



**United Nations**  
Convention to Combat  
Desertification

# **Evaluation of the “Global Land Outlook”**

**Final report**

**December 2017**

This independent evaluation is intended to provide an independent assessment of the Global Land Outlook (GLO), drawing out its strengths and possible weaknesses with a view to informing decisions regarding future editions and supplementary outputs. The scope of the evaluation includes:

- the relevance of the GLO to its primary audience of policy-makers at the national, regional and global levels;
- the actual and anticipated effectiveness of the GLO in triggering debate and underwriting progressive policy change;
- the efficiency of the process to produce the GLO; and
- lessons in terms of both content and process.

*This evaluation was commissioned by the UNCCD evaluation office and authored by Jeremy Smith in November-December 2017. The views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the UNCCD secretariat or the Global Mechanism.*

## Purpose and methodology

Published in September 2017 at the 13<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Global Land Outlook (GLO) is a “*strategic and evidence-based communication publication and platform [which aims] to facilitate insightful debate and discourse on a new and transformative vision for land management policies, planning and practices at global, regional and national scales*”.<sup>1</sup>

This evaluation is intended to provide an independent assessment of the GLO, drawing out its strengths and possible weaknesses with a view to informing decisions regarding future editions and supplementary outputs. The scope of the evaluation includes:

- the **relevance** of the GLO to its primary audience of policy-makers at the national, regional and global levels;
- the actual and anticipated **effectiveness** of the GLO in triggering debate and underwriting progressive policy change;
- the **efficiency** of the process to produce the GLO;
- **lessons** in terms of both content and process.

In commenting on effectiveness and outcomes, there is no expectation that the GLO will have yet triggered changes in policy and practice on the ground. The evaluation does seek to gauge whether there are signs of changes in attitudes or approach which the GLO has encouraged or enabled. It also draws out opinion regarding the extent to which the GLO can be expected to contribute to stronger political mobilisation around the UNCCD's goals in the future.

## Methodology

The evaluation draws on three main sources of information:

- a review of documentation, including concept notes, minutes from Steering Committee meetings, media coverage and the GLO itself;
- a survey completed by a total of 79 respondents according to the following schema:<sup>2</sup>

Region	Africa	Asia-Pacific	Latin America and Caribbean	Eastern Europe	Western Europe and Other
	32	16	12	9	9

Role	Government employee	Scientist	UN or IGO	Civil society	Other
	56	12	6	3	2

- Interviews with a total of 19 people, with one set of responses to questions sent by email. Four interviews were conducted in-person during a visit to Bonn in November 2017 and the rest were done by skype / phone.

1 *Terms of Reference: Consultancy, Evaluation of the Global Land Outlook*, p1.

2 The total for respondents by region is one less than 79 because one respondent gave their region as 'UNCCD'.

Interviews were mostly undertaken with those who had contributed to the GLO – as Steering Committee Members, Working Paper authors, chapter contributors and / or external reviewers. This is appropriate to an evaluation timed at this point in the GLO's life since it allows for harvesting information relating to the process behind the GLO's production. The survey represents the primary means of gathering the opinion of the GLO's main audience: National Focal Points and others involved in policy design and implementation.

## Relevance

### Genesis and purpose

First conceived in 2014, the GLO emerged as a reaction to a perceived lack of awareness and understanding among policy-makers of the implications of land degradation trends and inadequate documentation of socio-economic drivers.<sup>3</sup> It was also a response to the opportunities presented by the then-live process to agree Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the growing awareness of the importance of land to mitigating climate change and the momentum building around the concept of Land Degradation Neutrality.<sup>4</sup>

In this context, the GLO was produced *“in response to the mandate of the UNCCD [S]ecretariat to continually seek innovative approaches and products that increase awareness of desertification, land degradation and drought issues in the context of sustainable development”*.<sup>5</sup> It is designed to act as a *“framework for policy-making, planning and investment decisions”*. It should *“increase understanding... and provide stakeholders with a hugely enhanced policy and knowledge base... [by] deliver[ing] clarity on future scenarios and projections for degradation / rehabilitation trends”*. By enhancing the UNCCD's credibility, the GLO should *“leverage scientific, legal and political triggers for action.”* As such, the GLO is imagined as a medium for changing how the UNCCD communicates and enabling a step-change in how seriously its goals and messages are taken.<sup>6</sup> It should 'make a statement', catalyse what one contributor calls a shift from a signalling phase to a policy-making phase and, implicitly, elevate the profile of the UNCCD itself.

### Scope and content

The GLO aims to *“demonstrate the central importance of land quality to human well-being, assess current trends in land conversion, degradation and loss, identify the driving factors and analyse the impacts, provide scenarios for future challenges and opportunities, and present a new and transformative vision for land management policy, planning and practice at global and national scales”*.<sup>7</sup> It does so *“not [as] a scientific compilation nor a technical assessment but rather [as] a*

3 *A World Outlook on Land Degradation and Sustainable Land Management (GLO Outline 2014)*, p5.

4 *A World Outlook on Land Degradation and Sustainable Land Management (GLO Outline 2014)*, p4.

5 *GLO Mandate, Timeline and Milestones for the Steering Committee*, October 2015, p1.

6 Summary of the aim of the GLO derived from *A World Outlook on Land Degradation and Sustainable Land Management (GLO Outline 2014)*, p9-10 and *Terms of Reference: Consultancy, Evaluation of the Global Land Outlook*, p2.

7 <http://www2.unccd.int/actions/global-land-outlook-glo>

*policy focused global analysis of how land is used today and will be used potentially by 2050/2100*".<sup>8</sup>

The GLO proceeds through three parts. The first ('The Big Picture') sets the context, lays out evidence for land degradation and attempts to link it to issues of human security. The second part ('The Outlook') forms 'the meat in the sandwich': it presents scenarios of change and emphasizes the importance of land to energy, climate, water security, biodiversity and soil, among other issues addressed in a series of thematic chapters. This Part represents the evidence base to support the current state analysis and the prescription for the future given in Parts One and Three respectively. It aims to situate land as an aspect to other key policy debates, not in a defensive or purely tactical way, but on the basis of confidence that land can stand alone as an issue of global resonance and importance. Land is linked to climate change, for example, because, as one internal interviewee put it, "*it has more currency, but we do not need to hide behind it [and] it was not the purpose to assert land as the answer to climate change*".

There is some querying of the inclusion of a chapter on drylands (Chapter 12) on the grounds that the other chapters in Part Two are thematic in scope; several commentators note that there could just as well be a chapter on forest or mountain regions. There is no sense that this undermines the GLO, only that it seems a little incongruous to have a chapter dedicated to a particular biome while the others focus on themes. This chapter is most likely an artefact of the UNCCD's history. The GLO marks an attempt to signal a new direction for the UNCCD, but it is a transitional document and this Chapter is an indication of a transition not yet complete.

