



## Convention to Combat Desertification

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### Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

#### Tenth session

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Item 4 (b) (i) of the provisional agenda

**Improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and format of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties**

**Consideration of best practices in the implementation of the Convention**

**Iterative process: refinement of methodologies for the review and compilation of best practices, including methodological guidelines for best practices on sustainable land management technologies, including adaptation**

### **Iterative process: refinement of methodologies for the review and compilation of best practices, including methodological guidelines for best practices on sustainable land management technologies, including adaptation**

#### Note by the secretariat

##### *Summary*

The present document contains a revised proposal on a methodology for the review and compilation of best practices on sustainable land management technologies, including adaptation, by the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC). In particular, the document provides an overview of the status of the 2010–2011 reporting and review process on best practices and offers options for making the best possible use of this knowledge in the Convention process. It also presents a proposal for classifying best practices and a time schedule for their review within the timeframe of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018).

The CRIC may wish to consider the options presented in this document and make recommendations on how to carry the process of collection, dissemination and use of best practices forward.

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## I. Introduction and background information

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), in establishing the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS) of the Convention and of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) (The Strategy), decided that the review and compilation of best practices on the implementation of the Convention constitutes one of the four elements of the PRAIS<sup>1</sup>.

2. At its ninth session, the COP decided that best practices should be collected at the level of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) according to seven thematic topics.<sup>2</sup>

3. With regard to the review of best practices, the Bureau of the CRIC, at its meetings on 1–2 March 2010 and 21–22 June 2010, recommended that: (a) any submission by Parties and other reporting entities on all seven thematic topics of best practices should be reviewed within The Strategy's timeframe in accordance with a schedule to be established by the tenth session of the COP (COP 10); and (b) theme 1 (Sustainable land management technologies, including adaptation) should have been addressed by CRIC 9 and theme 6 (Funding and resource mobilization) should be addressed by CRIC 11.

4. Information on best practices on sustainable land management (SLM) technologies, including adaptation, were received from country Parties and other reporting entities in the 2010–2011 review and reporting process, on the basis of a common template and reporting guidelines developed by the secretariat. A proposal for the review and compilation of best practices in SLM technologies, including adaptation, was presented by the secretariat at CRIC 9.<sup>3</sup>

5. While acknowledging that a first step has been made towards a systematic use of best practices in the implementation of the Convention, some Parties at CRIC 9 recommended that the secretariat:<sup>4</sup>

(a) Revise the templates for submission of best practices with a view to simplifying them, and making them more flexible and compatible to the extent possible with existing templates;<sup>5</sup>

(b) Review the classification of best practices on SLM technologies, including adaptation, with a view to considering additional information and integrating existing information, which would facilitate the identification and replication of best practices; and

(c) Continue facilitating consultations between the Bureaus of the CRIC and the CST in order to develop validation and evaluation criteria for best practices and related methodologies.

6. Some Parties at CRIC 9 also recommended that, at its tenth session, the COP should consider:

<sup>1</sup> Decision 12/COP.9.

<sup>2</sup> Decision 13/COP.9, annex V.

<sup>3</sup> Documents ICCD/CRIC(9)/9 and ICCD/CRIC(9)/INF.13, chapter V.

<sup>4</sup> Document ICCD/CRIC(9)/16, paragraph 77 (c), (d) and (f)

<sup>5</sup> Some Parties advised that templates on best practices on SLM technologies, including adaptation, should be made as compatible with existing templates as possible, including the templates developed and used by the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) and the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA).

(a) The need to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the two subsidiary bodies in the review of best practices, as well as the synergies between the development of a knowledge management system for the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and the development of an experience sharing platform for the CRIC, and the possible integration of the system and platform.

(b) The classification of best practices for themes 2–7; and

(c) The proposed schedule for reviewing best practices, on the understanding that best practices are often linked to several thematic topics and hence each reporting cycle might not be confined to one thematic topic.

