



Republic of Serbia  
Ministry of Environmental Protection

**REPORT ON THE APPLIED METHODOLOGY  
AND IDENTIFICATION OF TARGETS TO ACHIEVE  
LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**  
(Voluntary targets and associated measures towards achieving  
Land Degradation Neutrality in the Republic of Serbia)

January 2020



**THE GLOBAL  
MECHANISM**  
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to Combat Desertification



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**Republic of Serbia  
MINISTRY OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

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**UNCCD Secretariat  
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification**

**Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw  
Executive Secretary  
UNCCD Secretariat  
Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1  
D-53113 Bonn  
Germany**

Your Excellency,

High-level note of measures to achieve the national LDN targets prepared

The Ministry of the Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia takes pleasure to submit national voluntary LDN targets and associated measures for the Republic of Serbia and present the compliments, appreciation and profound gratitude to the UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism (GM) for existing cooperation and providing technical and financial support that enabled our country to successfully complete this important assignment.

Recognizing the importance of the LDN process, Serbia expressed its interest and joined Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme (LDN TSP). The main motive for participation among others was related to integration of the LDN as a concept into national development and sectoral policies, strategies and plans, as well as implementing SDGs Target 15.3 and raising awareness of land resources and strengthening the cooperation at regional and international level. Within the LDN TSP, the National Working Group for implementation of the activities related to LDN process was established and which contributed the process on preparation of the "Report on the applied methodology and identification of targets to achieve land degradation neutrality in the Republic of Serbia", herewith attached.

This Report will be an integral part of the National Action Programme to Combat land degradation, which will be validated through the process of the Government adoption.

For the assessment of land degradation in Serbia, globally determined databases were used (provided by the UNCCD). The reason for using these data is that representative national databases with the spatial and temporal attributes necessary to determine LDN parameters relevant to the implementation of the LDN approach have not been yet established. The results obtained with the use of global databases should be understood as a temporary solution, until the time Serbia forms a representative, publicly accessible collection of national data, that should be established on the basis



of detailed monitoring, in accordance with a consistent methodology adopted by competent national research institutions.

Calculation of 15.3.1. indicator (Percentage of land that is degraded over total land resources) shows the total area of degraded land by degradation categories is 6.47% of the total territory, stable soil condition amounts to 20.54%, while 72.86% pertains the category of the improved soil condition.

Processing the global databases, results have been obtained so that nationwide LDN target of reaching land degradation neutrality in the territory of the Republic of Serbia by 2030 is articulated through the number of priorities and associated technical measures on enabling environment:

Priorities for enabling environment to achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030:

- 1) Recognising elements and targets of land degradation neutrality in legislations;
- 2) Improvement, restoration, rehabilitation of degraded areas, implementation of measures of sustainable land management;
- 3) Establishment and development of sustainable, systematic land monitoring;
- 4) Establishment of appropriate, detailed national databases for the implementation of the LDN methodology;
- 5) Raising public awareness and the role of education in combating land degradation and droughts.

Associated measures:

- 1) To increase the area of national territory under forests to 41.4% by 2050;
- 2) To increase the area under forests in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina to 14.3% by applying the system of forest protection belts;
- 3) To increase the level of forest cover in areas under bare and degraded soil, in mountainous areas south of the Sava and Danube Rivers, in the area of 100,000 ha by 2030 so as to control erosion and torrential processes;
- 4) To maintain the determined positive trend of land degradation neutrality, applying appropriate measures and activities, through spatial and planning documentation.

Afforestation measures are important not only for forestry, but for a whole range of vital activities aimed at restoring ecosystem services, preventing natural hazards and protecting the economic potential of the country, and this is incorporated in Serbia's basic spatial planning and strategic documents.

From the aspect of national interests and despite the use of global datasets, it is necessary to emphasize that Serbia is making great efforts to build its own geospatial information database which can meet the challenges of sustainable management of national resources. The National Sustainable Development Strategy recognizes land as one of the most important natural resources and despite the fact that the concept of LDN has not yet been explicitly defined under the current legislation of the Republic of Serbia, there is a clear tendency and effort to identify this approach in various development documents.

We are looking forward to our future cooperation in successful implementation of the SDGs.

Please, accept assurance of my highest consideration.

  
**MINISTER**  
**Goran Trivan**