

# WOCAT 2020+

## The Global Network for Sustainable Land Management



*putting land on the global agenda,  
mobilizing knowledge to fight degradation,  
stimulating the uptake of sustainable practices  
for the benefit of people and nature*

Proposed by the **WOCAT** Consortium Partners

# WOCAT

 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra  
  
Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC

*u<sup>b</sup>*  
UNIVERSITÄT  
BERN  
  
CDE  
CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT  
AND ENVIRONMENT

 Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

 **ISRIC**  
World Soil Information

Alliance

 Biodiversity  
INTERNATIONAL  
  
 **CIAT**  
International Center for Tropical Agriculture  
Since 1967 Science for sustainable change

 **ICARDA**  
Science for resilient livelihoods in dry areas

**ICIMOD**

**giz** Deutsche Gesellschaft  
für Internationale  
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



## Building on 25 years of experience

**The issue:** Inappropriate land management practices, along with climate change and associated disasters, place enormous pressure on natural resources, undermining land productivity and ecosystem resilience. In order to address these challenges, concerted efforts are needed to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation and aim for more sustainable landscapes. With the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030, a global call to action was launched to scale up restoration from successful pilot initiatives to areas of millions of hectares. Restoring ecosystem functions and services, increasing production sustainably, enhancing water security and climate resilience, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, managing (agro) biodiversity, and improving rural livelihoods are major challenges to be confronted. There is increasing interest from local and national governments in implementing and mainstreaming sustainable land management (SLM) as a means to do so.

However, as shown in the IPCC report on Climate Change and Land (2019), there is a number of interconnected **hurdles** to the **scaling up of SLM**: limited access to knowledge, information, new SLM technologies, and problem-solving capacities; weak policy, institutional and legal environments; hindering land tenure and property rights; lack of adaptive knowledge management that would foster learning in project cycles; lack of monitoring and evaluation of impacts; limited access to public and private funding for scaling up; and lack of innovative business models for SLM technologies.

**Our potential:** Global **networks** and **knowledge platforms** play a crucial role in tackling these challenges, as they are in a unique position to put land on the global agenda, to broker knowledge between science and societal partners, to create synergies, and foster the capacity of institutions and stakeholders. Thus, they are in a position to foster better coordination across governance scales, a better mobilization of knowledge for SLM and land degradation neutrality (LDN), and a better understanding of how change comes about and of where it already happens.

The World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (**WOCAT**) is particularly well positioned to design solutions for a faster dissemination and uptake of SLM. It builds on **25 years of experience**, a global network of partners at all policy levels, a widely recognized SLM knowledge platform and toolset (including the UNCCD-recommended database with nearly 2000 SLM practices from 130 countries), an outstanding capacity for informing the implementation of SLM, and a wide array of capacity building tools and methods for different target audiences.

The forward-looking **WOCAT 2020+ initiative**, developed by the WOCAT Consortium and long-term partners from around the globe, will build on these assets and stimulate the uptake of SLM around the world through a strengthened global partnership. The WOCAT network will commit to achieving key targets of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**: promoting land-based solutions to reach zero hunger (SDG 2), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), supporting life on land (SDG 15) - particularly land degradation neutrality - promoting climate action (SDG 13), and reducing poverty (SDG 1). Achieving these targets will not be possible without focusing on interlinked targets such as governance (SDG 16) and sustainable production and consumption (SDG 12). As a global platform, it will unite stakeholders in a partnership for **transformative actions** towards a future where knowledge is mobilized to fight degradation, land is on the global agenda, and sustainable practices are successfully taken up – benefitting people and nature.

## WOCAT 2020+ initiative

**Our goal:** WOCAT 2020+ aims to be a leading and collaborative platform of expertise and a major transformative force in supporting countries and institutions around the world to scale up SLM, achieve LDN, and foster related sustainable development goals (SDG) addressed by the three Rio conventions, UNCCD, UNFCCC and CBD. Building on the vast knowledge contained in the global SLM database and new partnership actions, WOCAT 2020+ will synthesize local, national and regional experiences, conduct and facilitate targeted research and disseminate lessons learned. Thus, it will provide new SLM insights and guidance to a wide range of stakeholders, from the local to the global level.