7. As a follow-up to these recommendations, the present document provides a refined methodology for the classification of best practices on SLM technologies, including adaptation, which comprise options for the schedule of the review of best practices within The Strategy's timeframe.

8. The draft guidelines to report on best practices on funding and resource mobilization, as well as a proposal for a classification system, are presented in document ICCD/CRIC(10)/16.

## **II. Results of the first reporting and review process on best practices in sustainable land management technologies, including adaptation**

9. By 12 November 2010, which was the deadline for the submission of reports from country Parties and other reporting entities, 89 national reports containing submissions on best practices were uploaded onto the PRAIS portal. The reports provided information on a total of 199 best practices. Of these submissions, 177 were put forward by affected country Parties,<sup>6</sup> while five best practices were submitted by developed country Parties and 17 by civil society organizations (CSOs). In addition, 46 reports, containing 81 best practices in total, were received after the deadline.

10. All best practices submitted by relevant reporting entities, irrespective of submission date, have been made available through the PRAIS portal.

## **III. Making use of information on best practices and the way forward**

11. As indicated in the framework for best practices recommended to the CRIC at its eighth session in consultation with the Bureaus of the CRIC and the CST,<sup>7</sup> the information on best practices collected in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) process will serve two different but interrelated purposes. In particular, it will enable the development of:

(a) An **experience sharing platform** aimed at facilitating the decision-making process and the translation of knowledge into policy recommendations. The platform will allow the CRIC to draw on commonly agreed standardized practices and to advise on measures, including policy measures, to be taken by the COP;

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<sup>6</sup> Fifty-two were from Africa, 61 from Asia, 83 from Latin America and the Caribbean, five from the Northern Mediterranean and 11 from Central and Eastern Europe.

<sup>7</sup> See ICCD/CRIC(8)/5/Add.5, paragraph 24.

(b) A **knowledge management system** aimed at feeding the consultation process with solid scientific advice and providing stakeholders with evidence-based information on potential benefits in adopting such practices at field level. The system will assist in the collection, identification and selection of good practices, with a view to facilitating the replication and upscaling of best practices.

12. The diagram below<sup>8</sup> illustrates the process relating to the collection of best practices, including main actors, procedures and activities. The figure addresses in particular the roles and the distribution of work among the CST and the CRIC.

13. CRIC 9 underlined the need to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the CRIC and the CST in the review of best practices as well as the synergies between the development of a knowledge management system for the CST and the development of an experience sharing platform for the CRIC, and the possible integration of the system and platform.<sup>9</sup>

14. As a follow up, the Bureaus of the CRIC and the CST convened a joint meeting in Bonn on 20 May 2011 to discuss the best way to (a) cooperate in view of the forthcoming CRIC and CST sessions with regard to the preparation of official documents; (b) coordinate action between the subsidiary bodies and the COP during COP 10, particularly in terms of feeding inputs from the CST to the CRIC; and (c) interact on best practices for SLM technologies, including adaptation.

