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Leveraging financing and partnerships for combating drought, land degradation and desertification in Africa*

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. This note explores the critical role of financing and partnerships in addressing the interrelated challenges of drought, land degradation, and desertification in Africa. The note evaluates various financing mechanisms at international, regional and national levels as well as exploring innovative funding sources. The note briefly highlights successful partnership models that have been used to address environmental challenges. Additionally, the paper examines the challenges and barriers to effective implementation and proposes strategies to enhance future efforts, emphasizing the need for strong institutional frameworks, transparency, accountability, and inclusive approaches.

II. Background

2. Africa is the most severely impacted region and is particularly vulnerable to desertification and land degradation. Approximately 45% of Africa's land area is affected by desertification, and 55% of this region is under high or very high risk of further degradation. The impact of changing climatic conditions will have direct and indirect effects on land degradation in forested and agricultural environments, including potential increases in heat stress on vegetation, changes in soil moisture availability, increases in soil erosion by wind and rain, soil nutrient loss, soil salinization, and an overall decline in vegetation and biomass. Some of the human impacts of land degradation experienced in Africa include increased competition for scarce natural resources, livelihood losses, land abandonment, migration and displacement¹.

3. Africa's drylands landscapes cover approximately 43% of the continent total area, excluding deserts, and are crucial for supporting over half a billion people through essential ecosystem services and economic activities². However, these landscapes often suffer from neglect and underfunding, leading to significant challenges such as land degradation, desertification and drought, exacerbated by climate change and unsustainable human activities. Addressing these issues requires effective financial resource and partnership strategies to promote sustainable land management, ecosystems restoration and achieving land degradation neutrality.

4. Availability of adequate and predictable financial resources play a pivotal role in mitigating the impacts on drought, land degradation and desertification. Development partners, governments, and financing mechanisms provide financial resources to initiatives aimed at enhancing resilience,

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

¹ Hermans, K., & McLeman, R. (2021). Climate change, drought, land degradation and migration: exploring the linkages. *Current opinion in environmental sustainability*, 50, 236-244.

² <https://thinklandscape.globallandscapesforum.org/52757/restoring-african-drylands-from-within-without-myths/>

conserving biodiversity, and improving livelihoods. Global commitments on land degradation, desertification and drought, through organizations, such as, the Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund, are known to provide critical large-scale funding opportunities.

5. Partnerships are essential for mobilizing resources and expertise across various stakeholders, including governments, non-governmental organizations, local communities, and the private sector. Enabling policies, subsidies, and tax incentives encourage private sector investment in land restoration projects. Collaborative efforts enable the sharing of knowledge, technologies, and best practices, enhancing the scalability and effectiveness of interventions. These partnerships foster inclusive decision-making processes that integrate local knowledge and community needs, thereby enhancing ecosystem resilience and socio-economic well-being.

6. Despite the importance of financial resources and partnerships, several challenges persist in implementing effective solutions in Africa. The challenges include inadequate and unpredictable financial sources, and limited access to funding. Further, return on investments in land management are not fully understood and hence prevent investments from the private sector. Additionally, inadequate data and monitoring systems hinders the assessment and reporting of impacts of project and possible scaling up of successful interventions³.

7. To address these challenges, strengthening institutional frameworks, improving governance structures, and enhancing transparency and accountability in financial management are crucial. Investing in capacity-building programs that empower local communities and institutions is essential for sustaining long-term impacts and promoting adaptive management practices.

8. Furthermore, by leveraging financial commitments from partners, governments, the private sector and innovative financing mechanisms, and fostering collaborative partnerships among diverse stakeholders, Africa can enhance its resilience to environmental challenges. Through effective efforts to promote sustainable land management, ecosystems restoration and achieving land degradation neutrality, Africa can achieve sustainable development goals, conserve biodiversity, and mitigate the impacts of land degradation and drought.

