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Title	Hosting organization
<p>Making a network of networks work to achieve land degradation neutrality: improving UNCCD stakeholders' use of scientific knowledge</p>	<p><i>DesertNet International (DNI)</i></p>
<p>Improving the dissemination and uptake of scientific knowledge on the prevention and reversal of desertification and land degradation (DLD) requires better coordination of existing science and knowledge networks. At the 11th Conference of the Parties, the UNCCD encouraged the formation of an independent consortium of scientific networks to interact with UNCCD's newly emerged Science-Policy Interface (SPI) (Decision 23/COP.11), with the aim of enabling the UNCCD to become a global authority on all aspects pertaining to desertification and land degradation.</p> <p>The side event aims to present the DNI-WOCAT-GNDRI initiative to create a network of networks to provide independent science and knowledge on DLD and sustainable land management (SLM), in order to contribute towards the achievement of land degradation neutrality (LDN).</p> <p>Participants will discuss the expectations of and needs for a network of networks on DLD and SLM, its functions, institutional setup and necessary interactions with other relevant organisations, programmes and stakeholders. By developing such broad interactions, it moves beyond an institutional-based focus. This allows identification of possible synergies in actions among the scientific and knowledge community that can enhance the visibility of the scientific community as a major stakeholder involved in the achievement of LDN. Participants will be invited to identify the most pressing policy-relevant science and knowledge gaps that would urgently need to be addressed by such a network of networks working at the science-policy interface.</p> <p>Discussions at the side event are expected to deliver concrete ideas on the required scope and objectives of such a network of network, possible institutional set up modalities, incentives for mobilizing multi-disciplinary scientific and technical expertise at the global, regional and local levels, required capacities, outreach activities, formats for science-policy interactions and a programme of work.</p>	
<p>Linking science and economics: maximizing technological uptake for widespread impact on land degradation</p>	<p><i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)</i></p>
<p>The Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) Initiative is a global, harmonised assessment of the economic benefits from land and land-based ecosystems with multiple global partner institutes. It draws from a range of case studies for poverty reduction and sustainable development with contributions from science, technology, traditional knowledge, and best practices. The Initiative highlights the value of sustainable land management and aims to make economics of land degradation an integral part of policy strategies and decision-making by increasing awareness of the economic value of sustainable land management, as well as outlining pathways for successful action in preventing the loss of natural capital, preserving ecosystem services, combating climate change, and addressing food, energy, and water security.</p> <p>The ELD aims to improve adaptive capacity from local to global levels by: a) making economic cases for sustainable land management through harmonised approaches; b) outlining options for livelihood diversification and reducing land/land-based ecosystem pressures; and, c) outlining pathways for successfully scaling sustainable land management practices and technologies up and out. The Initiative will produce three reports for scientific communities, decision-makers, and the private sector, and a final synthesis report. It already enables capacity building through practical implementation, stakeholder consultations based on scientific assessments, online courses and on-the-ground participatory case studies.</p> <p>The side event will focus on: raising awareness of the ELD Initiative's preliminary outputs and outreach activities, how they contribute to the overall efforts of the UNCCD, obtaining feedback on the relevance of these outputs, collating information on existing actions and activities to include in the Initiative, and identifying additional outputs to be expected from the ELD Initiative from the UNCCD community.</p> <p>A panel discussion will unite knowledge across disciplines and stakeholders to provide feedback and suggest constructive ways forward. The discussion will bring valuable input to the envisaged products of the 3rd UNCCD Scientific Conference and provide pointers for decision-makers, researchers, private sector, and civil society regarding options and pathways to address land degradation and promote sustainable land management. The conclusions of the workshop will be published on the ELD website (http://eld-initiative.org) and used to draft the ELD report to political and local decision-makers.</p>	