Part Three ('A More Secure Future') prescribes six 'response pathways' to fulfil an alternative vision of sustainable land management.<sup>9</sup> In a concluding section to this Part<sup>10</sup>, the GLO posits some critical questions relating to genetically modified crops, land grabs and the status of the private sector as both problem and solution, among others. These questions reflect issues which emerged in the process of producing the GLO, but which it does not itself address. More than that though, these questions reveal the UNCCD to be testing the waters on issues of importance to its agenda, but which it has tended to steer clear of on account of their political sensitivity.

The main body of the GLO is preceded by short Key Messages and an Executive Summary which employ the same headings as Parts 1 and 3, but not Part 2. Both include a section on 'An Emerging Consensus: A Broken System'; the latter also includes a section on Scenarios for Change. The format of the Key Messages and Summary indicate how a large part of Part 2 involves reiteration of

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8 *The Global Land Outlook, Outline of Main Report*, April 2016, p1.

9 The six pathways involve balancing different needs at a landscape scale while incorporating site-level specificity on land use, demand, and condition (multifunctional landscapes); building resilience: against climate change and other shocks through a planned combination of conservation, sustainable management, and restoration of land resources; farming for multiple benefits: towards an optimization of the total value of ecosystem services for current and future food production; managing the rural-urban interface: framing a new approach in the face of increasing urban sprawl and infrastructure development; no net loss in the consumption and production of natural resources; and creating an enabling environment: for scaling up small successes into transformative regional and global change; *Global Land Outlook*, p275.

10 *Global Land Outlook*, p304-5.

evidence through different thematic lenses. The headings used also signal the pivotal importance to the GLO as a whole of Chapter 4 (Convergence of Evidence) and Chapter 6 (Scenarios of Change).

From external respondents, there is some quibbling over the lack of signposting from the Executive Summary and Key Messages to the main body of text. An unfavourable contrast is drawn with reports of the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in which issues are said to be more easily traceable from a summary to chapters and sub-chapters and ultimately through to references.

### A clear central thread?

Throughout the process of developing the GLO, those most involved were sensitive to the risk that it became *“a dump of information rather [than information put] in a visionary way to make positive impact”*.<sup>11</sup> The reliance of the GLO on multiple authors to produce the raw material for different chapters not only raised an issue of consistency of style, but also engendered a certain centrifugal pressure as each author consciously or unconsciously pushed their own angle.

The final product is described within the Secretariat as *“one picture with many lenses”* or, somewhat less sympathetically, as *“a lot of related stories which do not quite fit together”*. If claims are made for a central message, it is that of the world needing to make choices in how land is used and managed.<sup>12</sup> This is a message which only emerged during the process of developing the GLO, rather than being conceived at the outset and even then, it is acknowledged that the 'red line' running through the GLO could be sharper. One effect is that individual contributors may not have felt that they were given a clear steer as to how to fit their pieces within an overarching framework.

If anything, the Secretariat is clearer on what the thread running through the GLO is not than on what it is. Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) was at one point positioned as *“the conceptual framework for the Outlook”*, with the GLO designed *“to set up a baseline against which to track progress towards land degradation neutrality”*.<sup>13</sup> But the premise that the GLO should form an accessible means of conveying UNCCD messages was later taken to preclude any straightforward use of it to justify LDN: while LDN is prominent in the GLO, *“it is not the backbone of the GLO, because LDN is a technical package while the GLO is not talking in technical language”*.<sup>14</sup> Since the audience of the GLO is broader than land experts, it cannot be tied too closely to a concept which requires a degree of expertise to understand. The GLO's six response pathways are correspondingly broader in scope than land policy.

For those outside the Secretariat, but still involved in the development of the GLO, the GLO's

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11 *Minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Global Land Outlook*, 30 June - 1 July 2016, p2.

12 A Steering Committee member interprets the GLO's core message in similar terms: *“the key theme is multifunctionality – land as source of multiple values, not to be managed by single sector for single value”*.

13 *A World Outlook on Land Degradation and Sustainable Land Management (GLO Outline 2014)*, p7.

14 Annex One lays out 'The Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality', but as one external observer puts it, including it as an annex is *“asking people not to read it”*.

relationship to LDN is clear and legitimate. The GLO both benefits from the growing cachet acquired by LDN and is supportive of it. If, as one Steering Committee Member sees it, the GLO has a broader purpose of *“waking people up to the fact that land is being mismanaged and that it is a finite resource which is being lost”*, its role is to prepare the ground for the technical solution of LDN by solidifying political awareness around the basic issues at stake.

Stakeholders at one remove from the GLO's production tend, therefore, to agree that the GLO lacks a clear central message, but excuse this in terms of its function as an outlook and a synthesis and in terms of the understandable fact of not getting everything quite right in a first edition. For one Steering Committee Member, *“it is difficult to follow a thread [but] Part Three is not a bad attempt to pull things together”*. The scale of what was being attempted also militates against the GLO's ability to tell a single story.

Another possible candidate for a central thread was human security<sup>15</sup> which has its own chapter in Part One. With this issue though, the UNCCD's thinking is relatively underdeveloped and in making the connections between land degradation and migration and conflict, it was wary of conflating correlation with causality. At one point in the process, human security was labelled *“a problem child in the structure [of the GLO] and should be considered with caution in the other chapters”*.<sup>16</sup> Here again, the GLO is a means for the UNCCD to take steps in new directions and to begin to position itself as an actor that should be involved in key global debates, and as one that can help to deal with the causes of major global problems, not just symptoms and consequences.

### **Balance between rigour and communicability**

The intended audience of the GLO is variously described as the *“intelligent and interested”* reader or *“the interested general public”*; likewise, its tone is meant to be *“non-academic, but intelligent”*.<sup>17</sup> The function of the GLO is to collate and synthesize rather than to present new material. Its value lies as much, if not more, in *how* it communicates than in *what* it communicates: it *“will not create new knowledge but rather will synthesize what we now know and place that knowledge into a policy framework.”*<sup>18</sup>

The GLO attempts something new in terms of scale. UNCCD policy and advocacy outputs tend to be lighter brochures which are useful for policy-makers, but do not themselves demonstrate rigour and depth. The GLO is much more substantial as if, while aimed at policy-makers, it wants to prove a

15 The GLO itself defines human security as a multifaceted concept that incorporates *“food and water security; safeguarding of soil and biodiversity; defense of communities and individual livelihoods; security of tenure and gender equity; protection of people at the urban-rural interface; safety from drought, floods and other weather-related disasters; reassurance in the right to retain cultural and spiritual identity; and, underlying all the above, social and political security”*, Global Land Outlook, p271.

