

BMZ



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development



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Sector Project to Combat Desertification

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giz

Deutsche Gesellschaft
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A herd of goats is grazing on a dry, hilly landscape. The goats are of various colors, including white, black, and brown. The terrain is arid and sandy, with sparse vegetation. The sky is clear and blue.

The sector project

Land degradation, especially in arid regions (desertification), is a growing challenge for development policy in all parts of the world. The Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was adopted by the United Nations in Rio in 1992. Germany has been an active supporter of the Convention from the start and hosts its secretariat.

The Sector Project to Combat Desertification assists the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany's UNCCD focal point, in developing policies and strategies relating to all aspects of land degradation and desertification. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH has been commissioned to implement this sector project.

What challenges do we face?

In light of the constantly growing world population, food production needs to increase by 50-70 per cent by 2050 to ensure food security. Yet soil loss and land degradation are advancing – a quarter of the world's land surface has become degraded in the past 25 years and each year a further 20 million hectares are affected.

Therefore, in order to achieve long-term development goals it is essential to increase yields and at the same time to conserve land and soils, which form the basis of agricultural production. The causes of land degradation must be tackled and political conditions must be improved to provide greater incentives for sustainable land management. Promising existing schemes must be boosted and extended.



How does the sector project work?

The sector project combines advice on policy, strategy and technical issues and operates in three action areas:

- 1) Advising BMZ on policy and strategy concerning UNCCD processes with the aim of ensuring that issues of land degradation and land management are appropriately covered in strategy papers and political discussions.
- 2) Organising and disseminating knowledge and experience relating to proven methods for promoting sustainable land management in arid regions, and advising on the implementation of measures to combat desertification in German development cooperation projects in selected partner countries.
- 3) Hosts the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) Initiative's Secretariat, which aims to analyse the costs of land degradation and the benefits of land rehabilitation.

www.eld-initiative.org

Practical examples of the sector project's work

Sustainable land management in development and budget planning, Peru

In terms of desertification Peru is one of the worst affected countries in Latin America. Climate change, soil degradation and decline of natural vegetation are mutually reinforcing and amplify the negative impacts of soil erosion, decreasing agricultural and forestry production and loss of unique biodiversity.

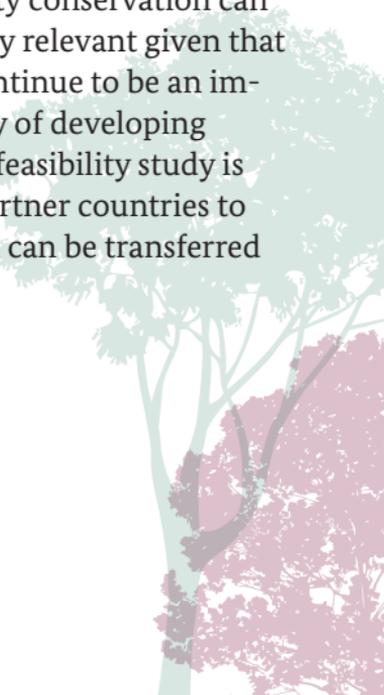
With assistance from the sector project, GIZ is advising the regional government in the department of Piura on incorporating sustainable land management into plans for regional development and public spending and on how to implement these plans. For example, a management model has been introduced that will promote the restoration of degraded dry forests through natural regeneration and forest fire prevention. Some 3,000 hectares of forest have already been successfully restored. By advising the Ministry of Environment on targeted dissemination, this experience from Piura is already being transferred to other regions of the country.





Dissemination of innovative approaches – sustainable land management in Madagascar

Processing and disseminating successful approaches that foster sustainable land management makes an effective contribution to the practical implementation of policies and strategies. One such approach involves linking the rehabilitation of degraded land to the sustainable production of wood for energy. A method developed by German development cooperation in Madagascar provides an impressive demonstration of how the goals of sustainable land management, poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation can be combined. This triple impact is highly relevant given that even in the medium term wood will continue to be an important source of energy in the majority of developing countries. Through the sector project a feasibility study is therefore being conducted in several partner countries to assess whether this successful approach can be transferred to other countries and regions.





Costs and benefits of different grazing techniques, Botswana

Economic and political decision-makers need facts and figures before they can take decisions and implement measures to combat land degradation. The ELD Initiative finances case studies that involve calculating the costs of land degradation and identifying alternative land-use strategies. A case study in the Kalahari, Botswana, provides an example.

The case study is investigating use and management practices that are widespread in southern Africa and semi-arid pastoral regions worldwide; it covers areas that are affected in various ways and to different degrees by degradation. The aim of the study is to evaluate the costs, benefits and compromises associated with different use and management strategies for grazing systems.



International initiative for soil conservation and rehabilitation

Fertile soils are becoming increasingly scarce and the goal of food security for a steadily growing world population is posing an ever greater challenge. It is therefore extremely important to consider rehabilitating degraded land. BMZ is addressing this challenge through the special unit 'One World, No Hunger' and has commissioned the sector project to take part in planning an initiative for soil conservation and rehabilitation. The initiative will have an international political dimension and will also be linked to concrete implementation in cooperation countries.

The private sector – a key partner and actor in the fight against advancing land degradation

The ELD Initiative has identified the private sector as one of the three important stakeholders in its process, alongside the scientific community and policy-makers. The private sector has until now not been aware of the major opportunities and risk mitigation gained in practising sustainable land management. The ELD Initiative is addressing this issue and highlighting these opportunities for the private sector to invest in this area. At events and in forums, the ELD Secretariat organises and supports strategy development with representatives of relevant businesses, the government and scientific sectors.



**THE ECONOMICS OF
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