United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification

Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area – SDG Indicator 15.3.1

Sara Minelli
Science, Technology and Innovation Unit

Jamal Annagylyjova
External Relations, Policy Advocacy

Informing biodiversity restoration policies
SEIS and the environmental dimension of the SDGs – webinar series
26 May 2021

SDG target 15.3

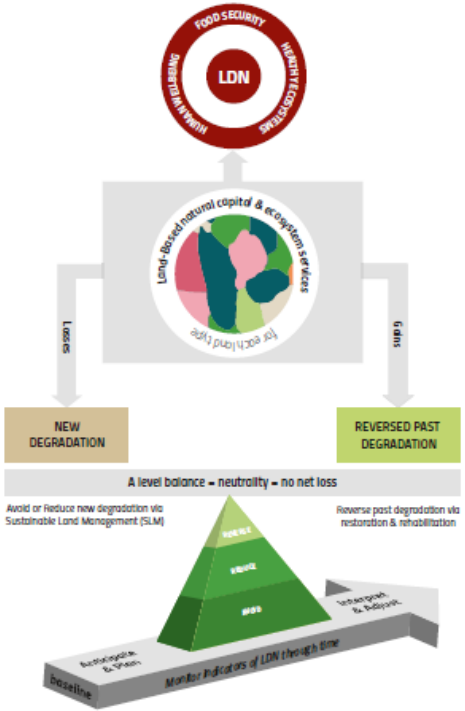
“By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land-degradation neutral world”

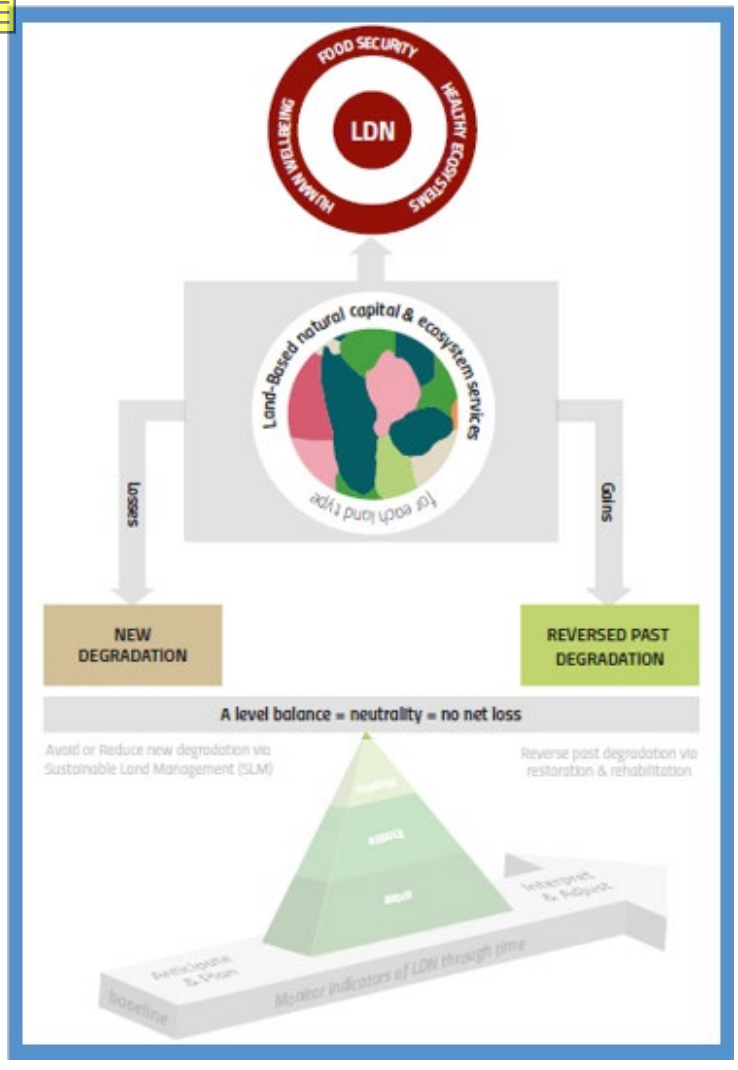
United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification

Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)

“A state whereby the amount and quality of land resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security remain stable or increase within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems”

UNCCD COP12 October 2015





Mechanism for achieving neutrality

United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification

Neutrality = ***no net loss*** compared to the reference state (baseline)

Baseline is NOW (current condition)

