

# Goal 15

**Target number:** 15.3

**Indicator Number and Name:** 15.3.1 Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area.

**Agency:** UNCCD

**Has work for the development of this indicator begun?** Yes

**Who are the entities, including national and international experts, directly involved and consulted in developing the methodology/and or data collection tools?**

The UNCCD has formed an Inter-Agency Advisory Group on indicator 15.3.1 composed of UNCCD, FAO, CBD, UNFCCC, UNEP and UNSD to develop the methodology and data options for this indicator. The focal points of this Advisory Group will also consult with their technical partners and data providers as part of this work.

**What is the involvement of or how do you plan to involve National Statistical Systems in the development of the methodology?**

Once a complete methodology package has been finalized, the Advisory Group will explore modalities of working with national statistical systems to validate and refine the methodology.

**Please briefly describe the process of developing the methodology for the indicator**

"In February 2016, the UNCCD and its key partners convened a meeting with over 60 experts from organizations, institutions, governments and the private sector to discuss the methodologies and data sets needed to monitor progress towards SDG target 15.3, in particular the indicator 15.3.1. At this expert meeting, there was a general consensus on the use of three sub-indicators: i) land cover, ii) land productivity and iii) carbon stocks, above and below ground; and that these sub-indicators need to be further contextualized with other national data and information. Subsequent to the expert meeting, the UNCCD submitted a revised metadata document contained in the SDG 15 compilation of 04 March 2016 and established the Inter-Agency Advisory Group on SDG indicator 15.3.1.

From June to December 2016, the UNCCD, in consultation with the Advisory Group, will assemble a team of international experts to produce Good Practice Guidance for deriving indicator 15.3.1, including a harmonized approach to data options at the national, regional and global levels. A comprehensive metadata document will then be presented to the IAEG-SDGs for its review in early 2017."

**Please indicate new international standards that will need to be proposed and approved by an intergovernmental process (such as UNSC) for this methodology.**

"An international standard for the sub-indicator on land cover exists (ISO 19144-2:2012); the Land Cover Meta Language (LCML) provides a common reference structure for the comparison and integration of data for any generic land cover classification system. LCML is also used for defining land-cover/ecosystem functional units by the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA).

The other two sub-indicators on land productivity and carbon stocks will require new international standards to be approved by the appropriate body."

**When do you expect the methodological work on this indicator to be completed?**

Early 2017.

**Are data and metadata already being collected from the National Statistical System for one or more components of this indicator?**

Yes

**If yes, please describe:**

"For some countries, data on land cover are being collected by National Statistical Systems; for most countries, land cover data is spread among different statistical fields (agriculture, environment, forestry, etc.) and related relevant agencies or ministries.

For the sub-indicators on land productivity and carbon stocks, data collection remains with specialized institutions at the national and regional levels."

**How do you plan to collect the data?**

Send questionnaire(s) to country, Joint survey/compilation with national agency and international entity, Satellite images, remote sensing, UNCCD national reports

**If the indicator involves multiple components from different data sources, please describe how each individual component of the indicator will be collected here.**

The sub-indicators will require multiple data sources. National official data sources will be used to the greatest extent possible, complemented by default data derived from Earth observation and geospatial information. The three sub-indicators are part of the UNCCD's mandatory reporting which will begin in 2018.

**With what frequency is data expected to be collected?**

Every four years.

**Is there a process of data validation by countries in place or planned for this indicator?**

Yes

**If yes, please briefly describe:**

In the absence of or to complement national official data sources, countries would validate default data, a process which has already been established as part of the UNCCD national reporting.

**If you have any additional comments that you believe would be helpful to IAEG-SDG members in analysing the work plan and methodological development of the indicator, please provide them here:**

The sub-indicator on land cover will also be used to assist in monitoring a number of other SDG targets and the Advisory Group is working with others, such as the UNSD on SEEA, to ensure a consistent methodology and classification system for the SDG indicator framework.

*(As of 3 March 2017)*