

Public Policy to Support Landscape and Seascape Partnerships

Meeting Sustainable Development Goals through Collaborative Territorial Action

A White Paper
June 2022

AUTHORS

Sara J. Scherr, Juan Ramos, Seth Shames (EcoAgriculture Partners)

Louise E. Buck (Cornell University / EcoAgriculture Partners)

Bhushan H. Sethi (GALLOP Initiative)

Ruth S. DeFries (Columbia University)



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Rice Terraces in Đắk Ya, Gia Lai, Vietnam



Preface

Accelerating land and water degradation threatens both the planet's health and humanity's well-being. The effects are already visible as drought, climate change, reduced productivity, species extinctions, and increasing food and water insecurity. Clearly, the world needs to embrace a more holistic approach to development, agriculture, environment, and business that balances what humans need to live better with what nature can provide. Indeed, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, begun in 2021, calls on everyone to "make healthy land central to all our planning."

National governments are responding to the challenge. They are defining ambitious new policy goals and mobilizing unprecedented funding—from public, private, and civic sources—to address them. [Evidence](#) shows that every \$1 invested in restoration returns \$7-30 of economic benefits to local people. However, in most countries, there is a troubling gap between policy goals and practical implementation for impact on the ground.

One promising way to bridge this gap is through Landscape and Seascape Partnerships. These local collaboratives recognize that their land- or seascapes are the foundation for all dimensions of well-being: the agriculture and supply chain that people need to earn a living and eat nutritious food, the rich cultural heritage of communities, the means to store carbon and counteract climate change, and the haven for natural heritage embodied in the plant and animal species that depend on their lands and waters. And these values are all profoundly interdependent.

Around the world, territory-wide coalitions are forming among local resource users from all sectors. They define and pursue a shared vision and strategy for regeneration and work to resolve trade-offs and find synergies. This integrated landscape approach has been endorsed by the UN's conventions on climate change, biodiversity, and land degradation and by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the UN Food System Summit, and UN-Habitat. We have learned much and developed practical tools to organize, design, and finance integrated landscape initiatives to secure a better future for people and nature.

But few countries have national policies that support these Landscape and Seascape Partnerships, even though providing that enabling environment is critical. Fortunately, models have emerged from experiences worldwide that demonstrate it's possible to align national policies, programs, and financial flows with local partnerships' action plans.

Our White Paper pulls this evidence together to show how national governments can craft a policy framework that fits their priorities and institutional context. The work is not easy. It calls for improved horizontal (cross-sectoral) and vertical (across levels of government and other institutions) coordination to foster inclusion. Policymakers must rethink how different agencies, ministries, and funding organizations work together from a systems and landscape perspective. Officials of all stripes need to build legal and institutional structures that celebrate and strengthen the symbiotic relationships between people and the landscapes they inhabit.

We hope this White Paper can be a helpful resource for public officials at all levels tasked with enabling the transformation to a sustainable future.

Sara J. Scherr, PhD

President and CEO, EcoAgriculture Partners
Chair, 1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People initiative

Juan Carlos Ramos

Project Manager, EcoAgriculture Partners

Seth Shames

Director, Finance and Policy, EcoAgriculture Partners

Bhushan H. Sethi

GALLOP Initiative

Louise E. Buck, PhD

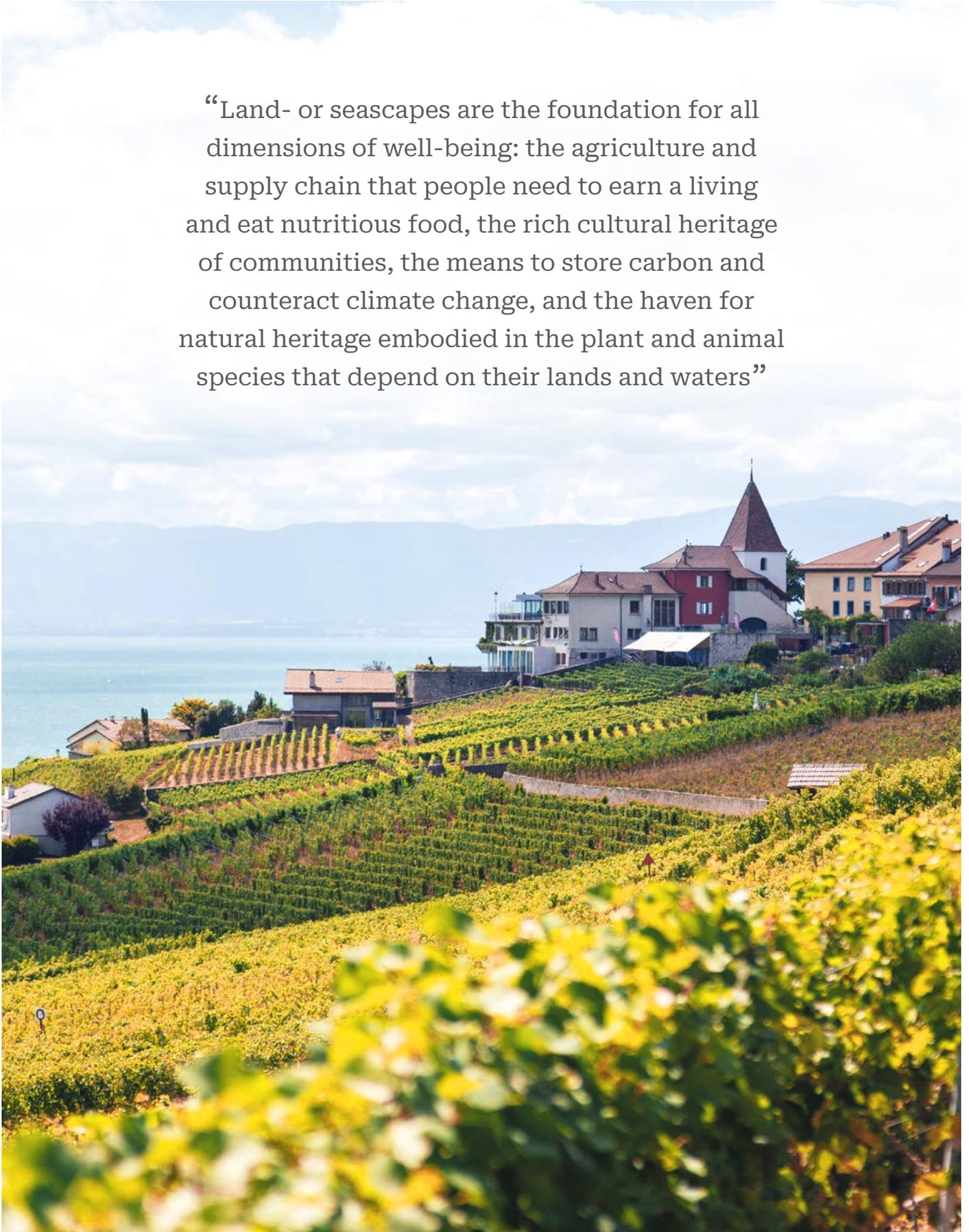
Senior Extension Associate, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Cornell University
Lead, Collaborative Management, EcoAgriculture Partners

Ruth DeFries, PhD

Denning Family University Professor of Sustainable Development, Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology and Co-Founding Dean, Columbia Climate School, Columbia University

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“Land- or seascapes are the foundation for all dimensions of well-being: the agriculture and supply chain that people need to earn a living and eat nutritious food, the rich cultural heritage of communities, the means to store carbon and counteract climate change, and the haven for natural heritage embodied in the plant and animal species that depend on their lands and waters”



Executive Summary

Why strengthen Landscape and Seascape Partnerships?

Governments have recently launched major policy initiatives to address the multiple urgent land and resource challenges facing their countries: food and water insecurity, climate change, land degradation, biodiversity loss and the threats to health and livelihoods in the context of a global pandemic. Public, private and philanthropic funders have committed billions of dollars to meet these challenges. But policymakers face serious difficulties in translating their policy goals into practical action on the ground by myriad local communities and businesses that use, manage and steward those resources.

A promising strategy is to work through multi-stakeholder Landscape and Seascape Partnerships. We refer to such initiatives below collectively as Landscape Partnerships or LPs. These long-term, voluntary collaboratives of local stakeholders from different sectors are emerging worldwide to align policies and actions to manage natural resources and the ecosystems they depend on better. The efforts of LPs may complement, reinforce or link with territorial or jurisdictional governance.

LPs with agreed long-term objectives can provide a common planning and negotiation platform for coordinating the local implementation of employment and livelihood programs, regenerative agriculture, sustainable cities, and environment programs like land and marine protected areas and area-based conservation programs. Multi-stakeholder representation and governance can confer greater legitimacy and local commitments to these programs. They can bring the voices of all those affected by policies (or lack of them) to the table. LPs can help design and locally implement national policies such as ecological fiscal transfers, debt for nature swaps or payment for ecosystem services.

A growing number of countries have made landscape regeneration—for community development, ecosystem restoration and sustainable agriculture and food



Terraces in Ciudad Perdida, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia

systems—a vital policy goal. But few of them have developed structured policies and programs for long-term continuous support. Instead, we see highly fragmented, uncoordinated, small-scale, short-term or sectorally siloed projects championed by government agencies, NGOs and companies. Even where projects are large and multi-sectoral, there are overlapping mandates and insufficient coordination of related activities. Interventions are designed in capital cities rather than by local stakeholders. Locally organized LPs and their thoughtfully developed and negotiated visions and collaborative action plans are often ignored or undermined when large public or private investment programs are implemented.

To advance sustainable development at the scale of territories and landscapes requires strong public policy and program support for LPs.

Types of policy support needed by Landscape Partnerships

Fortunately, rich experience can now inform more robust public policies and programs. This paper draws lessons from diverse landscapes: the Cerrado region of Brazil, the Galapagos Marine Reserve in Ecuador, Ethiopia's watershed management program in the Central Highlands, the Chalatenango Department of El Salvador, the Maya Biosphere Reserve of Guatemala, the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve of Mexico, De Marker Wadden in the Netherlands, Bohol Island in the Philippines, the uMngeni landscape in South Africa and the Northern Uganda region. The analysis also draws lessons from the national programs of Australia (Landcare), Chile and Colombia (the 20X20 program), Costa Rica (national reforestation policy/program), Namibia (Community Conservancy Program) and Scotland (Regional Land Use Partnerships), as well as a review of 14 territorial development initiatives, and consultations with LPs.

These sources found that LPs require strong institutional support of four key types to meet their potential for achieving multiple local and national goals:



Supportive government policies:

Governments need to recognize territorial-level collaborative landscape action as an essential operational mechanism to implement local and national policy priorities toward Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to lower greenhouse gas emissions. These represent not just a whole-of-government but a whole-of-society approach to meeting sustainable development challenges. Policies that encourage coordination and policy coherence among sectoral agencies greatly facilitate integrated landscape planning, action and monitoring. Specific policies are critical to their success and scope of action, such as protecting rights to land, forest and ecosystem services and formalizing multi-level participatory governance.



Technical services and local capacity development:

Good landscape planning requires access to technical data and advisory services to understand landscape processes and analyze socio-economic-ecological interactions. Partnerships need guidance on landscape

governance, laws, inclusive green and blue business practices, market mechanisms and integrated landscape monitoring systems design. Developing strategies and practices for sustainable landscape management requires science and research specific to the landscape. Programs are needed to strengthen and sustain local capacities for facilitating and implementing LPs. Governments can provide such services directly or facilitate NGOs, businesses and other actors to do so.



Financial and business services:

Even when they have formed effective collaborative platforms and have strong leadership, technical capacities, robust strategies and action plans, LPs find it a key challenge to mobilize and coordinate the finance required. Multiple sources of public, private and civic funding need to be aligned. LPs need support to build stronger financial knowledge, skills and tools. In addition to funding individual projects and businesses that contribute to landscape regeneration, financial institutions and the overall financial architecture must be shaped to fund LP processes and coordinate long-term investment for landscape regeneration at scale. National and sub-national governments have an important role in providing or catalyzing financial services to address these challenges.



Connections for knowledge exchange and learning:

LPs want to learn from one another. They also need clear communication channels connecting them to experts who can help them and prospective buyers of landscape-friendly products. To achieve their goals, LPs need access to specialized expertise on good governance, legal matters and market designs that incentivize sustainable landscape management.

Designating a strong national or state office to mobilize and coordinate government, civil society, businesses and other actors in support of LPs can contribute to all of the above.

