

THE ANKARA INITIATIVE

LEVERAGING LESSONS LEARNED FROM TURKEY'S EXPERIENCE WITH SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT





In a world where human conscience is deserted, it is impossible to prevent the desertification of soil. To save lands, we first need to enrich our consciences with justice, respect for each other, peace and mercy. This is how we view the issue of environment and desertification. Turkey already supports many countries in the framework of bilateral and multilateral relations. We expect these efforts to be more effective, permanent and participatory with the Ankara Initiative and to achieve the LDN targets more quickly by also integrating the experiences of other countries.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey



Land is a natural resource we cannot live without, and because of that, we have overused and impoverished this precious resource. The Government of Turkey has been a significant partner in global efforts to protect, sustainably manage and restore the land. Since 2016, the Ankara Initiative has addressed the key socioeconomic factors affecting land and the people who rely on it by involving communities in the decision making. We can make progress in sustainable development and leverage the lessons learned from Turkey's experience.

Ibrahim Thiaw, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)



Nowadays, we are facing a silent danger that constantly grows and threatens our planet. This danger is indeed more dangerous and more insidious than wars. This danger that takes our lands away, makes them unusable and risks our future is none other than desertification. Before it is too late, we should take the necessary measures before lands lose their productivity and become completely uninhabitable. While taking these measures, we must act in unison and adopt the principle that all lands around the world should be protected.

Dr. Bekir Pakdemirli, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey

MOVING TOWARDS A LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRAL WORLD

Land is an essential part of our life support system. It is the key building block of our societies and economies. Today, the pressure on global land resources is greater than ever and this pressure is expected to continue growing. A rapidly increasing population coupled with rising levels of consumption is placing ever-larger demands on our land and other natural resources. This results in growing competition for access to productive land and, in many cases, a collapse in the land's ability to provide the goods and services we all need to survive.¹ Continuing with business as usual is a recipe for disaster.



Sustainable Development Goal 15 aims to "Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss."

As one of the countries most affected by climate change, desertification and drought, Turkey has a vision: to build a future where the land is healthy and productive. Turkey recognizes that it is the health and productivity of the land and soil that will determine the future prosperity and security of humankind. By securing the health and productivity of its own land and then sharing its skills and experience internationally, particularly with African countries, for the benefit of future generations, Turkey is blazing a trail.

This brochure highlights how Turkey is working with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) secretariat to deliver that vision. A rich legacy of its role as host of the UNCCD Conference of the Parties in 2015 (COP 12), the Ankara Initiative is helping Parties and civil society to achieve their bold and ambitious targets for land degradation neutrality (LDN), building the resilience of communities to drought and boosting political engagement and policy coherence.

¹ UNCCD (2017): The Global Land Outlook, first edition, p.40 https://knowledge.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2018-06/GLO%20English_Full_Report_rev1.pdf

- Every year 12 million hectares of arable land are lost to desertification and drought.¹
- By 2025, 1.8 billion people will experience absolute water scarcity and two thirds of the world will be living under water-stressed conditions.²
- By 2045, some 135 million people may be displaced as a result of desertification.³
- Degradation of the earth's land surface through human activities is negatively impacting the well-being of at least 3.2 billion people.⁴
- The economic costs of desertification and land degradation are estimated at USD 490 billion per year.⁵
- Restoring the soils of degraded ecosystems has the potential to store up to 3 billion tons of carbon annually.⁶
- Avoiding land degradation through sustainable land management (SLM) can generate up to USD 1.4 trillion of economic benefits.⁷

The extent and severity of land degradation worldwide, combined with the negative effects of climate change, population growth and an ever-increasing demand for natural resources, requires immediate and assertive action. Efforts to combat desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD) require an approach that inspires action at local, regional and global levels.

In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and with a commitment to achieve LDN by 2030, the Ankara Initiative was launched at the COP 12 in Ankara (2015) by the Government of the Republic of Turkey to strengthen the implementation of the Convention. The Initiative aims to support the global sustainable development agenda and leverage the lessons learned from Turkey's experience and approaches to land management. As a predominantly arid and semi-arid country, Turkey has invested heavily in land rehabilitation and restoration. Based on its own experience, the country has been supporting other affected countries, particularly African countries, to build capacity through training and skill development. The Ankara Initiative leverages the full range of these skills, expertise and experience to provide practical support for the achievement of LDN. The pledged budget for the Ankara Initiative activities is USD 5 million (2016–2020).