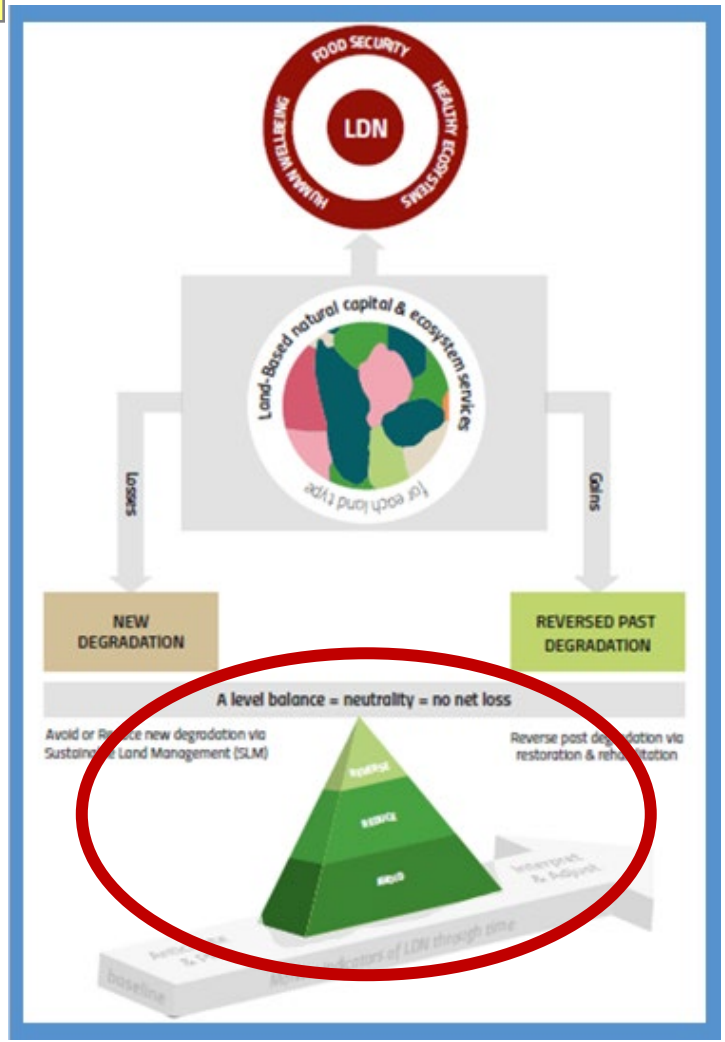
Counterbalancing future land degradation (anticipated **losses**) through planned measures to achieve equivalent **gains** elsewhere within the same **land type**

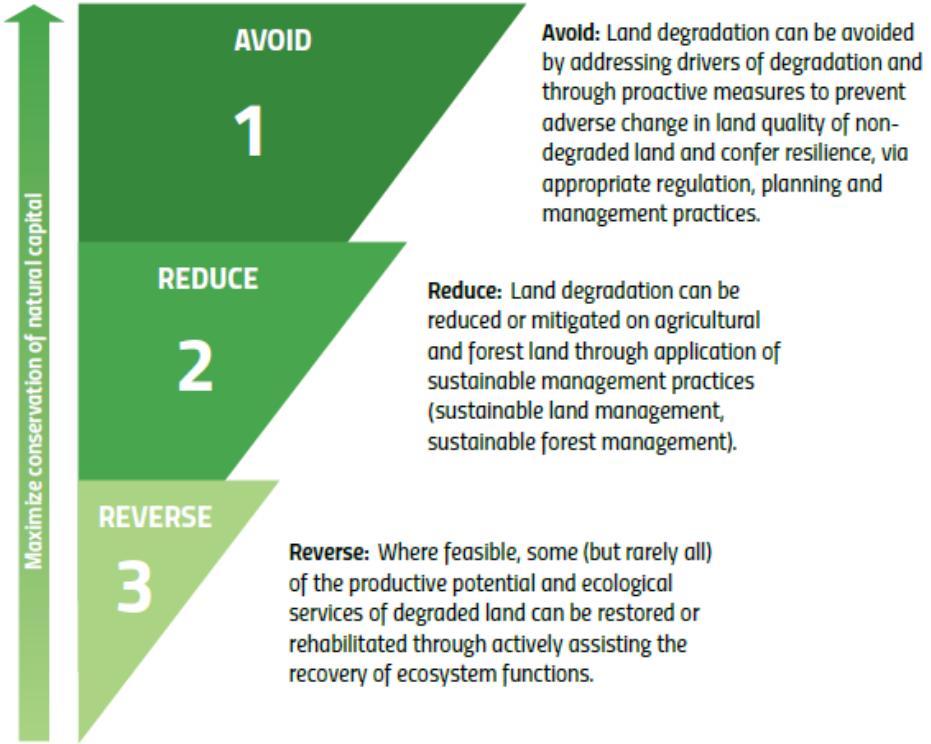
"like for like"