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Title	Hosting organization
Combating land degradation in production landscapes for adaptive and resilient livelihoods: learning from GEF projects applying integrated approaches	<i>Global Environment Facility (GEF)</i>
<p>As a financial mechanism of the UNCCD, the GEF has played a key role in promoting innovative approaches to combat land degradation in drylands. The GEF, through its investment in sustainable land management, is helping to advance innovative approaches to promoting stewardship of production landscapes—agricultural, rangeland, and forest—in the developing world. An important contribution in this regard has been the promotion of integrated approaches —practices that integrate the management of land, soil, water, biodiversity, and biomass—for combating land degradation in those landscapes. Therefore projects financed over the last two decades present an invaluable opportunity to generate knowledge on innovative practices, experiences, and lessons for wider dissemination. During the period 2011-2014, the GEF Secretariat undertook a series of learning missions focused specifically on understanding the catalytic effect of these integrated approaches. The learning objective was in accordance with the GEF focal area strategy to combat land degradation, which embodies the landscape approach and integrated ecosystem management principles to maximize the global environmental benefits of project interventions. As a result of that focus, the strategy also addresses the need to harness and safeguard ecosystem services (carbon cycling, biodiversity, hydrological flows, and healthy soils).</p>	
The importance of quantitative soil erosion data: how isotopic techniques can provide evidence for combatting desertification and climate change?	<i>International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)</i>
<p>Land degradation is affecting 1.9 billion hectares of land globally, representing around 65% of the global soil resources and is increasing at a rate of 5 to 7 million hectares each year. Soil erosion is the main contributor to such land degradation. As much as 75 billion tons of fertile soil is lost from world agricultural systems each year through soil erosion. To minimize this loss and for the sustainable use and management of this precious resource, there is an urgent need for reliable quantitative data on the extent and actual rates of soil erosion. In addition information on better understanding of the key driving processes is needed, so that policy-makers can make wise decision for sustainable soil conservation strategies. These quantitative data will be even more important for effective climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation programmes. How nuclear and isotope techniques can provide the quantitative data for sustainable land management will be presented in this side event by the IAEA and its project counterparts from Latin America and Asia and Pacific. They will be introducing these techniques (fallout radionuclides (FRNs) and compound specific stable isotopes (CSSI)) for estimating soil redistribution rates and for apportioning the source contribution from different land-uses. How the IAEA contributes to climate smart science is further elaborated in a global effort to address climate change impact in polar and mountain regions with benchmark sites in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Antarctica</p>	
How to encourage innovative capacities to achieve land degradation neutrality?	<i>International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)</i>
<p>The aim of this event is to show how an integrated approach to combating land degradation is required in order to build greater capacity to innovate amongst stakeholders. Land management practitioners already integrate economic, social and environmental issues into their decision making. The research community needs to appreciate these skills and to design research and capacity building activities that complement and significantly enhance these skills by generating and dissemination appropriate information based on sound system analyses rather than promoting components without a clear understanding of the context in which they can work and be adopted at large scales of impact. The event will build on the approaches taken by CGIAR' three systems research programs and the newly established network of networks of dryland scientists. Four to five panelists will present examples of the approaches taken and there will be a general discussion on how these can be used to foster greater innovative capacities of land users and policy makers.</p>	