THE ANKARA INITIATIVE IS ORGANIZED AROUND THE FOLLOWING CRITICAL OBJECTIVES:

- To address the key socioeconomic factors affecting implementation and to put people at the centre of decision-making.
- To make institutional arrangements more efficient.
- To strengthen policy-making by supporting integrated land use planning in countries vulnerable to drought.

1 UNCCD: <https://www.unccd.int/actions/united-nations-decade-deserts-2010-2020-and-fight-against-desertification>

2 UN Water: <https://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/scarcity.shtml>

3 Global Humanitarian Forum (2009): Human Impact Report – Climate Change. GHF, Geneva. <http://www.ghf-ge.org/human-impact-report.pdf>

4 IPBES (2018): Summary for policymakers of the assessment report on land degradation and restoration of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. R. Scholes et al, (eds.), p. 10.

5 UNCCD: <https://knowledge.unccd.int/topics/land-degradation-neutrality>

6 UNCCD: <https://www.unccd.int/issues/land-and-climate-change>

7 Economics of Land Degradation Initiative (2015): Report for policy and decision makers, http://eld-initiative.org/fileadmin/pdf/ELD-pm-report_05_web_300dpi.pdf

TO ADDRESS THE KEY SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS AFFECTING IMPLEMENTATION AND TO PUT PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE OF DECISION-MAKING

Efforts to combat DLDD should be people-centred. Priority should be given to those activities that improve human well-being, strengthen the rights of land-users and engage all stakeholders effectively. This section highlights the three main components of: “To address the key socioeconomic factors affecting implementation and to put people at the centre of decision-making”.

1. DLDD results in decreased agricultural production and decreased economic opportunity. Poverty, food insecurity and environmental crises are causing out-migration and social instability. The implementation of SLM practices can help mitigate the impacts of DLDD, reduce poverty and improve human well-being and livelihoods. This, in turn, would stabilize communities and reduce out-migration pressures.
2. A rights-based approach to SLM is necessary to ensure good stewardship of land resources – soil, water and biodiversity – and the achievement of the LDN target. Approximately 1.2 billion people currently live without rights of access or formal land tenure. When local communities have secure access or tenure, they tend to invest in the land, use resources more efficiently and be more easily encouraged to manage land in a sustainable way.
3. The active participation of all stakeholders (from local people to communities and private sector organizations) is needed to achieve LDN and the full implementation of the Convention. The participation of key and diverse sectors and civil society organizations (CSOs), local authorities and the private sector is currently limited by a lack of awareness and a lack of capacity.

The Ankara Initiative supports (a) work to understand the linkages between DLDD and social instability and migration; (b) activities that help countries address the issue of weak or insecure tenure and resource rights, particularly for women and the most vulnerable, to stimulate the uptake of SLM activities and to make progress towards LDN; (c) a small group of countries with the integration of land tenure and resource rights issues into their plans for LDN implementation; and (d) capacity-building for local level stakeholders and organizations.



Photo: Georgina Smith / CIAT



Photo: FAO/Swiatoslaw Wojtkowiak



Photo: Axel Fassio/ CIFOR

THE ANKARA INITIATIVE HAS BEEN SUPPORTING THE TASK FORCE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABILITY, STABILITY AND SECURITY INITIATIVE



“Desertification, land degradation and drought are phenomena that directly affect more than a billion people in many countries and have a negative impact in economic, social, environmental and cultural terms. People living in rural areas and the poor are the most affected by desertification and drought.” Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey

on Climate Change (UNFCCC), a Task Force was created to lead, refine and implement the 3S Initiative. The Task Force consists of 14 countries, co-chaired by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Senegal. The 3S Initiative and its Task Force aim to change the narrative on migration in Africa.

Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, The Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Zambia and Zimbabwe are refining their project ideas and targets and have successfully worked together to ensure the Initiative’s visibility and achieve key advocacy goals.

The Sustainability, Stability and Security (3S) Initiative aims to address the root causes of instability in Africa, particularly migration and conflict related to natural resource degradation. Over the next ten years, an additional 330 million young Africans will enter the labour market. During the same period, an estimated 60 million people are at risk of being forced to move from degraded land, both within and outside the continent. Land degradation and the other effects of climate change on the most vulnerable populations have thus become a global problem.

The 3S Initiative aims to (a) create **two million green jobs** for vulnerable groups, in particular young people, migrants, displaced populations and individuals targeted by extremist groups, through investment in the restoration and SLM of ten hectares of degraded lands by 2025; (b) strengthen **access to land and tenure rights** to increase the sense of belonging to a specific community and place, particularly in fragile areas; and (c) **prevent displacement by improving preparedness and early warning systems** for drought and other natural disasters.