Response Hierarchy

Prevention is better than cure

United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification



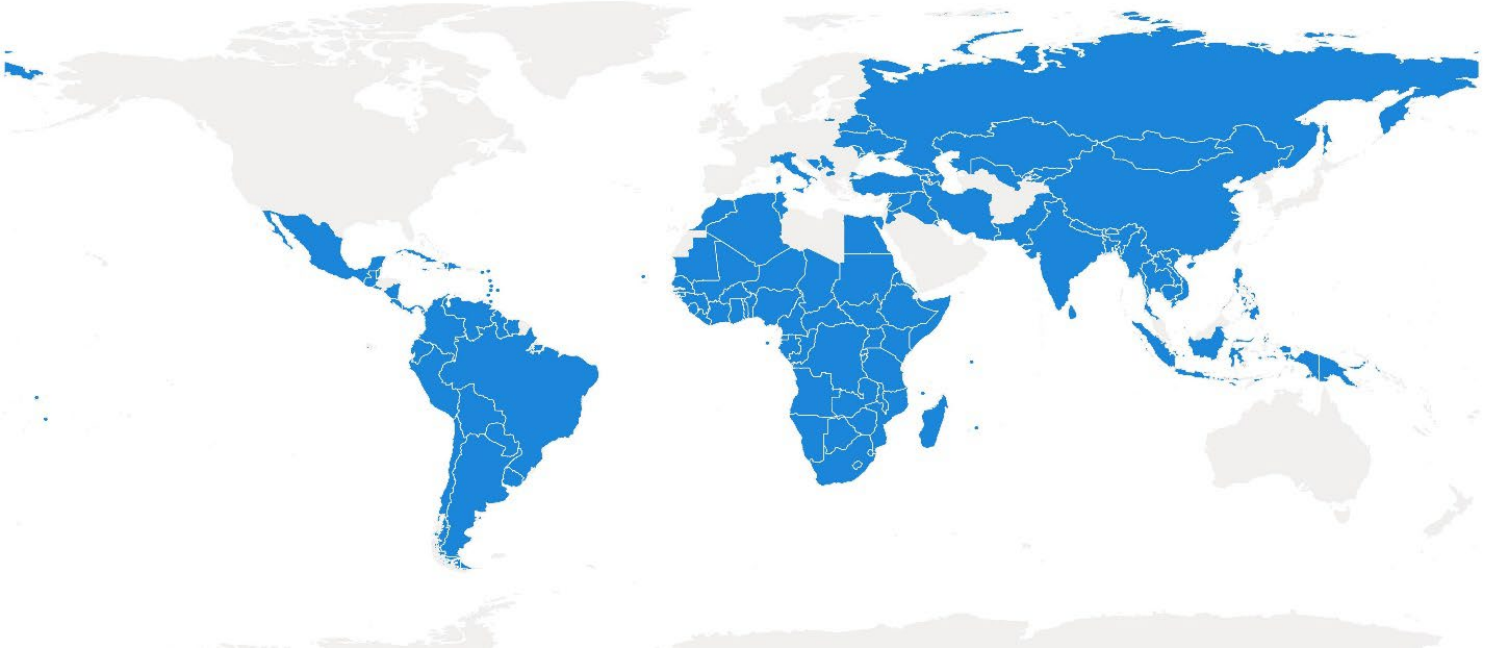


Avoid: Land degradation can be avoided by addressing drivers of degradation and through proactive measures to prevent adverse change in land quality of non-degraded land and confer resilience, via appropriate regulation, planning and management practices.

Reduce: Land degradation can be reduced or mitigated on agricultural and forest land through application of sustainable management practices (sustainable land management, sustainable forest management).

Reverse: Where feasible, some (but rarely all) of the productive potential and ecological services of degraded land can be restored or rehabilitated through actively assisting the recovery of ecosystem functions.