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<p>Large scale land restoration – Creating success</p> <p>Large scale land restoration efforts are gaining momentum. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment introduced the notion of “ecosystem services” and highlighted the critical state of land resources, and the Bonn Challenge in 2011 set the pattern of defining specific targets for land restoration, mainly for forested landscapes. More recently Rio+20 introduced the idea of “Land Degradation Neutrality”, which has been proposed as an SDG goal in the latest Open Working Group paper. Growing concern over land degradation has begun to translate into stronger global commitment, and is giving rise to action on a large scale. The 20by20 initiative launched at the Global Landscape Forum in Lima, Peru alongside the UNFCCC COP 20 in December 2014 aims to restore 20 million hectares of degraded land in Latin America by 2020. At the same time there is growing understanding of sustainable land management opportunities and approaches, as captured in e.g. WOCAT, Farmer Management Natural Regeneration, and Sustainable Rangeland Management. Yet there are still gaps our understanding of landscape-scale implications and the trade-off between land use options, and perhaps more importantly, the social implications of large scale initiatives.</p> <p>This workshop brings forward results from the session “Large-Scale Land Restoration - Creating the Conditions for Success” that was held at the Global Landscape Forum, 7 Dec 2014 in Lima, and will focus on what it will take to secure the political and financial commitments for such initiatives, ensure they are successful, and that they meet the economic, social and environmental expectations of governments, investors, as well as the millions of people who derive livelihoods from rural landscapes. Recognizing that all landscapes are not the same, and that the right combination of factors must come together for success we will explore the questions: 1. How can we safely optimise returns on investment in landscape restoration? 2. What approaches do we already have to safeguard ecosystem services at scale when SLM interventions are taking place on a more localised scale? 3. What are the implications of large-scale landscape restoration for local stakeholders? 4. How do we ensure accountability both to investors and local populations? A brief introduction will set the stage, followed by a moderated discussion with experts from government who have committed to large scale restoration, from civil society and researchers who will be supporting these efforts, and from the finance sector.</p>	<p><i>International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)</i></p>
<p>The pastoralism and the green economy – a natural nexus? Status, challenges and policy implications</p> <p>The Green Economy concept has recently gained significant traction due to mounting global fears over multiple crises of climate change, energy, food and financial systems. Transitioning towards a Green Economy will require growth strategies in which production and consumption does not continue to come at the expense of natural capital and social equity. Evidence shows that multi-functional use of natural and semi-natural ecosystems is not only ecologically more sustainable and socio-culturally preferable, but it is often more economically beneficial than intensive use of fully converted systems (de Groot et al., 2010). Despite this, many governments prioritise intensive crop production over pastoralism in the rangelands. Improvements in our global understanding of pastoralism, as well as recent evidence of the value of rangeland ecosystem services, shows that capitalising on the inherent sustainability of pastoralism for local, regional and international markets must be central to land use strategies for a Green Economy (McGahey et al., 2014).</p> <p>This workshop will launch the join UNEP-IUCN Publication on Pastoralism and the Green Economy, presenting state of the art evidence of the role of sustainable pastoral land management in ecosystem services provision, and outlining recommendations for improved policy and investment. Three principal elements will be discussed as central to the role of pastoralism in delivering sustainable outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The contribution of pastoralism to the maintenance of natural capital; (ii) Pastoralism’s resource efficiency and sustainable production in highly variable dryland environments; (iii) The conditions that enable pastoralism to deliver on its green economy potential. <p>The objective of this event is to strengthen coordinated input to the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals that are under negotiation and to catalyse wider support for the role of pastoralism in achieving Land Degradation Neutrality and promoting synergy between the Rio Conventions.</p>	<p><i>International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)</i></p>