III. Socioeconomic implications of desertification, land degradation, and drought in Africa

9. In Africa, desertification, land degradation, and drought pose formidable challenges, severely impacting soils, vegetation, and water resources across the continent⁴. Desertification, notably prevalent in regions like the Sahel due to arid conditions and low rainfall, expands desert areas, exacerbating environmental degradation. Approximately 65% of Africa's arable land suffers from degradation, characterized by soil erosion, nutrient depletion, and loss of vegetation cover⁵.

10. These issues are compounded by both natural and human-induced factors⁶. Climate change and variability play a pivotal role, altering precipitation patterns and increasing temperatures, thereby intensifying droughts and prolonging dry spells. This exacerbates water scarcity and reduces agricultural productivity, further threatening food security and exacerbating economic hardships.

11. The impact of drought, land degradation, and desertification on the African continent has been profound, with significant economic costs. According to the International Disaster Database, drought occurrences between 1950 and 2021 affected nearly half a billion people in Africa. The economic losses from drought-related hazards in the past 50 years have amounted to over United States Dollars 70 billion (WMO, 2022). This highlights the urgent need for effective strategies to combat these environmental challenges^{7, 8}.

12. The socio-economic consequences are profound. Countries are grappling with substantial losses on land degradation. These include diminished agricultural yields, higher healthcare costs due to environmental health impacts, and reduced tourism potential in affected areas. Moreover, degraded

³ United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). (2021). Food, feed, and fiber: Desertification and drought day. Retrieved from [GEF_in_Africa_2024_2.pdf](#)

⁴ United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification Particularly in Africa, 1954 UNTS 3 [UNCCD], Article 1.

⁵ 2021GC-REDAnnualReport.pdf (undp.org)

⁶ United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, "Land Degradation Neutrality", available online: <<https://www.unccd.int/land-and-life/land-degradation-neutrality/overview>>.

⁷ SR-Environment-PolicyBrief-4-executive-summary.pdf (ohchr.org)

⁸ Land and environmental degradation and desertification in Africa (fao.org)

landscapes are less resilient to climate change impacts such as floods and storms, exacerbating the challenges faced by communities already struggling with degraded environments⁹.

13. According to a complementary report by the United Nations Environment Programme on the Economics of Land Degradation in Africa, the present value of the cost of inaction measured in terms of the value of cereal crops loss due to soil erosion induced nutrient depletion over the next 15 years (2016–30) is about 4.6 trillion purchasing power parity United States Dollars, with an annual value of 286 billion PPP United States Dollars (127 billion United States Dollars/year at 2011 constant dollar), which is equivalent to about 12.3 % of the GDP of the 42 countries that were considered in the study. However, taking action through investment in sustainable land management practices will only cost about 344 billion purchasing power parity United States Dollars over the next 15 years with an annual cost of action of about 9.4 billion United States Dollars or 1.15% of the GDP of 42 countries in the continent. Notably, the benefits of taking action as approximated by the World Overview on Conservation Approaches and Technologies data on capital and recurrent expenditures on sustainable land management in Africa are almost 7 times the cost of inaction. In other words, Africa could generate about 2.83 trillion purchasing power parity United States Dollars (or about 71.8 billion United States Dollars/year) if all countries take action against soil erosion, which is causing nutrient losses from the arable land areas used for cereals production, through investment in sustainable land management interventions¹⁰.

14. Africa will need substantial annual investments amounting to billions of dollars to combat land degradation, desertification and drought. In the recent past, initiatives such as the Great Green Wall, approximately spent costs between United States Dollars 8 to 14 billion in land restoration which underscores the need for comprehensive funding.

15. Addressing these interconnected challenges demands integrated and sustainable approaches to land management and climate adaptation, prioritizing sustainable land practices, ecosystem restoration, and resilience-building¹¹. International cooperation and investment in climate-smart agriculture, improved water management, and biodiversity conservation are crucial to mitigating the far-reaching socio-economic and environmental impacts of drought, land degradation, and desertification across Africa.