LDN Target Setting Programme

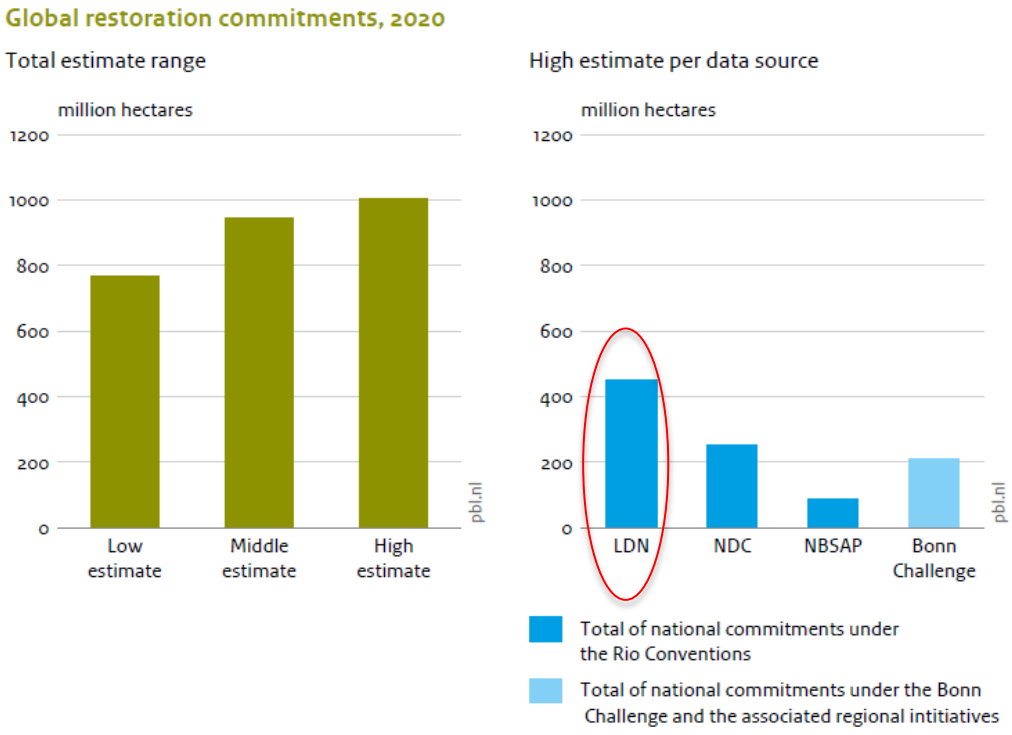


127 countries committed to set LDN targets

104 countries have already set LDN targets

LDN contribution to global restoration commitments, 2020

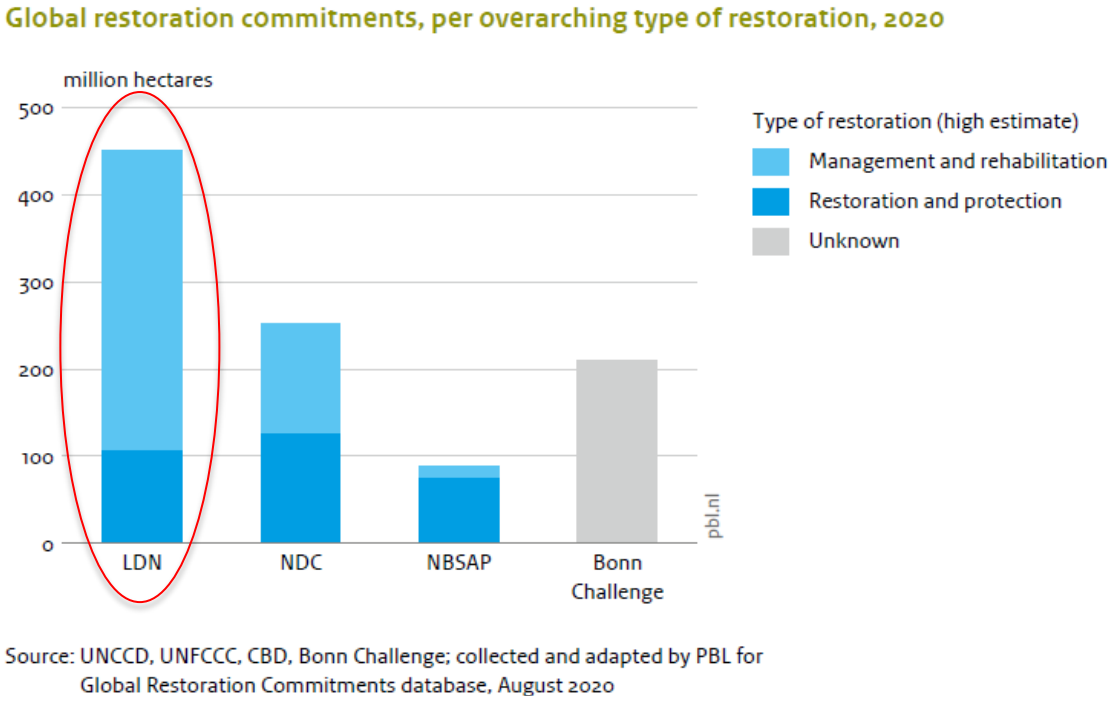
Through the LDN target-setting programme, countries committed to restoring about 450 million hectares out of a global total of 1 billion hectare (High estimate) (PBL, 2020)



Source: UNCCD, UNFCCC, CBD, Bonn Challenge; collected and adapted by PBL for Global Restoration Commitments database, August 2020

LDN contribution to global restoration commitments, 2020

The LDN commitments place emphasis on improved land management and rehabilitation measures, which aligns with the LDN response hierarchy to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation (PBL, 2020)