Key ingredients for success

Experience and research highlight seven ingredients for success in designing and implementing national and subnational government support:

- 1 Commitment to participatory landscape governance.** Agencies supporting LPs embrace principles and philosophies that respect and empower community identity, the locally constructed landscape vision, community-led initiatives and LP ownership by local actors.
- 2 Public policy frameworks that explicitly strengthen LPs for integrated territorial development.** Public sector policy frameworks and specific laws and programs strengthen LPs and make them visible.
- 3 Long-term support services responding to locally defined needs.** Governments institutionalize ongoing legal, technical, financial and networking support for LPs that respond to their evolving needs.
- 4 Strategic coordination among service providers.** Support organizations build on their synergies and actively coordinate efforts to reduce inefficiencies, unnecessary duplication and institutional conflict.
- 5 Proactive engagement of business in LPs.** Governments help businesses and supply chains align with local landscape development strategies while helping LPs work effectively with businesses.
- 6 Long-term financing for landscape enabling and asset investments.** Governments provide or facilitate grant financing for LP development; align different pools of public finance in the landscape; finance and co-finance LP-prioritized projects; and provide financial support services.
- 7 Constructive engagement with LP networks.** National and sub-national governments engage constructively with LPs' own networks to support their learning and participation in policy processes.





First steps toward designing effective policy and program support

We encourage national and subnational governments to take initial steps to design policy and support systems for LPs, collaborating with LPs and allied NGOs, civil society and businesses:



Set up a multi-sector task force

to develop strategies to institutionalize support for LPs



Identify and engage existing LPs,

and businesses that are already actively collaborating in LPs



Assess government policies, decision structures and coordination mechanisms related to LPs



Assess current and potential services provided by existing institutions to LPs



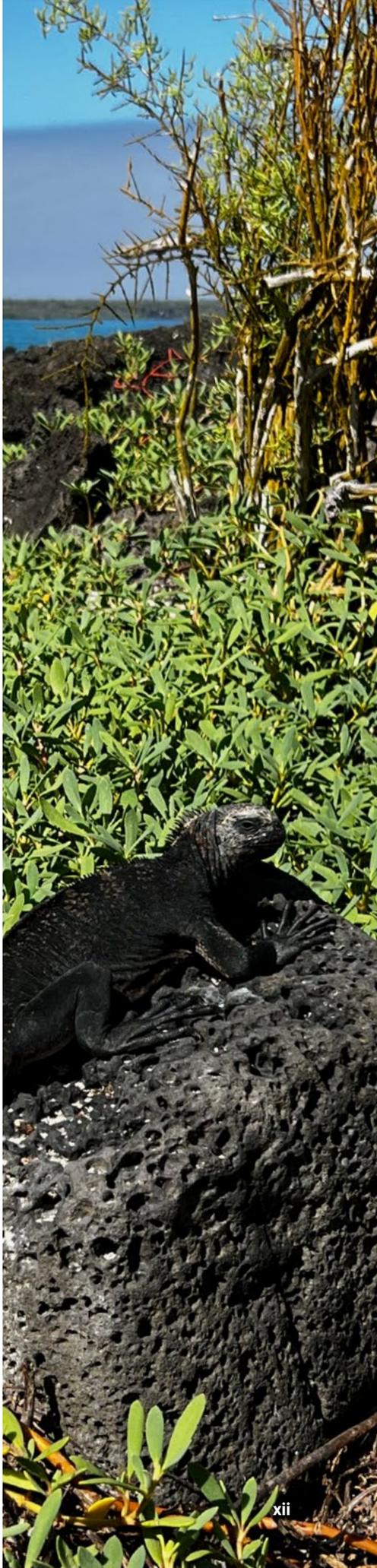
Draft a strategy and alternative

solutions to strengthen policy and support services for LPs, to discuss and refine in a national landscapes dialogue.

Abbreviations

AFD	Agence Française de Développement (<i>French Development Agency</i>)
AHWG	Ad Hoc Working Group on Territorial Governance
AIM4C	Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate
ASL	Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Program
ATIE	Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (based in Costa Rica)
CDP	Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (<i>Italian</i>)
CI	Conservation International
CIF	Climate Investment Fund
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
COMDEKS	Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative
COMPACT	Community Management of Protected Area Conservation (program of UNDP-SGP)
COP 26	Glasgow Climate Change Conference of the Parties
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
CPLP	Community of Portuguese Language Countries (<i>Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa</i>)
CSA	Climate-Smart Agriculture
CWMU	Community Watershed Management and Utilization proclamation (Ethiopia)
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme (in Uganda)
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance
EU	European Union
FACT	Forest, Agriculture and Commodity Trade dialogue
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FOLUR	Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration Impact Program
G-20	Group of Twenty, an intergovernmental forum comprising the EU and 19 countries
GALLOP	Global Livelihoods and Landscapes Recovery Platform Initiative
GBP	Great Britain pound
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GF4SL	Green Finance for Sustainable Landscapes Programme
GGGI	Global Green Growth Institute
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (<i>German Agency for International Cooperation</i>)
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank Group
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILM	Integrated Landscape Management
IMFN	International Model Forest Network
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
ISFL	BioCarbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Landscapes
LAMFN	Latin America Model Forest Network
LEAF	Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest Finance Coalition
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
LENs	Landscape Enterprise Networks
LIFE	L'Instrument Financier pour l'Environnement (<i>French, Financial Instrument for the Environment</i>)
LPs	Landscape and Seascape Partnerships
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (in Uganda)

M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFNs	Model Forest Networks
MoANR	Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (in Ethiopia)
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MSM	Multi-stakeholder Mechanism project
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment (in Uganda)
NAP-CCD	National Action Plan on Combating Desertification
NbS	Nature-based (climate) solution
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions (to Climate Change Mitigation)
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NLP	National Landcare Program
NOVI	National Environment Vision (Netherlands)
NRM	Natural Resource Management
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAN-GTD	Plan d'Action National Gestion Durable des Terres <i>(National Action Plan for Sustainable Land Management)</i>
PAN-LCD	Plan d'Action National National de Lutte Contre la Désertification <i>(National Action Plan for Combating Desertification)</i>
PBL	Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency
PROGREEN	The Global Partnership for Sustainable and Resilient Landscapes
PSI-GTD	Plan Stratégique d'Investissement dans la Gestion Durable des Terres <i>(Strategic Plan for Investing in Sustainable Land Management)</i>
RLUP	Regional Land Use Partnerships (Scotland)
RMIT	Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
SDGs	The Sustainable Development Goals for 2030
SEPLS	Socio-ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes
SGP	UNDP-implemented GEF Small Grants Programme
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
TP4D	Territorial Perspectives for Development
UCLG	The United Cities and Local Governments
UK	United Kingdom
ULN	Uganda Landcare Network
UNF	United Nations Foundation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFSS	United Nations Food Systems Summit
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States dollar
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VCM	Voluntary Carbon Market
WH-LEEP	World Heritage Local Ecological Entrepreneurship Program
WBG	World Bank Group
WUA	Water User Association



1

Advancing national policy goals through collaborative territorial action

1.1

Introduction to the White Paper

National and subnational governments face daunting challenges to implement policies and programs for economic, social and environmental goals that depend on or impact a common land and natural-resource base. Top-down policy structures are critical to mobilize change at scale, but policymakers need to adapt solutions to local contexts for them to be sustainable over the long term. National goals cannot be achieved without also building up local partnerships to design and sustain them and strengthening intermediate structures between local communities and national actors. The authors developed this white paper to inform and inspire policymakers, Landscape Partnerships (LPs) and their allies to collaborate in building greater policy support and making policy development and implementation more effective.

The terms “landscape” and “seascape” refer to geographic areas of natural and human-modified lands and resources where people, economy and ecosystems have historically interacted (Denier, et al. 2015). They encompass all the resources that jointly generate the suite of products and ecosystem services on which people depend: soils, water bodies, biodiversity, forests, grasslands and wetlands, agricultural lands and human settlements. Also central to the concept are cultural and political dimensions of resource values and management. Because landscape

elements are so interconnected, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals relies on the coherent management of our landscapes and seascapes, as illustrated in Figure 1.

The term “Partnership” refers here to a formal or informal coalition formed by diverse stakeholders from across the landscape or seascape who recognize their interdependence and agree to jointly pursue long-term landscape regeneration and resilience (Denier et al., 2015). Such partnerships go by myriad names (over 100 are listed by Scherr, 2022). But to succeed, they all need supportive policies and enabling services.

Section 1 of the White Paper summarizes the policy challenge and the opportunities provided by working with these Partnerships. The methodology is described in section 2. Key external policy support functions needed and wanted by LPs are described in section 3, and lessons learned from decades of field experience about the key ingredients are summarized in section 4. Building on these findings, section 5 proposes initial steps for governments to design an institutionalized support system for LPs that reflects their national context. The concluding section 6 recommends that policymakers take action now to position LPs as part of a core strategy to implement policy goals around all dimensions of sustainable development in an inclusive, operational and locally adapted way.

FIGURE 1: Landscapes and Seascapes



Source: Thaxton et al., 2015.

1.2 The challenge of translating sustainable development policy, targets and commitments into impact on the ground

Policymakers increasingly recognize the multiple urgent land and resource challenges facing their countries: food and livelihood insecurity, climate change, land and coastal degradation, disruption of hydrological systems, biodiversity and natural habitat loss, human health threats, covid-related economic losses and inadequate job creation.

In response, an explosion of innovation around inclusive green growth now offers the prospect of a more sustainable and regenerative future that also ensures the livelihoods of the most vulnerable (GGGI 2019; World Bank, 2012). Major new national and international policy commitments identify landscape- or territorial-scale action as essential, including the [UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030](#) (SDGs), the [post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#), the [Paris Climate Accords](#), the [Bonn Challenge](#) for forest landscape restoration, the [New York Declaration on Forests](#) committing to forest conservation, [Land Degradation Neutrality](#) committing to reduce land

degradation and accelerate land restoration, the [European Union Green Deal](#), the [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#) (Dudley, et al. 2021), and new [country coalitions emerging from the UN Food System Summit](#) (UNFSS). Some authorities propose post-COVID economic recovery programs to be “green” with environmental benefits seen as a co-benefit, a necessary condition or an opportunity (Maas and Lucas 2021; Meijer et al. 2021). Private corporations and countries have committed to climate action and zero-deforestation supply chains (Bregman, et al., 2015; Government of the United Kingdom, 2021).

Most funding to meet these commitments will necessarily be national and local, and major national investment efforts are underway. In addition, hundreds of billions of dollars in international financing are also entering the pipeline or have been promised to help advance these agendas, from philanthropic sources like the Bezos Earth Fund and the Protecting our Planet coalition of nine foundations, to Overseas Development Assistance, private companies and financial institutions, multilateral development banks and environment funds, and payments for ecosystem services especially around carbon and water (Ramos 2022).

Yet policymakers are struggling to translate their policy goals and financial resources into concrete action and impacts on the ground. In practice, most countries' policies and programs are still designed centrally and are highly siloed across ministries and sectors. Uncoordinated sectoral plans and programs in agriculture, biodiversity, infrastructure and health conflict with one another, are highly fragmented, or overburden local actors with duplicative or conflicting demands. Top-down implementation strategies often ignore local needs, contexts and priorities. There is little coherence in public, private and civic financing for sustainable development. Incremental project-based approaches are not delivering impact at the needed scale (Osborne, et al. 2021; United Nations Interagency Taskforce on Financing for Development, 2021).

Most importantly, the potential for harnessing synergies and avoiding negative tradeoffs among social, economic, and environmental goals is often lost or ignored. It is thus not apparent how the large new flows of national and international funds becoming available will make their way to the myriad farmers, businesses, community groups, local NGOs, villages and towns, and builders of local infrastructure whose work is critical to change reality on the ground. A more coherent and structured policy approach is needed that more explicitly links community and national goals.