16 Minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Global Land Outlook, Bonn, 30 June and 01 July 2016 p1.

17 *A World Outlook on Land Degradation and Sustainable Land Management (GLO Outline 2014)*, p7; *The Global Land Outlook: Outline of Main Report*, April 2016, p1; and *20150508 From IanJohnson GlobalLandOutlook Ou...eMainReport*, p1, respectively.

18 *The Global Land Outlook: Outline of Main Report*, April 2016, p1.

point to experts that the UNCCD can attract high calibre input and produce a 'definitive' text. It is recognised as something new and distinct and, generally speaking, it is felt to have succeeded in striking the right balance between communicability on the one hand and rigour and authority on the other hand. Nobody claims it is based on the most up-to-date science, but outside commentators mostly judge that it is *“solid enough for people who have some understanding but not so expert or dry that it becomes an academic exercise”*.<sup>19</sup> One draws a specific, positive contrast to other UNCCD outputs by arguing that he would not normally reference UNCCD publications – he would instead reference the sources that they draw on – but would do so with the GLO.

Chapters 4 and 6 (Convergence of Evidence and Scenarios of Change) are crucial to the GLO's added value. Securing the involvement of the *Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving* (PBL, Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency) and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) is a signal of the document's credibility, over and above their direct contributions.<sup>20</sup> At least for some commentators, the inclusion of material from the JRC and the PBL takes the GLO beyond being a 'mere', albeit fairly substantial, communications piece. For one scientist, Chapter 4 *“advances us in defining land degradation in a way that is quantifiable and mappable... it is a vehicle for a conceptual framework that has taken 25 years to define”*.

The material from the JRC – the mapping of different scenarios – is also important to the visual feel of the GLO. Overall, the GLO is considered to be attractive and to have an appealing look and feel.

There is some criticism, however, that the GLO is not rigorous enough and that *“it makes dubious claims regarding scientific credibility and legitimacy”*. A further specific criticism is that the GLO lacks a geographically balanced set of contributors, with reliance on essentially voluntary input forming a skew towards European scientists in particular. While this latter issue is acknowledged by the Secretariat and it would seem important for it to go out of its way to avoid this the future, the general point about rigour is perhaps an issue more of the claims that are presumed to be made for the GLO than of its content. Given the consensus that the content of the GLO is 'good enough' and that its value is in how it gets its messages across, failing to meet the highest scientific standards may not be the worse thing that can be said of it.

Since there is no general feeling that the GLO ever 'plays hard and fast' with the science, the reverse criticism – that the GLO is *“still more towards the academic side and does not quite hit the target in terms of reaching a general audience”* – may be more concerning. These are isolated comments though. Feedback from the survey is solid in terms of readability while the score for whether the GLO

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19 Another respondent uses similar language to describe the GLO as *“credible enough... [It] combines big picture messages with breadth. The messages are not new, but attempting to synthesise them into a coherent whole is very ambitious and UNCCD has pulled it off”*.

20 Involvement of the PBL, an in-kind contribution of the Dutch government, allowed for an *“analysis of the multiple drivers of land change and a better understanding of their co-variance and will also allow the GLO to develop a series of maps that can visualize changes in land use and potentially 'hot spot' areas and issues needing urgent attention”*; *The Global Land Outlook: Outline of Main Report*, April 2016, p1.

is an authoritative source of analysis reinforces the impression that it is considered reliable, if not absolutely 'cutting edge'.

<i>1-5 scale, 1 is lowest, 5 is highest</i>	TOTAL n = 79	ENG n = 57	FR n = 15	ESP n = 7
The GLO is informative and its content is easy to understand.	3.99	4.1	3.6	4
The GLO conveys policy-relevant information clearly and effectively	3.87	3.94	3.67	3.71
The GLO is an authoritative source of analysis of the status, trends and projections on land resources set within a broad socio-economic and political context	3.86	3.96	3.53	3.71

The GLO's Working Papers – listed in an annex – are part of the response to the question of sufficiency of rigour. Here, in theory, is the substance to back up the more 'communicable' content of the GLO itself. The Working Papers “allow for [analysis of] a broader range of topics relevant to land use and land use change”,<sup>21</sup> and together enable readers to go deeper into issues that most concern them. There is no sense emerging from interviews of there being issues not covered in a Working Paper. The Papers are felt to “give the overall package credibility”. That the rating for the Working Papers given in the survey is slightly lower than for other attributes of the GLO is due to a number of 'neither agree nor disagree' responses rather than a significant segment of respondents disagreeing with the statement: this suggests that it more likely that people have not reviewed the Working Papers rather than having read them and found them wanting.

<i>1-5 scale, 1 is lowest, 5 is highest</i>	TOTAL n = 79	ENG n = 57	FR n = 15	ESP n = 7
GLO Working Papers provide rigorous analysis to complement the broad arguments laid out in the GLO itself	3.75	3.83	3.6	3.43

### Comparators and 'competitors'

The GLO attempts to play a similar role for the UNCCD as the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) does for the United Nations Environment Programme and the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO) does for the Convention on Biodiversity. It is broader in scope than the Food and Agriculture Organisation's annual State of the Land but, like the GEO and GBO, aims a little lower than IPCC Assessment Reports. It is generally felt to reach a standard at least as high as the GEO and GBO, with some arguing that it compares favourably in terms of its look and the impression it makes on first sight.

The GLO does draw criticism for supposedly duplicating two major imminent publications – an IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Land<sup>22</sup> and a Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment (LDRA) being developed by the Inter-governmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and

21 *The Global Land Outlook, Outline of Main Report*, April 2016, p1.

22 With an approved title of *Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems*, this report will be finalized in September 2019.

Ecosystem Services (IPBES).<sup>23</sup> There are several parts to this criticism: some of scope and some of timing. Both the IPCC and IPBES reports are formally mandated – by the UNFCCC and UNCCD respectively – and will be more substantive in scope than the GLO. The suggestion that the GLO should have waited for them stands up more in relation to the IPBES report, due in March 2018, than the IPCC report due only in September 2019, given too that the former is a UNCCD-mandated product. To do so would have been to make the GLO a communications product derived from a substantive analysis rather than a reasonably robust, but accessible report in its own right. Implicit to this criticism is the view that the GLO fails on these terms and a fear that policy-makers will draw too much upon it because it was published first, in spite of its purported limitations in terms of its content.