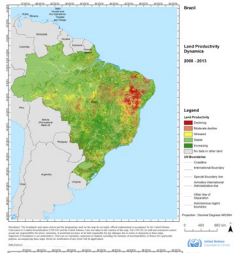


SDG Indicator 15.3.1 – Proportion of land degraded over total land area

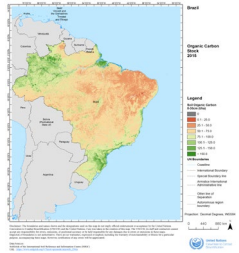
Tier 1

3 ESSENTIAL VARIABLES:

LAND COVER



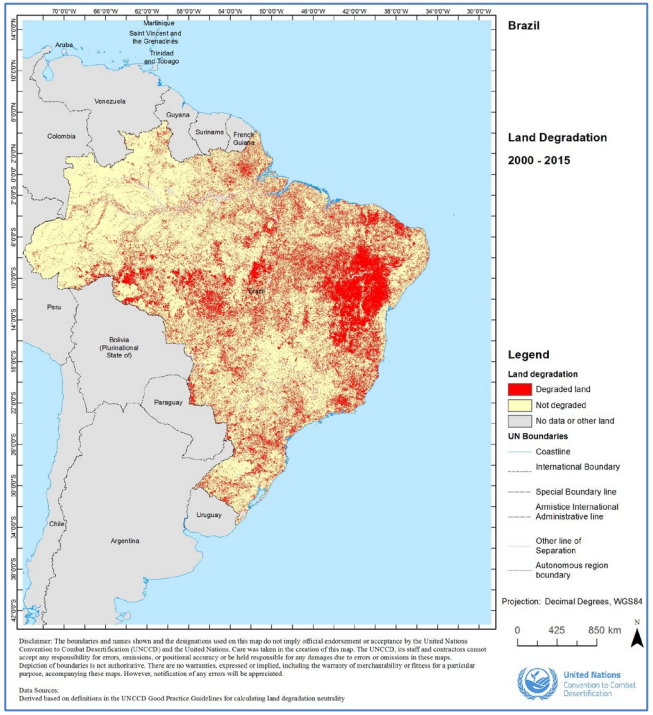
LAND PRODUCTIVITY



SOIL ORGANIC CARBON

"ONE OUT ALL OUT"

SDG 15.3.1



Good Practice Guidance

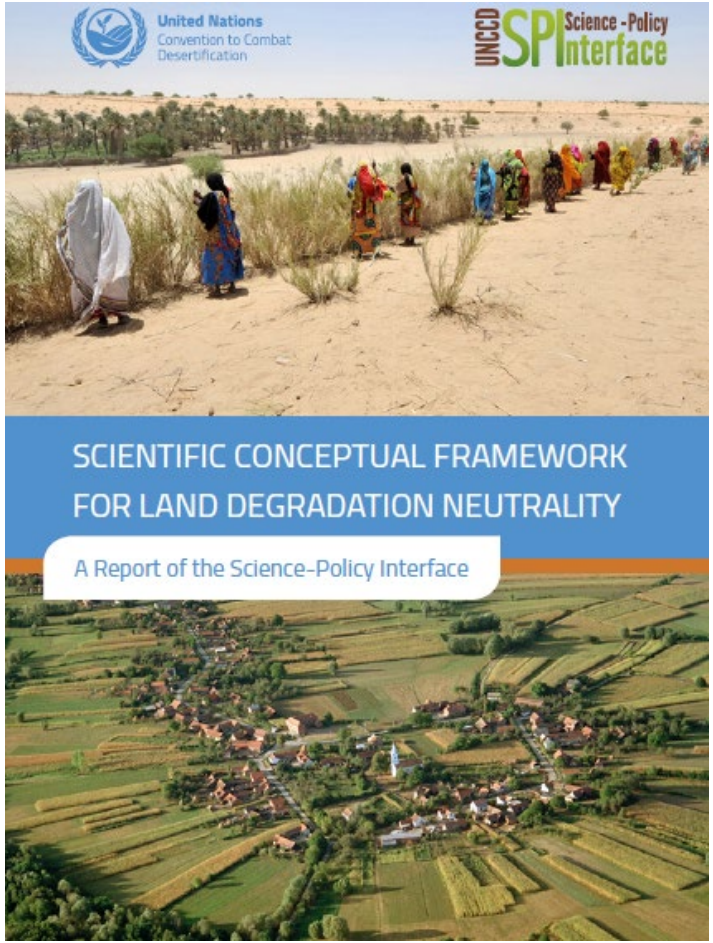
SDG Indicator 15.3.1

Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area

Version 2.0 – Advanced unedited version
March 2021

Version 2
New!

https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/relevant-links/2021-03/Indicator_15.3.1_GPG_v2_29Mar_Advanced-version.pdf



https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2018-09/LDN_CF_report_web-english.pdf

United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification

TRENDS.EARTH

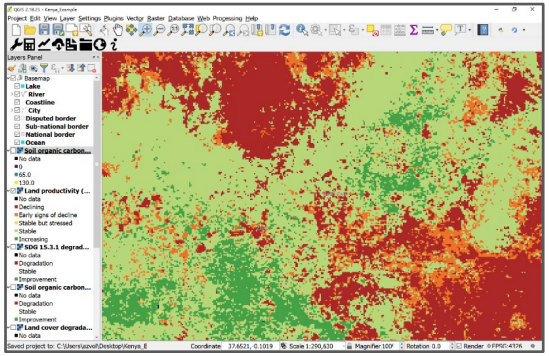
Trends.Earth is a free and open-source tool for monitoring indicators of land change, and in particular desertification, land degradation, and drought