After the High-Level Segment at the COP 22 of the United Nations Framework Convention



A Rising Africa in a Fragile Environment: The Sustainability, Stability and Security Initiative (3S Publications)

For example, Agadez, Niger was chosen as a “demonstration site” for the creation of the first land-based jobs under the 3S because of its location. Agadez is a city afflicted by mass migration flows in transit towards Libya. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), more than 100,000 migrants transited from the region in 2016. The IOM Transit Center in Agadez hosts migrants waiting to return to their home countries. During their stay at the IOM Center, the 3S project is intended to provide migrants with the opportunity to get training and update their agricultural skills and facilitate reintegration at the site provided by the government in their home country. At the end of this project, at least 470 ha of degraded land will be restored and 470 land-based jobs will be created for unemployed youths.



“The Sustainability, Stability and Security Initiative aims to combat desertification in Africa so as to re-habilitate and reclaim our lands and allow for the reintegration of our inhabitants and our citizens in these regions.” Saad-Eddine El Othmani, Prime Minister of Morocco



Spot where a barrage should be constructed (Agadez – September 2018) Image credit: IOM Niger

The Ankara Initiative contribution has been used to co-finance the 3S Initiative Task Force activities. In this context, governance (coordination) meetings, advocacy, research and project development activities have been supported by the Ankara Initiative.

Visit www.3S-Initiative.org for more information.

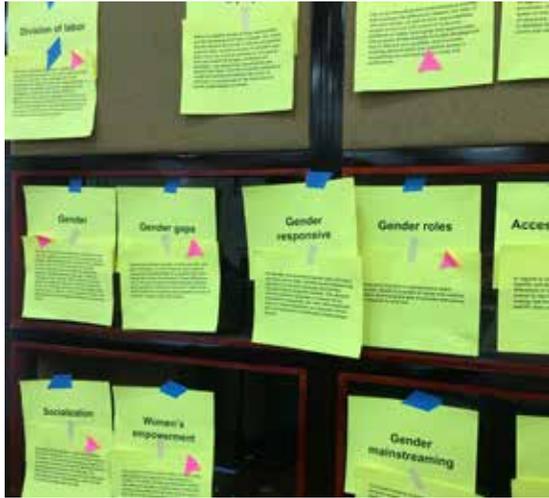
PRESS PARTNERSHIP

The Ankara Initiative has supported a Press Partnership to build the capacity of journalists, including Inter Press Service (IPS) journalists, to report more effectively on DLDD and SLM and provide media, including IPS, with news, analysis and opinions on DLDD/SLM with rapid access to critical sources for timely news production.



GENDER TRAINING AT THE FIRST UNCCD CAPACITY-BUILDING TRAINING FAIR 2019

Gender equality is not only a basic human right – its achievement has enormous socioeconomic ramifications. Empowering women helps boost economies, spurring productivity and growth. Yet women still lack access to decent work and they are too often denied access to basic education, land and other natural resources. Women in all parts of the world suffer violence and discrimination and they are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes. This represents a serious bottleneck for sustainable development and the achievement of LDN.



"Mix and Match exercise" at the gender training.

The first UNCCD Capacity-Building Training Fair was held in Georgetown, Guyana. The fair was specifically designed to address the UNCCD's main issues and to strengthen the capacities of the Parties to assist them in taking action to tackle these challenges. The development of the "Gender matters for Land Degradation Neutrality" special gender training module was made possible by the Ankara initiative.

The overall objective of the training module, which was organized by the UNCCD secretariat in cooperation with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the International Union for Conservation of Nature, was to increase the capacity of UNCCD national focal points and other interested stakeholders vis a vis gender mainstreaming skill for improved LDN management.

The training showed how land degradation is closely linked to social factors, stressing the importance of taking gender into account to effectively address this challenge and promote sustainable development. It presented relevant international/national instruments and suggestions for action, including the promotion of women's agency. Participants were provided with the knowledge and tools to mainstream gender and to be effective changemakers for sustainable development. It offered facts and figures, information on key linkages between gender and LDN, and global frameworks related to gender and environment.

The following topics were addressed: Unit 1: Introduction to gender mainstreaming; Unit 2: Gender-related legal frameworks and environment; Unit 3: Gender and environment (including Gender and LDN); Unit 4: Gender Mainstreaming in the project cycle; Unit 5: Gender requirements for financial mechanisms, such as the Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund; Unit 6: Synergies in implementing the gender-related mandates in the three Rio Conventions; Unit 7: UNCCD Gender Action Plan (GAP).



