Land degradation and its restoration has always and—considering recent projections for the future—will continue to threaten sustainable development. Annual economic losses due to deforestation and land degradation are estimated at EUR 1.5–3.4 trillion, equalling 3.3–7.5 per cent of the global GDP. But while we continue to develop evidence and knowledge about causes and countermeasures, but action against DLDD remains insufficient.

We still fail to address the multitude of relevant stakeholders related to land due to a lack of common understanding outside of the environmental realm. Economic arguments can help policy makers to understand the implications of their choices but also highlight the relevance of restoring land-based natural capital to local farmers and the wider society.

The Economics of Land Degradation Initiative has identified that globally USD 75.6 trillion can be gained annually from transforming global policies. However, global numbers will not help to reach national LDN targets.

ELD offers a rigorous methodological framework for the valuation of land management approaches on the national and land. This reviewed approach has proven effective for policy-development in various context, for example in Georgia, where we could identify that the implementation of SLM provides a return-on-investment of 1:2.2 for the farmers and 1:5.6 for the national society [1]. During the subsequent policy discussions and stakeholder engagement, we realized that we need to utilize economic arguments to build alliances and partnerships with actors outside of the "green" realm. We need to strengthen our abilities to convene the profitability of maintaining our land resources to Ministries for Economy or larger companies. We further need to highlight the potential of land restoration to create jobs or reduce business risks.

The ELD Initiative looks back on different projects, all driven by a multi-stakeholder approach, and we would be happy to support the SPI in its efforts to strengthen its focus on the economic potential of SLM. We can offer a wide network of partners from science and policy, who contribute their expertise. We can further offer data, knowledge and training materials for economic valuation, which can be used to value the economic potential of countries’ LDN visions.