

Management response: Evaluation of Business Sector Engagement in the UNCCD

Overview

In July 2020-January 2021, the UNCCD secretariat commissioned a study on the UNCCD's business sector engagement, which included an evaluation of business sector engagement and the development of elements for a new business sector engagement strategy. This management response is limited to the evaluation section of the study.

The evaluation report provides an overview of the different types of business sector engagement activities carried out by the UNCCD secretariat and the GM over the years. While the scope of the assessment is wide, the secretariat and the GM would have welcomed a deeper analysis of the extent of results, strengths and weaknesses of different types, so as to have a more substantial and specified basis for the consideration of future activities.

The secretariat and the GM agree with the emphasis given in the evaluation report to the importance of UNCCD private sector engagement leading to widespread business behavioral change and progress in preventing land degradation as well as restoring already degraded land.

The secretariat and the GM appreciate the positive assessment of the first private sector engagement strategy as a commendable attempt to provide a structure for business sector engagement.

Recommendations

Evaluation recommendation 1. *In their new BSES, the secretariat and the GM should develop a long-term vision for business sector engagement with the UNCCD, identifying key strategic aims and priorities, expected results and associated modalities of collaboration. The strategy could also specify main thematic areas of engagement.*

Management response: Accepted. The secretariat and the GM will further develop their strategic approach to engaging the business sector to address desertification, land degradation and drought.

Evaluation recommendation 2. *The secretariat and/or the GM, in collaboration with partners where feasible, should further develop their analysis, guidance and support targeting both country Parties and the business sector, with the aim of advancing shared understanding and alignment of public and private sector interests, collaboration modalities and expectations for effective country level action addressing land*

Management response: Partially accepted. The secretariat and the GM are already working on a variety of information products and guidelines that aim to facilitate private sector engagement in favor of regenerative land management within productive capacities

Evaluation recommendation 3. *The secretariat and the GM should enhance their tools, facilities, and capacity for effective business sector engagement, including:*

- ***Establishing a platform for the business sector to collaborate, access and share information, and exchange views on matters relevant to UNCCD priorities;***
- ***Revamping communications targeting the business sector, for improved transparency and alignment;***
- ***Reviewing the processes (e.g., around due diligence) to ensure they cover the different types of business sector actors and engagement;***
- ***Favouring more collaboration and complementarity across the secretariat and the GM, for instance through the creation of a business sector task team;***
- ***Improving knowledge management on business sector engagement through a systematic tracking of related resources and results, and periodic reporting on related matters for external purposes; and***
- ***Promoting internal learning and staff training on matters relevant to business sector engagement.***

Management response: Partially accepted. The secretariat and the GM have already implemented in part some of these recommendations but will strengthen the implementation.

Evaluation recommendation 4. *In view of the limited staff and other resources of the secretariat and the GM, efficiency in business sector engagement should be maximized. This would include streamlining engagement to focus on strategic, high-yields partnerships, clearly defining roles and responsibilities within and among units of the secretariat and the GM, taking advantage of existing efforts and materials from other UN institutions on the matter, and engaging in collaborations with said institutions.*

Management response: Partially accepted. The recommendation broad nature makes it difficult to distill actionable targets, as such the recommendation is partially accepted