At one level, it does seem unfortunate that the LDRA will be published only six months after the GLO. There would certainly seem to be value in fostering closer ties in the future; a second GLO can be consciously developed in the light of the LDRA's findings and those involved in the LDRA can be involved in its design. At the same time though, there is no consensus that the GLO is not robust nor is it held to be necessarily duplicative or preemptive of the LDRA. One contributor to both the GLO and the LDRA notes that the former is a stand-alone document, while the latter is a science and literature review. For those a step away from the politics of the different documents, *“the important thing is that each takes the other into account”*. In theory, both should contribute to the common cause of establishing the importance of land and of garnering attention around political and technical solutions.

## Effectiveness and outcomes

### Policy and knowledge base

The GLO is broadly appreciated for its analysis of the causes of, trends in and solutions to land degradation. There is a positive signal too from the survey in terms of take-up of the GLO and its use in work and studies, which, given that 56 out of 79 respondents are government employees, suggests GLO has struck a chord with its primary audience.

<i>1-5 scale, 1 is lowest, 5 is highest</i>	TOTAL n = 79	ENG n = 57	FR n = 15	ESP n = 7
I will use the GLO in my work and/or studies	4.3	4.36	4.07	4.29
The GLO provides a clear assessment of current trends in land conversion, degradation and loss	4.18	4.26	4	3.86
The GLO provides a clear analysis of driving factors and impacts of land degradation	4.15	4.17	4	
The GLO lays out a clear vision of alternative land management practices	3.99	4.06	3.73	

23 Some GLO Steering Committee members expressed concern about the distinctiveness of the GLO compared with outputs produced by the FAO, European Commission and IPBES; *Minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Steering Committee of the Global Land Outlook*, 30 June and 01 July 2016, p1.

Comments left to the survey reinforce the impression of a product which will be drawn upon in preparing responses to land degradation; one comment cites the GLO as “*a very important piece of work which will assist countries especially in Africa to understand the problem of land degradation and strategize on how to address the problems*”. While noting that the GLO's central message is hard to discern and suggesting that there does not appear to have been a thorough selection of content, a policy-maker recognises that the GLO provides “*a necessary overview of the issues*”.

The GLO has had a positive, indirect impact on the policy and knowledge base by concentrating minds at the JRC and PBL. Whether or not involvement in the GLO accelerated the process of completing JRC and PBL reports is open to question – that is the perception from outside the organisations if not from within – but it has certainly given their work a new audience and appears to have provided a boost to morale and energy levels. For an employee of one of these institutions, “*the GLO gave a huge push in making our work even more sound and readable. It made us want to make it perfect*”.

Internal to the Secretariat, it is accepted that scaling up sustainable land management is not adequately covered in the GLO, in part because the relevant Working Paper input was initially too theoretical. An external observer contends that there are gaps in terms of the latest arguments about how to measure land degradation. Neither of these issues is felt to make a major difference to the quality of the final product, however.

A more substantial criticism is that there needed to be more content on the economic value of land, especially given that policy-makers are the key audience. There is a Working Paper on *The Economics of Land Policy, Planning and Practice*, but this does not translate into a stand-alone chapter. For one commentator closely involved in the GLO process, more should have been made of the Economics of Land Degradation initiative.

### Political utility

Survey data suggest that the GLO succeeds in making the links between land and other key issues: scores are highest for statements relating to the GLO's ability to position land as an issue of relevance to other policy issues and which underwrites human well-being. The GLO is also taken to make a good case for LDN, even if this was not its primary purpose.

<i>1-5 scale, 1 is lowest, 5 is highest</i>	TOTAL n = 79	ENG n = 57	FR n = 15	ESP n = 7
The GLO shows the importance of land to other key policy issues such as climate change and food security	4.32	4.37	4.07	4.43
The GLO demonstrates the importance of land quality to human well-being	4.32	4.4	4.07	4.14
The GLO makes a strong case for Land Degradation Neutrality	4.12	4.31	3.67	3.57

Comments left to the survey affirm that the GLO will “*galvanize policy-makers and [the] public at large to achieve LDN*” and assert that it “*helps countries to understand how to better manage land and soil policy implementation*”. The German Parliament is reported to have requested a copy, something which has not happened with previous outputs.

For one scientist contributor, the GLO succeeds because “*it conveys messages with more weight than any single scientist can*”. Context is key to how well GLO messages land, of course. In this regard the GLO is well-timed to exploit the opportunity represented by the SDGs and the drive for closer integration between the Rio Conventions. Where states are coming to realise that they cannot hide land away under Ministries of Agriculture or Water, the GLO “*helps states move down a pathway to a more integrated approach to land, climate and agriculture*”. And if particular themes highlighted in the GLO play well in particular settings – like that of human security in Europe, for example, under a logic of tackling the root causes of conflict and migration – then this too is a reason for validating the GLO for its timing as much as for its content.

### **The UNCCD's credibility**

The implications of the comments that “*the GLO has helped elevate UNCCD and given it more credibility with the scientific community*” and that “*it takes UNCCD out of its desertification straitjacket*” are quite profound. They suggest an important repositioning of the UNCCD and its agenda. The GLO, for this point of view, 'forces the agenda' in terms of the scope of the Convention – as land rather than desertification more narrowly – and asserts the UNCCD as the entity leading the response on land. Again, this is not something done in a vacuum: just as a context in which land is being taken more seriously is both cause and effect of the GLO proving politically useful, so the credibility and profile of the UNCCD is something which enables the GLO to draw attention and a product of the GLO helping to (re)-position the UNCCD.

The merit here is in taking the initiative and being willing to try something different. The format is not radically new, given the similarities with the GEO and GBO, and the messages may not be very sharp, but they are sharper than usual, they form part of a forward-looking document rather than 'just another' review of land and its problems and they do push the boat out a little on sensitive issues like land rights and human security. Coming from an organisation like the UNCCD, this makes people take notice. The survey confirms that the GLO has enhanced the UNCCD's credibility and positioned it as a driver of post-2015 land and soil policy implementation. This signal is somewhat less strong among Spanish-language respondents, albeit from a small sample.

1-5 scale, 1 is lowest, 5 is highest	TOTAL n = 79	ENG n = 57	FR n = 15	ESP n = 7
The GLO enhances the credibility of the UNCCD by clarifying many UNCCD messages.	4.06	4.16	4	3.43
The GLO demonstrates how the UNCCD is a realistic and effective driver of post-2015 land and soil policy implementation.	4.03	4.14	4	3.29
The GLO enhances the credibility of the UNCCD by reaching audiences that are not usually involved or interested in this Convention.	3.83	3.98	3.47	3.43

As the last survey score – the somewhat lower score for reaching new audiences – may indicate, there are mixed levels of satisfaction with the media coverage achieved by the GLO launch. On the one hand, getting coverage in *The Guardian*<sup>24</sup> is unusual and can be taken to validate the assumption that a different sort of product was needed to get this sort of attention. On the other hand, there is a question mark over whether the GLO is different enough – one marketing expert argues that “*if they want to make themselves stand out, maybe a series of shorter documents with a 'braver' tone or something more interactive, would have been better to position them*” – and whether enough investment has been / is being put into promoting the GLO to new audiences. At the least, there is an onus on continued efforts to maximise the use made of it.