1.3 Landscape and Seascape Partnerships: A practical solution to advance national policies

Even as top-down solutions falter, all around the world a revolution towards sustainable development through cooperative models has begun in local landscapes and seascapes. In a context of accelerating terrestrial and coastal resource degradation and climate change, local actors have found they are unable to achieve their goals when operating on their own. Often after decades of fruitless conflict with other resource users in their landscape, some are turning to more cooperative models. They are facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue, analysis, visioning and planning, and coordinated actions across the landscape to sustain or restore the natural resources, social institutions and economic arrangements on which they all depend. Locally-led climate change adaptation is further accelerating this movement with actions that cut across traditional silos. They are one of a various

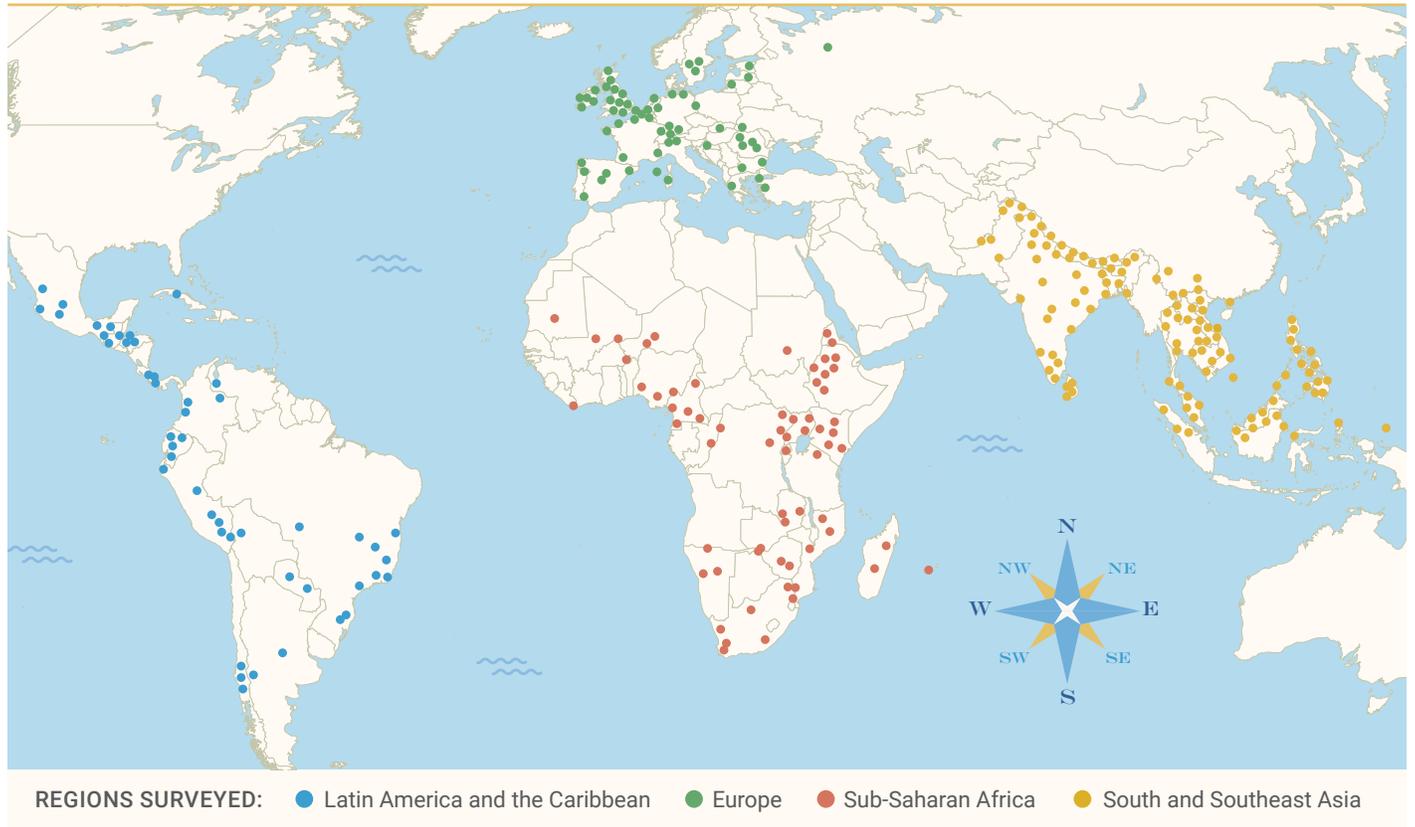
multi-stakeholder food-system processes that have emerged around the world (Alliance of Bioversity-CIAT, UNEP and WWF 2021).

More than 450 LPs were documented in the 2013-2017 period in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and South/Southeast Asia (Estrada-Carmona et al., 2014; Zanzanaini et al., 2017; Milder et al., 2014; Garcia-Martin et al., 2016; see Figure 2). A new survey of landscape initiatives in the United States is underway by the Network for Landscape Conservation, following one with more limited coverage in 2016 (Mickelson et al., 2017). Many more LPs exist in other regions. The geography of these Partnerships ranges from thousands to millions of hectares.

These integrated landscape management (ILM) and multi-stakeholder territorial governance approaches take many different forms (See Box 1). Voluntary partnerships may form around indigenous territories or city-regions, or around watersheds, biological corridors or green growth corridors that span multiple jurisdictions (Modrego and Berdegue, 2015; Molina and Pavez, 2012; Nishi et al., 2021). A group of leaders from different stakeholder groups collaborate to jointly set priorities, reach agreements and coordinate implementation. Local governments are almost always active members, as increasingly are local businesses. The Partnership may be convened and facilitated by a trusted NGO, university, watershed or biodiversity authority, producer organization or public agency. Some have formal legal status while others operate as informal platforms (Buck et al., 2017).

LPs provide a framework for implementing the SDGs at the local landscape scale (Thaxton et al., 2015). They aim to align actions for sustainable food systems and supply chains; restoration of forests, watersheds, wetlands, coastal resources and grasslands in and outside protected areas; biodiversity conservation; food, water and energy security; nature-based climate solutions; poverty reduction; human health and job creation (Buck and Bailey, 2014). They can serve as platforms for knowledge exchange, difficult negotiations, pre-competitive business planning and creative innovations to reduce trade-offs and enhance synergies (Denier et al., 2015; Scherr et al., 2015; Forster et al., 2021).

FIGURE 2: Landscape and Seascape Partnerships in Surveyed Regions



Sources: Estrada-Carmona, et al., 2014; Zanzanaini, et al., 2017; Milder, et al., 2014; Garcia-Martin et al., 2016.

Research provides evidence that ILM can support climate-change mitigation and carbon sequestration (Harvey et al., 2013; Scherr, Shames and Friedman 2012), strengthen watershed management (Boelee et al., 2013); enhance biodiversity and agrobiodiversity (Kremen and Merenlender 2018), sustain institutional processes for climate change adaptation (Shames and Scherr 2019) and resilience (Buck and Bailey 2014), and enhance livelihoods (Stoian et al., 2018). A review of scientific and gray literature found that landscape approaches show strong potential as a framework to reconcile conservation and development by building social capital, enhancing community income and employment opportunities, as well as reducing land degradation and conserving natural resources (Reed et al., 2016.) The COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on global challenges that can impact the environment and livelihoods at local scales. LPs are positioned to enhance resilience to such systemic shocks while contributing toward efforts to preempt the future emergence of such risks.

With support from and coordination with national policymakers, LPs are also strategically positioned to support national priorities in a whole-of-society approach. For example, while global supply chains and market forces impact local-level decision-making and action, local landscape coalitions can also work together to shape local response, including making benefits more inclusive and sustainable. Because LPs can tackle trade-offs among goals, they can help to define priorities and increase coherence (Bakarr et al., 2014).

For example, the new [Global Biodiversity Framework](#) with 2030 action targets includes achieving global coverage of integrated and inclusive spatial planning and the integration of area-based conservation measures into wider landscapes and seascapes to improve ecosystem connectivity and ensure nature's contributions to people. LPs can contribute (or lead the way) to achieving these targets (Meijer et al., 2021; Takahashi et al., 2022).



Box 1. Integrated Landscape Management and other territorial approaches

There are at least 100 different English terms for the variety of approaches to ILM (Scherr, 2022). The diverse terms do reflect some fundamental differences in focus between communities of practice. They may emphasize different entry points for integrated management such as regenerative agriculture, watershed management, forest protection, or climate action. They build on concepts of ecosystem restoration to incorporate social and economic benefits.

But all of these converge on the critical role of ecosystem health in local place-based sustainable development, recognize critical interconnections among land uses, consider multiple levels of spatial organization and seek to mobilize a collective response to threats like degradation, climate change, food insecurity and poverty. Most involve:

- **A multi-stakeholder and cross-sectorial partnership** or platform for long-term learning, negotiation, and coordinated action assisted by trusted facilitators
- **A long-term vision for development defined by stakeholders** for the landscape encompassing human well-being, regenerative economy and healthy nature
- **Adoption of agricultural, conservation, and other land-use systems and practices** that generate economic, environmental, and social benefits aligned with the landscape vision

- **Spatial planning** to ensure that different land uses and practices across the landscape—in natural habitats, regenerative production areas, and human settlements have positive ecological and economic synergies
- **Policies and market developments** that support integrated landscape goals, strategies, and landscape stewardship (Scherr, Shames and Friedman, 2013).

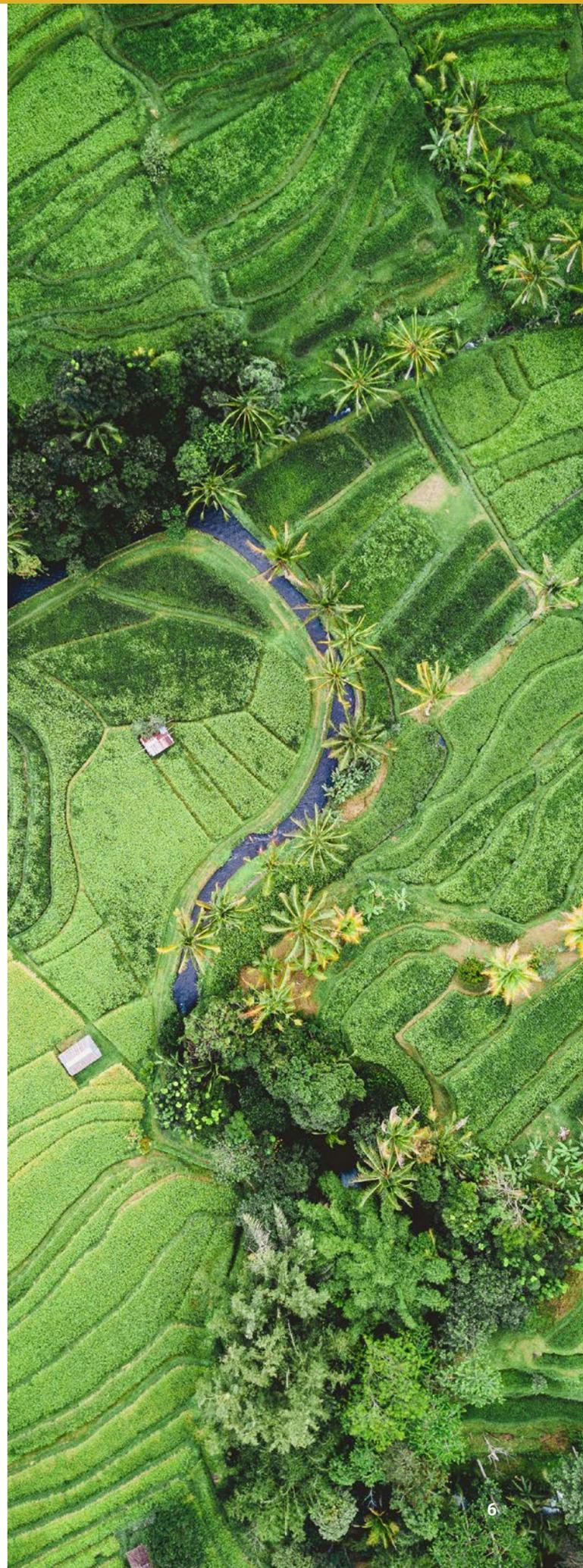
In parallel, a range of ‘territorial development’ approaches has developed around strategies for empowering local people and decentralizing power to achieve socioeconomic, developmental and political objectives. Territorial development often focuses on urban areas, local governments, or self-governed indigenous territories, while landscape approaches tend to be more rural-focused and tied to biophysical and ecological objectives (TP4D, 2018; Forster et al., 2021). But there is significant overlap among these approaches, and they are linked through common principles and frameworks. Territorial governments and multi-stakeholder landscape partnerships can join forces to build cooperative, co-creative, and co-managed initiatives at a landscape or seascape scale to achieve the SDGs in a holistic and integrated manner, leaving no one—and no place—behind (UNCCD, 2022; UNFSS, 2021a).

Indeed integrated landscape and territorial development approaches have been recognized internationally and endorsed formally by the UN conventions on climate change (UNFCCC, 2016), combating desertification/land degradation (Orr et al., 2017; UNCCD, 2017), and biological diversity (UNCBD, 2016); as well as by the UN High-Level Political Forum of the SDGs (HLPF, 2018), UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (Dudley et al., 2021) and UN Habitat (UN Habitat, 2019); the United Nations General Assembly (United Nations, 2015); in the recent adaptation report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2022); and in strategies of the coalition of Regional Governments (Regions4, 2021).