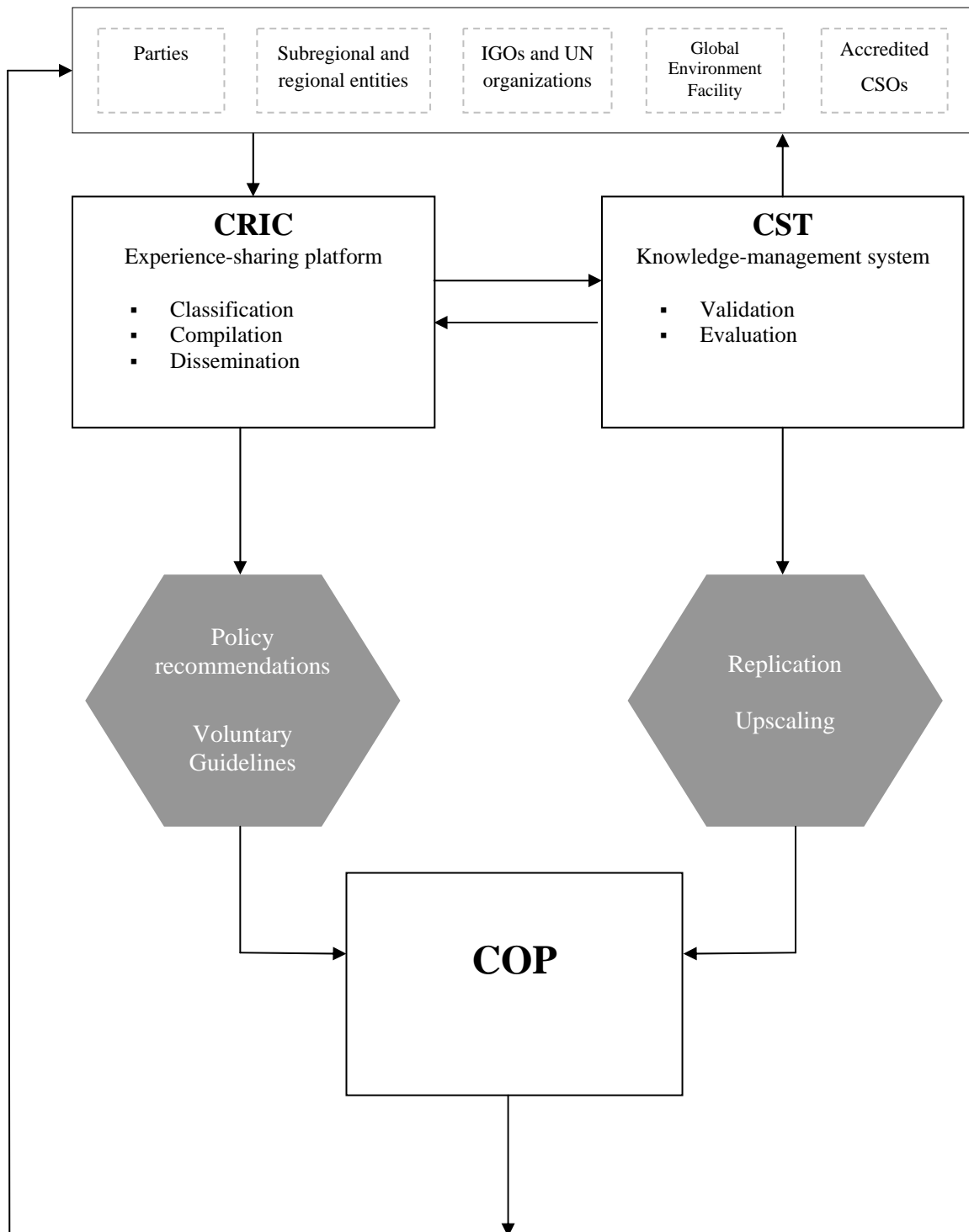
15. With regard to point (c) in paragraph 14 above, it was decided the CST Bureau will bring to the attention of the CST the proposed interaction between the subsidiary bodies, particularly in the light of finalizing the design of the UNCCD knowledge management system.

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<sup>8</sup> Also contained in document ICCD/CRIC(9)/9.

<sup>9</sup> ICCD/CRIC(9)/16 paragraph 77 (f).

**Diagram illustrating the process (main actors, procedures and activities) relating to the collection of best practices**



## **IV. Methodology for the review and compilation of best practices on sustainable land management technologies, including adaptation**

### **A. Revision of templates and synergies with relevant international initiatives**

16. At its ninth session, the CRIC requested the secretariat to revise the templates for the submission of best practices with a view to simplifying them, in particular with regard to best practices on SLM technologies, including adaptation.<sup>10</sup>

17. At CRIC 9 some Parties also recommended that templates on best practices uploaded on the PRAIS portal be made as compatible as possible with existing templates, and that its database be linked with similar databases. Furthermore, some Parties encouraged the secretariat to work closely with other national and international programmes, including relevant initiatives that are already making information on best practices available in a relevant and useful form.