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<p>Knowledge management for sustainable use of resources of natural landscapes promoting an application model of synergy between the Rio Conventions</p>	<p><i>Ministry of Environment, Brazil</i></p>
<p>Sustainable Forest Management plans are gradually becoming part of the natural landscapes of Brazilian semi-arid. Their dissemination represents an opportunity to improving local people's livelihoods, while granting greater chances to enhance the semi-arid rich biodiversity and the continuity of ecosystem services. Brazil's National Action Program to Combat Desertification considers SFM modalities essential as working tools for land use planners, agronomists, foresters and farmers that work in the region and are helping to develop sustainable natural resources through traditional and improved best practices for Land Management Systems. Integrated Natural Resources Management greatly benefits from SFM practices which take into account nature's need for renewal and ecosystems stability, together with satisfying people's basic needs. Successful experiences are a source of inspiration for rural dwellers, farmers and technical officers as well. Forestry, agriculture, animal husbandry and cottage industries compose the backdrop of semi-arid areas in Brazil, and SFM has an opportunity to intertwine with natural landscapes, to arrest land degradation and the erosion of biodiversity. SFM supports sustainable fuelwood production, that is essential for the region's energy matrix, animal husbandry, wild fruit production, honey and a long list of non-timber forest products. These approaches are also helpful to the wider public opinion to understanding fuelwood economics. The utilization of wood for fuel is widespread, and it is estimated to make 30% of the energy matrix of Brazil's Northeast region. SFM greater dissemination could allow forestry to become a source of employment and income in vast economically depressed areas. It is estimated that in the semi-arid, fuelwood production generates over 700 thousand jobs during the dry season. Almost 400.000 hectares of dryland forests are conducted under SFM plans in the Brazilian semi-arid, contributing to mitigate land degradation and the erosion of biodiversity. Otherwise research results support SFM, reinforcing the practice as a pioneering example of good forestry as attested by the monitoring of forest stands under the SFM network "REDE de Manejo da Caatinga" (http://www.rmfc.cnip.org.br/) that have been carried out over 20 years by a network of field stations.</p>	
<p>Programa Prosperar – Formulation of a land conservation programme, based on the Brazilian base-zero concept, aimed at recovering the organic structure, bioactivity and the productivity of degraded soils in the Caatinga biome in the state of Pernambuco, Brazil</p>	<p><i>Ministry of Environment, Brazil</i></p>
<p>Water scarcity prevails in large land swathes of the Brazilian semi-arid, a vast region of Brazil encompassing 11 federal states, 38 million inhabitants and an extension in excess of 1,5 million km² and 1490 municipalities. The Brazilian semi-arid represents 17% of Brazil's land extension. The <i>Prosperar Programme</i> promotes the idea of integrating and disseminating land use best conservation practices throughout the Brazilian semi-arid. It emphasizes best practices for land use and conservation, that are renowned for their simplicity, low installation costs, validated performances and easy to apply throughout diverse environmental conditions, mostly marked by low and irregular precipitation. Amongst the opportunities to enhance water collection in the Brazilian semi-arid, the system called "Base Zero Concept" has called public attention for its easiness to complying with the above-mentioned requisites for its installation. The Base Zero Concept practically refers to installed underground dams shaped like a lying Roman arch. These structures besides having a low installation cost helps underground water accumulation without the risk of salinization and increased evaporation, conditions that affect most dams in dry areas. The construction of the lying Roman arc does not require the application of mortar neither excavations. The Base Zero Concept provides that " in order to obtain the permanent maximum use of incident energy in a given agricultural area, it is necessary to adjust the conditions of the land to natural flows of water, favoring its retention without causing salinization and optimizing the use of biomass and elements of the soil . " The building of dams without taking into account natural conditions of the terrain such as declivity and vegetation are not helpful in face of heavy rains, and on the contrary in some places even aggravate the problems due to the phenomenon of salinization of backwaters. Dams shaped according to the lying Roman arch model are made with local stones and arranged through pure compression. The dams are coupled in series, end up forming plateaus due to the natural erosion caused by rain in the adjacent slopes. These plateaus are fertile, allowing normal agricultural production, because the water that flows quickly is stored much longer in them, due to the slow percolation through the soil and geological fractures immediately below and can be used throughout the year. The BZC could be replicated on a basis of 3 to 4 units per hectare and its dissemination can rely on local human resources and facilities and it brings the prospect of reducing land reclamation costs and avoiding water waste through intensive labor utilization of rural communities throughout the Brazilian semi-arid.</p>	

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COP12 in Turkey and Turkish experiences on combating desertification	<i>Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, Turkey</i>

Circum-Saharan vision for the fight against degradation and for land restoration	<i>Sahara & Sahel Observatory (OSS)</i>
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The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) is a member of the organizing consortium of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference. OSS has developed a regional West and North African initiative that aims to underscore the region's concerns and preoccupations in relation with the Conference's major themes. In fact, in line with its mission, OSS coordinates several actions for the promotion of ecosystems' resilience and the fight against land and water resources degradation in the countries of the circum-Sahara region. This initiative consisted in the elaboration and large dissemination of a questionnaire targeting development partners and concerned stakeholders, and was followed by a discussion workshop on the questionnaire's main results. The initiative brought together scientists, experts, and representatives of the civil society to discuss land degradation and restoration-related questions. This initiative has paved the way for a better contribution to the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference to be held in March 2015. A Circum-Saharan vision on the scientific and technical aspects of land degradation and water resources management will be brought to the Conference. This regional preparatory initiative aimed to conduct a deeper reflection on the major challenges to be discussed at the 3rd SC and their Circum-Saharan specificities through the proposition of a set of tools for desertification monitoring and characterization, the identification of existing solutions in combatting degradation, the examination of possible interactions between local know-how and academic knowledge, the identification of the scientific problems existing between land degradation and land restoration and the proposition of solutions for knowledge sharing and dissemination and their integration into the decision-making and educational process.