IV. Financial mechanisms to combat land degradation, desertification and mitigating drought

16. Investments in land degradation neutrality and ecosystem restoration are not only environmentally crucial but also economically beneficial. The African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative estimates that an initial investment of United States Dollars 2 billion in local African organizations, businesses, and government-led projects could catalyze further investments totaling United States Dollars 15 billion^{12,13}. This financial boost is expected to support the restoration of 20 million hectares of land by 2026, generating benefits worth United States Dollars 135 billion for approximately 40 million people (Hess, 2021). Additionally, in the context of the Great Green Wall, every dollar invested in land restoration yields an average return of United States Dollars 1.2, with returns ranging from United States Dollars 1.1 to United States Dollars 4.4 across different scenarios. It is estimated that it would take a maximum of ten years for these land restoration activities to break even from a social perspective, considering both market-priced and non-market ecosystem benefits¹⁴.

17. The World Bank, as a leader in development finance, channels significant resources to promote sustainable land management¹⁵. It plays a crucial role in combating land degradation, drought, and desertification globally, focusing on providing concessional financing to support projects that enhance agricultural productivity through soil conservation, watershed management, agroforestry, and

⁹ IPBES, The assessment report on land degradation and restoration (2018) [IPBES 2018].

¹⁰ ELD Initiative & UNEP (2015). The Economics of Land Degradation in Africa: Benefits of Action Outweigh the Costs. Available from www.eld-initiative.org.

¹¹ Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Desertification: The Invisible Frontline (2014), [UNCCD Desertification] page 1.

¹² African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100) | World Resources Institute (wri.org)

¹³ Enabling forest landscape restoration in Africa - giz.de

¹⁴ Mirzabaev, A., Sacande, M., Motlagh, F., Shyrokaya, A., & Martucci, A. (2022). Economic efficiency and targeting of the African Great Green Wall. *Nature Sustainability*, 5(1), 17-25.

¹⁵ World Bank. 2006. Sustainable Land Management: Challenges, Opportunities and Tradeoffs. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, Washington, DC.

sustainable land use practices. These efforts are complemented by regional initiatives, spearheaded by organizations like the African Development Bank, alongside national funding mechanisms that support sustainable land management practices. Meanwhile, the Global Environment Facility supports co-financing for projects addressing global environmental issues, such as the Strategic Investment Program for Sustainable Land Management in Sub-Saharan Africa, which scales up sustainable land management practices through partnerships and funding collaborations.

18. The International Monetary Fund complements these efforts by advising member countries on economic policies that promote sustainable growth and development. While its direct involvement in environmental and land management issues is more indirect, the International Monetary Fund influences these sectors through policy advice that supports economic reforms conducive to sustainable practices¹⁶.

19. Funding from Global Environment Facility further enhance global resilience to land degradation. The implementing agencies and executing partners of Global Environment Facility mobilize resources, provide technical expertise, and implement initiatives that promote sustainable land management practices.

20. Regionally, the African Development Bank plays a pivotal role in Africa by funding initiatives that integrate sustainable land management into broader agricultural development strategies. These initiatives encompass watershed management, soil conservation, agroforestry, and sustainable agricultural practices aimed at enhancing food security, improving livelihoods, and ensuring environmental sustainability across the continent.

21. At the national level, governments allocate resources and develop policy frameworks that prioritize sustainable land management. These frameworks include regulatory measures, incentives, and budget allocations for activities such as land rehabilitation, water management, climate actions, infrastructure development, and capacity building. By creating an enabling environment, governments support the implementation and maintenance of sustainable land management practices that mitigate land degradation and enhance ecosystem resilience.

22. Innovative financing mechanisms, such as, payment for ecosystem services schemes, green bonds, carbon markets, biodiversity credits, blended financing, debt for nature, provide additional support by incentivizing landowners and communities to adopt practices that restore and maintain ecosystem services. Payment for ecosystems service schemes compensate landowners for the environmental benefits their land provides, such as carbon sequestration and biodiversity conservation, thereby aligning economic incentives with environmental goals and fostering long-term sustainability.

23. The Green Climate Fund is the world's largest climate fund, mandated to support developing countries raise and realize their nationally determined contributions ambitions towards low-emissions, climate-resilient pathways. Out of the 503 projects approved so far, 104 projects are in Africa with a total of United States Dollars 5.29b.¹⁷ While these projects cover an array of issues, majority have land, in one way or the other, as their basis of impact.