18. As a follow-up to these recommendations, the secretariat has considered possible options, taking into account (a) the relevance of the information included in the reporting template to the UNCCD process and the proposed classification in order to make the retrieval of information easier; and (b) the actual information on the best practices available in the PRAIS database in order to avoid losing data and information submitted in the 2010–2011 reporting and review process.

19. The new template will, in particular, differentiate between (a) a minimum set of required information on best practices; and (b) optional information. On the one hand, this would ease the gathering and compilation of information on best practices by reporting entities, and on the other, it would facilitate the interpretation and classification of the information uploaded on PRAIS.

20. The secretariat also considered possible synergies with relevant international activities, such as the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) and the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) project.<sup>11</sup> In particular, the possibility to adapt existing templates on best practices to make them more compatible with the templates, databases and guidelines developed under WOCAT has been analysed in detail.

21. The WOCAT guidelines and database cannot be easily adapted to the purposes of the UNCCD, as they were devised to serve different needs, but the reporting templates are compatible. In this regard, WOCAT and the secretariat convened a consultative meeting (Bonn, Germany, 25–26 August 2011) to explore further ways of cooperation, including scientific validation and evaluation of best practices on SLM technologies, including adaptation.

### **B. Classification**

22. At its ninth session, the CRIC requested the secretariat to review the classification of best practices on SLM technologies, including adaptation, with a view to considering

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<sup>10</sup> ICCD/CRIC(9)/16 paragraph 77 (c).

<sup>11</sup> A summary of information on the two initiatives is provided in annex I.

additional and integrating existing information, in order to facilitate the compilation, dissemination and replication best practices.<sup>12</sup>

23. As a follow-up to this request, a revised proposal for the classification of best practices that were uploaded onto the PRAIS portal during the 2010–2011 reporting and review process is described in table 1 below.<sup>13</sup>

24. The classification is based on the following elements:

- (a) Geographic location;
- (b) Prevailing land use within the specified location;
- (c) Contribution to desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD) measures;
- (d) Contribution to the strategic objectives of The Strategy;
- (e) Types of impacts the SLM technology is contributing to; and
- (f) Linkages with the other themes of best practices.<sup>14</sup>

25. The proposed criteria for classification are compatible with both the current common template for all reporting entities and the proposed revised template mentioned in document ICCD/CRIC(9)/INF.2, section II.G.

26. A proposal for the classification of the remaining six themes of best practices (from 2 to 7) is presented in table 2 below. The proposal has been devised in accordance with strategic objective 4 and operational objectives 1 to 5 of The Strategy, taking into consideration their expected impacts (for strategic objectives) and outcomes (for operational objectives). Further guidance by Parties will be required in terms of its application in relevant future reporting and review processes. A proposal for the schedule for reviewing the six themes is provided in chapter IV.C below.

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<sup>12</sup> ICCD/CRIC(9)/16.

<sup>13</sup> This classification system is in accordance with (1) the theme selected by the Bureau of the CRIC for review at CRIC 9; (2) the methodological proposals put forward in document ICCD/CRIC(8)/5/Add.5 and ICCD/CRIC(9)/9; (3) the relevant COP decisions on this matter; and (4) the request made by the CRIC at its ninth session to review the classification of best practices on SLM technologies, including adaptation.

<sup>14</sup> As contained in decision 13/COP.9, annex V.



Table 1  
**Classification of best practices on sustainable land management technologies,  
including adaptation**

<i>Geographic location</i>	<i>Classification by region/subregion</i>
<i>Prevailing land use within the specified location</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cropland</li> <li>Grazing land</li> <li>Woodland</li> <li>Unproductive land</li> <li>Human settlement</li> <li>Other</li> </ul>
<i>Contribution to DLDD measures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevention</li> <li>Mitigation</li> <li>Adaptation</li> <li>Rehabilitation</li> </ul>
<i>Contribution to the strategic objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To improve the living conditions of affected populations</li> <li>To improve the conditions of affected ecosystems</li> <li>To generate global benefits through effective implementation of the Convention</li> </ul>
<i>Type of impact</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-site impacts on production or productivity</li> <li>On-site socio-economic and cultural impacts</li> <li>On-site environmental impacts</li> <li>Other on-site impacts</li> <li>Off-site impacts</li> </ul>
<i>Linkages with the other themes of best practices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity-building and awareness-raising</li> <li>DLDD and SLM monitoring and assessment/research</li> <li>Knowledge management and decision support</li> <li>Policy, legislative and institutional framework</li> <li>Funding and resource mobilization</li> <li>Participation, collaboration and networking</li> </ul>