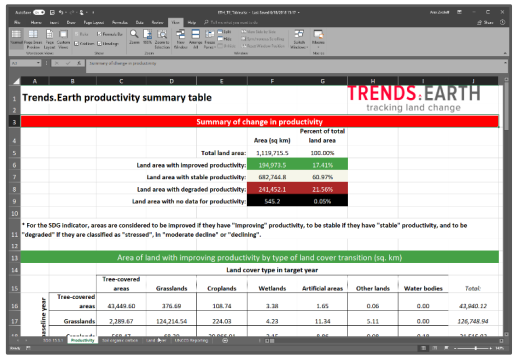
Trends.Earth Supports:

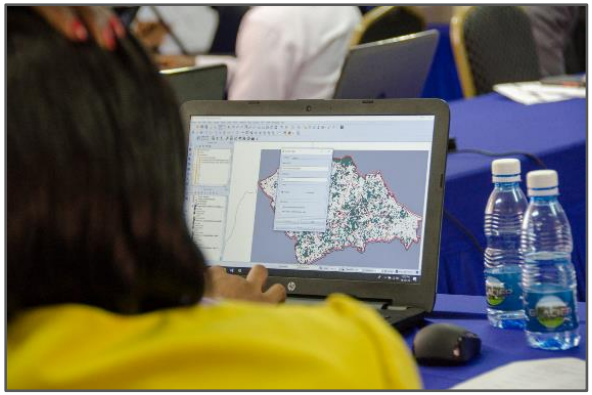
- Monitoring progress towards achieving SDG target 15.3
- Calculation of indicators following Good Practice Guidance and using global data sources
- Integration of locally available data
- Summarizing data for reporting to UNCCD
- Local data ownership

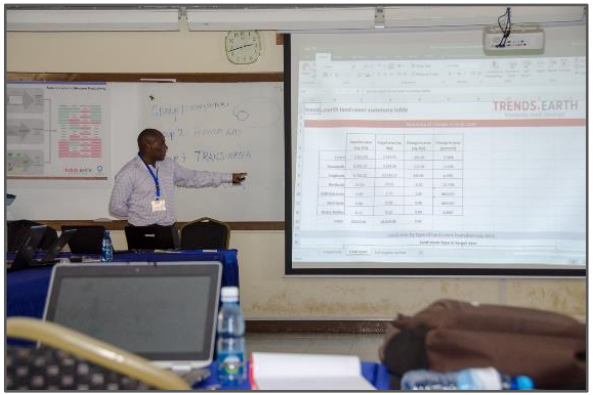
Coming soon (by September 2021):

- Direct support of data transfer to UNCCD reporting portal
- Higher resolution datasets
- Integration of information on land potential from LandPKS
- Linkage to WOCAT database









Slide courtesy of Alex Zvoleff, Conservation International

CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

Supported by: gef NASA

LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY

…is a unique **stakeholder-driven initiative** with a clear policy mandate from UNCCD

…helps national and local actors in all countries **use Earth observations (EO) to achieve LDN**

... promotes and supports the collaborative development, provision and use of EO datasets, quality standards, analytical tools and capacity building