**Our strategy:** The WOCAT 2020+ 10-year strategy builds on WOCAT's long-term investment (since 1992) and follows three inter-linked pillars of action (Figure 1):

**(1) Proof:** The first pillar will provide firm **evidence** about SLM and land degradation to policy makers, planners, land users, and the private sector. It will use and promote existing and new tools and methods for knowledge management and decision support in collaboration with local, national and international partners and initiatives. It will continue to promote the accessibility, analysis and dissemination of SLM good practices through the global WOCAT SLM database, as requested by UNCCD parties in Decision19/COP.14. It will use the growing dataset for comprehensive SLM analyses, including research on barriers to scaling up SLM and on the operationalization of landscape approaches.

**(2) Priority:** The second pillar will guide evidence-based **decision-making** and priority setting on SLM, LDN, and addressing trade-offs between conflicting land uses and land-related sustainability targets at various levels. It will propose land-based solutions that are designed based on criteria that are equitably negotiated among stakeholders. It will focus on the role of gender in SLM decision-making and implementation and focus on tenure and equitable access to land and water.

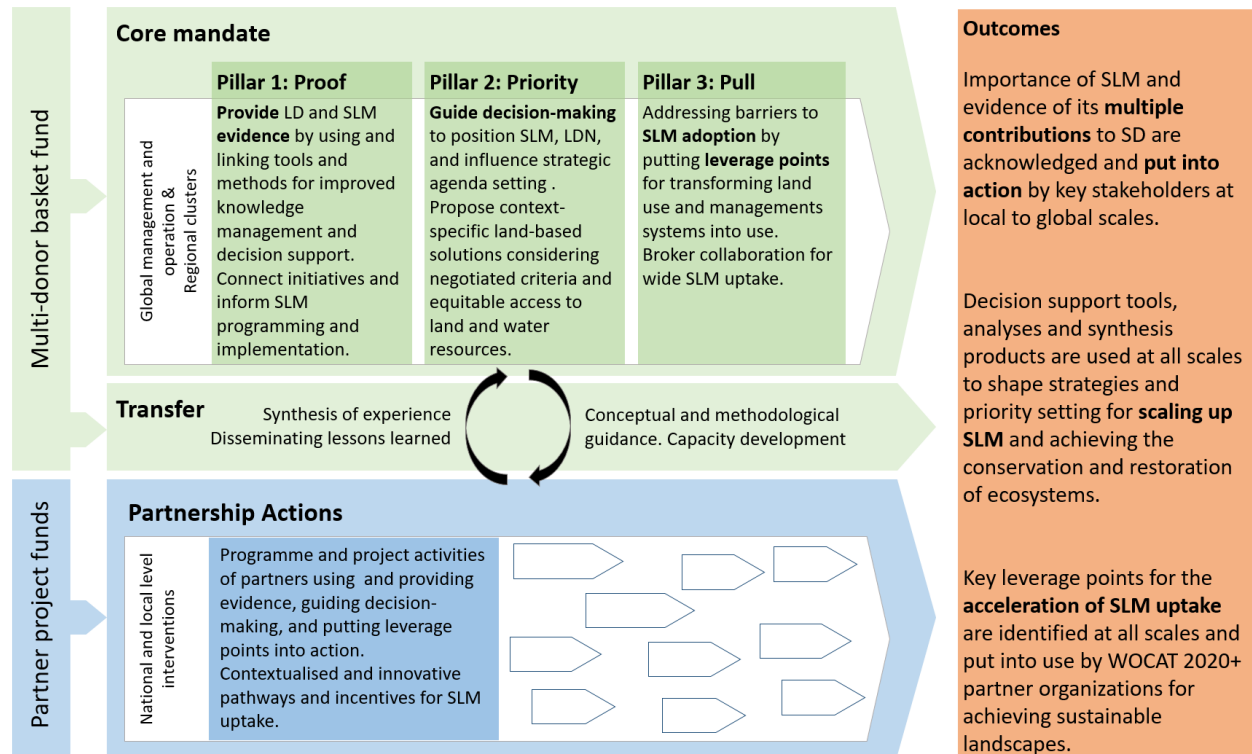
**(3) Pull:** The third pillar will address barriers to **SLM adoption** by identifying and tapping **leverage points** for SLM mainstreaming and integration in decision-making processes in policy, private sector, and civil society, for strategic planning, brokering collaboration and strengthened capacity. Such leverage points include finance and incentive mechanisms, land use planning processes, or awareness creation<sup>1</sup>. For that purpose, it will more actively integrate theories of social and behavioral science, and concepts of resources governance. Finally, it will emphasize on the combined impact of SLM actions towards addressing multiple issues for sustainable development and maintaining ecosystems and their services.

