Agroecological solutions to inspire transition

2022 Désertif’Actions
An international civil society dynamic
1- Reminders on LDN

Achieving land degradation neutrality means:

• reduce the rate of degradation of land with little or no degradation

• and compensate for further degradation by restoring degraded land

The concept of land degradation neutrality (LND) emphasises the importance of land restoration.
Note: the hierarchy of responses

Figure 4: La hiérarchie des réponses en matière de NDT et les mesures pour parvenir à la neutralité

1. ÉVITER
   Éviter : la dégradation des terres peut être évitée en s’attaquant aux facteurs de dégradation et en prenant des mesures proactives pour prévenir les changements négatifs affectant la qualité des terres non dégradées et favoriser leur résilience au travers de pratiques de réglementation, de planification et de gestion appropriées.

2. RÉDUIRE
   Réduire : la dégradation des terres peut être réduite ou atténuée sur des terres agricoles et forestières en appliquant des pratiques de gestion durable (gestion durable des terres et des forêts).

3. INVERSER
   Inverser : dans la mesure du possible, une partie (mais rarement la totalité) du potentiel de production et des services écologiques des terres dégradées peut être restaurée ou réhabilitée en aidant activement à la reprise des fonctions écosystémique.

Source : Orr et al., 2017
LDN at the heart of international issues

LDN is at the crossroads of the 3 international treaties for a sustainable planet:

- Prevents degradation of productive land
- Stops the erosion of biodiversity
- Fights against climate change

Figure 1. Relation entre l’ODD 15 et sa cible 15.3 et d’autres ODD. Source : Akhtar Schuster et coll. (en préparation)
2- The LDN within the UNCCD

Evolution of the concept since 2012

– UNCCD a new approach ZNLD / Clear strategy for Rio+20
– 2012 Rio+20 Towards a land degradation neutral world
– 2015 SDG 15 and target 15.3

Definition of indicators to define degraded areas and monitor progress

– Land use and vegetation cover
– Land productivity
– Carbon content in soils
Support to countries to define voluntary targets and develop action plans

=> 127 countries have defined their action plan and voluntary targets

Development of transformative projects

=> 52 countries participated: 14 concept notes developed

⇒ 38 countries proposed 6 regional projects

Creation of the LDN fund

Observations:
- Difficulty in defining areas to reduce land degradation
- A priority for action is restoration
3- D’A 22 : what we want to defend

1. The importance of investing in "avoid and reduce" as well as "restore" axes

2. The relevance of agroecology to "avoid and reduce" land degradation
1/ Why invest as much in "avoid and reduce" as in "restore"?

- **Limitations of the "restore" focus**
  - Risk of falling into a principle of compensation: restore to balance and achieve neutrality but continue to degrade elsewhere
  - So-called restored land does not have the same value as land before it was degraded: irreversible losses of natural capital
  - **Very high cost** of restoration which takes a long time to achieve tangible results
  - What about the beneficiaries of the restoration: large-scale investments that often benefit very little the local population
1/ Why invest as much in "avoid and reduce" as in "restore"?

**ARGUMENTS**

- **Interest of the "avoid and reduce" focus**

  - Acts directly to solve farmers' problems rather than looking and acting elsewhere: they are the **direct beneficiaries**
  
  - Perpetuates and strengthens existing agricultural systems by **limiting collateral effects**: reduces the risks of disorganisation, privatisation, etc.
  
  - **Preserves** non-replaceable natural **capital**
  
  - **Lower cost investments over shorter periods of time** if taken in time
  
  - Actions to be implemented on private land or collective spaces: building on **existing land status**
1/ Why invest as much in "avoid and reduce" as in "restore"?

- Additional elements?
  - ...
  - ...
2/ How is agroecology relevant to "avoid and reduce"?

Avoiding land degradation

– By reducing the factors responsible for degradation
– Through proactive measures in a holistic and territorial approach
  • Preventing adverse changes in the quality of non-degraded land
  • Increase their resilience through appropriate regulation, planning and management practices

– Avoiding the expansion of agriculture at the expense of natural areas
  • Through agroecological intensification of agriculture
  • Through the adoption of sustainable land management practices
2/ How is agroecology relevant to "avoid and reduce"?

**Reducing land degradation**

- **Eliminate or reduce land degradation factors**
  - Limit changes in land use
  - Eliminate harmful practices
  - Reduce and regulate pressure on resources
  - Reduce land insecurity

- **Adopt GTD and agro-ecological itineraries and practices**
  - Rehabilitation of soils, their biology, their organic matter content to increase productivity
  - Increasing the resilience of agroecosystems and the people who depend on them

- **Undertake a progressive approach** to move towards a land development trajectory that increases both productivity and the other services associated with good functioning

- **Maximising the preservation of environmental assets** and the maintenance of biodiversity in agrosystems
2/ How is agroecology relevant to "avoid and reduce"?

=> Field experiences show that agroecological practices can combat land degradation factors by:

- Improving soil fertility: enrichment with organic matter (manure, compost, RCW, green manure, alluvium, etc.)

- Preserving water resources: maintaining humidity and a microclimate (soil structure, stacked crops, LCD techniques, etc.), avoiding pollution of the water table (reduction of fertilisers, etc.)

- Protecting against erosion and strong winds: hedges, planting, soil cover...

- Protecting against scalding and drought: staggered crops, soil cover, etc.
2/ How is agroecology relevant to "avoid and reduce"?

- Additional elements?
  - ...
  - ...
2/ How is agroecology relevant to "avoid and reduce"?

=> Field experiences show that agro-ecological intensification allows:

- Producing more by improving yields and quality
- Improving food and nutrition security and economic income
- Developed in peri-urban areas to supply local markets
- Limit the need for expansion of agricultural land into natural areas
2/ How is agroecology relevant to "avoid and reduce"?

- Additional elements?
  - ...
  - ...

ARGUMENTS
4- Breaking down the barriers to the deployment of agroecology

There is a need for technical, political and/or financial support:

– Risk management during the transition phase (2-3 years)
– Facilitating access to agricultural water (in peri-urban areas for example) and land
– Facilitating access to common areas for AE (e.g. in rural areas)
– Facilitation of cross-sectoral dialogue (agriculture-livestock-environment) at local, national, regional...
– Promote coherence of interventions (agroecology vs. specialised monoculture)
4- Breaking down the barriers to the deployment of agroecology

- Additional elements?
  - ...
  - ...
4- Breaking down the barriers to the deployment of agroecology

Towards a major public policy commitment

– Integrate the 3 dimensions into LDN action plans (Avoid, Reduce and Restore)

– Integrate the principles of agroecology into the systems promoted within these LDN action plans

– Integrate neutrality issues with biodiversity and climate issues in national action plans
4- Breaking down the barriers to the deployment of agroecology

- *Additional elements*?

- ...

- ...
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

More information:

https://desertif-actions.org

And to whet your appetite: watch this video