

TerrAfrica Information Note

TerrAfrica is a partnership that aims to scale up harmonized support for effective and efficient country-driven Sustainable Land Management (SLM) practices in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). This shared goal is part of a collective response to repeated calls for action by African stakeholders to support them in more fully confronting the challenge that land degradation poses to the environment and African sustainable development.

In the 18 months since its launch at the UNCCD COP-7, TerrAfrica has developed into a broad dynamic partnership which has made significant progress towards establishing the conditions for scaling up SLM in SSA. TerrAfrica partners are implementing a wide range of activities under the umbrella of a joint annual work program, itself a key tool for driving the coalition building and harmonization process critical to succeeding in TerrAfrica's mission.

Activities under the work program are organized around three mutually reinforcing Activity Lines – Coalition Building, Knowledge Management and Investments – which together aim to generate the coalitions, advocacy, 'know-how', policies and investment packages necessary for full and effective mainstreaming, up-scaling and financing of SLM. By acting through a joint work program, partners can leverage their own efforts, and organize and amplify their actions according to their respective comparative advantages.

The Partnership in Action

Partners have taken the lead in laying the groundwork for increased and stronger involvement in SLM in SSA countries, building on the tools and partnerships developed under TerrAfrica to advance operational donor alignment at the country level around a common vision, investment tools, and knowledge base. Activities are being designed to build on and implement existing SLM related actions and strategies, including the UNCCD/NAP, NEPAD and PRSP processes. Progress has been achieved in Ethiopia, where the Government has made a formal decision to develop and implement a national framework for SLM, and has taken steps to establish an SLM platform at federal level to engage and align the contributions of all stakeholders in the country (see Box 1 overleaf). TerrAfrica partners are also working with the governments of Uganda, Ghana, Burkina Faso and Namibia to support country programming approaches for SLM. Meanwhile, country dialogue on SLM has been initiated in a number of other SSA countries, including Mali, Malawi, Niger, Gambia, Eritrea, Nigeria and Senegal.

NEPAD has played an essential role in advocating for SLM at the regional level, particularly through the ongoing development of its Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) and its Environmental Action Plan (EAP). The NEPAD TerrAfrica Operational Framework, designed to operationalize the SLM objectives of the CAADP and EAP visions, is currently under implementation by NEPAD and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), who are coordinating their activities through the implementation of joint work programs. Specific progress has been made by COMESA, which will set up regional coordination mechanisms and knowledge support systems to facilitate cross-country cooperation and peer review and mutual learning processes, while the NEPAD Secretariat will focus on facilitating policy dialogue, mutual review and the coordination of development assistance. Ongoing institutional support for these processes is being provided by TerrAfrica, in line with its business plan objective to strengthen regional African advocacy capacity and leadership in support of SLM.

Thanks to the dynamic involvement of all TerrAfrica partners a range of analytical tools, designed to support the above country-level activities, will soon be available. FAO has been actively leading on this front, especially in the context of preparation of the GEF Strategic Investment Program for SLM (see Box 2 overleaf), and is currently coordinating the development of the Country Support Tool and SLM vision paper. Together these will form the basis of the TerrAfrica Knowledge Base, which is also under development with FAO. Similarly, the UNCCD-GM has led the work on the Country Engagement Strategy for TerrAfrica partners, as well as enhancements to the FIELD database, including the

development of a methodology for SLM reporting and portfolio reviews. UNEP has been developing a number of tools in collaboration with institutions such as the CGIAR for assessing the relationship between soil carbon stocks and land management as well as analysis of land-use change and impacts on the environment which have been made available to the TerrAfrica partnership.

Other partners, including the World Bank, the AfDB, IFAD and UNDP have made significant efforts to promote and advance the SLM agenda through their internal business lines. The World Bank, host to the TerrAfrica Secretariat, has positioned SLM more strongly as a key element of the Africa Action Plan, embedding the goals of TerrAfrica into the broader strategic framework of the Bank's Africa Region. Similarly, AfDB has been actively mainstreaming SLM in Bank projects and operations and has ensured that the new division of Natural Resources Conservation and Environmental Protection has SLM as part of its mandate. Meanwhile UNDP have led special advisory groups convened by the partnership to develop joint strategies for M&E and civil society engagement.

Box 1**Progress towards a national SLM framework in Ethiopia**

Significant steps have been taken towards establishing a national framework for SLM investments in Ethiopia, which will offer a mechanism to engage and align development partners' and other stakeholders' SLM contributions in the country.

Following the Government of Ethiopia's formal decision to develop and implement the national framework for SLM, a joint mission was made to the country in December 2006 by key development partners (World Bank, UNCCD, Global Mechanism, NORAD, UNDP and WFP) to review progress towards the development of the framework, with a specific focus on the partnership and coalition building elements, and to discuss the joint next steps required.

These next steps will include cooperation between the Government and its development partners at two levels: on the one hand support to the SLM platform set-up at federal level by the Government to engage and align the contributions of all stakeholders in the country; on the other hand targeted support at regional and local levels for on the ground SLM investments, to implement priorities set under the national framework.

Ethiopia has been an active partner of TerrAfrica since its inception. As well as being instrumental in the development of the national framework, the TerrAfrica partnership will support implementation in the country through the mobilization of various financial and non-financial resources, the dissemination of targeted knowledge, toolkits, best practices, and through the coordination of M&E strategy and indicators.

Box 2**Strategic Investment Program for SLM in Sub-Saharan Africa (SIP)**

The GEF Strategic Investment Program for SLM in Sub-Saharan Africa (SIP) will provide an umbrella investment vehicle to support Sub-Saharan countries in their efforts to scale up SLM on the ground, in line with the TerrAfrica approach. The SIP aims to accomplish this by more efficiently leveraging GEF grants to strengthen donor and sectoral alignment, align land-related policy dialogues, enhance investment quality and impact, and engage more predictably over the longer timeframe needed to improve the enabling environment for SLM.

The SIP has been prepared with the support of all GEF implementing and executing agencies under the convening leadership of the NEPAD Secretariat, and in close consultation with the UNCCD and the Regional Economic Communities. Funding will be channeled strategically through all agencies, cooperating at country level based on their comparative advantages and TerrAfrica principles. Additional financing from the GEF is also being integrated into the SIP to help climate proof land management.

The SIP has a simple implementation structure designed to develop the support tools and coordinating mechanisms for agencies and countries to collectively align, harmonize and scale-up their ongoing activities at country level, based on gap analyses and a country-led prioritization process.

The Program Brief for the SIP is due for submission to the GEF Council in June. Implementation is anticipated to begin in July.