



Announcement

The role of SLM in contributing to achieve the SDGs

WOCAT Symposium and 18th WOCAT Network Meeting

Cali, Colombia, 13 to 16 June 2017



Introduction

For achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in particular for meeting future global food demand that is projected to be 60% above 2006-levels in 2050, a major transformation to sustainable agriculture will be needed with special emphasis on strengthening the resilience of smallholder agriculture to emerging changes such as climate change.

About 40% of the rural population worldwide (or 2.6 billion people) directly depend on agriculture. Poor land and water management at various levels, however, jeopardizes land resources by accelerating their degradation, which affects rural communities that directly depend on these resources as well as other communities indirectly further away. About 52% of the land used for agriculture worldwide is estimated to be moderately or severely affected by land degradation, and nearly 2 billion ha of land are seriously degraded. Sustainable Land Management (SLM) is essential for minimizing land degradation, rehabilitating degraded areas and ensuring the optimal use of land resources while sustaining ecosystem services.

SLM provides the foundation for ensuring food security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, preventing and reducing natural disasters, and maintaining and protecting biodiversity. As such, SLM can be considered a key element for the United Nations Conventions such as UNCCD, UNFCCC, and CBD, as well as for achieving the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development particularly SDG 2 on food security, SDG 6 on sustainable management of water and SDG 15 on sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems.

WOCAT (World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies www.wocat.net) is a global network of SLM specialists, contributing to SLM by sharing and evaluating knowledge. It recognizes the potential of WOCAT tools and methods that can be used for achieving, monitoring and reporting of SDGs, particularly so for SDG target 15.3¹ on Land Degradation Neutrality² and SDG target 2.4³ on ensuring sustainable food production systems and implementing resilient agricultural practices. The upcoming WOCAT Symposium and the 18th WOCAT Network Meeting will therefore have its thematic focus on how SLM and the application of tools and methods of WOCAT and others can support the achievement of the SDGs at various levels.

Since its origin in 1992, WOCAT has been undertaking efforts to link up SLM specialists worldwide for compiling, documenting, evaluating, sharing and using SLM knowledge and gradually building a corresponding evidence database. The WOCAT SLM database (<https://qcat.wocat.net/en/wocat/>) is recognized by the UNCCD as the primary recommended database for best practices on SLM. Acknowledging the key importance of SLM and in response to the pressing need for improving knowledge management and decision support, the WOCAT network aims at providing standardized tools and methods. Recent achievements are marked by strengthened collaboration with various national, regional, and international partners and institutions with new opportunities for partnerships and projects for WOCAT International as a result. These developments together with the institutionalization of the WOCAT Network and the increased acknowledgement of the WOCAT SLM database provides a strong basis for WOCAT to further build on and strengthen its support to its members, partners and other stakeholders.

Against this background, CIAT and WOCAT are jointly organizing the WOCAT Symposium and the 18th WOCAT Network Meeting that aims at bringing together a wide range of

¹ SDG target 15.3: By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world (UNGA, Resolution 70/1. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2015)

² Land Degradation Neutrality is defined as the state whereby the amount and quality of land resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security remain stable or increase within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems. (UNCCD, Science Policy Brief 02 – September 2016)

³ SDG target 2.4: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality (UNGA, Resolution 70/1. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2015)

WOCAT members and stakeholders such as Non-Governmental Organisations, Governments, International Organisations, the donor community and other institutions to share and discuss their experiences and findings on how SLM and in particular SLM tools and methods can be used to contribute to the achievement of SDGs at different levels.

The symposium and meeting will be structured into three main parts:

Part 1: WOCAT Symposium (Tuesday, 13 June)

Part 2: Field day to showcase SLM implementation and the application of WOCAT tools and methods in the surroundings of Cali (Wednesday, 14 June)

Part 3: 18th WOCAT Network Meeting (Thursday 15 June - Friday 16 June)

Part 1: WOCAT Symposium (1 day) (with English and Spanish translation)

Main topics:

- 1 Innovative tools and methods for monitoring and scaling up SLM in contribution to achieving the SDGs
- 2 Use of SLM tools and methods of WOCAT and others in local, national and regional programmes for achieving SDGs
- 3 Success stories of knowledge-based decision-making and achieving positive impacts by using tools and methods from WOCAT and others and their potential to contribute to the SDGs
- 4 Special focus Latin America: Promotion and achievement of SLM through the WOCAT network and the application of SLM tools and methods of WOCAT and others

Call for abstracts for WOCAT Symposium

Participants of the WOCAT Symposium are invited to submit a short abstract of a maximum of 400 words in English or Spanish for a thematic contribution that can be an oral presentation or a poster presentation at the Symposium. The abstract should include the goal, the methods, the findings and a conclusion.

Topics to be addressed are:

- (1) Innovative tools and methods for monitoring and scaling up SLM in contribution to achieving the SDGs
 - Present and discuss recent developments in terms of existing innovative SLM tools and methods which can be used for monitoring and scaling up SLM and overall contribute to achieving the SDGs
 - A range of available SLM tools and methods will be looked at including those of WOCAT as well as of other institutions and networks
- (2) Use of SLM tools and methods of WOCAT and others in local, national and regional programmes for achieving the SDGs
 - Present and discuss to what extent the tools and methods of WOCAT and of others can be used at different levels towards achieving the SDGs through SLM
 - Present concrete examples of how tools and methods of WOCAT and of others can be used by specific countries to promote SLM and achieve the SDGs
- (3) Success stories of knowledge-based decision-making and achieving positive impacts by using tools and methods from WOCAT and others and their potential to contribute to the SDGs
 - Share success stories on how decisions are taken in SLM based on existing knowledge and on how positive impacts are achieved by using tools and methods from WOCAT and others as well as reflect on the potential of these success stories to be replicated and to be scaled up to effectively contribute to the SDGs
- (4) Special focus Latin America: Promotion and achievement of SLM through the WOCAT network and the application of SLM tools and methods of WOCAT and others
 - Thematic contributions with special focus on the host region of Latin America, reflecting on the current practice in SLM and how tools and methods of WOCAT and others are being applied

Abstract submission and deadline

Please submit the abstract online in the [registration form](#).