**Multi-level engagement:** WOCAT 2020+ will be active at multiple scales to maximize impacts: At the **global level**, the Consortium Partners will strive to increase the visibility of land issues, SLM and land degradation in global sustainability agendas - across all international conventions and other global initiatives e.g. related to water - and accelerate scaling-out of solutions. In an effort to decentralize its current structure, WOCAT 2020+ will set up **regional clusters** as catalysts for mainstreaming SLM and LDN in the regions' strategic agendas. Regional clusters will help enhancing capacities, through south-south collaboration, in identifying appropriate solutions at farm and landscape level as well as innovative financing mechanisms, policies and land use planning. This will inform SLM programming and implementation. At the

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the Decision Support Framework for Mainstreaming and Scaling out developed in the GEF/FAO DS-SLM project and applied with 15 countries.

**national and local level**, WOCAT 2020+ will support partner institutions in countries to design, acquire and implement SLM projects and programs that contribute to the WOCAT 2020+ objectives: and it will be a willing partner and ally in these initiatives.



**Figure 1: WOCAT2020+ strategy**

**Core mandate:** The strategy of WOCAT2020+ will be based on a core mandate geared towards accelerating the global uptake of SLM and its multiple contributions to sustainable development. The core mandate, executed by a steering committee, a global executive team supported by a secretariat, and regional clusters, is designed to lead the three pillars of action - Proof, Priority and Pull - in partnership with the global network.

**Partnership actions:** The global management and regional clusters will identify and support partnership actions, implemented by partner institutions and projects in the field. It will harness this existing potential, support partners with new acquisitions, and gear the portfolio of partnership actions towards **effective uptake of SLM**. By taking an active role in shaping this portfolio, WOCAT 2020+ will have the necessary contextual understanding, practical experience, and ground-truthing that will enable it to assert its global relevance and transformative power.

**Transfer:** The strategy will actively promote a two-way transfer between core mandate and partnership actions. This vertical integration across scales will take place in the form of an adaptive project management and steering mechanism, based on frequent and well-coordinated exchange and reflection. It will help harnessing **lessons learned** in concrete implementation of partnership actions and avail them as **syntheses** of experiences and relevant evidence that are **transferable** and applicable beyond the partners' individual project activities. However, it must also reflect on the experiences of partners' project to align and adapt

the WOCAT 2020+ strategy to guarantee that it adapts to emerging needs and changes coming from the partners and the contexts that they are working in.

**Outcomes:** With its core mandate, partnership actions, and transfer component, WOCAT2020+ aims to reach the following three outcomes by 2030:

- 1) Importance of SLM and evidence of its multiple contributions to Sustainable Development are acknowledged and put into action by key stakeholders at local to global scales.
- 2) Decision support tools, analyses and synthesis products are used at all scales to shape strategies and priority setting for scaling up SLM and achieving ecosystem conservation and restoration.
- 3) Key leverage points for the acceleration of SLM uptake are identified at all scales and put into use by WOCAT 2020+ partner organizations for achieving sustainable landscapes.