Landscape investments are included in the financing strategies of the Global Environment Facility, the Global Green Growth Institute's 2030 strategy, the Green Climate Fund, the World Bank and other multilateral development banks, and bilateral donors of the OECD (Climate Investment Funds, 2021; Global Green Growth Institute, 2019; Grey et al., 2016; OECD, 2020). Some powerful business actors are starting to support good landscape governance, such as the Forest Allies organized by Rainforest Alliance (Rainforest Alliance, 2021; World Business Council on Sustainable Development, 2018).

Much has been learned about how to form and facilitate these partnerships and how to plan, implement, finance and monitor ILM (Buck and Scherr 2019; Dudley, et al., 2021; Heiner et al., 2017; Kusters et al., 2016; LandScale, 2021; Shames and Scherr, 2020). Learnings from around the world about effective landscape management and practical tools for implementation are being systematized and made more accessible by groups like the [Global Landscapes Forum](#), UNU-IAS for the [Satoyama Initiative](#), the [Model Forest Network](#), [1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People](#), [4 Returns for Landscape Restoration](#) and the [UNDP Green Commodities Programme](#).

There are significant barriers to organizing, sustaining and successfully implementing long-term collaboratives for sustainable landscape development. These include power imbalances, conflicts over land and resource rights, lack of trust, poor data on and understanding of landscape dynamics, resistance from entrenched interests, and conflicting regulations from different government agencies (Buck and Scherr 2019; Kusters et al., 2016). But a growing body of strategies



learned from the field can help to address, if not fully resolve, these. For example, the risk of benefits being captured by local or external elites is being mitigated by using neutral or independent facilitators, strengthening the voices of marginalized groups, support from allies of democratic processes, and setting norms of transparency (Heiner et al., 2017).

1.4 Currently weak policy support for Landscape and Seascape Partnerships

Despite the proliferation of LPs and broad international endorsement, few countries have developed policies and programs to systematically and sustainably support them over the long term. This is due in part to the lack of visibility of LPs at the national level. But it also reflects the difficulties of replacing legacies of state control over land with more bottom-up approaches. Ceding significant decision-making authority to the local level can feel risky for those responsible at the top. So can encouraging multi-sector strategies in locations that are especially important for national goals, like protecting key biodiversity areas, conserving key forest carbon sinks or ensuring the secure supply of key agricultural commodities.

A comparative study of country policy frameworks in Ghana, Indonesia and Zambia found positive features, including adaptive management in the face of climate change, planning methods that recognized multiple land uses and stakeholders, and decentralized rights and responsibilities. But these fell short in actual implementation and quality of practice, with significant gaps in clarifying rights and responsibilities, defining entry points of common concern and negotiating a shared “change logic” at local, regional, and national levels (O’Connor et al., 2020).

Even where national policy endorsement of LPs is strong, actions are typically fragmented and uncoordinated, with small-scale, short-term or sectorally siloed projects championed by individual government departments, NGOs, companies or UN agencies. Most existing support services promote interventions designed in capital cities rather than with local actors (RIMISP, 2021). Locally organized LPs and their thoughtfully developed and negotiated visions



and collaborative action plans are often ignored or undermined when large public or private investment programs are implemented. LP leaders and partners find it difficult to access knowledge, financing and other resources, especially for solutions that address multiple goals at once. For example, LPs promoting agroforestry systems must navigate market and technical assistance from agriculture, forestry, water, climate and biodiversity agencies and overcome their contradictory regulatory guidelines and incentives.

This situation represents a lost opportunity for achieving transformational change in landscapes and seascapes to benefit people, nations and the planet. Halting the loss of forests, natural grasslands and wetlands cannot be achieved over the long term without changing processes of agricultural planning and urban development. Climate-change adaptation cannot be achieved without new ways of managing watersheds and agricultural development. Biodiversity cannot be conserved without involving local communities in protecting and restoring the ecosystems that they steward, use and manage.

“Halting the loss of forests, natural grasslands and wetlands cannot be achieved over the long term without changing processes of agricultural planning and urban development”



2

Sources of insight: Literature, program experts, landscape leaders

In late 2020, EcoAgriculture Partners, the Global Livelihoods and Landscapes Recovery Platform Initiative (GALLOP initiative), Columbia University and Cornell University began collaborating to understand these needs, challenges and opportunities in a structured way. This White Paper synthesizes findings from four complementary sources.

The team first did a targeted review of academic and gray literature about institutional support of LPs and ILM. Among these was a report on [Territorial Approaches for Sustainable Development \(TP4D\)](#) published by GIZ for the Territorial Perspectives for Development (TP4D) coalition. That report included 14 case studies of territorial and landscape initiatives across Asia, Africa and Latin America to examine experiences and synthesize lessons learned (Forster et al., 2021).

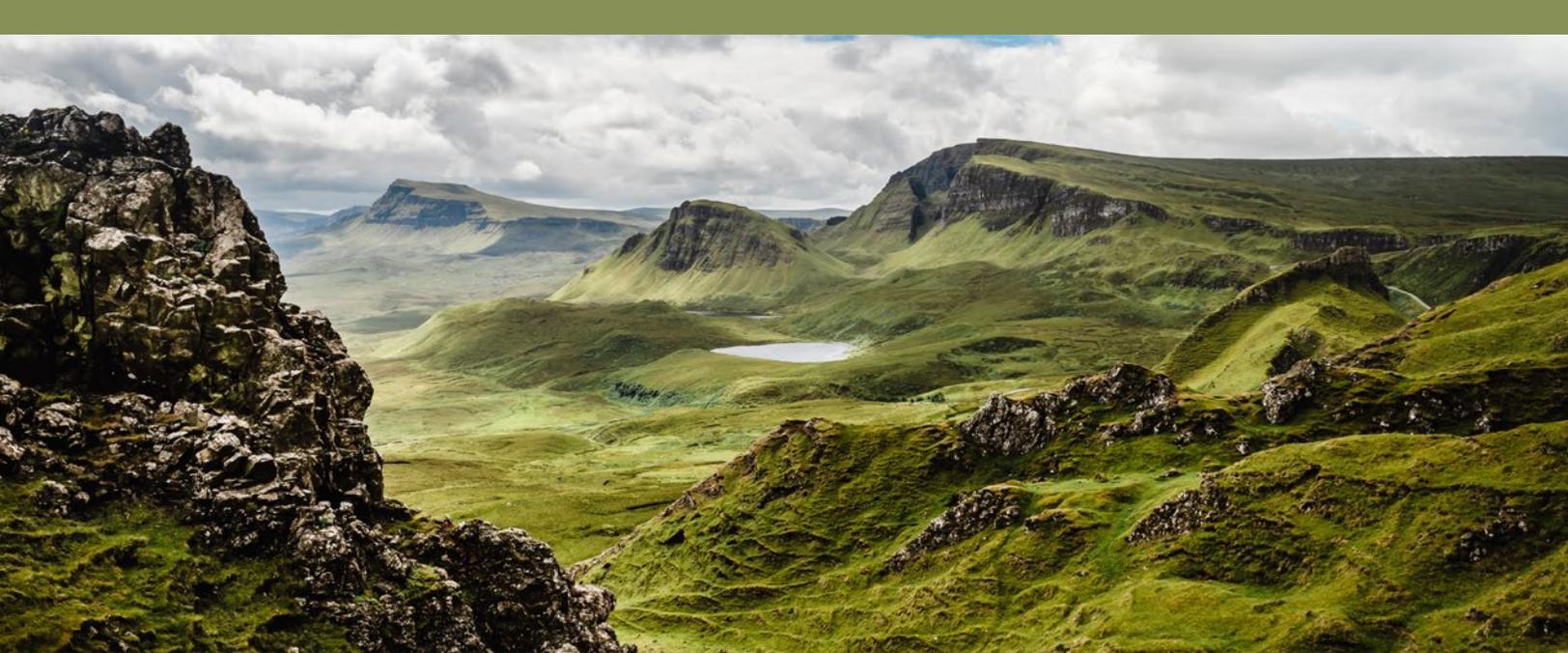
Individual interviews were then conducted with a group of 15 experts with extensive field experience with policies and programs supporting ILM. The interviews solicited institutional details of policy and program support for specific landscape initiatives, lessons learned on effective design and implementation, and organizational features the informants considered to be most important for enabling support of LPs. The focus was on the modalities of external support, not on the internal organization of the LPs.

The expert experiences came from diverse contexts (see Figure 3). Landscape-specific support programs were described in Brazil (Cerrado Region), Ecuador (Galapagos), Ethiopia (Central Highlands), El Salvador

(Chalatenango Department), Guatemala (Maya Biosphere Reserve), Mexico (Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve), Netherlands (De Marker Wadden), Philippines (northern Mindanao Landcare), South Africa (uMngeni landscape) and Uganda (Northern Uganda). National landscapes programs reviewed included Australia (Landcare), Colombia and Chile (20x20), Costa Rica (reforestation policy and program), Namibia (Community Conservation Areas) and Scotland (regional land-use partnership system). A virtual workshop conducted on March 31, 2021, brought together those experts to collectively interrogate issues and innovations revealed by the literature and the interviews.

The analysis also drew on expert consultations organized under the Territorial Governance workstream of the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS, 2021a), including an [Independent Dialogue](#) and the [Pre-Summit Affiliated Session](#) organized by EcoAgriculture Partners and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Territorial Governance-AHWG (UNFSS, 2021). Both the AHWG and UNFSS Action Area on Territorial Governance embraced a convergence of the communities of practice around landscapes, territories and city-regions.

Finally, the analysis drew on policy and program recommendations from consultations directly with LP leaders and supporters during the [FAO-EcoAgriculture Partners UNFSS Independent Dialogue](#) (Ramos, 2021); [African Landscapes Action Plan](#) (African Landscapes Dialogue, 2020) and the [Mesoamerican Landscape Dialogue](#) (EcoAgriculture, 2018).



Quiraing, Isle of Skye, Scotland

FIGURE 3: Landscape Partnership Cases Studied



LATIN AMERICA

- 1. Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve (Mexico)
- 2. Maya Biosphere Reserve (Guatemala)
- 3. Chalatenango Department (El Salvador)
- 4. Costa Rican Agricultural Landscapes
- 5. Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape
- 6. Colombian Landscapes
- 7. Galapagos Seascapes & Landscapes (Ecuador)
- 8. Cerrado Landscape (Brazil)
- 9. Chilean Native Forests

EUROPE

- 10. Scottish Landscapes
- 11. De Marker Wadden (Netherlands)

AFRICA

- 12. Ethiopian Highland Region
- 13. Ghanaian Western Region
- 14. Ugandan Northern Region
- 15. uMngeni Landscape (South Africa)

ASIA & OCEANIA

- 16. Tamil Nadu Landscapes (India)
- 17. Northern Mindanao Landcare (Philippines)
- 18. Australian Landscapes

3

Types of support needed by Landscape Partnerships

LPs are typically convened and facilitated by an entity trusted by stakeholders, which may be an NGO, local government, regional authority, indigenous community council, university, producer cooperative, or business. Some are in an early stage of development and have relatively limited internal capacities while others are longstanding and have members with strong capacities for effective implementation of the landscape vision and action plan. Regardless of the level of development, however, four key types of external support—that is, beyond what can be provided by local partnerships’ own members—were identified as key for their long-term success by both experts and LPs themselves. These include supportive government policy, technical services and local capacity development, financial and business services, and connections for knowledge-sharing and learning (Figure 4). Each is briefly described below.

FIGURE 4: Types of Public Policy Support Needed by Landscape and Seascape Partnerships





3.1 Supportive government policies

LPs need coherent support across an array of public policies. Most fundamentally, governments need to recognize landscape and seascape collaboratives as a legitimate mechanism to help define and implement interrelated national and local policy priorities. Governments provide legal frameworks for organizing and managing partnerships, define the scope for their input into public development plans, and enable government agencies to work with and support them.

Policies that encourage coordination among sectoral agencies greatly facilitate integrated landscape planning, action, and monitoring (Buck and Scherr, 2019). Smallholder communities, indigenous peoples, and others need to have clear rights in relation to self-governance of resources and development plans, access to resources for decision-support, and institutions to defend them. Specific policies such as regularizing land tenure and protecting land rights are critical to their success and scope of action.