Table 2  
**Proposed classification of best practice themes 2 to 7**

<i>Best practice theme</i>	<i>Strategic objectives (SOs) and related impacts to which the theme contributes</i>	<i>Contribution to operational objectives (OOs) and related outcomes</i>
Theme 2: Capacity-building and awareness-raising		OO 1: Advocacy, awareness-raising and education <i>(Outcome 1.1)</i> OO 4: Capacity-building <i>(Outcomes 4.1 and 4.2)</i>
Theme 3: DLDD and SLM monitoring and assessment/research		OO 3: Science, technology and knowledge <i>(Outcomes 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6)</i>
Theme 4: Knowledge management and decision support		OO 5: Financing and technology transfer <i>(Outcome 5.5)</i>
Theme 5: Policy, legislative and institutional framework		OO 2: Policy framework <i>(Outcomes 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4)</i>
Theme 6: Funding and resource mobilization	SO 4: To mobilize resources to support implementation of the Convention through building effective partnerships between national and international actors <i>(Expected impact 4.1)</i>	OO 5: Financing and technology transfer <i>(Outcomes 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4)</i>
Theme 7: Participation, cooperation and networking	SO 4: To mobilize resources to support implementation of the Convention through building effective partnerships between national and international actors <i>(Expected impact 4.2)</i>	OO 1: Advocacy, awareness-raising and education <i>(Outcomes 1.2 and 1.3)</i> OO 2: Policy framework <i>(Outcome 2.5)</i>

**C. Time schedule for the review of best practices**

27. The Bureau of the CRIC recommended that the seven themes of best practices be reviewed within the The Strategy’s timeframe (up to 2018).

28. At CRIC 9, some Parties underlined the need to have a comprehensive analysis of best practices that were provided during the fourth reporting process.

29. In compliance with these recommendations, two options for the schedule of the review of the best practice themes 2 to 7 are proposed:

(a) **Sequential association logic:** the review of the best practice themes 2 to 7 will be carried out as shown in table 3, with the understanding that the review of theme 1 will continue at CRIC 11; and

(b) **Cumulative logic:** at each session of the CRIC, starting with CRIC 11, the review of best practices will include the theme indicated in table 3 for that session, plus the theme(s) already considered in the previous sessions of the CRIC.

Table 3  
**Proposed schedule of review of best practice themes 2 to 7: option 1 (phased)**

<i>Best practice theme</i>	CRIC 11 (2012)	CRIC 13 (2014)	CRIC 15 (2016)	CRIC 17 (2018)
Theme 2: Capacity-building and awareness-raising				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Theme 3: DLDD and SLM monitoring and assessment/research		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Theme 4: Knowledge management and decision support		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Theme 5: The policy, legislative and institutional framework				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Theme 6: Funding and resource mobilization	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Theme 7: Participation, collaboration and networking			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

## V. Conclusions and recommendations

30. A first step towards the systematic use of best practices in the UNCCD context, in particular in the context of The Strategy, was made in 2010 through the submissions of best practices on SML technologies, including adaptation, in accordance with the common template and guidelines for all reporting entities.

31. In this context the PRAIS portal has proved to be a useful tool for the submission, archiving and retrieval of information on best practices. The portal is also expected to facilitate the review of information on best practices for consideration by the CRIC and the COP.

32. The proposals made in the present document will serve as a basis for Parties at CRIC 10 to discuss how to move this process forward. Together with the outcome of the consultation process launched at CRIC 9 with the involvement of civil society, a comprehensive framework for the use of UNCCD best practices is expected to be established at COP 10.