**Pathways:** WOCAT 2020+ will bring together, guide, and support its network partners to harness pathways towards sustainable landscapes. While the choice of concrete pathways is strongly dependent on social-environmental characteristics in the targeted contexts, WOCAT 2020+ will tackle four key entry points with its network partners:

- **Facilitate support** to land users and extension services at technical and socio-economic levels, e.g. through emphasizing the role and decision making power of women in land management, or the inclusion of youth in agricultural production, or the importance of land tenure.
- Development and implementation of **landscape approaches** for (a) tackling SLM beyond the farm level, (b) promoting multi-stakeholder processes for robust decision-making on landscape-level SLM strategies, and (c) securing the ownership and support of relevant authorities.
- Integrating, in collaboration with the **private sector**, SLM principles into value chains or certification schemes of commodities for local and global markets, and helping to mainstream SLM as a relevant criterion for private and public procurement.
- **Policy dialogue and support** for working across the Rio Conventions and targets set, by integrating water, land, biodiversity and climate policies into coherent context-relevant strategies.

## Organizational structure

**WOCAT2020+ is a network of organizations and individuals** wanting to advance Sustainable Land Management, having corresponding skills, and agreeing on the vision, mission, overall goals and objectives of WOCAT2020+. Membership is granted through an application process reviewed by the Executive Team and validated by the Steering Committee. The Network will strive to be gender-balanced in all its functions.

### Type of Members

**Organizational Members (OM)** represent organizations actively using WOCAT tools and methods and contributing to the WOCAT Global SLM Database. OM are priority partners for joint project design and implementation. Each OM has one vote during the election of Steering Committee members through their official representative or delegate.

**Individual Members (IM)** are individuals requesting to join WOCAT and not representing an organization. They benefit from WOCAT tools and methods and have access to detailed information on SLM practices

recorded in the WOCAT Global SLM Database. At the same time, they are active users and promoters of these products and outputs. IM can participate in project acquisition, network meetings and other events, but do not have a right to vote or elect.

**Roster of Experts (RoE)** constitutes a pool of (WOCAT/SLM) experience, with institutions and experts having major former or present involvement in WOCAT and/or SLM. IM submit their profile to an Expert Profiles database available on the WOCAT Website and the Executive Team validates their inclusion in the RoE.

## Bodies

**Consortium Partners (CP)** are the seven organizations having created WOCAT 2020+. They act as high-level Ambassadors for the network and are permanent members of the Steering Committee. Their permanent role allows WOCAT2020+ to build on solid experience to address key issues and to benefit from existing networks. CPs are the signatory organizations for the WOCAT framework agreement.

The **Steering Committee (SC)** provides support and approves the long-term strategies, annual plans, and budgets of WOCAT 2020+. It oversees the implementation of the annual plans and is responsible for providing strategic direction to the Executive Team. SC members appoint Advisory Board members and approve or refuse recruitments into the Executive Team, Secretariat, and Regional Clusters. The SC is composed of nine members; CPs have four to five seats and the rest goes to other OMs. The SC Chair is elected among its members, all of which are self-funded.

The **Advisory Board (AB)** provides an external viewpoint on the strategy, organization and activities of WOCAT2020+. It advises the SC and Executive Team. The AB is formed by organizations that are not member of WOCAT, appointed by the SC for three years. The SC ensures that the AB represents several world regions. AB members can be re-elected (unlimited number of times).

The **Executive Team (ET)**, with support from the Secretariat, is responsible for the global management of WOCAT2020+, including: developing and implementing strategies, acquiring projects and securing a multi-donor basket fund for the core mandate, securing visibility, network care and support, monitoring and reporting. The ET is composed of three OM applying for this role and nominated by the SC. It is financed through the multi-donor basket fund.

The **Secretariat** supports the ET with overall management tasks including organizational and administrative support, requests from the network, and commissioning tasks to IM or OM. The secretariat members, who can be in the same institutions as the ET members or in others, are paid through the multi-donor basket fund.

The **Regional Clusters (RC)** are official representatives of WOCAT 2020+, defend its interests and promote its messages, visibility and acceptance in the regions. They act as catalysts for mainstreaming SLM and LDN in strategic agendas and for enhancing capacities, through south-south collaboration, with other RCs and other institutions, in implementing and scaling up SLM. They promote the use, by relevant stakeholders, of WOCAT 2020+ data, knowledge products, capacity development modules, and tools. Each RC is run by a Coordination Team (CT) composed of three OMs legally registered in the region. Every three years, OMs in the region elect/re-elect their CT members and CT chair. The SC approves these elections. The staff time of CT members and expenses incurred while fulfilling the CT responsibilities are financed through the multi-

donor basket fund. Each RC develops its own operational guidelines and workflows in accordance with its institutional and regional characteristics.

