

Inputs to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2024

Inputs from functional commissions of ECOSOC, other intergovernmental bodies and forums to the 2024 HLPF

UNCCD

Impacts of multiple crises on the implementation of SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17 from the vantage point of your intergovernmental body.

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is committed to addressing the intricate challenges posed by desertification, land degradation, and drought, which significantly impact the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in all Member States. This section below provides insights into the impacts of multiple crises on the implementation of SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17 from the perspective of the UNCCD.

SDG 1 - No Poverty: The compounding effects of desertification, land degradation, and drought exacerbate poverty by reducing agricultural productivity, displacing communities, increasing conflict over scarce resources, and undermining livelihoods. Limited access to land resources due to degradation hinders income generation opportunities, perpetuating cycles of poverty among vulnerable populations. An important component of reducing poverty is ensuring equal rights to ownership and control over land and other forms of property and building resilience to social and environmental shocks and disasters including land degradation, desertification, and drought.

SDG 2 - Zero Hunger: Desertification and land degradation threaten food security by diminishing arable land and water resources. Drought-induced crop failures and livestock losses deepen food insecurity, particularly in regions dependent on rain-fed agriculture. Unsustainable land management practices further compromise soil fertility, impairing agricultural productivity and undermining efforts to achieve food and nutritional security targets.

SDG 13 - Climate Action: Desertification and land degradation contribute to climate change by releasing carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and reducing carbon sequestration capacities. Increased frequency and intensity of droughts exacerbate climate vulnerabilities, amplifying the need for resilient adaptation strategies. Addressing land degradation and promoting sustainable land management are integral to mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts.

SDG 16 - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: Land degradation and desertification exacerbate resource scarcity, competition, and conflicts over land and water resources. Inadequate land governance frameworks and disputes over land tenure rights further exacerbate social tensions and

undermine peacebuilding efforts. Strengthening institutions, promoting inclusive land governance, and resolving land-related conflicts are essential for fostering peace and stability.

SDG 17 - Partnerships for the Goals: Collaborative efforts are essential for addressing the complex interlinkages between desertification, land degradation, and sustainable development. Enhanced partnerships among governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector are crucial for mobilizing resources, sharing knowledge, and implementing integrated approaches. The UNCCD promotes multi-stakeholder partnerships and initiatives to leverage expertise, resources, and technology transfer for effective land management and ecosystem restoration.

The interplay of desertification, land degradation, and drought amplifies the challenges in achieving SDGs 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17, underscoring the urgency of integrated and holistic approaches to sustainable land management. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated action, innovative solutions, and strengthened partnerships at all levels to ensure the resilience, prosperity, and well-being of present and future generations. The UNCCD remains committed to supporting global efforts to combat desertification, land degradation, and drought, and achieve sustainable development for all.

Three key areas where sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions for achieving the SDGs are being effectively delivered, especially related to the cluster of SDGs under review in 2024, bearing in mind the three dimensions of sustainable development and the interlinkages across the Goals and targets.

As the global community strives to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions play a pivotal role in addressing the complex challenges facing our planet. This section below highlights three key areas for which UNCCD delivers solutions that are related to the cluster of SDGs under review in 2024, while considering the three dimensions of sustainable development and the interlinkages across goals and targets.

Ecosystem Restoration and Sustainable Land Management: Ecosystem restoration initiatives, such as regenerative agriculture, reforestation, and land rehabilitation, contribute to achieving multiple SDGs, including SDGs 13 (Climate Action), 15 (Life on Land), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Sustainable land management practices promote soil conservation, water retention, and biodiversity conservation, fostering resilience to climate change and enhancing food security (SDG 2) and poverty eradication (SDG 1). Integrated approaches to ecosystem restoration and land management address the nexus between land, water, and biodiversity, promoting synergies across SDGs while mitigating climate change, land degradation and desertification.

Climate-Resilient Agriculture and Sustainable Food Systems: Innovations in climate-resilient agriculture, such as agroecology, conservation agriculture, and climate-smart technologies, contribute to SDGs 2 (Zero Hunger) and 13 (Climate Action) by enhancing agricultural productivity, resilience, and carbon sequestration. Sustainable food systems initiatives promote agrobiodiversity, local food production and regional food systems, and equitable access to nutritious food, addressing hunger, malnutrition, and poverty (SDG 1) while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing ecosystem health.

Community-Led Adaptation and Land Management: Community-based adaptation strategies and sustainable land management empower local communities to respond to climate change impacts, enhance drought resilience, and sustainably manage natural resources. Participatory approaches to resilience building, including indigenous knowledge systems, gender-responsive interventions, inclusive decision-making processes, and Integrated Land Use Planning (ILUP) contribute to SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 5 (Gender Equality), and 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Strengthening community resilience fosters social cohesion, reduces vulnerabilities, and promotes sustainable development, underscoring the interconnectedness of the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions are instrumental in advancing progress towards the SDGs, especially within the cluster of goals under review in 2024. By harnessing the synergies between ecosystem restoration, climate-resilient agriculture, and community-led adaptation and land management, we can address the interlinked challenges of poverty, hunger, climate change, and environmental degradation.

Three examples of specific actions, policies and measures that are most urgently needed to effectively deliver sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions to eradicate poverty and reinforce the 2030 Agenda, building on interlinkages and transformative pathways for achieving the SDGs.

To effectively deliver sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions to eradicate poverty and reinforce the 2030 Agenda, targeted actions, policies, and measures are urgently required. The section below provides examples of specific actions that can catalyse transformative pathways for achieving the SDGs, building on interlinkages and fostering resilience across multiple dimensions of sustainable development.