## Efficiency

The GLO is a major undertaking, something attempted by the Secretariat for the first time. That there were teething problems along the way is unsurprising. Initial plans were over-optimistic in terms of the GLO's launch date and wide of the mark in terms of length: while it was initially conceived as being around 100 pages in total<sup>25</sup>, predictions of its length soon settled around a more accurate figure of 300 pages.

	Steering Committee meeting, October 2015	Steering Committee meeting, June - July 2016
Anticipated launch date	Late 2016 (at NATO, UN Habitat or G20 summits)	June 2017 (World Day to Combat Desertification)

There are lessons to be drawn from the process, all of which should be seen in the context that, to the credit of those most involved, it all came together in the end, to a good standard.

## The coordination of inputs

The GLO's production followed a model of tight control over vision and light coordination of inputs. The Secretariat had a coherent vision of what it wanted the GLO to look like and did not want an open process that risked watering down this vision. But the level of central resources available affected the efficiency with which the Secretariat could impose its vision: it was dependent on contributors producing draft text that was more or less on the mark and on its small central team being able to maintain an overview of the process and drive it to a conclusion.

24 <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/sep/12/third-of-earths-soil-acutely-degraded-due-to-agriculture-study>

25 *A World Outlook on Land Degradation and Sustainable Land Management (GLO Outline 2014)*, p7.

The authors of Working Papers consistently describe, to varying degrees, a lack of clarity about the status of the Papers and their relationship to Chapters in the final report. Many feel that insufficient guidance was provided in terms of the intended style of their input. Whether or not there was a signal and an expectation that Working Papers would morph more or less seamlessly into GLO Chapters, this possibility was trumped by the need for consistency of style. Some authors report receiving little or no feedback on their Paper and hearing nothing until the GLO itself had been drafted. Left to *“cherry pick from a wide panoply of material”* – some of it heavily referenced, some less so, for example – the Secretariat’s solution, after some exchange with authors, was to edit everything into a common style itself. This may have been the most efficient step at this point, but it would have been preferable to have had inputs closer in style in the first place. At least some authors are disappointed that their Working Paper formed only a small part of a Chapter and / or that they were not listed as Chapter authors. This can be sensitive in terms of how time spent on the GLO is reported within their own institutions.

Working Papers are listed at the back of the GLO and are available on the GLO’s website, but authors are now unclear whether they can and should publish them in their own right.<sup>26</sup> Those most sensitive to what they see as lack of credit for chapters in the GLO itself are more inclined to seek what one refers to as *“avoidable duplication of publication”*. Others imagine that the GLO and their own publication can be complementary – the GLO coming with the name and clout of the UNCCD, their own publication conveying a fuller analysis.

### The design process

The design of the GLO was approached with a clear view of what the final product should look like rather than letting this evolve during the design process. Lack of experience in producing an output of this type and scale may have induced a degree of nervousness and unwillingness to entrust the designers to interpret their brief. The effect is that the process took longer than it perhaps needed to – also because of the addition of a stage of consultation with National Focal Points, which did not lead to substantive changes, but required an extra stage in laying out a draft – and the design may not have been as sharp as it could have been.

### The balance between efficiency and ownership

In the development of the GLO, some individuals were involved in multiple ways – as authors, reviewers and Steering Committee Members. That not every Steering Committee Member attended every meeting is itself unsurprising, though that attendance was self-financing may have affected participation and skewed membership towards those most able to pay. Though it is said to have been *“instrumental in guiding [the GLO’s] development”*<sup>27</sup>, the Steering Committee acted more as a sounding board for the core Secretariat team than as a proactive driver of the process. For one Steering Committee Member, it was *“clear that UNCCD was in the driving seat”*. Another argues that

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26 At one point, it was expected that Working Papers would be co-branded (SC meeting, July 2015) but only that on Energy and Land Use is.

27 *Terms of Reference: Consultancy, Evaluation of the Global Land Outlook*, p2.

a meeting of all contributors would have helped each understand how their different inputs were conceived as a single piece.

Inviting National Focal Points to review a draft was designed to engender ownership. Only a very small number responded, which may suggest that there was little return in terms of ownership for this extra step in the process. It is possible though that the opportunity to comment was noted and appreciated even if comments were not submitted and hence that benefits in terms of ownership may still accrue.

### Promoting the GLO

The way that the GLO was put together may have diminished the creation of a community around it, something that may in turn have impacted levels of energy around it once it was published. For one survey respondent, *“a large part of the audience to which this publication is addressed did not know that it was in process. Some [were] even surprised of its sudden publication. This is an indication that [a] top-down approach does not awaken consciousness beyond those directly linked to the production process. This is not a criticism of the scientific quality of the contents of the report [but] it is nevertheless [a criticism of] the process, of which civil society is not yet well aware. More outreach at all levels is fundamental”*.

Various respondents stress the importance of the GLO being cited in other publications and becoming recognised as a standard resource to draw upon. Noting that *“it can be hard to create these connections and get [the GLO] referenced”*, one Steering Committee Member suggests that it could – and informally at least still could – be made a responsibility of contributors to cite it. Another Steering Committee member acknowledges their own responsibility to promote the GLO, but also argues that more suggestions could have been forthcoming as to how to do so.

The risk is that there is not enough sustained effort to promote the GLO. That a promotional strategy and a list of events at which the GLO could be promoted was developed at a Steering Committee meeting held on the fringes of the Ordos COP<sup>28</sup> suggests that promotion was not given much time before the launch, perhaps as a consequence of all energies being sunk into getting the report ready on time. From outside the Secretariat, there is a perception that *“the potential of the GLO is not being exploited enough [because] there seems not to have been the capacity at UNCCD to sell it to policy-makers”*. Others close to the process judge that *“promotion is a bottleneck”* and feel that the GLO has not received enough traction from among senior management.

There are mixed views of the value of the GLO's own microsite.<sup>29</sup> Some argue that the site offers more space and visual content than the GLO would have on the UNCCD site itself. Others argue that the GLO may get less attention from being one step removed from the UNCCD's site.

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28 Notes of *Informal Stocktake Meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the Global Land Outlook*, 09 September 2017.