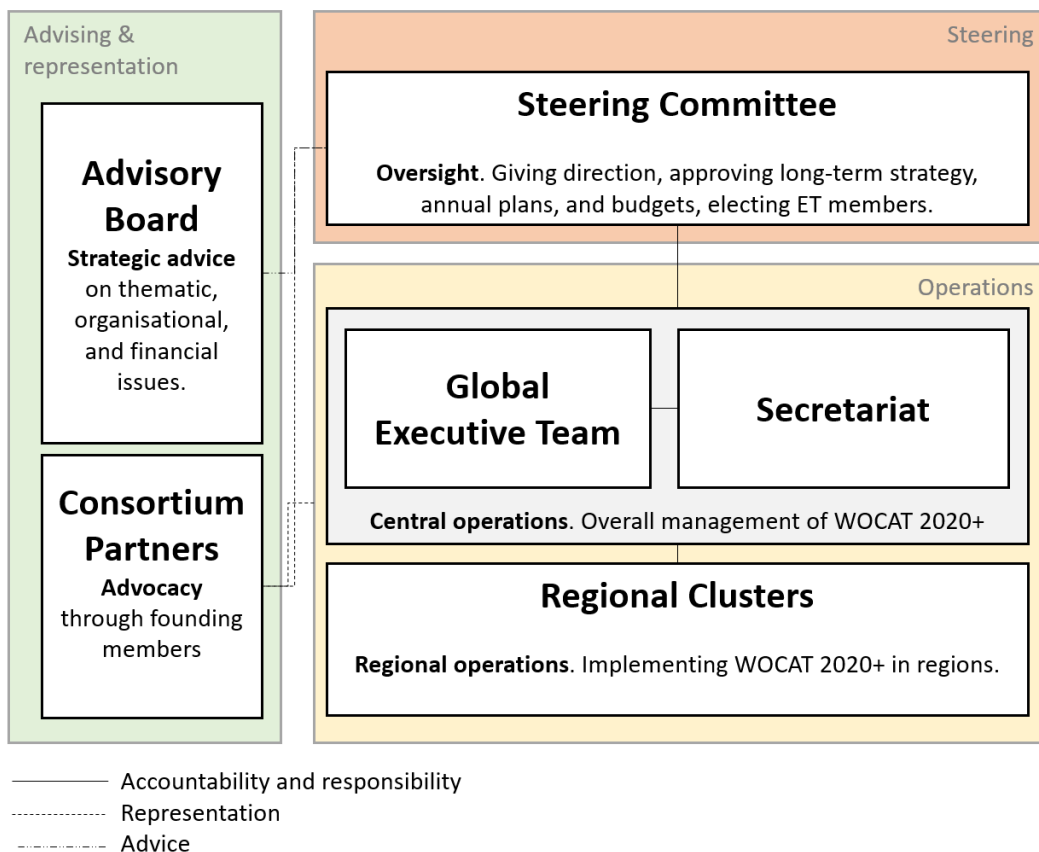


Figure 2: Governing bodies of WOCAT2020+

## Funding mechanism

WOCAT 2020+ will operate through a **dual funding mechanism** (see Figure 1). (1) A **multi-donor basket fund**, with at least one million USD per year for the first five years, to finance the WOCAT 2020+ core mandate at global and regional levels, as well as transfer activities between core mandate and partnership actions. (2) **Partnership actions** including projects and programmes in and between countries and regions aiming at mainstreaming and scaling-out SLM in priority regions and landscapes. The ET will manage the multi-donor basket fund which will consist of different types of contributions:

- uncommitted funds contributing to the core mandate;
- committed funds for specific core mandate activities;
- committed funds assigned by the concerned funding agency to a specific ET Member or OM for core mandate activities; and
- own funds of ET Members and OM, which are allocated internally to perform specific core mandate activities.