



Increasing finance
for sustainable land management

MALI

CONTEXT

Sustainable land management (SLM) is a top political priority for Mali. The country's economy is based on the primary sector, particularly agriculture and livestock, which contributed 44% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1995 and employs 80% of the active population.

Agricultural land suffers from soil erosion, with average annual losses of 6.5 tons/ha nationwide, rising to 10 tons/ha in the south of the country.

As a result, agricultural incomes are falling, by €7/ha in the Sahelian zone and by up to €138/ha in the Sudanese zone. These losses are severe, given that most of the rural population live below the poverty threshold of €234 per capita per year.

Experience shows that land investments are not effective unless they are supported by institutional, economic and political developments.

The Government of Mali is therefore seeking to establish a strategic framework for SLM investments with the support of partnerships with the World Bank, the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Global Mechanism (GM), in cooperation with technical and financial partners in the environmental and rural development sectors.

CHALLENGES

In spite of its importance, the mobilization of national resources for SLM is weak: the Ministry of Environment and Agriculture has little influence in budgetary decision-making and there is no common view on SLM. Mali needs a comprehensive global strategy for the mobilization of financial resources for SLM.

The current project approach to allocating financial resources creates fierce competition among ministries.

For most rural people, agro-silvo-pastoral systems are merely a survival strategy for lean periods, and soil and water are 'gifts from god' that do not need to be maintained and regenerated by humans.

On the other hand, the donor community makes significant contributions to combating desertification and SLM. Between 2000 and 2006, 68 SLM projects were implemented in Mali, with a total budget of more than USD93 million.

Between 2002 and 2003, Mali received about USD500 million of official development assistance (ODA), representing slightly more than USD13 per capita per year and 5% of GDP.

In 1995, at the government's request, GTZ began implementing environmental projects in Mali. Since 2006, regular meetings of technical and financial partners demonstrate a strong commitment to harmonization and, more recently, alignment with national priorities.



Total population (million), 2007: 12.33
Population growth, 2007: 3.0%/year
Surface area (km²), 2007: 1 240 200
Population density (people per km²), 2007: 9.9
GDP per capita, 2007: USD498
Life expectancy at birth, 2006: 54 years
Fertility rate (number of children per woman), 2006: 6.6
Under-5 mortality rate, 2006: 2.17%
HIV/AIDS prevalence among population aged 15 to 50 years, 2007: 1.5 %
Forest area (km²), 2000: 125 700
Cultivable area, 2000: 32.4 %
GDP, 2007: USD 6.86 billion
GDP growth, 2007: 2.8 %/year
External debt, 2006: USD1 436 million
Foreign direct investments, 2006: USD185 million
Emigrant workers' remittances and salaries, 2007: USD212 million
ODA, 2006: USD825 million
UNCCD ratification: 1995

Source: World Development Indicators database, September 2008

The Global Mechanism (GM) was established under Article 21 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and began its operations in October 1997. The GM is defined as an organizational entity mandated "to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of existing financial mechanisms... [and]... to promote actions leading to the mobilization and channelling of substantial financial resources to affected developing country Parties."

COMMON OBJECTIVES

In 2005, at the government's request, the World Bank and the GM started to carry out awareness-raising and advocacy activities. These culminated in 2007 with the establishment of an SLM partnership platform, made up of government and civil society organizations active in SLM, together with the including the World Bank, GTZ and UNDP.

The platform's main objective is to increase the financial resources for SLM and combating desertification in Mali. It supports government development of an integrated financing framework to mobilize national, bilateral and multilateral resources to improve the effectiveness of SLM interventions, and to create an enabling environment for sustainable financing of SLM activities, through the dissemination of successful practices, knowledge management, mainstreaming, etc. Most of Mali's technical and financial partners in environmental issues have supported this initiative, including the GM, which has contributed USD600 000.

WHERE DO WE STAND ON IMPLEMENTATION?

Since 2005, the GM and the Government of Mali have worked together to establish an investment framework and an Integrated Financing Strategy (IFS) for SLM. This has led to the adoption of a programme document and the signing of a partnership agreement. The expected outcomes of this GM support programme include:

- strengthened capacities of civil society organizations;
- identification and adoption of innovative financing sources and mechanisms for combating land degradation and mitigating the effects of drought;
- integration of the National Action Programme (NAP) for UNCCD implementation and of SLM and soil degradation issues into development plans and related sector and investment plans and policies;
- mobilization of financial resources through international financial institutions, mechanisms and funds, such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF); and
- establishment, through consensus, of a partnership framework and an investment framework for SLM.

NEXT STEPS

The programme was launched when the GM transferred the first instalment of its financial contribution to the government, via UNDP. The initial activities undertaken were to strengthen national dialogue, establish a steering committee with nine components and develop a common vision of SLM.

Future activities will include registering civil society organizations (October to December 2008), promoting gum Arabic (October 2008) and revising the NAP (early 2009).

Map courtesy of IFAD



FOR MORE INFORMATION



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