The side-event proposed by OSS will be a great opportunity to shed light on the state of the Circum-Sahara in relation with the themes to be tackled by the scientific Conference and to share the recommendations of the region's countries on the aspects mentioned above (fight against land degradation, land restoration and water resources management)

This side-event will focus on the mobilization of scientific and traditional knowledge for the generation of necessary innovations to reduce the populations' vulnerability to land degradation, ensuring thus not only the preservation of productive capacities at the agronomic and ecological levels, but also social and economic capacities.

Environmental monitoring and land degradation diagnostic tools in the circum-Saharan region	<i>Sahara & Sahel Observatory (OSS)</i>
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The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS), member of the organizing consortium of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific conference, plans to organize a side event, on the fringe of this event, focusing on the first theme of the conference (Diagnostic). OSS's side event will focus on taking stock of the most developed environmental monitoring tools based on a number of initiatives, projects, and programmes that the organization conducts in collaboration with its institutional partners in the Circum-Sahara region. These tools have been developed with a view to conducting diagnostics on the land and water resources degradation state in the countries of the region. In addition to the identification of the state of water and land, these tools are also highly useful for the assessment of the performances of new adopted M&E practices and techniques, as well as the estimation of their potential dissemination. Aware of the importance of having reliable and updated information for a rational land and water resources management, the countries of the region have long been committed to set-up efficient tools for environmental data collection and information production. In fact, information and data on the state, evolution and use of land and water resources, are of a paramount importance for the elaboration and implementation of sustainable management strategies in the region and thus contribute to the fight against land degradation.

Rapid data collection is a prerequisite for the development of effective policies for combatting desertification and for land protection in general. The side-event aims to open up a discussion on the best ways to adapt expected environmental monitoring approaches, methods and tools for a better consideration of achievements, on the one hand, and of biophysical, socio-economic and institutional contexts on the other. The side-event will be also an opportunity to identify paths and prerequisites for improving the efficiency of the actions undertaken and the tools developed by OSS and its development and institutional partners in the field of land degradation diagnostic and assessment of the efficiency of land restoration measures and their valorization by the final beneficiaries.

Finally, the side-event will be an occasion for OSS to look for new partnerships and build synergies with other regional and sub-regional initiatives and programmes in line with its Strategy 2020.