29 <https://global-land-outlook.squarespace.com/#glo-intro>

## Resourcing

The GLO stands in a peculiar position of being both a relatively expensive output for UNCCD and one which appears quite lightly resourced in comparison with similar products.<sup>30</sup> It is to the credit of those most involved that the GLO is perceived to reach a similar standard to these other products.<sup>31</sup> For one Steering Committee Member, *“UNCCD squeezed good value out of their editorial team. They did a great job for a first edition but will need to resource it more if they want it to grow it into a flagship document”*. This is the crux: that the GLO is imagined as being or becoming a 'flagship document', but does not appear to be resourced proportionately. Some of those most involved describe the process as *“painful”* or *“ad hoc... we were told 'do what you can and don't spend too much money”*. There are said to have been gaps in terms of back-office support and / or in funding for support functions such as sourcing images. Capacities were spread thinly with perhaps too much depending on one or two key individuals as the only ones on top of the whole process. Levels of resourcing also made the process vulnerable to being knocked off track. Bringing on board an editor made a big difference, but this is a need that could perhaps have been foreseen and planned for earlier.

## Prospects and future editions

The question of future editions has three main dimensions: the format / focus of a GLO2; the timescale to which it is produced and, by extension, whether to fix a regular cycle for further editions; and whether it should become a Party-driven output or remain an independent Secretariat product. These are not isolated questions but impact on each other: the form that a new GLO takes would strongly influence a decision on when it should be produced, most obviously.

## Content and focus

The nature of an outlook is that it makes a prediction for the future and its utility to policy-making is as good as its prediction is sound. With appropriate policy-making reliant on a clear picture of whether the outlook is improving or worsening, there is effectively an obligation to generate new forecasts and updated scenarios. A new GLO may not need the overview and contextual introduction of GLO1, but it should involve an analysis of the pace and direction of degradation, dig deeper into the key pressures on land and involve an assessment of interventions which may be particularly effective.

In addition to endorsing the need for maintaining an overview of trends and scenarios, survey data suggest the value of giving a new GLO a thematic focus, with climate change the leading candidate.

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30 Expenditure on the GLO totalled \$728,000 against a budget of \$600,000. Details of the cost of similar reports are unknown, but there is no dissension from the view that the GEO costs much more in both funding and human resources.

31 There is an argument that having fewer resources meant that the GLO could be produced in a relatively streamlined way by those most committed to its aims, without the distorting effect of a competition for resources.

<i>0-10 scale, 0 is lowest, 10 is highest</i>	TOTAL n = 79	ENG n = 57	FR n = 15	ESP n = 7
Greater prominence to key themes: climate change	8.54	8.62	8.29	8.57
Updated analysis of global trends and scenarios	8.16	8.19	7.8	8.71
In-depth treatment of national experiences in setting and striving for Land Degradation Neutrality goals	7.9	7.92	7.53	8.57
Greater prominence to key themes: conflict and migration	7.25	7.21	7.4	7.29
Greater prominence to key themes: gender	6.73	7.16	6.66	6.43

Noting that COP13 adopted a drought initiative, one survey respondent argues that the next GLO could focus on drought to complement and analyse the actions taken as part of this initiative. Another argues that land tenure is a 'hot topic' which warrants further attention in a new edition.

There are repeated calls to complement an updated trends analysis with a stronger regional perspective. Different respondents call for more emphasis on areas which face a 'perfect storm' of factors inducing land degradation, for testing other scenarios with particular regions to build up a more differentiated picture of threats and trends or simply for more detail to be provided at a regional or even country level. One survey respondent, for example, argues that the next GLO should *"provide examples, proposals and solutions that are more specific [than GLO1] and focused on each region"*.

It is noted too that, as LDN plans are developed and implemented, the key locus of activity is the national level. A new GLO could centre on case studies of how states have grappled with LDN and shed light on which approaches, methods and tools work well and which less so. There is though an argument that a report focused on LDN implementation is an output in its own right and not a new GLO *per se*.

Some respondents take the idea of focusing on themes or regions to a particular conclusion by arguing that a global outlook is not necessary or is certainly not a priority over a fairly substantial time-frame. Others counter that *"shorter thematic reports would not attract the same calibre of people and would not garner the same interest"*. If a key value of the GLO is its prestige, global reach and ability to 'make a statement', then new statements are needed to reinforce the message about the importance of land and the role of UNCCD in addressing it. As one external observer notes, *"if you don't do these reports, people assume that the issues are fixed. It is important that it not a one-off, but makes an ongoing case for the importance of land degradation"*.<sup>32</sup>

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32 The same observer noted that the advance in terms of the position adopted in the IPCC's 4<sup>th</sup> report – along the lines of humans 'almost certainly' causing climate change – compared with that in its 5<sup>th</sup> report – that human-caused climate change was 'beyond almost all doubt' was insignificant in itself, but hugely important in political terms for reinforcing a fundamental message.

## Timing and frequency

The question of the timing of a new GLO is one of the balance to be struck between the need to maintain momentum and to repeat key messages on the one hand and to avoid apathy and disengagement by publishing without having new things to say, on the other.<sup>33</sup>

Many of those involved in the current GLO are sceptical of the need to publish a new edition earlier than 4-5 years' time, primarily on the grounds that the science is unlikely to change much in the meantime. An edition every four to five years is typical of the GLO's main comparators:

Title	Global Environment Outlook	Global Biodiversity Outlook	IPCC Assessment Reports
Lead organisation	UNEP	CBD	UNFCCC
Frequency	Every 5 years <sup>34</sup>	Every 4 years <sup>35</sup>	Every 6 years <sup>36</sup>

A four year cycle has the advantage of tying the launch of GLOs to COPs, the UNCCD's key political moment. The current GLO made a point of being launched at a COP, a decision validated by the comment of one policy-maker that this “*got it off to a good start*”. Were the Convention to move to a four-year reporting cycle, the synergies would be even stronger, given the likely LDN focus on the next edition.<sup>37</sup>

If this were the cycle for GLOs proper, there is nothing to preclude addressing issues which evolve more quickly through some kind of 'special report'. The decision on the timing of a new GLO is inseparable from that of the total set of outputs envisaged to best advance the UNCCD's case; capacity at the Secretariat and a clear view of what is feasible are of course important aspects to this. Various respondents imagine supplementary outputs – usually shorter briefings – targeted at specific audiences such as the private sector or which take the GLO to the next level of detail by laying out policy prescriptions for particular countries or (sub-)regions. In that these outputs would be derived from, and in support of, the GLO and because part of their purpose would be to showcase good practice, they can help sustain the buzz around the GLO.

