

2022 Désertif'Actions

Agroecology, a boon for achieving the objectives of land degradation neutrality

According to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), land degradation neutrality (LDN) is “a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services to enhance food security remain stable, or increase, within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems”. In other words, while it is not possible to achieve a situation where land degradation is completely halted, a neutral situation combining a reduction in the rate of land degradation and the restoration of degraded land should be the way forward. The implementation of NDT through sustainable land management has multiple objectives. It must contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation (storage of organic carbon in soils), to biodiversity protection and to ensuring food and nutritional security for populations through the strengthening of responsible land governance. Thus the NDT consolidates the synergies between the three Rio conventions and contributes significantly to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Land degradation neutrality: ambitious targets for the end of 2030

At the Rio+20 Summit in 2012, in their declaration "The future we want", the member countries of the United Nations made a global commitment to strive for a land degradation neutral world. Three years later, this commitment was translated into Sustainable Development Goal 15 - target 15.3 of the 2030 Agenda.

SDG 15 - Target 15.3: *By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation neutral world.*

As part of its mandate, the UNCCD is designated as the referent for this objective and is involved in the implementation of concrete actions, whether it be in supporting the setting up of a specific fund (LDN Fund - Mirova), or in helping countries to formulate voluntary national targets and action plans to achieve neutrality (to date 127 countries and 450 million hectares are targeted). This is based on the "avoid, reduce and restore" triptych as recommended in 2016 by the Science Policy Interface¹. Several countries are currently developing transformative projects, with 14 concept notes and 6 regional projects under construction. Despite these efforts, with less than ten years to go before the 2030 deadline, it seems unlikely that the targets set will be met. Once again, civil society wishes to sound the alarm and to insist on two major aspects to be taken into consideration by the UNCCD and by the States.

¹ See the UNCCD website for the summary (in English and French) at: <http://www2.unccd.int/publications/land-balance>