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<p>The use of satellite data to measure and monitor land degradation over time at multiple scales</p>	<p><i>Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility (GEF/STAP)</i></p>
<p>There is a clear and immediate need for accessible and accurate measurements of land degradation that are objective, consistent and repeatable. Given the global and temporal nature of land degradation, it is clear that the only practical method to obtain reliable and up-to-date information to monitor land degradation at national, regional and global scales, is through the acquisition and use of satellite remote sensing data. While numerous satellite sensors and associated data products exist that can and have been used to map land degradation, there is no universally agreed upon data source or method that can be easily applied and utilized by affected countries and other interested parties. The objective of this side event is to present and compare current satellite data products and associated methods that have been used and/or are being proposed to assess land degradation and desertification within the context of the needs of the UNCCD and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Land Degradation Focal Area. This session will also seek to better understand the needs of Countries and Agencies that use satellite-based data products currently, or plan to in the future, to map changes in land cover and analyze the causes and consequences of land degradation at the national and sub-national level. One of the challenges to be addressed at the UNCCD 3rd scientific conference and the 4th special session of the CST is how best to measure the performance of actions to combat land degradation and desertification. This includes developing techniques to help evaluate the effectiveness of knowledge-based practices and technologies designed to respond to the consequences of climate change on ecosystems and vulnerable populations. In addition, Strategic Objective 2 of the UNCCD's Progress Indicators is to 1) "improve the conditions of affected ecosystems" through monitoring trends in land cover (SO2-1) and 2) land productivity or functioning of the land (SO2-2). This side event will help address these challenges by providing information on specific methods that can be used to assess trends in land cover and land condition at relevant scales and monitor changes over time to determine the overall effectiveness of the practices and technologies that are implemented to reverse degradation in key areas. In addition, the use of remote sensing methods for monitoring land cover and land condition is of importance to the GEF. This includes applying satellite imagery for the purposes of monitoring the objectives of the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area that aims to "...arrest and reverse current global trends in land degradation, specifically desertification and deforestation..." (www.thegef.org). This session will identify ways that satellite-based data products can help the GEF meet these monitoring needs, as well as facilitate a dialogue between the UNCCD, the GEF, Countries, scientists and data providers, on methods that can be used to assess and monitor land degradation.</p>	
<p>The quest for resilience indicators – A resilience assessment framework</p>	<p><i>Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility (GEF/STAP)</i></p>
<p>The objective of the side event is to demonstrate and review a resilience assessment framework that can be used to identify indicators of resilience for agro-ecosystems. The framework is designed for project developers, practitioners, policy-makers, and scientists. The framework takes the user through a logical process of defining the scope of the assessment; identifying the drivers of resilience in that system (answering the question "resilience of what, to what"); defining the thresholds for the identified controlling variables considering also interactions across and within scales; and, finally, assisting the user to consider options for either adapting, or transforming, (e.g. implementing climate adaptation pathways), and modifying their land management practices to improve resilience of the defined agro-ecosystem. The framework is based on current understanding of resilience science, and is intended to be applied in an iterative manner, with participation of stakeholders.</p> <p>Demonstrating and reviewing the resilience assessment framework will contribute to the UNCCD's 3rd scientific conference and the 4th special session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST S-4) of the UNCCD in several ways. First, participants will learn how the framework can be used to support new reporting requirements through the development of narratives that complement the quantitative indicators. Second, the indicators of agro-ecosystem resilience can be included as supplementary indicators in UNCCD reporting. The organizers anticipate that continued work on these supplementary indicators may eventually lead to common reporting on land-based adaptation between the UNCCD, CBD, and the UNFCCC. Through its focus on sustainable land management, as a measure to address desertification and land degradation, the UNCCD is well-placed to strengthen initiatives between the Conventions on monitoring and assessment of socio-ecological systems and their resilience to climate change. The framework provides the UNCCD's practitioner and science community with a method for identifying indicators of agro-ecosystem resilience based on a human-centered approach. Third, food security and climate change adaptation are two focus areas of the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for which strengthened resilience of agro-ecosystems is identified as relevant. Thus, the outcomes of the side event will serve the intersecting goals of the Conventions in assessing progress in enhancing agro-ecosystem resilience to deliver global environmental benefits, and support the sustainable development agenda. An additional outcome is strengthening the links between UNCCD reporting (national level), and monitoring of GEF-funded activities on sustainable land management (project level) – in order to develop indicator sets that work together to assess progress in combating land degradation.</p>	

