



Midterm report on the joint IUCN-UNCCD Work Plan (2015-2020)

October 2017

Acronyms

- LDN: Land Degradation Neutrality
- NBS: Nature Based Solutions
- SLM: Sustainable Land Management
- GM: Global Mechanism

Overview

Goal of the partnership: Support progress towards policies and programmes that deliver Land Degradation Neutrality through the application of Nature Based Solutions (at national and sub national levels)

Results by 2020 are categorised as:

1. Nature-Based Solutions

- a. **Result 1:** LDN voluntary targets are established in at least 15 countries and NBS implementation strategies are developed and initiated

2. Enabling Environment

- a. **Result 2:** Stronger enabling environment for delivery of NBS to key land management challenges in pilot sites/countries, including improved natural resource governance

3. Indicators

- a. **Result 3:** A Land Degradation indicator framework incorporating biodiversity-related metrics and harmonised reporting requirements with other international commitments is established

Highlights

The partnership between UNCCD and IUCN has strengthened since 2015, as a result of collaboration on LDN target setting, IUCN's participation in the Science Policy Interface and the Global Land Outlook, and joint work on policy dialogue related to both gender and governance. The two secretariats co-organised a series of events called "Life on Land", at WCC 2016, and collaborated on events at COP12 and COP13.

The UNCCD adopted Land Degradation Neutrality at COP12 in 2015 and IUCN adopted LDN as one of its Intersessional Programme Targets at the World Conservation Congress in 2016. Both institutions share an interest in now delivering action on the ground to achieve LDN by 2030, and a number of large scale transformative initiatives are under development or implementation.

IUCN and UNCCD have strengthened policy and institutional support for LDN implementation, collaborating on issues of both gender and governance. LDN has been adopted in the UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030. The UNCCD also convened a ministerial meeting in Marrakesh on the 3 S Initiative (Security, Stability and Sustainability).

IUCN and UNCCD have further collaborated on a number of technical products, including the Global Land Outlook, the SPI report on SLM and climate change co-benefits, the Technical Guide on LDN implementation, and the Book "Living Land". IUCN has also published additional work on Water in Drylands, Biodiversity in the Great Green Wall, Rangeland Restoration, and Land Degradation Neutrality.

Over the next reporting period IUCN and UNCCD plan to progress in using IUCN datasets and methodologies to strengthen LDN target setting. Further actions will be taken to develop projects for implementation of LDN on the ground, including a number of large scale transformative initiatives on landscape restoration. IUCN and UNCCD will continue to collaborate for stronger attention to governance, gender, drought and other issues.

The detailed report on progress and next steps is tabulated below.

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	Planned Deliverable	Current status	• Next step
Result 1: LDN voluntary targets are established in at least 15 countries and NBS implementation strategies are developed and initiated			
Activity 1: Compilation of experiences, mapping of NBS approaches to LDN, and publication of NBS-LDN guidelines	a) Publish a review of the role of the conservation sector in addressing Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought, including the role of Protected Areas, Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas, Forest Landscape Restoration, Integrated Water Resource Management, gender mainstreaming etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of “Water in Drylands” • Publication of “Biodiversity in the Great Green Wall” • Launch of the Global Land Outlook (GLO) • GLO Working Paper on Protected Areas: Mainstream into the Development Agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse proposed deliverables in the IUCN Intersessional Plan 2017-2020 (Target 28 on LDN) to assess the overall contribution to LDN (SDG Target 15.3) and gaps in reporting or programming and identify links with the UNCCD Target Setting Programme • Publish the Technical and Policy Brief on “Soil Biodiversity and Organic Carbon” • Produce a scoping paper for the GLO2
	b) Publish a report on enhancing the contribution of the Bonn Challenge and the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration to meeting LDN targets, exploring how the targets are related and the development of action plans for the targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDN was adopted as a thematic area for action under Goal 1 in the new UN Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize a panel session at CPF international conference (20-22 Feb 2018) on country experiences in setting forest-related LDN targets • Coordinate inputs for GPFLR report and meeting (17-18 Dec) and GLF (19-20 Dec 2017) • WRI and the Global Mechanism are discussing linkages between LDN and the Bonn Challenge. IUCN is invited to participate in this discussion and examine how global restoration initiatives contribute to LDN and vice versa. • IUCN to evaluate the convergence between LDN and Bonn Challenge commitments, including the inclusion of this synergy in country LDN targets • Collaborate on a report “Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality in Forestry Sector”
	c) Publish a handbook on the use of protected areas in protecting land-based ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUCN CEM and WCPA to plan how to finance this product