For more info:
http://earthobservations.org/geo_ldn.php

United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification

Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area – SDG Indicator 15.3.1

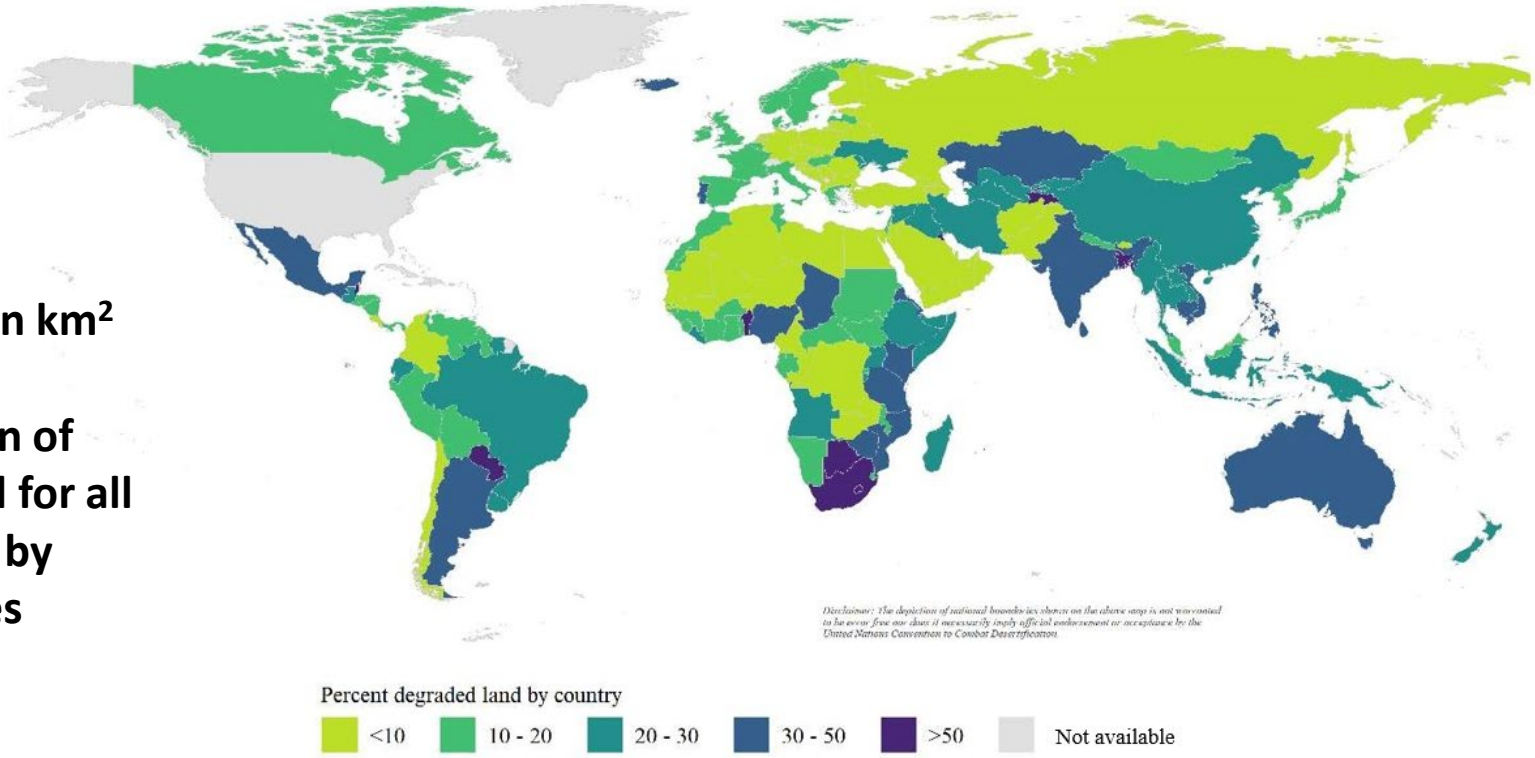
REGIONAL EXPERIENCE

Informing biodiversity restoration policies
SEIS and the environmental dimension of the SDGs – webinar series
26 May 2021

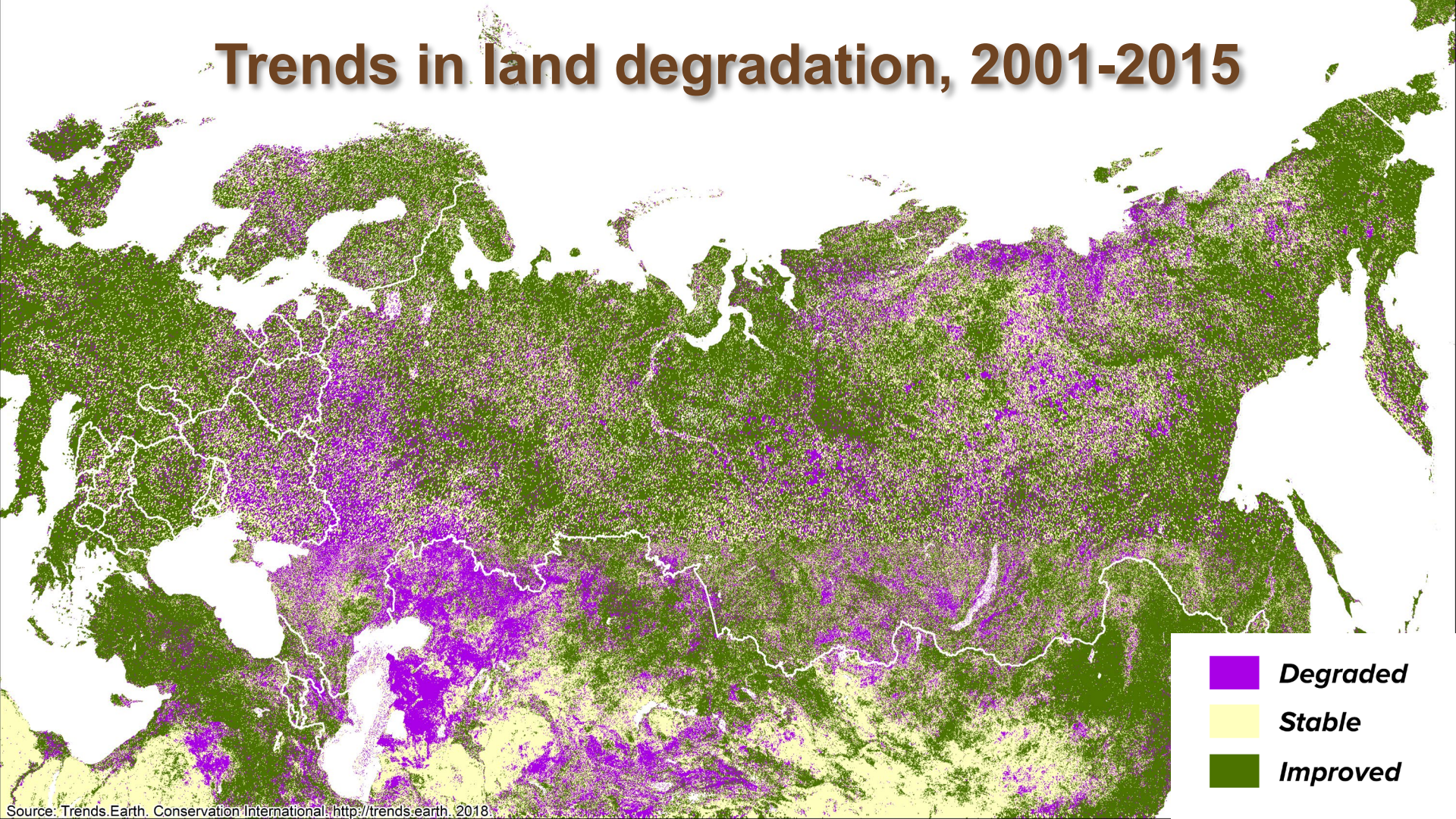
What was the outcome for SDG 15.3.1 reported by countries in 2019?