National, sub-national, and local governments will have different roles because of their different designated responsibilities, policy objectives, and policy instruments available. Policy and service support will also depend on the degree and type of political decentralization in the country and on the economic or environmental value of the land- and seascapes to central governments (Ghazoul and Schweizer, 2021). At this time, there is little cross-country comparative data on the extent or quality of these legal and policy frameworks.



3.2 Technical services and local capacity development

The overall aim of support services should be to strengthen LP capacities so that as many of the functions as possible can be supplied within the landscape or directly by the LP partners. But in the process, LPs will typically need ongoing access to specialized technical services from actors who understand ILM (Leigh Goldberg Consulting, 2018).



National programs can provide such services directly while also helping NGOs and other actors do the same.

Key services include training and backstopping LP facilitators or providing the services of an independent facilitator. Expertise is needed in practical tools for all elements of the landscape and seascape regeneration process: partnership development, landscape assessment for shared understanding, visioning and action planning, implementation and financing, and impact assessment (Heiner et al., 2017; Shames and Scherr, 2020; 1000 Landscapes, 2022).

LPs require access to technical data and advisory services about landscape processes and evolving socio-economic conditions. They value expert guidance on landscape governance, relevant laws, inclusive “green” and “blue” business practices, and the design of new market mechanisms and integrated landscape monitoring systems. Access to relevant, user-friendly information technology can greatly improve their efficiency and effectiveness.



3.3 Financial and business services

A central feature of ILM is translating the collaborative vision and action plans of diverse stakeholders into a coherent landscape investment portfolio that can attract public, private, and civic finance at scale. ‘Asset investments’ include the farm, business, physical and natural infrastructure, value chain, protected area, and other activities that directly generate economic, social, and environmental values and the synergies needed to achieve the landscape vision at scale. Thus expanding existing and new businesses whose focus and practices align with landscape strategies is a key part of the landscape investment portfolio. Business and finance leaders allied with the LP’s aims can help to ensure synergies with other commercial and non-commercial investments (Buck and Sweitzer, 2018).

‘Enabling investments’ in landscape processes and institutional innovations are also key. Such investments provide the whole-landscape conditions for commercial and non-commercial projects to be profitable and cost-effective. Examples are the long-term tasks of managing the LP, such as convening

stakeholders facilitating dialogues, undertaking landscape assessments and research, setting up new markets or financial mechanisms, designing regulatory reforms, capacity development, and monitoring actions and impacts (FAO and Global Mechanism of UNCCD, 2015).

For both asset and enabling investments, a central challenge for LPs and their members is engaging the business community and coordinating the required finance to realize potential ecological, social, and economic synergies among them. Even when LPs have formed effective collaborative platforms and have strong leadership, technical capacities, and robust strategies and action plans, leaders and member organizations are typically stretched too thin to undertake the work required for finance mobilization. They also lack the business and financial skills needed for financing at this scale (Heiner et al., 2016).

At the same time, business and financial institutions and the overall financial architecture are not set up with the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) features for many of the activities and projects critical for landscape restoration and regeneration. Proactive efforts are required to shift financial flows towards sustainable landscape investment. This will involve actions by public and civic financial institutions, as well as pre-competitive innovation in the private sector that is incentivized, supported, or partnered with the public sector (Meijer et al., 2019; Shames and Scherr, 2020). New models for business and financial intermediation may be needed. Investments in communal and public lands may require new governance mechanisms.



3.4 Connections for knowledge exchange and learning

A central ILM principle is adaptive management, a continual process of monitoring, learning, adapting, evaluating, and improving. Therefore, strong knowledge systems are needed for Internal learning within the LP, access to external expertise, and peer-to-peer knowledge exchange (Kusters et al., 2018). While many LP networks and platforms have been established, they need resources to provide more services and to be connected to national and subnational knowledge institutions (1000 Landscapes, 2021).

“LPs need to stay informed about broader actions in their landscape. This includes political changes, major business developments, and financial flows in the pipeline”

LP leaders typically spend a huge amount of time trying to access information and connect with actors from many different sectors who can inform or advance their work. They need clearer and easier-to-access communication channels with these actors (Adams and Tanos, 2021). They may need help to organize dialogues with government agencies or buyers of sustainably grown products and services. They may need specialized expertise to promote markets that incentivize sustainable landscape management.

Improving landscape management practices also requires landscape-specific scientific analyses and research. Strategic, long-term relationships with technical institutes or universities have been highly useful to many LPs. At the same time, LP leaders and members deeply value peer-to-peer learning with colleagues from other LPs who are facing similar challenges and can often share practical solutions.

Meanwhile, to make strategic decisions about their development pathways and stop harmful developments or adapt to them in a timely way, LPs need to stay informed about broader actions in their landscape. This includes political changes, major business developments, and financial flows in the pipeline. Where advocacy is needed, their voices can be amplified through strategic coalitions and dialogue forums.

Anstruther, Fife, Scotland



4

Key ingredients for success

The section above summarized the what of external policy and program support for LPs. This section focuses on how that external support is provided. Seven ingredients for successful LPs were identified by the experts and LPs consulted, each described and illustrated below:



4.1 Commitment to participatory landscape governance

An ingredient for success highlighted by both experts and landscape leaders is that policymakers and service providers be committed to participatory landscape governance. Their organizations need to have principles and philosophies that respect and empower community identity, the locally constructed landscape vision, community-led initiatives, and ownership of the LP by local actors.

Those providing services to LPs need to understand local contexts (values, motives, history, culture) and hire local leaders from the community whenever

possible (Copping et al., 2006). External policies and programs should be in service to the communities in the landscape and provide impartial support and information. They should respect local people's own interpretation of good governance and respect human rights such as women's inclusion. This approach is illustrated by national government support for the locally-led LandCare model that originated in Australia (Box 2) and the Watershed User Associations in Ethiopia (Box 3). Widespread experience with similar approaches is providing practical lessons for program development, for example, in the multi-stakeholder mechanisms project of the Alliance of Bioversity-CIAT, UNEP, and WWF (2021).



Uganda, Africa

Box 2. The Landcare model of locally-led landscape action

The Landcare movement is strongly grounded in the strength of human relationships mediated in the community sphere by a shared interest in the landscape or seascape. Started in Australia, Landcare has been taken up in more than 25 countries under various social conditions and political environments, alongside myriad government and non-government projects, programs, and initiatives. The focus on livelihood improvement is a valued aspect of Landcare internationally and may explain the strong link observed between successful, sustainable groups and value chain/markets/economic development initiatives being undertaken by the groups.

Landcare in **Australia** comprises more than 5,000 groups with a total membership now greater than 100,000 volunteers. Landcare membership is diverse and includes rural and urban farmers, landowners, traditional owners, and groups such as Bushcare, Coastcare, Dunecare, Rivercare, and “Friends of” groups. School-based Junior Landcare is a program for children and youth where they learn about and engage with Landcare. As voluntary associations, Landcare groups vary in size from groups of neighbors addressing a local land problem to larger groups addressing more complex catchment-scale concerns. These groups tackle a wide variety of place-based on-the-ground activities including rejuvenating and repairing of habitat, restoring waterways, and addressing land management issues such as erosion.

Australian Landcare has bipartisan political support, and successive national, state/territory, and local governments have funded Landcare since the late 1980s. National government funding has been primarily delivered through the National Landcare Program (NLP). NLP Phase Two (2018-23) invested approximately Aus\$1.1 billion to deliver targeted national priority actions. Landcare Australia, a national not-for-profit organization, was also established to support the

Landcare community with funding, capacity-building, on-the-ground projects, information, and the promotion of Landcare achievements. The organization works closely with corporate and philanthropic partners and sponsors. Landcare groups and networks such as Bass Coast Landcare Network, Victoria also run commercial businesses that generate funds to support their activities.

Philippines Landcare grew from efforts to promote soil conservation and achieve rapid adoption of contour-based farming systems. In Bohol, central Visayas, for example, the Pilar Landcare groups support more than 5,000 households to grow vegetables, fruit trees, and livestock while simultaneously protecting the water catchment area of the Pilar Malinao Dam. Technical and resource support is provided through a strong ongoing relationship between the groups and Pilar Municipal Government.

The **Uganda** Landcare Network is an apex body with partners from the government, private sector, civil society, and those responsible for Lands and Urban Development, Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries, Ministry of Water and Environment, and Ministry of Local Government. The network supports individual chapter-based regional networks that provide facilitation and extension support to farmer groups focused on resource management and sustainable production.

South Africa's National LandCare Programme is a government-supported, community-based initiative that has implemented projects in all nine provinces through the LandCare Conditional Grant. The LandCare Programme is aligned with the government's broader objective of job creation, and temporary jobs are created under a program funded through the Expanded Public Works Programme.

Sources: Mary Johnson, Australian Landcare and RMIT, personal communications; Johnson, Muller and Muller, 2020; Landcare Australia 2022; Uganda Landcare Network, 2022; South Africa LandCare Programme 2022; Bass Coast Landcare Network



Box 3. Watershed User Associations in Ethiopia: Community-level institutional structures for landscape management

Since 2008, the Ethiopian Sustainable Land Management Program (SLMP) has promoted the formation of Watershed User Associations (WUAs), with support from German Technical Cooperation by GIZ. WUAs were designed to strengthen decentralized management by watershed communities. In Amhara National Regional State, WUAs have been essential in participatory land-use planning at community watershed levels and in the formulation and enforcement of by-laws that regulate the use of the local natural resource base. Community members use the WUAs to organize, plan, and implement soil and water conservation and rehabilitation measures in their watersheds. The impact of the SLMP in the Amhara region alone from 2008 to 2017 was the rehabilitation of 414,000 ha of degraded lands in 750 micro-watersheds, which benefitted 202,000 households (22% were women-headed households), an average increase of vegetation cover of 13-15%, a substantial

reduction (85%) of soil erosion on treated land, and positive effects on groundwater levels.

National, state, district government and community-level steering committees provide coordination to implement the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources's flagship program, along with development partner investments in SLM, agricultural growth and safety nets. In 2013, the Amhara Regional Government enacted a WUA proclamation that provides legal status for these associations, enabling them to legally enforce bylaws and ease access to public services and finance. In 2020, the Ethiopian Prime Minister's Office and Parliament endorsed a Community Watershed Management and Utilization proclamation. This proclamation provides rights for the use and management of watersheds for communities organized in cooperatives and associations.

Sources: Boris Buechler, Kai Schuetz and Karl Moosman, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), personal communication; Fiedler et al., 2018.

Programs can contribute to self-sustaining LPs by internalizing as many roles as possible within the LP through capacity strengthening. In Ethiopia, for example, a learning watershed network supported by the Water Land Resource Centre of Addis Ababa University helps local actors adapt the approach (WLRC, 2020). Distinctions of "internal-external" may be fluid and context-specific. Actors who were initially external may become part of the LP over time. Stakeholder mapping can be useful to explore these relationships.

There are benefits to combining bottom-up and top-down processes. External ideas may be shared with local groups for their validation and adaptation. For example, external information on climate-change scenarios or learning about landscape transformation

models from other places can inspire and inform LP planning. But governments, businesses, NGOs, and other actors that are not already part of the LP, or designated by them to do so, should not make economic, environmental, or social commitments on the LP's behalf. Any such commitments need to reflect local sustainable development priorities defined through an inclusive, participatory process. Similarly, service providers should allow LPs to do their own storytelling to internal and external audiences.

To sustain this quality of engagement by government programs or partner organizations sub-contracted by a government to provide such services typically requires strong endorsement and accountability by national or state political leaders.

4.2 Public policy frameworks that explicitly endorse Landscape Partnerships for integrated territorial development

LPs can help to implement national policy commitments (e.g., to climate action, land and ecosystem restoration, reduced deforestation, 'one health' approaches linking human-livestock-wildlife health) more effectively on the ground by integrating and adapting them to local contexts. They can provide a platform to facilitate collaborative land-use planning, negotiate community boundaries, and resolve conflicts around overlapping rights of different stakeholders. Thus, another key ingredient for successful LPs is to be a visible, well-supported pillar of public policy for integrated territorial development. This calls for national cabinet-level support and policy alignment, multi-level governance frameworks that explicitly recognize the roles of LPs, specific laws and programs to strengthen them, and operational mechanisms for cross-ministry coordination.

National cabinet-level dialogues promoted by senior politicians have enabled paradigm shifts towards integrated landscape development. Examples include the Government of Benin's shift to a whole-of-government land management strategy (Box 4) and Costa Rica's sustainable development strategy (GEF, 2006; United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform, n.d.; World Bank 2022). Organized efforts can build bridges of trust and regular communication between LPs and national or state governments and demonstrate mutual benefits.