Photo: Olivier Girard/CIFOR

In response to persistent calls from UNCCD Parties to better mainstream gender considerations and women's empowerment in the implementation of the Convention, COP 13 adopted a Gender Action Plan to make the implementation of the Convention and the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework gender-responsive by providing support and guidance on policies and measures to mainstream gender considerations and achieve women's empowerment. In this context, the following activities are the likely focus over the year to come:

- Gender mainstreaming in the LDN Programme
- Gender mainstreaming into the UNCCD Drought Initiative (national drought plans)
- Gender and sand/dust storms
- Gender and UNCCD Reporting

SUPPORTING THE CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY AND SUPPORTING POLICY DOCUMENTATION ON LAND RIGHTS

CSOs play a key role in the implementation of the convention. The UNCCD promotes the active involvement of CSOs in the implementation of the Convention at all levels. The secretariat has focused on increasing the involvement of key stakeholders, including faith-based organizations, local and regional governments, indigenous peoples, trade unions, women and youth organizations.

At COP 12 and COP 13, civil society underlined, during the ministerial high-level dialogue, a set of priorities on land rights and tenure that would need to be considered in order to achieve the LDN target. The UNCCD CSO panel identified land rights as its priority for the biennium. In this regard, the following activities were carried out within the framework of the Ankara Initiative:

- The development of a guideline for the restoration of degraded lands for land-insecure communities – especially indigenous peoples – in ways that prevent land grabbing and instead improve tenure security.
- The preparation of a publication demonstrating how the secure use of land and the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests are necessary to ensure LDN.



Civil Society Organizations Panel: Land Rights for Sustainable Life on Land. (UNCCD Publications)



"Turkey already supports many countries in the framework of bilateral and multilateral relations. With the Ankara Initiative, we expect these efforts will be more effective, permanent and participatory and that we will achieve the land degradation neutral targets more quickly while integrating the experiences of other countries."

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey

- The organization of a ministerial dialogue during COP 13 on Gender and Land Rights.
- The preparation of a strategy targeting coordinated input from CSOs on aspects related to gender, responsible land tenure and the involvement of key stakeholders.
- The publication of newsletters and updates to the UNCCD-CSO website (www.csopanel.com), providing information on the work undertaken by the CSOs.
- Involvement in the work of the Science-Policy Interface (SPI), particularly in the work programme 1.2 on the potential contribution of LDN to enhancing the well-being, livelihoods and environmental conditions of people affected by DLDD.

The Ankara Initiative has been supporting the work of CSOs through the CSO panel.



TO MAKE INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS MORE EFFICIENT

Collaboration across sectors, processes, disciplines and borders would streamline and accelerate the implementation of the UNCCD and the achievement of LDN targets. The Ankara Initiative encourages increasing cooperation and information exchange to the extent possible to understand land use change and land use dynamics at the regional and sub-regional scale, and support the dissemination of best practice, adapted to different country conditions.

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING ON COMBATING DESERTIFICATION

The Ankara Initiative supports the global sustainable development agenda and leverages the lessons learned from Turkey's past experience and approaches to land management. Every year, up to 100 experts from over 50 countries (the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, Africa and neighbouring countries) are trained in Turkey on the issue of combating desertification. By 2019, more than 800 foreign experts had attended international training sessions in Turkey on combating desertification and erosion, as one of the actions under the Ankara Initiative.

The Initiative strengthens its support for capacity-building activities with a view to ensuring capacity-building for African countries on issues of LDN, drought and gender. This year, the capacity-building training for African countries will be organized in Turkey in close co-operation with the Government of Turkey in November 2019.



The 14th International Training Session on Combating Desertification (Turkey – 2018)



The 14th International Training Session on Combating Desertification (Turkey –2018)

WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION GLOBAL OBSERVANCE EVENT



The World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD) is observed every year to promote public awareness of international efforts to combat desertification. The day is a unique opportunity to remind everyone that LDN is achievable through problem-solving, strong community involvement and co-operation at all levels. This year, on the Convention's 25th anniversary, the WDCD celebrated the 25 years of progress made by countries in SLM under the slogan, **"Let's grow the future together"**.

The WDCD global observance and the 25th anniversary of the Convention took place in Ankara, hosted by the Government of Turkey in conjunction with the UNCCD media workshop and the tenth International Soil Congress. The President of Turkey, H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, sent a message to the event, speaking about the Turkish efforts to combat desertification and the tangible outcome they have achieved. Messages were also received from the United Nations Secretary-General, the Executive Secretaries of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director.