United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification

Over 18 million km^2 (20%)
The proportion of degraded land for all land reported by country Parties



Trends in land degradation, 2001-2015



Source: Trends.Earth. Conservation International. http://trends.earth. 2018

National reporting 2019

- Regional capacity building events
- 90% of countries set up land degradation baseline
- Lack of compatible national data
- Harmonization with national statistics
- Data share and exchange
- Gap in data flow from sector ministries to national voluntary reviews

COUNTRIES	Degraded land % of total land	Confidence level
Armenia	1.7	Medium
Belarus	0.7	Medium
BiH	3.9	Low
Georgia	5.9	Low
Latvia	12.8	Low
Montenegro	6.4	Medium
Republic of Moldova	29.1	Medium
Romania	2	Medium
Russia	26.3	Medium
Serbia	6.5	Low
Slovakia	4.3	-
Ukraine	25.6	Medium
Kazakhstan	36.9	Medium
Kyrgyzstan	24.3	Medium
Tajikistan	13.1	Medium
Turkmenistan	22.15	Medium
Uzbekistan	28.6	Medium

Source: UNCCD ICCD_ CRIC 17

Land Degradation Neutrality - national targets

- 14 countries established LDN targets
- **42 mln ha** of diverse ecosystems committed for restoration
- LDN Transformative Projects and Programmes

Restoration measures	Ha, %
Rehabilitation and consolidation of agricultural lands	29 772 010 70%
Sustainable forest management and increase of forest area	6 953 013 16.4%
Rehabilitation and sustainable use of pastures/grasslands	2 572 600 6%
Expansion of protected areas	239 162 0.6 %
Rehabilitation of drained peatlands	90 000 0.2 %
Improvement of other lands	2 692 200 6.5%

Source: UNCCD LDN national reports, 2017-2018

Are we on track with Goal 15 in UNECE region?

UNECE

Is the UNECE region on track for 2030?
Assessment, stories and insights

GOAL 15	LIFE ON LAND
15.1	Terrestrial & freshwater ecosystems
15.4	Conservation of mountain ecosystems
15.6	Utilization of genetic resource
15.8	Invasive alien species
15.a	Resources for biodiversity & ecosystems
15.2	Sustainable forests management
15.5	Loss of biodiversity
15.3	Desertification and land degradation
15.7	Protected species trafficking
15.9	Biodiversity in national & local planning
15.b	Resources for forest management
15.c	Protected species trafficking (global)

ACCELERATE progress to achieve target **REVERSE** trend to achieve target **NOT YET MEASURED**

Land and Biodiversity – a joint responsibility

Programming:

- Post-2020 BD framework, NBSAPs
- UNCCD Strategic Framework 2030, LDN Targets

Operational level:

- Design of restoration projects, plan intervention areas
- Considering principles and standards of ecological restoration

Monitoring and reporting:

- UNCCD 2021-22 national reporting
- Geo-spatial assessment of land degradation trends, land cover change, hot-spot and bright-spots, population exposed to land degradation, hazard exposure and vulnerability to drought
- Geo-spatially represented national LDN targets and LDN related interventions

THANK YOU!

United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification

www.unccd.int

Informing biodiversity restoration policies
SEIS and the environmental dimension of the SDGs – webinar series
26 May 2021