LP planning and action are most easily aligned with government policies and programs when there is more general support for territorial approaches and inclusive, multi-level governance with mandates for evolution and decentralization of decision-making and resource allocation. Distributed authority structures can provide the legal foundation for inclusive, cross-sectoral planning and budgeting. Subnational/territorial governments can establish functional governance that aligns policies, rules, regulations, services, and communication. Formalizing multi-level governance in the rule of law can legally guarantee communities and multi-stakeholder input to policy and programs. Communities and highly vulnerable populations can be legally empowered to claim the effective

implementation of laws and their rights (OECD 2011; Stickler, et al., 2018).

Public policy frameworks may need to formalize permission for LPs to benefit from, and contribute to, existing policy instruments, such as protected areas, marine protected areas, climate-smart agriculture programs, ecological fiscal transfers, debt for nature swaps, payment for ecosystems services, and other effective area-based conservation measures. Such frameworks can develop new policy instruments that explicitly meet LP needs (ECLAC, 2015, 2019; RIMISP, 2017, 2021). Clear legal guidance may facilitate sectoral policy coordination and coherence at local levels and shift public sector financial flows to landscape investment portfolios. For example, the Netherlands NOVI Vision is now institutionalizing place-based thinking through joint environmental spatial planning (Tisma and Meijer, 2018).

Many state and non-state actors may benefit from technical support and capacity strengthening on landscape policy and governance issues (Dalupan et al., 2015; IDLO, 2012, OECD, 2011, 2020). For example, the World Resources Institute [Restoration Policy Accelerator](#) supports Latin America's ambitious 20X20 Initiative by helping national policymakers to evaluate and share learnings about policy options to accelerate landscape restoration (World Resources Institute, 2021).

4.3 Long-term support services responding to locally defined needs

Transformational change from a trajectory of landscape degradation to regeneration takes time. LPs thus operate over a generational time scale or longer. Even as they become stronger and more self-sustaining over time, LPs continue to need legal, technical, financial, and networking support, though the priorities and form of that support will evolve (Reed et al., 2020).

Service providers will ideally be locally based and long-term, supporting local champions and serving as catalytic links with external actors and resources. Specific LP support services should respond to self-assessments by the landscape partners of their needs, capacities, and opportunities. LPs and local universities can be encouraged to partner over the long term. It is important that service providers clearly



Box 4. Mobilizing national policy coherence for landscape regeneration in Benin

The Government of Benin attaches great importance to combating desertification and sustainable land management. This is reflected in their National Action Plan on Combating Desertification (PAN-LCD) of 1999; the adoption of a Strategic Plan for Investment in Sustainable Land Management (PSI-GDT) in 2012; and defining its Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) goals in 2017. However, implementation still faced barriers in mobilizing resources, aligning policies across government, and including subnational actors. Accelerating climate-change impacts on natural resource management, agricultural productivity, and developmental goals required policy coherence at national and subnational levels to adequately respond to these inter-related issues.

To deal with this challenge, a rigorous socioeconomic and environmental case for combatting degradation was produced and then socialized across different government ministries. Once a coherent understanding of the problem was achieved, a multi-sector, multi-level task force was set up including key government ministries and private stakeholders. The task force organized a national-level dialogue in 2018 to define institutional and public finance interventions to support LDN and the SDGs in Benin. Individual discussions with government stakeholders followed, socializing the analysis and agreeing on how sustainable landscape management policies could be integrated. This provided the foundation for elaborating strategies for subnational-level action.

Policy coherence across ministries for LDN was advanced by formulating a 10-year National Action Plan for Sustainable Land Management from 2018 to 2027 (PAN-GDT) along with an investment framework around four pillars:

1. Integrating landscape approaches in agriculture development planning, including an investment framework at all levels
2. Eliminating perverse incentives that encourage land degradation
3. Designing positive incentives that reward sustainable landscape management practices and initiatives
4. Developing monitoring and accountability systems

The plan seeks to mobilize 16.75 billion Central African francs (over US\$29 million) in the 10-year period.

An interim analysis in 2018 demonstrated that this approach had helped translate the concept of “avoid, reduce, and restore” impacts on nature into national agriculture ministry planning, the climate NDCs, and the national adaptation plan of Benin. A national government survey of farmers in their six ecological zones provided inputs for designing highly tailored technical assistance programs. A new financial mechanism to support sustainable investment in agriculture at a national level is under development.

Territorial-level dialogues have been conducted by local leaders to design integrated actions that will be embed in integrated territorial plans, along with impact mapping to prioritize public investments across the SDGs. To advance implementation, ILM capacities need to be strengthened among farmers and sub-national policymakers, and financial resources need to be made available for LPs.

Sources: Luc Gnacadja, UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration and Global Policies for Sustainable Development, persona communications; Republique de Benin 2018a; Republique de Benin 2018b.

communicate with LPs about the kinds of support they can offer, how they work, the costs involved, and the exit strategies from their programs, if any.

An example of effective long-term engagement is the Government of Germany's support for integrated watershed management and sustainable land management in Ethiopia, which lasted over 40 years and evolved with country developments. Short-term, targeted project assistance to LPs can still be useful, if aligned with the long-term strategy and action plan of the partnership.

Brokering and facilitation skills are central for LPs to build trust and forge a shared vision for collaborative action. Support services should enhance the capacities of existing facilitators in the landscape

stakeholder community to apply their skills and learn new tools for landscapes and seascapes. External facilitators may sometimes be needed until trained local conveners and facilitators are available. The latter will benefit from long-term backstopping, coaching, and regular opportunities for peer-learning across landscapes through different types of learning services and networks. Comparable systems are in place today for teachers and healthcare providers. External service providers should encourage and support experimentation and learning by the LPs rather than prescribing fixed recommendations. An example is the training course developed on climate-smart agricultural landscapes for local district leaders in Tanzania, described in Box 5.

Box 5. Training district governments in Tanzania to lead integrated landscape development

Since 2017, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service (USAID-FAS) has collaborated with USAID on an East Africa-based Resilient Agriculture Program. They worked with leaders in the Republic of Tanzania's Ministry of Agriculture to build subnational policy support and capacity for practicing climate-smart agriculture (CSA). Despite strengthened national enabling environments for CSA, adoption remained low, with limited coordination of subnational government interventions, finance, and technical capacity.

To fill the gap between national climate policy commitments and farmer knowledge and skills in CSA practice, EcoAgriculture Partners worked with USDA-FAS, USAID, and other national and international partners to create a subnational training curriculum for developing jurisdictional and landscape-level CSA action plans. The curriculum introduces the concept of ILM and was designed to be adaptive to relevant local contexts. Curriculum components include an introduction to Landscape CSA, facilitation skills, landscape/jurisdictional planning, markets and marketing, enabling environment, adaptation planning, and monitoring-evaluation-learning.



In 2019, the [Landscape CSA curriculum](#) was piloted during two five-day workshops in the regions of Morogoro and Zanzibar to complement the roll-out of a decentralized agriculture plan. More than 60 officers including agriculture and extension experts were trained across nine districts. The participants went on to develop eight separate ward-level action plans and integrated CSA actions into district budget proposals. Leadership teams were developed and stakeholder networks strengthened through broader collaboration and cooperation for action planning and implementation. The curriculum was refined based on participant feedback, and now Tanzania plans to scale out the training nationally with continued USDA-FAS and USAID support.

Source: Buck et al., 2021; Corner-Dolloff et al., 2020.

4.4 Strategic coordination among service providers

Support to LPs is most effective when service providers actively coordinate their efforts to build on synergies among them and reduce inefficiencies, duplication, and institutional conflict. This refers both to vertical coordination among different levels of government and horizontal coordination across sectoral institutions. There is no one blueprint for an institutional setup; this must be adapted to the context. It is sometimes better to strengthen an existing institution if it is willing to incorporate the

key ingredients for success than create a new one. Inter-agency committees can be set up to align programming, mapping, and M&E frameworks. Box 6 describes some of the institutional coordination mechanisms developed for Seascape Partnerships in the Galapagos Marine Reserve.

Having a designated lead institution can simplify and coordinate access of LPs to the services of various supporting organizations. Such lead organizations can serve as intermediaries between government departments and the LPs. Multi-level systems designate different roles to different actors (Dragomir et al., 2020). Sharing a single, spatially

Box 6. Coordinating services for Seascape Partnerships across the Galapagos Marine Reserve

In 1998, Ecuador passed a special law to create the Galapagos Marine Reserve (GMR), which comprises 13.6 million hectares within the country's Exclusive Economic Zone. Beginning in 2004, Conservation International supported the coordination of different coalitions and partnerships across the Galapagos and promoted collaboration across different areas of government to promote shared objectives. The purpose was to strengthen science and enforcement and assist in fisheries recovery in the GMR.

In April 2004, the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor initiative was created by Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Panama to serve as a regional cooperation mechanism with strong support from conservation science groups. It was led by diverse branches of government from the four member countries that included defense, security, tourism, fisheries, foreign relations, and others. Transboundary partnerships required cooperation across different organizations and advisory bodies to support networking, communications, marketing, information provision, advocacy, fundraising, and collaborative work for their common goals.

At the national level, Colombia set up the Comisión Colombiana de Océanos as a multi-sector government advisory, consultation, planning, and coordination organization. It encompassed different strategic, scientific, technological, economic, and environmental issues related to the sustainable development of the Colombian seas and their resources.



In Ecuador, the Sub-Secretary of Marine Affairs coordinated efforts of government, NGOs, and other stakeholders to support seascape initiatives across the country. In Galapagos, local stakeholders were linked through a participatory management board. High-level decisions were made by the Autoridad Interinstitucional de Manejo (Inter-institutional Management Authority), with delegates from the seven government agencies involved. In 2021, the GMR was expanded and now covers 19.2 million hectares.

Building on the initial momentum generated by the GMR's creation and through mobilizing multiple inter-institutional cooperation mechanisms, the Eastern Tropical Pacific has become a global leader in the establishment of well-managed, large-scale marine protected areas. Five of these are now UNESCO World Heritage Sites and have succeeded in recovering coastal fisheries, staving off the loss of vitally important mangroves, and creating the ocean health required to build healthy, prosperous communities.

Source: Scott Henderson, Conservation International, personal communications; Murphy et al., 2021.

explicit monitoring system and one map can inform coordinated action and enhance transparency. Box 7 illustrates diverse institutional models from four countries.

Where multiple supportive institutions have a shared vision for empowered, enabled, and sustainable landscapes, the support system can be more resilient, including to changes in political power. For example, in El Salvador, a group of municipalities that depend on a shared watershed established a joint group called La Montaña to connect all groups across the watershed and give them a space for voicing opinions, learning, and connecting projects. The group maintained consistent action even as government officials changed (Cuéllar and Kandel, 2007; Cummings et al., 2019; PRISMA, 2015).

4.5 Proactive engagement of businesses in Landscape Partnerships

Private businesses, both large companies and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), play a central role in landscape management. Fostering a “bio-economy” based on businesses with environmental and social benefits is increasingly on governmental agendas around the globe. These can support decentralized economic development in rural areas (TFA, 2021). LPs can partner with governments in promoting such development for agricultural, fishery, and forest production and processing; tourism; services; infrastructure; human settlements and infrastructure.

A new generation of landscape or territorially anchored enterprises at different scales are arising in different categories of business activities. For example, in northern Uganda, the promotion of shea nut butter production as a landscape sustainability strategy generated numerous new business opportunities and support for landscape management (Gwali et al., 2014). Likewise, the RUAFA Global Partnership on Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Food Systems has envisioned a new analytic and business framework for city-region food systems (Dubbeling, et al., 2016). Governments can facilitate the effective engagement of businesses and supply chain actors in LPs, and their alignment with the landscape development strategy, is a key ingredient for success (Demopoulous and Indrarto, 2021).

Box 7. Coordinating government support to landscapes: Diverse institutional mechanisms used in Australia, Ethiopia, India, and Scotland

Australia's Landcare program set up a multi-level system with a national natural resource management unit with representatives from different ministries, and joint federal/state technical and financial support. The government agencies assist catchment management authorities to set up their plans and channel funding, that is redistributed to local communities. The system established feedback loops from people on the ground to state and national policymakers about what was happening in the landscapes so they could be more responsive to LP input into how policies are designed and implemented (Landcare Australia, 2021; Mary Johnson, RMIT and Landcare Australia, personal communications).