WDCD Opening Session, 17 June 2019, Ankara, Turkey



Welcome address of Dr. Bekir Pakdemirli, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey – 2019 WDCD

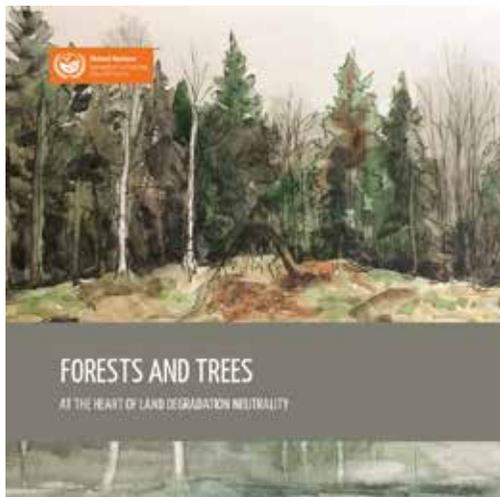


Welcome address of Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD – 2019 WDCD

UNCCD FORESTRY BROCHURE

Supported by the three former COP presidencies and their forest ministries (Turkey, China and South Korea), the UNCCD produced a brochure entitled *Forest and Trees: At the heart of Land Degradation Neutrality* for release at COP 14 in New Delhi, India. The brochure features the important role of forest-related LDN targets in achieving many of the other SDGs.

A policy brief, produced in collaboration with the IUCN, analyses forest-related LDN targets and measures developed under the LDN Target Setting Programme (TSP), including good practice cases on forest-related LDN target implementation, such as sustainable forest management, agro-forestry and silvo-pastoralism, and the restoration/rehabilitation of degraded forests.



Forests and Trees: At the Heart of Land Degradation Neutrality (UNCCD Publications, 2019)



Photo Ollivier Girard/CIFOR





Photo: C. Schubert (CCAFS)

As a result of land degradation and climate change, drought is the world's costliest natural disaster and affects more people than any other form of natural disaster. While more and more countries are facing droughts with increasing intensity and duration, progress on drought preparedness has been somewhat slow. We are witnessing the devastating impacts of droughts because of the ineffectiveness of "reactive" approaches to droughts. A paradigm shift to more "proactive" risk-based approaches is required.

Against this backdrop, the need to develop drought early warning systems for timely drought detection and risk and vulnerability analysis, and to identify possible drought risk mitigation measures is becoming more vital to tackle drought before it occurs. The Ankara Initiative supports drought early warning systems in the most vulnerable countries, and interested countries in the national LDN target setting process, including the definition of national baselines, measures and targets to achieve LDN by 2030.

AFRICAN DROUGHT CONFERENCE

On 19 August 2016, Namibia hosted the African Drought Conference which focused on identifying the specific needs of African countries in the area of effective drought mitigation, with a view to developing a strategic framework and channelling support towards addressing needs. The UNCCD was a co-organizer of the conference and provided technical assistance and financial support through the Ankara Initiative. The two major outputs attained during the conference were as follows:

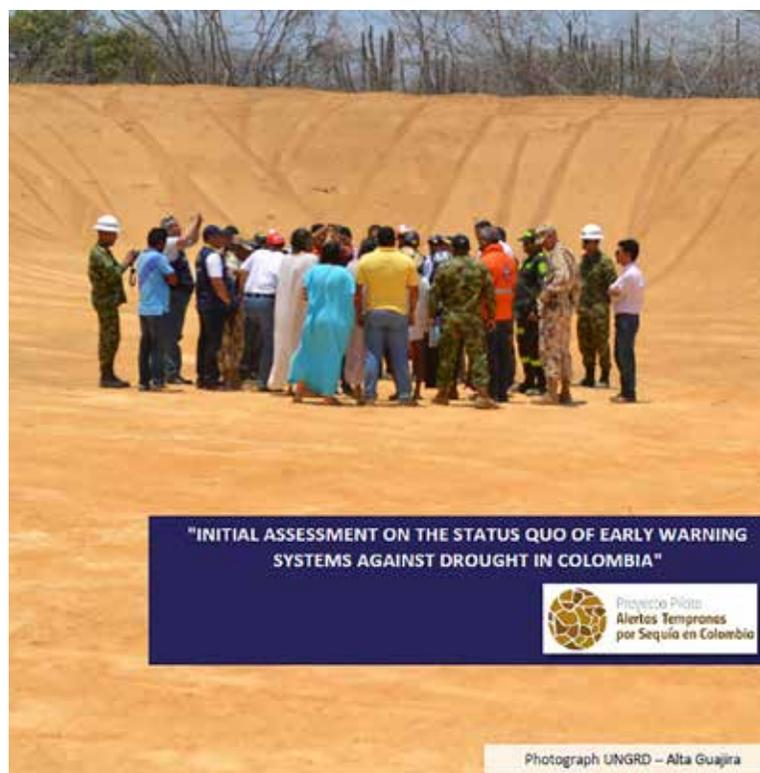
- The presentation and deliberation of a draft white paper on Drought Resilient and Prepared Africa (DRAPA) which includes six key elements: (i) policy and governance for risk drought management; (ii) drought monitoring and early warning; (iii) drought vulnerability and impact assessment; (iv) drought mitigation preparedness and response; (v) drought awareness and knowledge management; and (vi) reducing the underlying factors for disaster risk.
- The Windhoek Declaration for Enhancing Resilience to Drought in Africa.