	services and the role of PA in delivering LDN.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GLO Working Paper on Protected Areas: Mainstream into the Development Agenda 	
	d) Document the value of multiple environmental benefits of LDN, restoration and sustainable land management (e.g. to Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, Disaster Risk Reduction, gender equality and women's empowerment, Food Security, Water Security, progress in the implementation of the Aichi Targets and other international goals) drawing on the Human Dependency on Nature knowledge product, ecosystem service modelling, economic valuation and other tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of the Technical Brief on investing sustainably in rangelands (Homing in on the Range) SPI report on SLM and climate change co-benefits http://www2.unccd.int/sites/default/files/documents/2017-09/UNCCD_Report_SLM_web_v2.pdf Contribute to CBD's voluntary guidelines for the design and effective implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction Review of Ramsar's Global Wetlands Outlook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People in Nature (formerly HDN) has not yet documented the benefits of LDN, but proposals for application in Malawi and Honduras are under way 2018-20 Support the development of a decision on gender and wetlands for Ramsar (COP13)
	e) Publish guidelines to LDN target-setting and implementation, ensuring attention to NbS standards (currently under development), biodiversity, ecosystems, governance, gender mainstreaming etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GM, with support from the IUCN-GEF LDN Target Setting project, has developed a Technical Guide on LDN implementation. This, together with the SPI Conceptual Framework on LDN, responds to recommendations from IUCN consultations in 2013, including an emphasis on governance, recognition of gender, and inclusion of biodiversity in monitoring LDN. Parties adopted the gender action plan (GAP) for piloting in 2018-2019 for review at COP13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN to contribute to SPI process of developing LDN Conceptual Framework IUCN and the Global Mechanism to evaluate implementation of the LDN Target Setting project for inclusion of biodiversity, ecosystems, governance and gender mainstreaming in country targets and implementation strategies. Pilot test the GAP in three countries and document and share the experiences ahead of COP14
Activity 2: Engage a wider range of conservation actors in	a) Strengthen engagement of IUCN members in UNCCD processes through key events and dialogue, including the World Conservation Congress 2016.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journey "Life on Land" organised at WCC 2016, reported separately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use COP13 as a platform for stronger communications to the conservation sector on the relevance of LDN Engage IUCN regional offices more strongly in LDN dialogue as a means to connect more strongly with members

