ELD CAMPUS

Module: The Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) Initiative
In this module you will learn about:

- Background and objectives of the ELD Initiative;
- The ELD Initiative’s core partners and contributors;
- ELD’s contribution to the SDGs;
- Similar initiatives under other UN environmental conventions;
- The approach of ELD (in general); and
- Past and present activities of the initiative

If you would like to deepen your know-how on the initiative, further information is provided in the script on this module. Web-links to additional material are provided at the end of this presentation.
The ELD Initiative

- ELD is a global initiative, initiated in 2012 by

- It is hosted by the German International Cooperation in Bonn, Germany
- ELD mainly works at the science-policy interface
- Core partners of the ELD Initiative are research institutions, independent think tanks, government institutions, NGOs, and organisations working in the field of international cooperation

[www.eld-initiative.org](http://www.eld-initiative.org)
Background

- The initiative was created against the background of an increasing rate of land degradation.
- At present, 52% of land used for agriculture worldwide is moderately or severely affected by soil degradation.
- This process results in the **loss of ecosystem services from land and land-based ecosystems**, that are necessary for human livelihoods.
Background

- The ELD Initiative aims at bringing to light all the under-appreciated values of land and land-based ecosystem services, which are often not considered in management and policy decisions.
Vision

The ELD network of partners share a joint vision, which is

- to transform the global understanding of the economic value of productive land based on both market and non-market values;
- to improve stakeholder awareness of socio-economic arguments for sustainable land management (SLM);
- to prevent the loss of natural capital, preserve ecosystem services, combat climate change, and address food, energy and water security.
ELD’s core partners and contributors include
Similar initiatives under other conventions

- Environmental valuation methodologies have become significantly more prominent over the past years.
- Several discussion platforms and initiatives were launched in this sense in support of the three major environmental conventions:
  - Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
  - Convention on Biodiversity Protection (UNCBD)
  - Convention on Combatting Desertification (UNCCD)
Reports on the economics of climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation

- The UNFCCC published the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change in 2006.
- The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) was published in 2008 (Sukhdev, 2008).
- The ELD Initiative, in support of the UNCCD, published its core report The Value of Land in 2015.

ELD Initiative (2015) – The Value of Land
ELD Initiative (2015) – The Value of Land (quick guide)
The ELD Initiative basically contributes to the achievement of two targets under SDG 15:

1. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

2. Contribute to the achievement of two targets under SDG 15.
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 (LDN)

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

15.9: By 2020, integrate ecosystems and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes and poverty reduction strategies, and accounts
Contribution of SDG 15 to other SDGs

Source: UNEP-TEEB
Core activities of ELD

- ELD developed a **holistic framework** for the consideration of the economic values of land in political decision-making processes;
- ELD estimates **economic benefits deriving from sustainable land management practices** and compares them to the costs of these practices as a basis for investment and policy decisions;
- Based on results from cost-benefit analysis, ELD sharpens **awareness** of the socio-economic value of land and related ecosystem services;
- ELD proposes effective **solutions, policies, and activities to reduce and reverse land degradation**.

→ **Economic arguments can be strong drivers for sustainable land use!**
ELD’s 6+1 step approach

ELD studies quantify the costs of land degradation as well as the economic benefits of SLM, using the 6+1 approach:

1. **Inception**- definition of the objective and scope of the study
2. **Analysis and description of the geographical characteristics**
3. **Identification of ecosystem services types**
4. **Analysis of the role of ecosystem services in community livelihoods and economic valuation**
5. **Scenario development based on land degradation patterns, pressures and trends**
6. **Cost-benefit analysis (business as usual versus action!) and decision-making**

6+1 step: *Take action!*
ELD timeline

- **2011:** Inception of the ELD Initiative
- **2014/15:** ELD Practitioner’s Guide
- **2014/15:** ELD User Guide
- **2015:** ELD Value of Land Report
- **2015:** ELD Africa Report
- **2015:** ELD Materiality Screening Tool
- **2016:** EU-co-financed project (-2020)
- **2019:** ELD Campus established

**Methodology development and ELD studies**

**Outreach:**
- capacity development and studies
- (focus: Africa)

**Envisaged:**
- Roll-out of ELD learning and teaching materials to partner institutions

Please find a detailed timeline as well as further information on case studies, publications and capacity building at [www.eld-initiative.org](http://www.eld-initiative.org)!
ELD studies so far
National activities: ELD’s current core project (2017-2020)

- Currently, the ELD Initiative works in eight African countries under the umbrella of the EU-BMZ co-financed “Reversing Land Degradation in Africa by Scaling-up EverGreen Agriculture” Project
- Partner countries are: Senegal, Mali, Niger, Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya, and Somalia
- More than 100 experts from research and policy have received training in the ELD 6+1 approach
ELD’s current core project

- ELD studies focus on land degradation hotspots (defined in the LDN process) and economically viable SLM options for ongoing in all countries.

- The studies are led by the national and local partner institutions under ELD guidance and supervision.

- The ELD Initiative encourages high-level policy dialogues on the need for investments into SLM. It does this with project partners including ICRAF, international NGOs and GIZ projects in the countries.
Video: The Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) Initiative at a glance
Further information and reading on ELD:

Script for this module

Introductory ELD material
ELD Initiative (2013) – Brochure
ELD Initiative (2015) – The Value of Land
ELD Initiative (2015) – The Value of Land (quick guide)

Further ELD material
ELD publications and case studies
ELD Digital Learning Courses
ELD Multi-stakeholder consultations
Regreening Africa project brochure ELD component

ELD videos
If you have questions, please contact us: info@eld-initiative.org

You can find further information on our website: www.eld-initiative.org

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