African Drought Conference 2016. Image credit: <http://www.africandroughtconference.com/>

DEVELOPMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS SYSTEMS

In the year 2017 and well into 2018, the UNCCD engaged with Colombia (as a pilot country) to support the development of a comprehensive national drought preparedness system. The project was intended to support the adoption of the Drought Risk Management approach in the country. The project helped strengthen drought early warning systems, carrying out a thorough drought impact and vulnerability assessment, as well as drawing up a national drought mitigation and response plan and piloting its implementation. The preliminary outcomes of this project served as a background document for COP 13 which, in turn, led to the launch of the Drought Initiative.



Colombia pilot project's reports. Image credits: Unidad Nacional para la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres , Alta Guajira

As part of the Drought Initiative, the UNCCD has been working with partners including the World Meteorological Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UNEP and the Global Water Partnership to develop a toolbox to propose a set of policy and technical options to mitigate drought risk. As a key milestone towards finalizing the toolbox, a validation workshop was held in Antalya, Turkey from 2 to 4 May 2019, funded by the Ankara Initiative. The purpose of the workshop was to test the scope and functionality of the drought toolbox, gather feedback to refine the toolbox before the eventual launch at the COP and plan the dissemination strategy. Delegates from 15 countries involved in the UNCCD Drought Initiative participated.



The UNCCD Drought Toolbox. <https://knowledge.unccd.int/drought-toolbox>

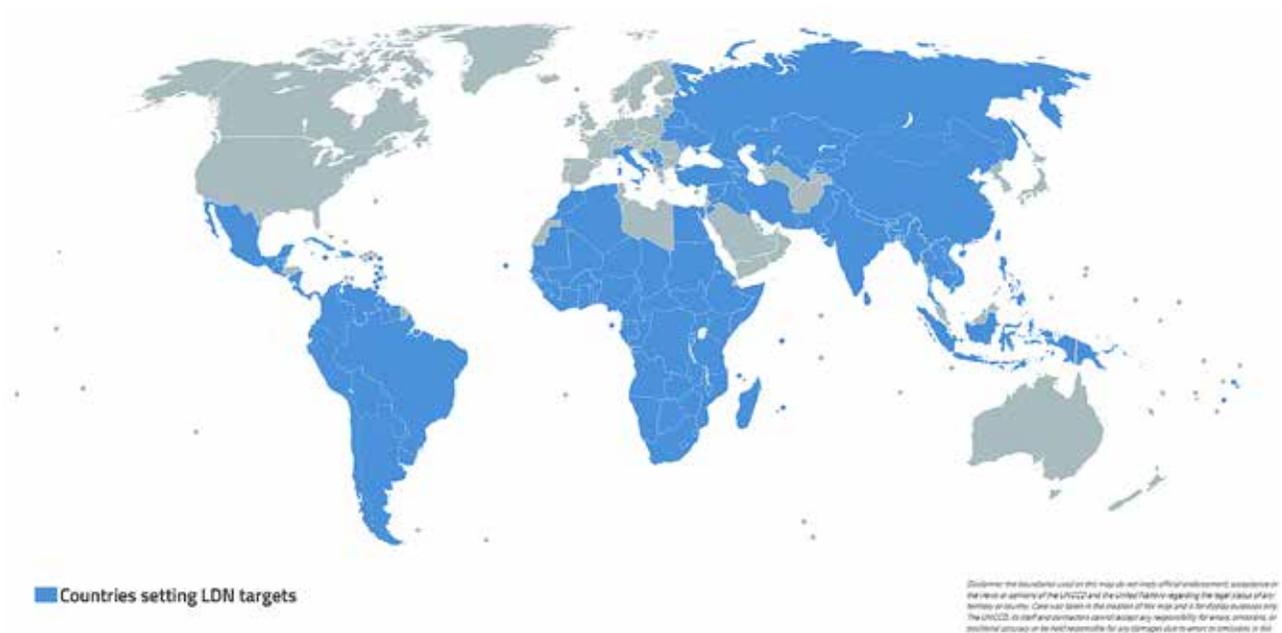


Drought Toolbox validation workshop, 2–4 May 2019, Antalya, Turkey.



LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY TARGET SETTING PROGRAMME (LDN TSP)

Through the LDN TSP, the Global Mechanism (GM) and the secretariat of the UNCCD, in collaboration with multiple international partners, including with financial support from Ankara Initiative, are supporting interested countries with their national LDN target setting process, including setting national baselines, targets and associated measures to achieve LDN. As of 2019, 122 countries have committed to setting LDN targets.



Map view of countries that committed to setting land degradation neutrality targets (as of 2019): <https://www.unccd.int/actions/ldn-target-setting-programme>

The LDN TSP is closely linked to the implementation of SDG target 15.3 at the global and national levels. Under the LDN TSP, countries have received support through the Ankara Initiative to formulate voluntary LDN targets and measures and to produce a final report that helped secure high-level commitment from the respective national authorities.

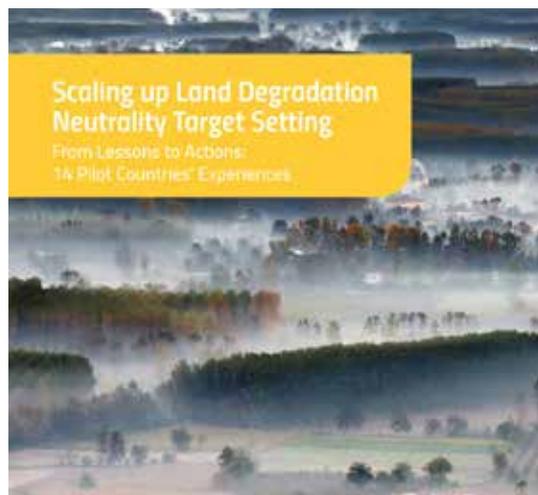
Funded by the Ankara Initiative, 79 national consultants have been supporting countries in setting national LDN baselines and targets, carrying out national workshops, identifying opportunities to leverage LDN and organizing field visits to identify LDN hotspots. This period was important to the success of the LDN-TSP as it allowed countries to significantly advance on baseline validation and the setting of LDN targets and associated measures.

With the support of the Ankara Initiative, the GM organized 11 national and regional workshops in Mali, Mongolia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Panama, and Zambia to identify and collect available sources of data to quantify factors associated with land degradation and identify opportunities for leverage through the LDN target setting process.

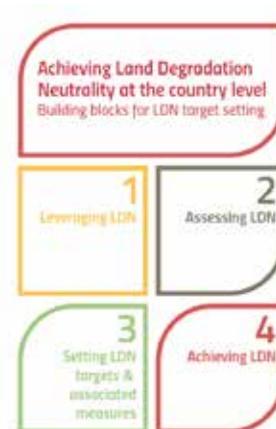
OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION FOR LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY

Two brochures were published to raise awareness of the LDN TSP:

- **Scaling up Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting – from Lessons to Actions: 14 Pilot Countries' Experiences:** Summarizes the key findings from the Pilot Projects.
- **The building blocks for LDN Target Setting:** Summaries how to put the evolving LDN concept into practice has been developed with the scientific guidance of the UNCCD SPI and feedback from country Parties and other stakeholders.



Scaling up Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting – from Lessons to Actions: 14 Pilot Countries' Experiences (UNCCD Publications, 2016)



The building blocks for the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Brochure (UNCCD Publications, 2016)

Building on the successful progress in the LDN target setting process, which was welcomed by participants at the seventeenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and culminated in more than 120 countries joining the efforts to set their national voluntary LDN targets, the GM will focus its support to countries under the Ankara Initiative in the following areas:

- Continue assisting countries in completing the ongoing LDN target setting process;
- Support countries in achieving their LDN visions through various activities and programmes, including capacity-building, to develop LDN transformative projects and programmes, as well as technical support to prepare such projects and programmes.