Ethiopia's Sustainable Land Management Programme had a political strategy at the national ministry level, down to micro-level training through government staff to build landscape management capacities. These supported WUAs—legal entities that made their own bylaws, accessed government services, and had their own bank accounts (Fiedler et al., 2018; Boris Buechler and Karl Moosman, GIZ, personal communication).

In **India**, an act of parliament established the Green India Mission and provided it with a budget. The mission is implemented through a cascading system from national-level development commissioners. Ministries or departments in each state have overarching coordination and prioritization roles, while specific government programs are run by different actors. The National Biodiversity Authority manages national-level coordination, the states manage other services, and local structures support specific landscapes. (Edward Millard, Rainforest Alliance, personal communication; Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests).

Scotland's Land Commission is coordinating support for regional land use partnerships (local form of LPs) to achieve a green recovery and transition to net-zero carbon neutrality across the country's urban and rural regions. Seen as an implementation mechanism for their climate goals, this support for LPs is structured to be adaptive as the government creates new approaches to rural funding after the UK's exit from the European Union. The goal is for all areas of Scotland to be supported by functioning RLUPs by 2023 (Daniel Zimmer, Climate-KIC, personal communication; Scottish Land Commission, 2020).

Since most LPs are organized by NGOs, civil society, or government agencies, their operational practices are often uncomfortable for businesses and vice versa. The continental surveys of LPs 2013-2016 described above found that fewer than 25% included private businesses among their partners. Many LPs need assistance in reaching out to companies and articulating the business case and financial viability of landscape-friendly business models (Scherr et al., 2017). Governments can encourage sympathetic business leaders to become involved early in LP development and incorporate landscape regeneration into their own business plans. Such leaders can assist land and coastal resource managers in the LP to design and implement inclusive green and blue business solutions as well as public or market-based incentives. Once committed to the multi-stakeholder landscape vision and strategy, business players can be influential in policy advocacy and finance mobilization (Bishai et al., 2021, 2022; TFA, 2021).

Meanwhile, many businesses need to deepen their understanding of ecological and social processes in the landscape, modify internal norms and incentives, and strengthen staff capacities. Businesses may need assistance to evaluate if and how collaborative action with LPs could reduce risks (environmental, climate, and social), increase medium- and long-term returns on investment, reduce regulatory burdens, expand their markets, facilitate labor relations, secure reliable supply chains, provide co-finance for investments benefitting their business, access new sources of finance, or enhance social and environmental impacts to meet their commitments and reputational values (TFA, 2021).

Government programs can play a catalytic role in building bridges and fostering trust and practical collaboration between companies and LPs. For example, the Government of Namibia facilitates 25-year partnerships between community concessions and hunting, safari, tourism, and other private companies that depend on biodiversity resources. The Government provides legal and negotiation services, and ensures that a minimum of 25% of profits going to the communities (NACSO and MET, 2021). Box 8 describes a sophisticated mechanism for companies to invest in ecosystem services in a landscape that was developed by LENS in the United Kingdom.

“Many LPs need assistance in reaching out to companies and articulating the business case and financial viability of landscape-friendly business models”





Box 8. Landscape Enterprise Networks in the United Kingdom: Enabling business investment in landscape regeneration

Landscape Enterprise Networks (LENs) was co-developed by Nestlé and 3Keel (a sustainability consultancy) in the UK in 2019. This demand-led mechanism coordinates private companies to fund investments by land stewards in the long-term quality and functionality of the landscape on which they depend. The evidence collected for LENs projects also helps to make a stronger case for the importance of all sectors investing in nature.

The mechanism identifies the strategic natural assets in a landscape needed by different businesses and defines shared dependencies amongst these groups. They then broker an aggregate agreement between the businesses and a group of land users to optimize the value chain and reduce risk. By bringing together the resources of companies with convergent goals, the platform steers capital to manage companies' environmental and reputational risk profiles and generate additional benefits for local communities. Specific risk-managing benefits from natural and social capital include improved soil health and crop production, flood risk hazard mitigation, carrying capacity of water catchments, and improved health and quality of life for the local workforce.

Since the platform is needs-driven, transparency with both demand- and supply-side parties results in a greater understanding of the process and benefits and strengthens motivation. The approach has been implemented in six landscapes in the United Kingdom and is beginning to scale in other countries.

Local and national governments are pivotal actors in enabling these private landscape investments through clear environmental regulations, ecosystem monitoring, and territorial planning. In addition, they play a valuable role in LENs, depending on the context, by providing technical services, providing government grants, and supporting landscape governance structures to convene transactions. In some cases, governments themselves play a role as a demand-side actor by procuring ecosystem services.

Source: Andrew Griffiths, Diageo (previously Nestle U.K.) and Landscape Enterprise Networks, personal communications; Jobes, 2018.

4.6 Long-term financing for landscape enabling and asset investments

Government programs can make four types of financial contributions to Landscape Partnerships (Scherr et al., 2022 forthcoming):

1. **Grant financing** for the organization and management of LPs
2. Alignment of **public finance** in the landscape
3. **Finance and co-finance of projects** in landscape portfolios
4. **Financial support services** to help LPs mobilize financing for projects and businesses in their landscape investment portfolio

First, **grant financing** is fundamental for LPs to play their key roles, including support for developing landscape investment portfolios, and coordinating and mobilizing financing for them. LP support funding needs to be structured for the long term (20+ years). Such support may draw on public finance, place-based donor collaboratives, public and philanthropic grant programs, designated user fees, member contributions, blended finance, trust funds, or bonds. Long-term funding would rely on confidence in LP governance, with mechanisms in place to provide transparency, minimize chances of corruption, and ensure benefit-sharing. Governments can fund LPs directly, co-fund to leverage other funders, or help to set up mechanisms for funding from other actors. There may be modest opportunities to generate funds for operating the LP through LP services, fees, or commercial activities.

Second, **public finance** across different scales and sectors needs to be aligned, coordinated, or pooled in the landscape. This has historically been a challenge, but new models are emerging. Costa Rica's national policy to reduce deforestation put in place payments to farmers and landowners for ecosystem services and worked with the UNDP-implemented GEF Small Grants Programme to select landscapes, aggregate actors, and support them to meet government requirements (GEF, 2006). This approach has continued in collaboration with the World Bank's PROGREEN program (World Bank, 2022). The European Union's

LIFE program has begun to allocate public financing for investment proposals developed through bottom-up, place-based processes, providing a potential framework for engaging LPs (ECIEEA, n.d).

Mechanisms are also needed to disaggregate large pools of public funds into numerous small-scale investments in the landscape investment portfolio. For example, as part of the Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation initiative, for 13 years the UNDP implemented a landscape-level grant fund targeted at NGOs, community-based organizations, Indigenous peoples, small-scale producers, and SMEs selected by a local consultative body at the landscape and seascape level (Box 9).

Third, governments can play a catalytic role in **co-financing private-sector projects** in landscape investment portfolios. To be sustainable, many projects in the landscape investment portfolio should generate commercial gains via sound business case implementation within the short-, medium-, or long term. But a recent report from the UN Environment Programme on finance for nature-based solutions (NbS) in the G20 countries shows that these are still supported largely by public funding; only a small part to date is financed from private-sector sources (UNEP, 2022, Figure 1). Thus blended public-private-civic finance models for landscape investment are becoming important, with governments acting as risk reducers to bring in private-sector investments. Box 10 describes an example of blended finance in which public finance in the Netherlands is catalyzing private investment funds. New landscape finance mechanisms—landscape funds, bonds, landscape banks—are being developed that enable large pools of private capital to be invested across a diverse set of landscape investments (Shames and Scherr, 2020). Special governance, intermediation, and public budget commitments are being designed to mobilize large-scale finance for investments in lands under communal or state land tenure.

Fourth, until a more integrated landscape finance sector matures, governments can play a critical role in providing **financial services** to help LPs mobilize financing for projects in their landscape investment portfolios. Governments may establish financial mechanisms, intermediation, and connect financial institutions to pipelines of landscape projects. Major flows of private finance are unlikely to shift without



“A notable example was the Sian Ka’an Biosphere Reserve in Mexico, where the SGP financed 86 small grant projects worth \$1.95 million that targeted 17,500 beneficiaries living in and around the protected area of 528,000 hectares”

Box 9. UNDP/Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme: Civil society funding mechanisms for Landscape Partnerships

For close to three decades, a wide range of LPs have been supported by the UNDP’s Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (SGP) in at least 50 of its 125 participating countries. The Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation (COMPACT) initiative ran from 2001 to 2013. The SGP worked with the United Nations Foundation and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to develop a structured model for COMPACT to finance a portfolio of small grant projects with civil society actors focused on the sustainability of eight World Heritage Sites and their surrounding buffer zones. The COMPACT model was a tiered approach combining a landscape-level baseline assessment, a conceptual model of the key threats and drivers, and an adaptive site strategy to select and finance a portfolio of small grants for local actors and authorities to form coalitions for landscape sustainability.

In 2007, with additional support from the UNF, UNDP extended the COMPACT model to include a World Heritage Local Ecological Entrepreneurship Program (WH-LEEP) to leverage funds from Conservation International to provide technical assistance to de-risk biodiversity-friendly loans to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the target World Heritage Sites and wider landscapes. A notable example was the Sian Ka’an Biosphere Reserve in Mexico, where the SGP financed

86 small grant projects worth \$1.95 million that targeted 17,500 beneficiaries living in and around the protected area of 528,000 hectares. Similarly, for the Belize Barrier Reef World Heritage Site System, the program supported 74 small grants worth \$2.35 million, generating \$1.86 million in co-financing, and attracted significant sequential scaling investments by the Oak Foundation.

With \$10 million in bilateral funding received from the Government of Japan and CBD Secretariat, the SGP replicated the multi-stakeholder governance model through the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS), running from 2011 to 2022. Building on the SGP experience supporting formally recognized protected areas, COMDEKS funded portfolios of small grants targeting the promotion of biodiversity conservation, resilience to climate change, and sustainable livelihoods within socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS) in 20 participating countries. Over the decade, COMDEKS tested socio-ecological indicators of landscape resilience, built new forms of landscape-level governance, and identified avenues for the institutional and financial sustainability of SEPLS, including “other effective area-based conservation measures” as recognized by the [CBD Decision 14/8](#) adopted in 2018.

Sources: Terence Hay-Edie, UNDP, personal communications; Brown and Hay-Edie, 2013; UNDP, 2016

strategic inputs from government actors. Practical implementation requires training programs for staff of banks, investment firms, business incubators, and others in landscape investing, as is being done by UNDP/GEF and others. Policymakers and national and local sources of capital need to be sensitized about the opportunities for ILM business and finance. International bodies like the UN Food Systems Summit and the conventions concerned with land degradation, climate, and biological diversity have begun considering how to help member-states develop strategies for integrated landscape finance (FAO and Global Mechanism of UNCCD, 2015).

4.7 Constructive engagement with Landscape Partnerships' own networks

LP leaders identified peer-learning and -cooperation as the most effective way to support them practically and emotionally as they manage the complex challenges and develop the local innovations needed for integrated development. Such peer networks also can enhance the collective voice of LPs in policy and business forums.

For example, the African Landscape Dialogues attracted hundreds of landscape leaders who jointly developed the [African Landscapes Action Plan](#).

National Landscape Networks have been formed in Kenya, Ethiopia, [the U.S.](#), and other countries for knowledge-sharing. Regional and international networks have formed, such as the [Model Forest Networks](#) (see Box 10), the [Mesoamerican Alliance of Forests and Communities](#), and the [Satoyama Initiative](#) connecting socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (Nishi et al., 2021). [The United Cities and Local Governments](#) (UCLG) network has mobilized international policy action in support of territorial development. Many NGOs and UN programs support landscape learning exchanges. Broader networks and exchange platforms that support integrated regional water resource management, such as the Mekong River Authority, Nile Basin initiative, and European watershed institutions for the Rhine and Donau rivers, also connect local LPs.

Key features contributing to the sustained function of these platforms are member-driven agendas, access to continuous modest financial support for convening, easy-to-use communication channels (e.g., WhatsApp) and opportunities for cross-site visits and staff exchanges. A key ingredient recommended by our experts is for the public sector to engage constructively with these networks to strengthen LPs and facilitate their interconnections. The networks can in turn play a valuable role in informing and amplifying national and subnational policies and programs.