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<p>Global Land Outlook</p> <p>This side event will present the proposed UNCCD Global Land Outlook, and the key components now under development, while introducing key members of the team. It will be an opportunity to consult with participants about its structure and approach, and the chance to explore potential partnerships.</p> <p>The Global Land Outlook is planned to be published every four years. It will consist of three inter-linked modules that will provide UNCCD with a strong, politically relevant, but analytical base for determining the future course of land degradation and sustainable land management across the globe.</p> <p>The three modules will include a policy report reflecting on the uses, changes and future scenarios for land and soil degradation and rehabilitation around the world, including the identification of key measures and policies to improve land management. It will also reflect on issues of key policy relevance, such as climate change.</p> <p>The second component of the Outlook will be the preparation of tools for ‘good practice’ with a particular understanding of the key driving factors affecting performance and the bottlenecks to scaling up.</p> <p>Finally, the Outlook team will develop land indices that will allow us to compare land management systems across countries and the impact that these systems have on socio-economic development.</p>	<p><i>United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)</i></p>
<p>Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality, how do we do it?</p> <p>This side-event will introduce the Soil Leadership Academy’s approach to supporting the implementation of land degradation neutrality objective. The SLA will consult on the policy cycle and curriculum, which will be used to generate a simulation tool driven by clear policy support objectives. This innovative approach will support participants to navigate through the complexity of achieving LDN and the proposed SDGs, by providing clear and pragmatic steps integrated in the policy cycle and information on the existing knowledge and experience to complete those steps.</p> <p>The simulation tool, and its scientific basis, will be examined by scientists participating in the UNCCD’s 3rd Scientific Conference. Participants’ comments and suggestions will be critical to fine-tuning the curriculum and ensuring it meets the rigorous scientific standards required and is in line with stated objectives.</p> <p>This workshop is a unique opportunity to tap into the ideas, research and field experience shared at the Conference, to create a game-changing policy inspiration tool with a solid scientific foundation.</p> <p>The Soil Leadership Academy’s workshop is a great opportunity for scientists with research results, field knowledge and innovative ideas to contribute to the simulation tool, and inspire world leaders to prioritize sustainable land management in their decision-making process.</p>	<p><i>United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)</i></p>
<p>Knowledge and knowledge transfer: The UNCCD Scientific Knowledge Brokering Portal (SKBP)</p> <p>The UNCCD Scientific Knowledge Brokering Portal (SKBP) has been developed as a pilot in 2014 to act as a “bridge to bridges”. It is designed to improve access to scientific and technical information on desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD). The SKBP pilot uses advanced search technologies as well as a spatial (mapping) interface to assist users in finding the most relevant information sources. It increases visibility and enables access to valuable knowledge products developed by its partners, and enables the partners to receive feedback from the users of that information. As such the SKBP pilot has opened the door for future developments, such as mobile applications and other “on the ground” tools.</p> <p>Current partners cooperating in the SKBP Pilot are WOCAT, ISRIC, CSIC, and FAO AGRIS and TECA. The current pilot of the SKBP includes the interactive maps, which have been developed with the support of the Jornada Dryland Research Program, USDA-ARS.</p> <p>The further development of the SKBP pilot will be decided by UNCCD Country Parties at COP 12 (Turkey, October 2015). In this side event you can get a live preview of the prototype that has been developed, learn from the experiences of some of the current partners and users, and participate in the conversation about future uses and benefits of this exciting new platform. This side event is hosted by the UNCCD secretariat.</p>	<p><i>United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)</i></p>

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Title	Hosting organization
<p>Civil society and technology: research and uses</p> <p>Which is the role played by Civil Society Organizations and Local Communities in the identification and promotion of traditional knowledge? And which is the roll that these key partners in sustainable land degradation also play in the process of research and in the uses of innovative technologies? Are they mere receptionists of innovation or they are actively involved in the process from the very beginning?</p> <p>The objective of this side event promoted by the UNCCD CSO Panel is to discuss these topics, through a combination of presentations of experiences in the field and some policy recommendations.</p> <p>The side event will be chaired by a high level representative from the UNCCD and then there will be four presentations, followed by a question and answers session and a discussion with other participants from the floor.</p> <p>Emmanuel Seck (from ENDA, Senegal) will make a presentation on traditional knowledge and strategies to cope with desertification, drought and climate change in West Africa.</p> <p>Sonja Malicevic (from FEA, Bosnia and Herzegovina) will present the experience of small farmers in Central and Eastern Europe towards integrated natural resource management practices.</p> <p>Patrice Burger (from CARI, France) will provide a practical example based on the introduction of agro ecology thinking and practice on a family farm in the oasis ecosystem south of Morocco; based on a three-year experience in the field, including technical, organizational and policy work done.</p> <p>Finally, Nathalie van Haren (from Both Ends, Netherlands), will make a presentation on the perspective of civil society in the Science Policy Interface of the UNCCD (SPI). Van Haren is observer to the SPI, representing CSO community.</p> <p>The side event will be facilitated by Juan Luis Mérega (from Fundación del Sur, Argentina). Mérega is the Chair of the UNCCD CSO Panel.</p>	<p>UNCCD CSO Panel</p>