24. The Adaptation Fund, established under the Kyoto Protocol, finances projects and programmes that help vulnerable communities in developing countries adapt to climate change. In Africa, the Adaptation Fund has committed over United States Dollars 200 million to 38 projects, benefiting millions of people by enhancing climate resilience and adaptive capacity. Under the umbrella of the Adaptation Fund, the Clean Development Mechanism enables industrialized countries to invest in emission reduction projects in developing countries as a way to meet their own emission reduction targets. In Africa, the Clean Development Mechanism has registered over 1,600 projects, reducing emissions by more than 480 million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent. These mechanisms work together to promote sustainable development and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, providing essential support for climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

25. The establishment of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund has been a welcome development. While its establishment is being finalized, there is a need to accelerate the operationalization of the fund; prioritize investments directed to African countries, including the pre-investment financing to prepare bankable projects; and build the requisite national capacity, including the capacity of African

¹⁶ From Ambition to Execution: Policies in Support of Sustainable Development Goals; by Stefania Fabrizio, Rodrigo Garcia-Verdu, Catherine Patillo, Adrian Peralta-Alva, Andrea Presbitero, Baoping Shang, Geneviève Verdier, Marie-Therese Camilleri, Kazuaki Washimi, Lisa Kolovich, Monique Newiak, Martin Cihak, Inci Otker, Felipe Zanna, and Carol Baker; IMF Staff Discussion Notes 15/18; September 2015

¹⁷ <https://www.greenclimate.fund/projects/dashboard>

countries to monitor and report on land degradation¹⁸. Building capacity in this regard would help decision makers identify the significant opportunities for the conservation, rehabilitation, restoration and sustainable management of land resources.

26. More funding sources should be explored in the effort to expand the funding available for the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, and hence to contribute to the realization of most of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Land Degradation Neutrality Fund is being structured as a layered fund, designed as a public–private partnership for blended finance. It will complement and scale up existing financial instruments and funds for sustainable land management and rehabilitation, by providing financing that would not otherwise be available in the market. For instance, the 11 member States of the Great Green Wall Initiative are exploring the possible establishment of a regional funding mechanism, known as the “Carbon fund”, which would invest in projects that promote sustainable land management, carbon sequestration and drought resilience at both the large scale and smallholder scale. While this is still at the proposal stage, other regions may want to explore such an initiative to support the efforts of the countries of the Great Green Wall Initiative.

27. Land degradation, desertification and drought, especially in the context of climate change, are not confined to national boundaries. It is therefore important that regional approaches and programmes be promoted and funded under funding mechanisms including the Global Climate Fund and the new Land Degradation Neutrality Fund. To achieve this, member States need to work together through the facilitation of regional economic communities and development partners. In so doing, countries should set aside co-financing that would leverage the global funds.

28. A successful financing model in Africa is the Great Green Wall Initiative which involves comprehensive planning and budgeting to achieve its ambitious goals. This initiative exemplifies a pioneering effort to combat desertification and land degradation in Africa's vulnerable Sahel region. This ambitious project is bolstered by a robust financing framework that blends international funding, national government support, and active community involvement. International partnerships with organizations like the Global Environment Facility and the World Bank provide crucial financial resources and technical expertise. Governments of Senegal, Nigeria, and Ethiopia contribute financially prioritizing the Great Green Wall in national development agendas.

29. In conclusion, the combined efforts of international funding, regional initiatives, national policies, and innovative financing mechanisms illustrate a multi-faceted approach to addressing the challenges of land degradation, drought, and desertification. These coordinated efforts not only enhance ecosystem resilience but also contribute to improving livelihoods and securing a sustainable future for generations to come.

V. Partnerships for combating land degradation, desertification and drought

30. Partnerships are critical in addressing the multifaceted challenges of land degradation, drought, and desertification globally. These partnerships encompass multilateral initiatives led by organizations such as the United Nations system and regional collaborations facilitated by bodies like the African Union. Additionally, bilateral agreements between countries, public-private partnerships, and the active involvement of non-governmental organizations and civil society contribute significantly to promoting sustainable land management practices and enhancing resilience against environmental degradation. These partnerships bring together diverse stakeholders, leverage resources, and promote innovative approaches to sustainable land management.

31. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stands out as a pivotal multilateral partnership platform focused on combating desertification and land degradation worldwide. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification operates through policy advocacy, technical assistance, and financial support to member countries. It advocates for policies that promote sustainable land management, provides technical expertise to develop national action programs, and supports projects aimed at improving land productivity and resilience to climate change impacts.

32. Simultaneously, the African Union structures through initiatives like Agenda 2063 the Africa we Want, plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable development across Africa. Agenda 2063 integrates sustainable land management practices into broader development strategies aimed at achieving economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability. It emphasizes resilience-building against climate change impacts by promoting sustainable agriculture, improving

¹⁸ Quatrini, S., & Crossman, N. D. (2018). Most finance to halt desertification also benefits multiple ecosystem services: a key to unlock investments in Land Degradation Neutrality. *Ecosystem services*, 31, 265-277.

water management, and restoring degraded lands. The Africa Union fosters regional cooperation among African countries to share knowledge and resources for combating land degradation effectively.

33. The Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration under the direction of the African Union is implemented by all African member States. The Agenda provides policy measures, strategic actions, cooperation mechanisms and on-the-ground actions to advance land and ecosystem restoration in Africa. Given the extent of land and ecosystem degradation in Africa, an urgent and comprehensive response is necessary. By 2030, the Pan-African Action Agenda aims to restore more than 200 million hectares of habitat, enhancing existing initiatives such as AFR100.

34. The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment serves as a critical platform for building partnerships, facilitating dialogue, and coordinating efforts among African countries to address environmental challenges. The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment enables countries to collaborate on sustainable land management practices, share innovative solutions, and advocate for environmental policies that support sustainable development goals.

35. Bilateral partnerships between African countries and development partners are instrumental in supporting efforts to combat land degradation and desertification. These partnerships facilitate knowledge sharing, technical assistance, and financial support to enhance local capacities in implementing sustainable practices. Development partners often provide financial assistance and expertise to African nations, promoting sustainable agriculture, conserving natural resources, and improving rural livelihoods.

36. Public-Private Partnerships leverage private sector investment, innovation, and expertise to scale up sustainable land management and restoration efforts. These partnerships involve private sector investments in sustainable agriculture, eco-tourism, and renewable energy projects that promote environmental sustainability and contribute to land restoration. They facilitate technology transfer and risk sharing between public and private sectors, promoting large-scale projects that restore degraded lands and enhance ecosystem services.

37. Furthermore, civil society organizations play critical roles in advocating for sustainable practices, mobilizing resources, and implementing community-based projects to combat land degradation. They raise awareness about the importance of sustainable land management, advocate for policy reforms, and implement projects focused on soil conservation, agroforestry, watershed management, and biodiversity conservation. Civil society organisations also provide capacity building and technical assistance to empower local communities and stakeholders in sustainable land management practices.

38. Community involvement is central to the initiative's success. Local communities actively engage in decision-making processes, implementing sustainable land management practices. This approach enhances environmental restoration efforts' effectiveness, directly benefiting communities through improved livelihoods and ecosystem resilience. By involving communities in tree planting, soil conservation, and water management, the initiative fosters ownership and sustainability of outcomes. Integration of local knowledge with global expertise is another strength, allowing adaptation to local contexts using international best practices in sustainable development and ecosystem restoration. The initiative's success in mobilizing stakeholders—from governments and international organizations to local communities—underscores its role in combating desertification, restoring degraded lands, and promoting sustainable development in the Sahel.

VI. Challenges and barriers to effective financial mechanisms and partnerships

39. Addressing challenges and barriers to effective financing and partnerships in environmental initiatives, such as land restoration projects, involves navigating several critical obstacles. Financial constraints present a primary challenge, as securing adequate funding for initiatives like the Great Green Wall and other sustainable land management programs across Africa is often hindered by limited financial resources and competing developmental priorities.