33 In an internal 'next steps' paper, the Secretariat has floated different options for the timing of a new GLO including a GLO akin to the current edition in scale and scope published every seven years, with shorter intermediary outputs focusing on particular themes, regions or countries; and a GLO of similar length and format, but including “a more in-depth treatment of LDN experiences with detailed national profiles that highlight regional challenges and successes. Issues such as gender, drought, finance, indicators and migration could feature prominently in these case studies”, presumably as an alternative to, or in some cases an elaboration of, the thematic chapters of GLO1, to be published in three years' time; *UNCCD's Global Land Outlook (GLO) – Next Steps*, p1.

34 Over the last four editions, with less regular timing with earlier editions: GEO-1 in 1997; GEO-2000 in 1999; GEO-3 in 2002; GEO-4 in 2007; and GEO-5 in 2012. GEO-6 regional assessments for Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, and West Asia were launched in May 2017.

35 GBO have been published in 2001, 2006, 2010 and 2014.

36 IPCC reports have been published in 1990, 1996, 2001, 2007 and 2014.

37 A four year cycle was the default position at the time of *The Global Land Outlook, Outline of Main Report*, April 2016 (p7).

## Status and process

In contrast to the GEO and the reports of the IPCC, the GLO is funded by voluntary contributions from the governments of South Korea, the Netherlands and Switzerland and the European Commission. This has the advantage that the Secretariat was free to write the sort of accessible document that it identified as being most needed. Formalising the GLO – putting it under the Convention's formal mechanisms, and making it a responsibility of, for example, the Science-Policy Interface – would, it is widely assumed, cost more and take longer, with efficiency and sharpness of content traded for status and political weight.

It is understood that it is likely to be impossible to fund future GLOs from the UNCCD core budget. As long as the GLO relies on voluntary contributions, the Secretariat will be reluctant to sacrifice the flexibility that comes with this form of funding. The issue may then be that of finding other ways of securing recognition for the GLO. It is reported that the European Union and African Union have expressed support for the GLO in recent meetings, which suggests that advocacy and promotion of the GLO at regional fora may be more fruitful than wrestling with the question of its formal status. And even if this and future GLOs are not tabled for formal discussion at COPs, they can still be used as context for COP debates.

## The next step: a Global Land Index?

The idea for a Global Land Index to “compare countries on governance and institutional land management indicators”<sup>38</sup> has been on the table since at least early 2015. An Index would, in theory, “score and rank countries on the “quality” of their land management policies and practices where “quality” is determined by decreases, increases or stasis in the biological and economic productivity of land resources, related socio-economic conditions and effectiveness of governance systems and institution”<sup>39</sup>.

The appeal of an index as “an advocacy tool [which is] resonant and easy to understand with little interpretation by policymakers, practitioners, and layperson”<sup>40</sup> is clear. Not only would an index be of potential utility to measuring progress towards LDN, but it would allow for spotting cases of successful practice for others to copy or draw upon. The tactic of publicly comparing states with each other can have a significant mobilizing effect and is attractive to media. Survey data show support for an Index:

0-10 scale, 0 is lowest, 10 is highest	TOTAL, n = 79	ENG, n = 57	FR, n = 15	ESP, n = 7
Utility of a Global Land Index	7.48	7.37	7.33	8.57

38 Terms of Reference: Consultancy, Evaluation of the Global Land Outlook, p3.

39 UNCCD Secretariat and Results for Development Institute Terms of Reference: Designing and Producing a Land Management Index for the 1<sup>st</sup> Global Land Outlook, p1.

40 Methodological Options Paper for a Land Management Index (LMI), prepared for UNCCD by Results For Development, August 31, 2015, p1.

The aspiration for an index has been hard to translate into something defensible in practice, however. The Steering Committee was quick to note that *“a single, overarching index merging different indicators was seen as extremely problematic and difficult to defend”*.<sup>41</sup> The response to this challenge of the consultants initially tasked with developing a working approach was to propose a dashboard of indicators rather than a composite index,<sup>42</sup> but this seems to have elided rather than resolved the question of methodological rigour. The work of a new consultant, discussed at a workshop in Bonn in June 2017, advanced the discussion,<sup>43</sup> but *“the greatest challenge”* to finalising an index remains *“finding existing indicators and datasets that actually reflect or measure the ability or capability of the society to improve land management practices”*.<sup>44</sup>

These methodological challenges are rendered acute by the sensitivities of producing an index in which developing countries may be concentrated at the bottom and by the *“political dangers of publishing evidence of the ineptitude of governments”*. Other indices have survived these risks, but a land index does not yet have a robust approach to confront them. As one expert notes, *“putting something out which is not robust defeats the purpose [since it] would be vulnerable to a legitimate counter-attack by those with more information about [for example] land use changes which have socio-economic benefits even if some degradation results”*. The strength of an index – the mobilizing potential of ranking states against one another – is also its weakness if it were the case that *“there is so much focus on the numbers that it loses its meaning... A country could be making progress but still come low down, which would be demoralising”*. More than one respondent is unconvinced that an index creates incentives for states to improve.

It proved impossible to include an index as a component of the GLO. At the June 2017 workshop, it was argued that a further two years' work was needed before an index could be published<sup>45</sup>, while the Steering Committee has already considered whether the index is *“an insurmountable challenge that would detract from the aims and impacts of GLO2”*.<sup>46</sup>

The debate around the merits and risks of an index appears to recreate the tension between rigour and communicability which the GLO itself resolved. Caricaturing somewhat, an index may be a step too far for content experts, who are, because of its methodological flaws, able to reassert the case for rigour.<sup>47</sup>

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41 Summary, 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of The Global Land Outlook (GLO) Steering Committee, 7-8 July 2015, p1.

42 Methodological Options Paper for a Land Management Index (LMI), prepared for UNCCD by Results For Development, August 31, 2015, p4.

43 As elaborated in Land Management Index Governance Framework for Sustainable Land Management [[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5694c48bd82d5e9597570999/t/5936667bff7c502e51f56177/1496737426329/Preliminary+draft+scoping+paper+fro+LMI\\_May+2017.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5694c48bd82d5e9597570999/t/5936667bff7c502e51f56177/1496737426329/Preliminary+draft+scoping+paper+fro+LMI_May+2017.pdf)]

44 UNCCD's Global Land Outlook (GLO) - Next Steps, p1. One expert who has followed the process judges that it still amounts to accumulating any potentially useful indicator without a clear framework, while another highlights the risk of choosing indicators for which data exists rather than indicators best matched to the purpose at hand.

45 UNCCD expert workshop on a land index 22-23 June 2017 Summary and Recommendations , p4

46 Notes of Informal Stocktake Meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the Global Land Outlook, 09 September 2017.