Photo: C. Schubert (CCAFS),

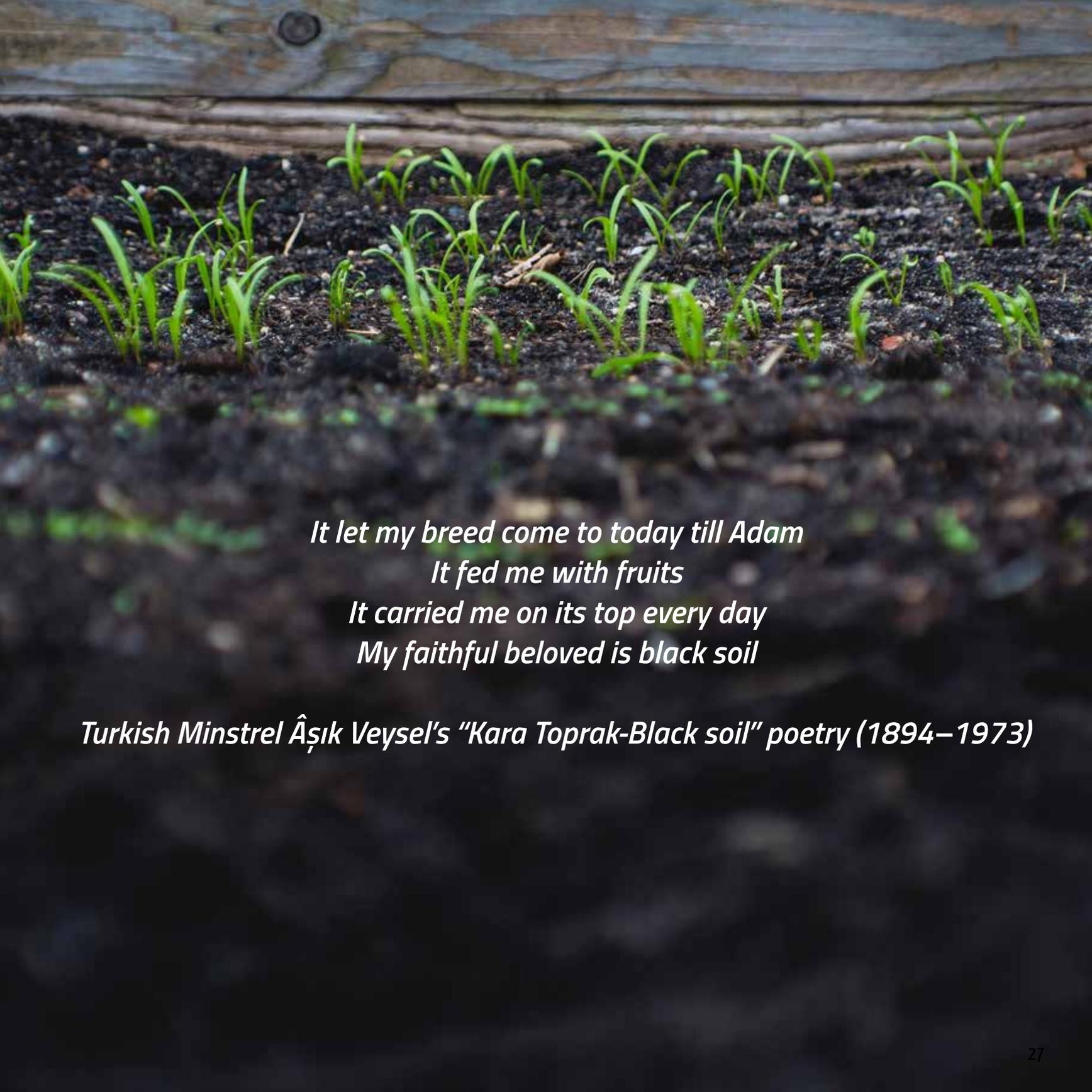


CONCLUSION

The best preparation for tomorrow is to do today's work well. Our real problem is not the challenges we see today but, rather, the vital need for action today to ensure the prosperity and security of humankind, based on the availability of healthy and productive land and water resources tomorrow. Globally, we face increasing demand for land-based goods and services. The current pressures on land resources are huge and expected to continue growing due to the impacts of climate change and human activities.

However, we have an opportunity to secure multiple benefits if we take appropriate action urgently. Investing in restoration and SLM brings many benefits, directly and indirectly. For example, achieving LDN, i.e. preventing land degradation and rehabilitating already degraded land by scaling up SLM and accelerating restoration initiatives, is a cost-effective pathway to greater resilience, prosperity and security for all.

The Ankara Initiative demonstrates Turkey's commitment to the future by addressing the socioeconomic factors driving land degradation and by engaging people and making policy more relevant and efficient. Indeed, the Ankara Initiative is putting people at the centre of decision-making by supporting integrated land use planning and reducing the risk of drought for the most vulnerable.



*It let my breed come to today till Adam
It fed me with fruits
It carried me on its top every day
My faithful beloved is black soil*

Turkish Minstrel Âşık Veysel's "Kara Toprak-Black soil" poetry (1894–1973)

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