40. Governments face difficult decisions in allocating funds between social services, infrastructure, and environmental conservation efforts. Despite international support from organizations like the Global Environment Facility and the World Bank, sustaining funding over the long term remains uncertain. Economic downturns or shifts in global priorities can impact donor commitments, complicating financial planning and project continuity.

41. Governance issues pose significant barriers as well, undermining the transparent and accountable management of funds allocated for environmental initiatives. Issues such as corruption, political instability, and policy inconsistencies can divert funds intended for conservation efforts or disrupt policy continuity and enforcement. Addressing governance challenges requires robust regulatory frameworks and vigilant oversight mechanisms to ensure funds are used effectively and transparently.

42. Effective coordination among diverse stakeholders is crucial but challenging in initiatives involving multiple actors with varying interests and objectives. For example, the Great Green Wall Initiative exemplifies this complexity with its extensive network of international organizations, national governments, local communities, and civil society. Coordinating efforts across different sectors—environment, agriculture, finance, and community development—requires strong communication, mutual understanding, and collaborative mechanisms. Stakeholders often have differing priorities and approaches, making alignment difficult. Building trust among stakeholders through inclusive decision-making processes, regular consultations, and structured partnerships is crucial for sustaining momentum and ensuring project success. Significantly, addressing challenges and barriers to effective financing and partnerships in environmental initiatives requires a comprehensive approach. Overcoming financial constraints involves diversifying funding sources and ensuring long-term commitments from both international donors and national governments.

VII. Strategies to enhance financing and partnerships

43. While it is obvious that financial resources are critical in addressing drought, land degradation, and desertification, the reality is that not much is made available to this end. This points to the fact that there are barriers that need to be addressed for financing to be unlocked/ mobilized. It may mean that there is a need to make business and/or investment cases that are easily understood by policy makers, especially those in charge of national planning and finance sectors. Making the case would involve economic analyses based on national data on how much investments in sustainable land management/ land restoration contribute to GDPs of each country, and the cost of action vis a vis inaction. The foundational work has been done by the Economics of Land Degradation initiative e.g. the 2015 UNEP-ELD report on Africa and the specific ongoing cases being conducted in Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali. Making the case will also need the national bureaus of statistics to come on board and build on the awareness and momentum built by the Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa which has since been accelerated by the approved System of Environmental-Economic Accounting by the UN Statistics Division. The System of Environmental-Economic Accounting has developed a methodology and framework that includes land accounts.

44. Addressing drought, land degradation, and desertification requires a multidimensional and cross-sectoral approach. It thus follows that coordination is required to achieve this goal. It means that efforts to address drought, land degradation, and desertification must also be aligned to the funding mechanisms of other multilateral environmental agreements, particularly the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund. It also means linking the various processes such as the Land Degradation Neutrality (under UNCCD), Nationally Determined Contributions (under UNFCCC), and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (under CBD).

45. Funding from the private sector has yet to fully develop for the Africa region. Developing this financing stream will involve addressing the risk factors associated with sustainable land management and land restoration projects through upstream measures such as seed capital facilities that address the risks and pave the way for the development of bankable projects that can be picked up by various funds such as pension funds. Several successful seed capital facilities can provide lessons on how this can be developed further. This also applies to other financing arrangements such as green bonds, carbon markets, biodiversity credits, etc. that would be accelerated through blended financing initiatives/arrangements.

46. The Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration presents a cohesive strategy to combat land degradation, desertification, and drought in Africa through a blend of domestic resource mobilization, innovative financing mechanisms, external funding sources, and enhanced private sector engagement. By integrating ecosystem restoration into national strategies and leveraging partnerships with public-private collaborations and international organizations, the Agenda aims to mitigate the challenges posed by limited financial resources, inadequate private sector involvement, and coordination barriers, thereby fostering sustainable development across the continent.