47 This comes through in the comments that *“indices are fraught with methodological demons – how to tell if farmers are good farmers, what is good or very good land management. An index could focus on outcomes not*

In this context, the option to publish an index while being careful not to over-claim what it is based upon nor to defend its conclusions to the hilt – an index which does not claim to be comprehensive and which simply aims to “*initiate discussion and debate*”<sup>48</sup> – appears to be closed off. If, as it is acknowledged internally, “*we are not even not quite there*”, the *sine qua non* of any publishable land index is to deepen its methodological foundations and specifically to identify tenable indicators. This is taken to be no small endeavour – for one expert commentator, even if in theory it is possible and all the pieces are in place, meaning the conceptual framework, weighting and normalization – “*it will take a huge amount of resources*” to get it into a publishable state.

One way forward is to avoid an either / or choice as to whether to invest in an index. It may be that an index can focus on particular themes for which there are reliable data and relevant indicators. How this is received would determine whether to attempt to build a more complex index. This is also a question of preparing the ground – testing with a few countries, conducting extensive peer review of the methodology, cultivating champions, engaging a wide range of stakeholders to pre-empt criticism. For this approach, the UNCCD needs to get itself known as the 'owner' of an index and build momentum prior to publishing it.

Either just initially or as a permanent approach, an index could put more weight on comparing like with like – making comparisons of states in the same region or political group and / or with the same bio-physical conditions. The crux would be how an index is presented, how it can be positioned as a tool for making reasonable comparisons, putting a spotlight on things that are going well, encouraging learning and, by extension, downplaying somewhat its naming-and-shaming aspect.

## Conclusions and recommendations

The GLO can be read at two levels – as an analysis of land and the issues with which it interconnects and as a political tool for asserting an agenda and positioning the UNCCD as an actor to be taken seriously. The measure of the content of the GLO is not so much whether it is the best, most accurate and thorough analysis, but whether it is sufficient to make this political case. In these terms and insofar as it is possible to reach a conclusion at this point in its life, the GLO succeeds. It may not have convinced states that land degradation is as important and in some regions more important than climate in the short- to medium-term and it may not have equalised the status of UNCCD *vis à vis* the UNFCCC and the CBD, but it has contributed to the growing profile of land. It “*meets the need for a*

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*management, but it's still difficult to measure land quality. Parts of Sahel are greener now than 20 years ago, but don't have the same mix of vegetation so are not providing the same services” and that “You can list countries in terms of factors which can provoke land degradation and rate countries on these factors, but this may not convert into land degradation. In many senses, European land is very degraded, but fertiliser is used to maintain productivity. Similar issues in different places have different outcomes, because factors interact differently in different places and so it is not possible to reduce it to a single index.. There are [also] gaps in terms of dynamic data on soil nutrients and soil structure. To do comparisons, you need harmonised data for all states”.* The point is not to deny the soundness of these analyses, but to cite them as examples of forensic description of the problems.

*global product describing the land issue and asserting UNCCD as honest brokers focusing attention upon it". It may not yet constitute a flagship document, but it has the potential to become one.*

As a first edition, there were kinks in the development process which can be ironed out in future editions. A second edition need not reinvent the wheel and can be produced in a manner which maintains standards while improving efficiency.

## Recommendations

### Capitalising on GLO1

- Efforts to promote the GLO should be redoubled and captured in a strategy which lays out steps to ensure the GLO is widely cited and made the centrepiece of the Secretariat's interaction with states.
- The Secretariat should strategize with IPBES in advance of the publication of the LDRA in order that the LDRA benefits from, and contributes to sustaining, the momentum built by GLO.

### GLO2 scope and timing

- A new GLO, centred on an updated outlook of scenarios and trends, should be produced every four years to maintain the momentum and support the political purpose of GLO1.
- Whether GLO2 itself meets demand for in-depth regional analyses and further exploration of key themes such as land and climate or whether these are published as supplementary outputs is less the issue than that this demand is met and that there is continuity and coherence to the overall package of GLO products.
- Further development of a Global Land Index should reflect a clear view of opportunity costs and involve stop-go moments when the pros and cons of continuing would be reviewed. Ranking countries within particular regions / biomes should be explored as an alternative or interim option.

### GLO2 planning

- Planning for the next GLO should begin early with an initial phase of outreach to attract high-quality contributors, engage stakeholders with a shared agenda and ensure that topical issues can be adequately covered.
- A wide range of contributors should be solicited to avoid the appearance or reality of regional bias; funding should ideally be provided to enable the participation of contributors from beyond developed countries.
- Plans for GLO2 should learn from the experience of GLO1 by anticipating capacity bottlenecks, especially in relation to editing, the sourcing of images and promotion.
- Contributors to the next GLO should be given clear, early guidance relating to the length, depth and style of their input and how it should be referenced. This guidance should specify the status that contributors' input will have in the final product and how authors will be acknowledged.

## Annex: Working Papers

- *Co-Managing Land and Water For Sustainable Development*, Alfred M. Duda.
- *Energy and Land Use*, Uwe R. Fritsche *et al.*
- *Gender-Responsive Land Degradation Neutrality*, Atieno Mboya Samandari.
- *Integrated Landscape Management: an Approach To Achieve Equitable And Participatory Sustainable Development*, Melissa Thaxton, Seth Shames and Sara J. Scherr.
- *Land Tenure and Rights For Improved Land Management And Sustainable Development*, Emmanuel Kasimbazi
- *Land Use Planning*, Graciela Metternicht.
- *Land Value Chains*, Giancarlo Raschio.
- *Migration and Land Degradation: Recent Experience And Future Trends*, Robert Mcleman.
- *Peace, Security, Land and Sustainable Development*, Grammenos Mastrojeni.
- *Protected Areas*, Nigel Dudley And Kathy Mackinnon.
- *Rural-Urban Linkages in The Context Of Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection*, Craig Hatcher
- *Scaling Up Sustainable Land Management and Restoration Of Degraded Land*, Richard Thomas *et al.*
- *“So the Land is actually like a big book, you know?” Geomythology, and the Value of a Bridge Between Conventional and Indigenous Science*, Michael Welland.
- *The Economics of Land Policy, Planning And Practice*, Nicola Favretto *et al.*
- *The Land In Drylands: Thriving In Uncertainty Through Diversity*, Jonathan Davies.
- *The Role Of Ecological Restoration And Rehabilitation In Production Landscapes: an Enhanced Approach To Sustainable Development*, Neville D. Crossman.
- *Threats to Soils: Global Trends and Perspectives: a Contribution from the Intergovernmental Technical Panel On Soils, Global Soil Partnership, FAO*, Gary Pierzynski and Brajendra (Editors).