WOCAT - A knowledge management platform goes new

*World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies/
Centre for Development and Environment, University of Bern
(WOCAT/CDE)*

Ensuring sustainable use of natural resources is crucial for maintaining the basis for our livelihoods. With threats from climate change, disputes over water, biodiversity loss, competing claims on land, and migration increasing worldwide, the demands for sustainable land management (SLM) practices will only increase in the future. For years already, various national and international organizations (GOs, NGOs, donors, research institutes, etc.) have been working on alternative forms of land management. And numerous land users worldwide – especially small farmers – have been testing, adapting, and refining new and better ways of managing land. All too often, however, the resulting SLM knowledge has not been sufficiently evaluated, documented and shared. Among other things, this has often prevented valuable SLM knowledge from being channelled into evidence-based decision-making processes. Indeed, proper knowledge management is crucial for SLM to reach its full potential.

Since more than 20 years, the international WOCAT network, www.wocat.net documents and promotes SLM through its global platform. As a whole, the WOCAT methodology comprises tools for documenting, evaluating, and assessing the impact of SLM practices, as well as for knowledge sharing, analysis and use for decision support in the field, at the planning level, and in scaling up identified good practices. In early 2014, WOCAT's growth and ongoing improvement culminated in its being officially recognized by the UNCCD as the primary recommended database for SLM best practices, including measures of adaptation.

In August 2014, the WOCAT network has been relaunched in a new set-up with nine new Consortium Partners. They build the Steering Committee of WOCAT International and have a shared responsibility for the functioning of the WOCAT Network and to encourage SLM and responsible land governance at global, regional and local level. In this session the newly set-up WOCAT Network and latest advancements and innovations are presented, and various panelist, including UNCCD Parties, will present their experiences in using the WOCAT tools.

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Title	Hosting organization
Sustainable Land Management in the Mining Sector	<i>The Global Mechanism of the UNCCD</i>
<p>Land degradation is a wicked problem for social–ecological systems, addressed through international policy by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The UNCCD is striving towards land degradation neutrality (LDN) – maintenance or improvement of the condition of the land – whereby degradation is prevented and reversed through sustainable land management (SLM) and restoration. Land degradation neutrality, and therefore SLM, is relevant to all land-based sectors. In 2014, the Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD launched a pilot study to begin collecting information on how the mining companies are performing in terms of SLM, and understand challenges and opportunities ahead. The study, commissioned to a consortium of researchers led by the University of Leeds, was conducted using semi-structured interviews with key mining and SLM stakeholders and content analysis of company sustainability reports. The study has been recently published on the <i>Environmental Science & Policy</i> journal (48 (2015) 196-209).</p> <p>The study identified a range of interpretations of SLM and suggested that companies are engaging in SLM largely due to the need to reduce their costs and risks. A variety of good and poor reporting practices were found. Differences in both SLM discourses and the quality of reporting have important implications in terms of stakeholders’ abilities to understand and evaluate corporate SLM performance, their engagement in the implementation of the UNCCD, and ultimately, the progress made towards LDN.</p> <p>The findings suggest that the currently dominant format of corporate sustainability reporting does not lend itself easily to context-specific, wicked problems such as SLM. Furthermore, there is a need for improved communication, data sharing and knowledge management between mining and other SLM stakeholders; a need to seek further synergistic opportunities for reporting; and innovative financial instruments and mechanisms to unlock the required investments.</p> <p>The side event is designed to discuss the main findings of the mining sector study, particularly its implications for research, policy, and practice, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how mining companies and mining sector stakeholders conceptualize SLM; • the drivers of their engagement in SLM; • how mining companies operationalize existing guidelines to report on SLM; • how companies report on SLM; • lessons for the UNCCD in moving towards land degradation neutrality in a key land use sector; • moving beyond business as usual: additionality; • options to finance the transition towards SLM by leveraging public and private investments; • metrics to measure progress and motivate companies and investors. 	