development of LDN guidelines, including tools for diagnosis, stock-taking of initiatives, options for progress etc.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify at least 3 LDN implementing member states as advocates to support their development as global champions • Develop a short paper that compiles LDN links with ROAM, RLE, gender etc. • Organise a training programme on “restoration of degraded drylands and monitoring of desertification processes”
	b) Champion biodiversity in LDN dialogue through LDN-fora and initiatives including the Global Land Outlook, Soil Leadership Academy, Science Policy Interface etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter on dryland biodiversity contributed to the Global Land Outlook. • Continued participation as observer to the SPI • Contribution of a chapter in the UNCCD Book “Living Land” (October 2015) by the IUCN secretariat and CEM. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish a Technical Brief on Soil Biodiversity and Soil Organic Carbon in Drylands • Publish report on Biodiversity in the Great Green Wall
Activity 3: Develop a funded initiative to support LDN target setting and development of implementation strategies in 15 countries	a) Develop LDN targets based on multistakeholder consultation and ensuring safeguards delivered under Activity 1 and demonstrating contribution of LDN to other existing framework agreements (including Aichi targets).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDN Target Setting project funded by the GEF, implemented by IUCN and executed by the Global Mechanism, contributing to 70 out of 111 country target setting processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUCN and GM to monitor the target setting activities and identify ways to strengthen the application of good practices and agreed standards
	b) Demonstrate how the use of the Red List of Ecosystems, Red List of Threatened Species, Environment Gender Index and other IUCN tools, databases and products contributes to LDN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEM tested the use of RLE to enhance LDN target setting in Colombia. The initial consensus is that RLE strengthened the prioritisation at the sub national level and is a valuable tool for improving the precision of target setting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEM to report back on participation in Colombia LDN Target Setting • IUCN Forest programme to evaluate the links between ROAM and LDN target setting • Evaluate the use of RLE and other tools for examining risks of Sand and Dust Storms in key regions (e.g. West Asia, Central/Eastern Asia).
	c) Demonstrate the contribution of different rehabilitation/restoration initiatives and other SLM and environmental initiatives in target countries to achieving LDN, and identify opportunities to strengthen these synergies through harmonisation of policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects addressing Land Degradation are being implemented in Jordan, Egypt and Iran. Project support to regional LD action are being implemented in the SADC region and in the Great Green Wall countries. • New initiatives are under development in Kenya, Burkina Faso, Senegal and Mauritania. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUCN to target selected countries to map contribution to LDN targets and to identify opportunities for development of transformative projects • IUCN to identify contributions to LDN from projects in the Forest, water, EBA and DRR portfolios

	implementation and a coherent policy implementation framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous other projects are being implemented but not currently reported against LD indicators 	
	d) Support countries and Regional Economic Communities to revise NAPs and SRAPs and align them with emerging LDN processes and other initiatives (e.g. the Great Green Wall).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing dialogue with SADC over implementation of the SRAP ESARO - Ongoing dialogue with SADC over implementation of the SRAP. Development of Baseline and Investment Strategy and Communication and Partnership Mobilization Strategy, to support the SRAP, about to begin. Scale-up of current work resulting in an Africa-wide strategy for eradication, control and sustainable management of terrestrial invasive species as a contribution to LDN efforts being considered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN to strengthen communication on UNCCD issues and opportunities within the secretariat, to country and regional offices and to global programme units regional, country and gender offices to engage more strongly in UNCCD processes Develop visual documentation of large scale restoration (e.g. contribution to Bonn Challenge) to illustrate the contribution of different biomes IUCN and UNCCD to explore opportunities with emerging regional initiatives, including the Chinese Belt and Road initiative.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Result 2: Stronger enabling environment for delivery of NBS to key land management challenges in pilot sites/countries 			
Activity 4: Evaluate key governance dimensions of land degradation and develop initiatives for national-level capacity development to strengthen environmental governance for LDN	a) Publish a rigorous examination of governance failures as the structural drivers of land degradation and identify appropriate governance responses for achieving DLDD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNCCD Secretariat supporting a report by Civil Society, to be launched at COP13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work closely with GAP pilot testing for case study solutions
	b) Document evidence of the role of conflict resolution for SLM and provide guidance on conflict resolution to support progress towards LDN targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNCCD convened the ministerial meeting in Marrakesh on the 3 S Initiative (Security, Stability and Sustainability) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiative under way in IUCN West Asia Office (position paper) for NRM in Regional Conflict (possibly focus on Jordan and Lebanon in view of the additional pressure of refugees on NRM) Give specific attention to gender-related issues; women in promoting economic migration of sons, women's additional burdens Provide inputs to IUCN's upcoming special publication on environment and conflict
	c) Use the launch of the "Technical Guide on implementing the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure in Pastoral Lands" to convene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue on the VGGT was convened at COP 12 Addressed by the UNCCD study on governance (see 4a) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish report on Legislation for Transboundary Pastoralism Identify 2-3 research institutes or universities to develop and promote a research agenda for