Box 10. Public-sector finance catalyzing Landscape Partnerships in the Netherlands

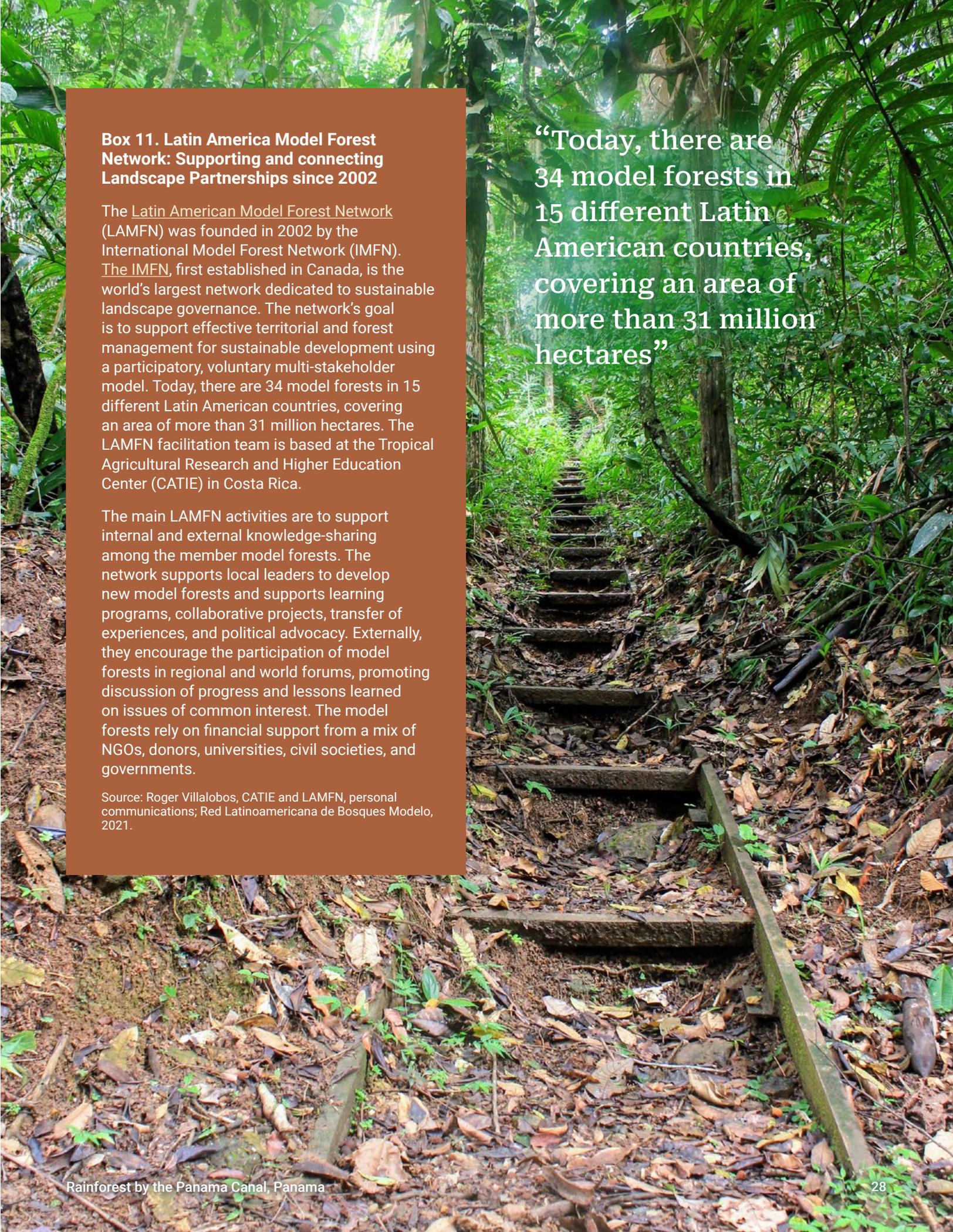
The IJsselmeergebied coastal region provides an indispensable supply of fresh water for the Netherlands, as well as nature and beauty for valuable tourism. But it is threatened by ever more extreme weather conditions and flooding. In 2015, the central government of the Netherlands, through the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, initiated the Agenda IJsselmeergebied process. Using a multi-stakeholder approach, they sought to develop a participatory ecological and economic vision for 2050 and implement a climate adaptation agenda for 2030.

Three regional dialogues were organized with local stakeholders and produced a first synthesis document. In 2018, an implementation, knowledge and innovation agenda was developed that incorporated the joint ambitions of the stakeholders and drew on principles

from the IJsselmeer Region 2050 Agenda. This plan was translated into concrete milestones for the next five years, with periodic updates every two years. This sets out how the entire IJsselmeer region is preparing for the future and how governments, organizations, and businesses are involved to address issues such as flood risk management, nature, cultural heritage, recreation, shipping, and the economy.

In 2019, the Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management signed the agenda along with 60 stakeholders. More than 16 million euros of funding were allocated from the central government for a mix of investments including restoration, infrastructure, and incentive payments. The central government is also funding technical support that is provided and organized by the local and central governments. This public funding is, in turn, catalyzing related business investment.

Sources: BPIJ, 2021.



Box 11. Latin America Model Forest Network: Supporting and connecting Landscape Partnerships since 2002

The Latin American Model Forest Network (LAMFN) was founded in 2002 by the International Model Forest Network (IMFN). The IMFN, first established in Canada, is the world's largest network dedicated to sustainable landscape governance. The network's goal is to support effective territorial and forest management for sustainable development using a participatory, voluntary multi-stakeholder model. Today, there are 34 model forests in 15 different Latin American countries, covering an area of more than 31 million hectares. The LAMFN facilitation team is based at the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) in Costa Rica.

The main LAMFN activities are to support internal and external knowledge-sharing among the member model forests. The network supports local leaders to develop new model forests and supports learning programs, collaborative projects, transfer of experiences, and political advocacy. Externally, they encourage the participation of model forests in regional and world forums, promoting discussion of progress and lessons learned on issues of common interest. The model forests rely on financial support from a mix of NGOs, donors, universities, civil societies, and governments.

Source: Roger Villalobos, CATIE and LAMFN, personal communications; Red Latinoamericana de Bosques Modelo, 2021.

“Today, there are 34 model forests in 15 different Latin American countries, covering an area of more than 31 million hectares”

5

First steps to strengthen policy and support services for Landscape and Seascape Partnerships

LPs could be strengthened, scaled, and more widely organized if they received more structured national and sub-national policy and program support. There is no one model for institutionalizing support for LPs; country strategies need to build on existing strengths. So we propose a set of five steps to start that process (Figure 5). These may be done as a stand-alone initiative or be integrated into broader strategies for sustainable development. The steps are not a blueprint; they can be part of a gradually evolving process. They do not require that a large number of LPs are already operational (though in most countries many have previously formed and are called by different names).

FIGURE 5: First Steps Toward Designing Effective Policy and Support Systems



5.1 Set up a multi-sector task force to institutionalize support to Landscape Partnerships

A first step is for national (or sub-national) political leaders to set up a task force with the objective of evaluating the current state of support for LPs and defining options for institutionalizing and scaling such support. The task force could be hosted by an existing high-level multi-sector body (e.g., an integrated food system council) or could be an ad hoc body composed of representatives from key government ministries (e.g., economic and rural development, agriculture and forests, environment and climate, health and nutrition), as well as non-governmental institutions with experience in landscape development and leaders of some well-established LPs. Co-chairs should be highly esteemed individuals who are respected and trusted across sectors. The group can begin by learning about diverse experiences and institutional models being used in other countries.

5.2 Identify and engage existing Landscape and Seascape Partnerships, and businesses that are already actively collaborating with them

An early activity of the task force would be to inventory existing formal and informal LPs that are clearly place-based, multi-sector and multi-stakeholder, and aim for integrated, place-based development (regardless of what they are called). Task force member networks can help to identify these with assistance from national or regional LP networks. Methods for finding and documenting existing LPs can be found in the continental surveys of the Landscapes for People, Food and Nature initiative (Estrada-Carmona et al., 2014; Garcia-Martin et al., 2016; Milder et al., 2014; Zanzanaini et al., 2017), and the review of Land Use Partnerships by the Land Commission of Scotland (Scottish Land Commission, 2020). Their analyses can characterize the landscape and seascape initiatives and assess the extent to which they are operating with an integrated management approach. They can consider how the social, ecological, and physical boundaries are defined, and the geographic, socioeconomic, institutional, and governance structures within which they operate.



A structured consultation between LP leaders and the task force can illuminate ways that policy currently supports or thwarts landscape initiatives. The LPs can be encouraged to reflect with their members prior to such consultations to generate practical inputs. Such a process of landscape-policymaker dialogue has been tested with five LPs in Kenya (Shames et al., 2016).

5.3 Assess government policies, programs, and decision structures

Task force members can themselves review, or engage policy experts familiar with LPs to do so, relevant laws, government policies, and decision structures across ministries and agencies. They can also look at mechanisms for cross-ministerial, cross-agency and cross-jurisdictional planning and coordination, and multi-level government decision processes. This analysis can highlight constraints and opportunities in the current system for the success of LPs and possible options for policy action. Analyses should differentiate between national, subnational, and government contexts and the existing and potential roles of respective governmental levels. Task force members can also familiarize themselves with diverse policy approaches and institutional models used in other countries.

5.4 Assess current and potential provision of technical, financial, and networking services by existing institutions

In parallel, the task force can assess which organizations—government agencies, NGOs, and others—are already providing the key long-term technical, financial, and networking services needed by LPs, or are positioned to do so. The task force can identify agencies with the competencies to coordinate planning

and service provision for LPs across sectoral agencies. Groups that already provide effective services in specific sectors could potentially expand their scope to embrace an integrated landscape perspective. The analysis can examine how the contributions of such organizations could be connected. This might be through cascading of roles across national, state and district government levels; through distributed leadership across agencies with a coordinating body; or through semi-autonomous bodies. New institutions may need to be established.

Existing national training/capacity strengthening institutions, NGO networks, or universities can be strengthened to work on landscape issues. Market development hubs already in place could expand into landscape development. The task force can examine how public, private, and civic financing is already flowing to landscape programs and investments, and identify gaps and opportunities. Private sector companies and financial institutions can be engaged to support LPs. It may be instructive to examine the roles the UN and other international agencies, development banks, and donor organizations have played in stimulating public, private, and civic support for LPs in the country. The task force could identify resources that could be tapped to help design and build the needed institutional infrastructure.

5.5 **Develop a strategy and action plan to support Landscape Partnerships, refined through a national landscapes dialogue**

The above process of consultations, data collection, and analysis could take the task force upwards of 6-12 months. Based on these inputs, they can refine the case for LPs in their national policy context and outline a strategy to strengthen policies and support services. The task force can offer alternative solutions to institutionalize policy and support services to advance these policy objectives, proposing possible future roles for different government agencies, NGOs, financial institutions, and business actors.

These models can then be presented and discussed in a national landscapes dialogue with all actors present, including LPs. Based on recommendations from the dialogue, a joint national action plan can be developed to strengthen public policy support for LPs, together with concrete plans for funding.

“The task force can examine how public, private, and civic financing is already flowing to landscape programs and investments, and identify gaps and opportunities”



6

The imperative for action is now

The world is at a crossroads. Ambitious efforts and new funding are becoming available to advance national and internationally agreed sustainable development agendas in food systems, biodiversity, climate, livelihoods, post-covid economic recovery, employment, and health. But financial resources continue to flow to siloed sectoral investments with limited local design input or control. This is creating serious risks of competition, conflict, and disempowerment for local actors, and thus limited impact on the ground.

LPs offer an effective institutional mechanism to align these different policy agendas through integrated solutions that are rooted in local bioeconomies, which use natural capital to transform and sustainably manage land, food, health, and industrial systems. There is clearly growing interest among policymakers and policy planners. National governments in 18 countries in Latin America and 32 countries in Africa have already made commitments to large-scale landscape restoration under the 20X20 and AFR100 initiatives. Eight Latin American ministers of agriculture, livestock, environment, energy and sustainable development presented [Comunicado Ministerial de la Iniciativa 20x20 del 2021](#), a joint communique in support of landscape regeneration, at a recent convening of the 20X20 Restoration Initiative. More than 15 countries have committed to territorial governance through the coalition on territorial governance convened by the eight members of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) secretariat.

Investments in policy and program support are the key missing links between bottom-up community participation and national government goals. To stand a chance of achieving national goals for sustainable development, now is the time for national and sub-national governments to institutionalize long-term support for these Landscape and Seascape Partnerships.

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A White Paper | June 2022



ecoagriculturepartners

2961-A Hunter Mill Road, Suite 647
Oakton, VA 22124, USA
info@ecoagriculture.org
www.ecoagriculture.org