33. To this end, Parties at CRIC 9 may wish to recommend that the COP:

(a) Establish a schedule for the review of best practices by considering the two options presented in paragraph 29 above;

(b) Endorse the revised classification of best practices for theme 1 as proposed in table 1 above;

(c) Endorse the classification of best practices for themes 2 to 7 as proposed in table 2 above; and

(d) Request that the secretariat:

(i) Continue working on the development of the PRAIS portal on best practices, and to ensure that all submissions on best practices, including those submitted after the 2010 deadline, are classified and made available;

(ii) Continue facilitating consultations between the Bureaus of the CRIC and the CST in order to develop validation and evaluation criteria for best practices and related methodologies;

(e) Invite Parties and the other reporting entities, including CSOs, to continue reporting on best practices in order to increase the knowledge base with regard to the Convention and the CRIC; and

(f) Invite research institutions, intergovernmental organizations and United Nations bodies to further provide their input in order to build a basis for developing a knowledge management system that will serve for the replication and scaling up of best practices.

## Annex

### Summary information on the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands project and the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies initiative<sup>15</sup>

#### A. World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies

1. The World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) initiative is a global network of soil and water conservation specialists whose main objective is to prevent and reduce land degradation through the use of sustainable land management (SLM) technologies and approaches. To this end, WOCAT assists specialists in the field with tools that help identify the appropriate SLM practices and supports them in scaling up best practices
2. WOCAT tools include a global database system on SLM practices (database on SLM technologies and approaches, and a mapping database).
3. The WOCAT database on SLM technologies and approaches contains case studies documented worldwide. It currently comprises datasets on 380 technologies and 240 approaches from over 40 countries, many of which are quality-assured. The online version of the database is currently under development.
4. Other tools include the SLM inventory tables,<sup>16</sup> which can be used as a first overview of the different SLM technologies and approaches in a specific region/country before starting with the case study assessment, together with the WOCAT questionnaires on SLM practices.

#### B. Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands

5. The Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands project (LADA) project (2006–2010), is a project funded mainly by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Environment Programme serve as the executing agency and implementing agency, respectively. Partners comprise international organizations, universities and research centres. LADA's general purpose is to create a basis for informed policy advice on land degradation at global, national and local levels. This objective is achieved through the assessment of land degradation at different spatial and temporal scales and the creation of a baseline at global level for future monitoring. The project focuses on six countries: Argentina, China, Cuba, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia.
6. The LADA project operates at different scales: global, national and local. Operations at global level focus on modelling global databases, complemented by ground truthing. Working with WOCAT, information on land degradation is collected at national level and

<sup>15</sup> Sources: <<http://www.wocat.net/>>, <<http://www.fao.org/nr/lada/>>, *Tools for assessing and monitoring sustainable land management/land degradation and decision support to address today's global challenges*. Final report of the LADA/WOCAT Seminar, 16 February 2010, Rome.

<sup>16</sup> <[http://www.wocat.net/fileadmin/user\\_upload/documents/QT\\_and\\_QA/Inventory/inventory\\_T.pdf](http://www.wocat.net/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/QT_and_QA/Inventory/inventory_T.pdf)> and <[http://www.wocat.net/fileadmin/user\\_upload/documents/QT\\_and\\_QA/Inventory/inventory\\_A.pdf](http://www.wocat.net/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/QT_and_QA/Inventory/inventory_A.pdf)>.

on SLM at sub-national level. This information is complemented by detailed studies on land cover changes based on remote sensing techniques. The local level is based on field work and local expertise following a standardized manual.

7. The objectives of the LADA local segment consist of: (1) implementing methods and tools to assess land degradation and SLM practices at local level; (2) building capacity for assessment and monitoring; and (3) improving the knowledge base of land degradation and SLM at local level. The outcomes of the local segment include the collection of documentation on SLM measures using WOCAT tools.

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