	<p>multistakeholder dialogue on governance at UNCCD COPs in 2015 and 2017 and the IUCN WCC in 2016 and 2020, bringing lessons from practice to this discourse at the national and international level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Level Meeting to be organised on governance at COP13 • IUCN publication “Homing in on the Range” addressing rangeland tenure issues. • UNCCD/UNDP Policy Papers (2015) show gender is central in land management in pastoral areas 	<p>LDN and its impacts in order to further inform policy making [to be reviewed in light of LDN evaluation]</p>
	<p>d) Support Parties to develop legal instruments to put LDN in concrete terms at country level and to influence legal reform related to the environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUCN has co-operated with individual countries (e.g. Kyrgyzstan, Uruguay, Mongolia, Iceland) to draft and implement national legislation for soil protection. Presentations by WCEL on soil legislation reform, including LDN, at various national and international venues, including Brazil, China, Belgium, Germany, Hawaii. WCEL members have contributed numerous chapters to the 2016 and 2017 editions of the International Yearbook of Soil Law and Policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue communication with individual countries and at international venues on the legal aspects of LDN. WCEL will identify examples of legal frameworks to effectively protect land and soils leading to LDN. • Give specific attention to women’s land rights issues • Support at least 3 parties in mapping 1) national policies that can facilitate LDN 2) policy gaps that need the development of new policies and legislations 3) contradicting policies that may hinder LDN implementation and need revision/alignment
<p>Activity 5: Develop funded initiatives to mobilise increased investments and financing on the ground for achieving LDN</p>	<p>a) Develop projects to evaluate the costs and benefits of approaches for achieving LDN, taking into account the nature and distribution of cost and benefits (public vs. private) (building on Activity 1).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder consultation and Study on Sustainable Investments in the Jordan rangelands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM proposes to produce national cost-benefit fact sheets. • Explore the opportunity and need to apply Natural capital approaches (public and private) in specific LDN countries • Develop guidance on how to do CBA for LDN?
	<p>b) Develop projects to strengthen capacity for mobilising investments and financing on the ground for achieving LDN.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PES Legal Analysis conducted in Jordan by IUCN to inform the development of PES for rangelands • HERD initiative established in Jordan, Egypt and Iran and under development in Kenya (Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development)) • IUCN co-authored an action agenda for Business in a sustainable landscapes. This report draws widely from the diverse experience of landscape partnerships to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUCN to map country restoration and SLM actions in relation to LDN • IUCN to expand the HERD initiative to additional countries (e.g. Kenya, Senegal) • UNCCD is developing a proposal for a “Technical Assistance Facility” in partnership with the GEF and with the CBD and UNFCCC to promote synergy in implementing the conventions.

		analyze the challenges and opportunities for businesses and their partners: http://peoplefoodandnature.org/publication/business-for-sustainable-landscapes/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN Gender programme is writing a GEF proposal with the three Rio Conventions to enhance the capacity of 3 countries in relation to gender. Concept note to be revised in light of UNCCD COP13, GEF Council 7th Replenishment and UNFCCC COP23 outcomes.
	c) Collaborate in the on-going Private Sector dialogue on LDN, including under the auspices of the LDN Fund and the WBCSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN in dialogue with Mirova over possible technical advisory role to the LDN fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify specific projects/countries in which to practice this advisory role as TA facility will take more time to set up based on 5b Identify potential IUCN projects for scale up in partnership with LDN Fund
	d) Publish a review of experiences in financing LDN (or initiatives that contribute to LDN), including conservation finance, taxes and incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping study on identifying and documenting parallels in conservation finance, taxes and incentives with a research partner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Result 3: A Land Degradation indicator framework incorporating biodiversity-related metrics and harmonised reporting requirements with other international commitments is established 			
Activity 6: Pilot an LDN monitoring framework at country level, integrating indicators on biodiversity and environmental governance, as well as indicators to report across	a) Document the evidence of synergies between the 3 Rio Conventions through landscape restoration activities and use this to strengthen consensus on achieving LDN targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of IUCN Technical Brief on Land Degradation Neutrality (2013) UNCCD Technical Guide, and the SPI Conceptual framework provide the basis for demonstrating synergies, particularly in relation to above ground and below ground organic carbon (biodiversity). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNCCD to invite the IUCN “Collaborative Partnership on Forests” focal point to support LDN thematic area for action in the new UN Strategic Plan for Forests and explore how the CPF and GPFLR can increase collaboration on LDN particularly at the national level Publish Technical Brief on Soil Biodiversity and Soil Organic Carbon
	b) Support development of the three UNCCD indexes (biophysical, economic and governance)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A so-called Land Governance Index is expected to be launch ready for GLO2 in 2020. IUCN and UNCCD to confer over possible partnership Draft a preliminary outline for 2 remaining indexes and/or identify others in development to partner with