Promotion of Sustainable Land Management Practices: Urgent actions include implementing policies and programs that promote sustainable land management practices, such as agroforestry, regenerative agriculture, and soil conservation techniques to enhance soil fertility, water retention, and biodiversity conservation; and providing technical assistance, capacity-building support, and financial incentives to smallholder farmers, rural communities, and land users to adopt sustainable

land management practices, thereby improving livelihoods, agricultural productivity, resilience to climate change and drought, and food security.

Integrated Land Use Planning and Management: Develop and implement integrated land use planning frameworks that balance competing land uses, such as agriculture, forestry, conservation, and urban development to optimize land productivity, ecosystem services, and socio-economic benefits. Foster multi-stakeholder collaboration and participatory decision-making processes in land use planning and management, engaging local communities, indigenous peoples, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure inclusive and sustainable development outcomes. Incorporate climate change considerations, biodiversity conservation objectives, and sustainable development goals into land use planning processes, promoting landscape-scale approaches that reconcile environmental conservation with socio-economic development priorities.

Tenure Security and Women's Land Rights and Empowerment: Strengthening land tenure security by supporting the recognition of a continuum of tenure systems including customary tenure, and ensuring equitable access to land resources, particularly for women and marginalized groups, to empower them economically and socially. Providing targeted support and capacity-building programs to enhance women's participation in decision-making processes related to land tenure, resource management, and agricultural production, enabling them to contribute effectively to household food security and sustainable livelihoods. Supporting awareness-raising campaigns, education initiatives, and advocacy efforts to challenge discriminatory social norms, patriarchal attitudes, and cultural practices that perpetuate gender inequalities in land ownership, control, and use.

Follow-up actions and measures being undertaken by your intergovernmental body or forum to support implementation of the Political Declaration of the SDG Summit.

As the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), we are actively engaged in supporting the implementation of the Political Declaration of the SDG Summit through a range of follow-up actions and measures:

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance: We provide capacity-building support and technical assistance to Member States to enhance their understanding of and ability to leverage the interlinkages between desertification, land degradation, and sustainable development. Our training activities and workshops focus on resource mobilisation, promoting sustainable land management practices, ecosystem restoration techniques, and climate-resilient agriculture to help countries achieve multiple SDGs.

Knowledge Sharing and Best Practices: We facilitate knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices through innovative knowledge products, such as the Global Land Outlook, and platforms such as conferences, forums, and online portals, toolboxes and communities of practice and learning. Our initiatives showcase successful experiences and lessons learned in combating desertification, land degradation, and drought, while promoting innovative solutions for sustainable development.

Policy Advocacy and Partnerships: We advocate for policy coherence and integration of land-related issues into national development and disaster risk strategies, policies, and plans. Through strategic partnerships with governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector, we mobilize resources, foster collaboration, and promote collective action to address the root causes of desertification and land degradation.

Monitoring and Reporting: We support Member States in monitoring progress towards the implementation of the Political Declaration and the SDGs through our reporting mechanisms and assessment tools. Our monitoring frameworks and national reporting processes track indicators related to land degradation, biodiversity loss, climate change adaptation, and resilience building, providing valuable data for evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation.

Advocacy for Land Degradation Neutrality: We promote the concept of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) as a target to halt and reverse land degradation through sustainable land management and restoration practices. Our advocacy efforts raise awareness about the importance of LDN as a pathway to achieving multiple SDGs, including poverty eradication, food security, and climate resilience.

Recommendations and key messages for inclusion into the Ministerial Declaration of the 2024 HLPF.

Commitment to Integrated Approaches: Emphasize the importance of integrated approaches that address the interlinkages between environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainable development. Advocate for integrated land use planning and mainstreaming sustainability principles across all sectors and policy domains to achieve synergies and maximize impact.

Promoting Inclusive and Equitable Development: Advocate for inclusive and equitable development that leaves no one behind, ensuring that the benefits of progress are shared by all segments of society, including women and girls. Address systemic inequalities, discrimination, and marginalization to create enabling environments for the full realization of human rights, a just transition, and social justice.

Advancing Sustainable Land Management to Support Accelerated Climate Action and Resilience Building as well as Biodiversity Conservation: Highlight the critical role of sustainable land management in achieving multiple SDGs, including poverty eradication, food security, biodiversity conservation, and climate action and resilience. Call for increased investment in land restoration, ecosystem conservation, drought resilience, and land tenure security to halt and reverse land degradation and desertification.

Fostering Global Partnerships: Emphasize the importance of international cooperation and partnership-building to mobilize resources, share knowledge, and foster collective action towards achieving the SDGs. Encourage collaboration among governments, civil society, the private sector, and international organizations to leverage expertise, innovation, and technology transfer for sustainable development.

Strengthening Multilateralism and Global Governance: Reaffirm commitment to multilateralism as the cornerstone of effective global governance, emphasizing the need for inclusive and transparent decision-making processes. Call for enhanced collaboration and coordination among UN agencies, international financial institutions, and regional bodies to address shared challenges and advance the 2030 Agenda.

Empowering Youth and Future Generations: Recognize the vital role of youth as agents of change and champions of sustainable development and commit to empowering youth participation in decision-making processes. Invest in education, skills development, and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people to drive innovation, creativity, and social progress.

By incorporating and acting upon these recommendations and key messages into the Ministerial Declaration of the 2024 HLPF, Member States will demonstrate their commitment to accelerating progress towards the SDGs and building a more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive future for all.