47. To effectively address the complex issues of land degradation, desertification, and drought in Africa, the Pan-African Action Agenda emphasizes a multi-pronged approach. This includes robust

financial mechanisms like domestic resource mobilization and innovative financing tools, alongside strategic partnerships with public-private entities and international organizations. By enhancing capacity-building efforts and knowledge sharing among member states and exploring innovative financing solutions such as payment for ecosystem services, the Agenda strives to overcome existing challenges and pave the way for sustainable ecosystem management and restoration across the region.

48. To enhance financing and partnerships for desertification, land degradation and drought strategic approaches focusing on creating enabling environment, strengthening institutional frameworks, enhancing transparency and accountability, and fostering inclusive participation are required.

49. Firstly, raising ambition and mobilizing resources is essential. African countries should be encouraged to establish ambitious targets to mobilize increased financial resources for combating land degradation and promoting sustainable land management. This involves advocating for greater international support and innovative financing mechanisms, such as green bonds, climate funds, and public-private partnerships, to leverage additional funds for environmental projects.

50. Strengthening institutional frameworks is critical in this context. This involves building robust governance structures and enhancing the capacity of governmental agencies and relevant institutions. These efforts enable better management of environmental funds, implementation of policies, and coordination of multi-stakeholder initiatives.

51. Policy alignment and leadership are also crucial. Aligning national policies with international frameworks incentivize private sector involvement and integrate environmental considerations into national development agendas. Promoting strong leadership and supportive regulatory frameworks will drive these policies forward, ensuring that environmental sustainability goals are met.

52. Fostering inclusive and participatory approaches is crucial. Engaging local communities and stakeholders in decision-making processes ensures that projects align with local needs, incorporate traditional knowledge, and address community priorities. In countries like Ethiopia and Eswatini, community-based natural resource management is pivotal. By involving communities in planning, implementation, and monitoring phases, projects gain relevance and ownership. Partnerships with civil society organizations, and local authorities further promote collaboration and shared responsibility in achieving environmental goals.

53. Enhancing regional collaboration and resource optimization is also critical. Prioritizing joint initiatives and cross-border cooperation can maximize the impact of sustainable land management efforts, optimizing resource allocation and sharing best practices. Encouraging countries to collectively strengthen resilience against climate change impacts through regional collaboration will further boost these efforts.

54. In addition to these measures, capacity building and technical support are vital. Enhancing national capabilities in implementing sustainable land management practices by investing in capacity building and technical support is essential. Providing access to scientific research, knowledge exchange platforms, and technical assistance will support evidence-based decision-making and project implementation. Additionally, enhancing the capacity of governmental agencies and relevant institutions to improve the management of environmental funds and coordination of multi-stakeholder initiatives is vital. Focusing on improving administrative processes and training personnel will ensure effective financial management.

55. Concrete policy recommendations and commitments during special sessions and conferences are another important step. Countries should commit to increasing financial support and strengthening partnerships for sustainable land management. Establishing national funds dedicated to land restoration and integrating sustainable practices across sectors will further support these efforts.

56. Promoting strong partnerships among governments, international organizations, civil society, academia, and the private sector is essential to scale up impactful projects and initiatives aimed at addressing land degradation and enhancing ecosystem resilience. Engaging local communities and stakeholders in decision-making processes will ensure that projects align with local needs, incorporate traditional knowledge, and address community priorities. Partnering with civil society organizations, and local authorities will promote collaboration and shared responsibility in achieving environmental goals.

57. Integrating climate resilience considerations into national policies and strategies related to agriculture, forestry, water management, and urban planning will ensure that environmental sustainability goals are aligned with broader development objectives.

Consideration by the 10th special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

58. This note is intended to highlight the financing and partnerships needed to raise Africans ambitions to tackle land degradation, desertification and drought. Some of the suggested key discussion questions on the topic are:

- (a) How can African countries set ambitious targets and adopt innovative financing mechanisms to mobilize increased financial resources?
- (b) How can regional and national collaboration and resource optimization be enhanced to maximize efforts on drought resilience?
- (c) How can strong partnerships be fostered to spur investments in desertification, land degradation and drought?
- (d) How can we create pathways to engage with partners at regional and international levels, to build synergies and identify potential actions for joint impact initiatives beyond the current ongoing initiatives

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