multiple environmental obligations/targets	c) Mainstream the Environmental Gender Index in the LD indicator framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN has supported the development of UNCCCD Gender Action Plan to be presented at COP13 for approval. IUCN will support the implementation of a pre-COP gender training for Parties during COP13. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN and UNCCD to identify opportunities to influence LDN on mainstreaming gender, including through contribution to its revision at COP14 and collaboration in a potential High level debate on gender at COP 14 IUCN to define its next steps to support implementation of the GAP
	d) Report on synergies in work on the ground – e.g. to evaluate the impact on LD/SLM of projects addressing Climate Change, biodiversity, Disaster Risk Reduction etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDN has been adopted in IUCN’s intersessional programme as Target 28: “New national, sub-national or corporate planning and investment frameworks are effectively implemented in productive ecosystems to contribute to biodiversity conservation, sustainably deliver ecosystem goods and services and promote ‘land degradation neutrality’.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN to monitor progress in delivering on Target 28 during the intersessional programme. Using Target 28 results, IUCN to identify a list of flagship initiatives or projects that can demonstrate synergies and will continue to be monitored until 2020
	e) Conduct assessments to validate global data at the national or sub-national level based on the 3 UNCCD indicators (Land Cover, Land Productivity, Soil Organic Carbon) and use for prioritisation of Nature Based Solutions actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN implementing Participatory Rangeland and Grassland Assessment project to develop a methodology for validating large-scale assessment data (5 countries) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN to evaluate the potential synergy between LDN target setting and other assessment tools (e.g. ROAM, RLE) IUCN to identify opportunities and approaches that can support the alignment of different target settings
	f) Developing further indicators (together with soil science) for all threats to soil, including soil biodiversity loss and soil contamination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dialogue on threats to soil stability discussed at WCEL Congress (April 2016), WCC and with individual countries (e.g., Uruguay, China, Mongolia, Iceland). Presentations by WCEL members to conferences and workshop sin Brazil, China, Belgium, Germany, Hawaii, France, New Zealand, Australia, Norway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN to report on interaction between WCEL and soil science, legal institutions and individual countries on threats to soil stability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operationalizing the Work Plan 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate in development of an LDN initiative funded by the GEF and other partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LDN-TSP secured in 2016 and executed by the GM. IUCN continues to participate in UNCCD mechanisms and initiatives including the Science Policy Interface, the Inter Agency Task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successfully implement the LDN target setting work and report on outcomes.

		Force for the UNDDDD, the Land Degradation Study of IPBES.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify joint fundraising opportunities for implementation of other priority actions in the joint Work Plan, including joint discussions with bilateral and multilateral institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jointly define high priority activities that require further resources and discuss opportunities to mobilise resources. IUCN to map opportunities at country level and work with UNCCD and GM to identify options for mobilising resources for transformative actions. IUCN Country offices to participate in LDN target setting consultations and use this as an entry point to identify resource mobilisation opportunities UNCCD to finalise the development of the Technical Assistance Facility.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN to continue active participation in UNCCD mechanisms and initiatives including the Science Policy Interface, the Inter Agency Task Force for the UNDDDD, the Land Degradation Study of IPBES, and communication products including the ongoing UNCCD Panel Study on SLM. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IUCN is active in the UNCCD Science Policy Interface and the IPBES Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment. IUCN is also contributing chapters to the Global Land Outlook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor changes in the SPI composition to clarify IUCN's ongoing engagement