The submission deadline is **Friday, 14 April 2017**.

Review process for abstracts

The submitted abstracts will go through a review process led by the organizing institutions and oral presentations and poster presentations will be assigned. The authors of the abstracts will be notified about the acceptance or rejection of their submissions beginning of May 2017.

In addition to the thematic contributions, there will be the launch of new products. One new product is the new WOCAT website which offers a platform for regions, countries and partners involved in the Network as well as for the WOCAT Consortium Partners. Another new product that will be launched is the new WOCAT publication 'Making sense of research for sustainable land management'.

Part 2: Field day (1 day)

A field day showing successful SLM implementation and the practical application of WOCAT tools and methods in the surroundings of Cali will be organized by CIAT. Further details will be announced in due course.

Part 3: WOCAT Network Meeting (WNM) (2 days)

The WOCAT Network Meeting (WNM) will follow the Symposium and field day.

During the WNM the outcome of the Symposium will be further developed and new and further developments of tools and methods, partnerships, progress and directions for the way forward will be elaborated and discussed among new and long-term national, regional and international partners.

Thematic contributions such as thematic input presentations and presentations on best practices and new developments from within the WOCAT Network will be complemented by interactive sessions to facilitate intensive learning and networking among the participants.

Main topics:

Special session for newcomers (as per demand): Introduction to the WOCAT Network and its tools and methods (in Spanish and in English)

Main sessions:

- (1) Overview of the WOCAT Network and its recent achievements and how it can contribute to achieving the SDGs
- (2) New SLM tools and methods
 - Thematic input (presentation to set the scene of this session)
 - WOCAT database including its watershed mapping tool and climate change adaptation module (presentation followed by a panel discussion among different users/institutions, countries and other)
 - Sharing SLM tools and methods (presentations with discussions in groups followed by reporting back in plenary) and their potential for contributing to the SDGs (panel discussion in plenary)
- (3) Learning from SLM projects (market place with posters)
 - Thematic input (presentation to set the scene of this session)
 - Decision support framework for SLM (WOCAT, GIZ, ISRIC, FAO)

- IFAD-funded project on Scaling-up SLM with smallholder farmers (Cambodia, Lao)
- (4) SLM for SDGs – practice and planning in the regions
- Thematic input (presentation to set the scene of this session)
 - Progress of SLM at global/regional/country level and on how SLM is contributing to achieving the SDGs (presentations followed by discussions)
 - Added value and opportunities for promoting SLM for SDGs in the regions (group work followed by sharing findings in plenary)
 - Planning the next steps for 2017-2018 (group work followed by sharing findings in plenary)

The WNM sessions and thematic contributions will be further developed and their final version will be included in the programme.

Organizational issues

Venue

The WOCAT Symposium and the 18th WOCAT Network Meeting (WNM) will be held at the

International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) Headquarters
 Apartado Aéreo 6713
 Recta Cali – Palmira, Km 17
 Cali, Colombia

Phone: +57 (2) 4450000
 E-mail: ciat@cgiar.org
 Website: www.ciat.cgiar.org

Contact persons for the meeting at the venue (coordination & logistics):

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Louis Verchot Coordinator	Phone: + 57 (2) 4450000 At CIAT: Ext. 3324	l.verchot@cgiar.org
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Date

Tuesday 13 June - Friday 16 June 2017

Arrival

Participants should arrive on **Monday 12 June** at the CIAT campus in Cali, Colombia (fly to Cali Alfonso Bonilla Aragon international airport (direct) or indirect via Bogota El Dorado International Airport).

The Cali airport is located only 15 minutes away from the CIAT campus. Upon request, the CIAT Conference and Visitors Office will organize necessary transportation arrangements to and from the Cali airport.

The CIAT campus is located at half an hour's drive from downtown Cali (to the north) and at a 15-minute drive from the smaller city of Palmira.

Departure

Plan your departure for Saturday, 17 June 2017.

Visa requirements

Please check in the list below whether your country is visa exempt for entry into Colombia.

Participants (nationals) of the following countries **DO NOT** require visa on the condition that their visit to Colombia is for less than 90 days, for a technical visit and for tourist purposes. These countries are:

Andorra	Dominican Rep.	Korea	Samoa
Antigua & Barbados	Ecuador	Latvia	Solomon Islands
Argentina	El Salvador	Liechtenstein	Saint Kitts & Nevis
Australia	Estonia	Lithuania	Saint Marino
Austria	Fidji	Luxemburg	Saint Lucia

Bahamas	Finland	Malaysia	Saint Vincent & The Grenadines
Azerbaijan	France	Malta	Singapore
Barbados	Germany	Marshall Islands	Sovereign Military Order of Malta
Belgium	Granada	Mexico	Slovakia
Belize	Greece	Micronesia	Slovenia
Bolivia	Guyana Republic	Monaco	South Africa
Brazil	Guatemala	Netherlands	Spain
Bulgaria	Honduras	New Zealand	Suriname
Bhutan	Hungary Rep.	Norway	Sweden
Brunei-Darussalam	Holy See	Palau	Switzerland
Canada	Hong Kong (SAR)	Panama	Taiwan
Costa Rica	Iceland	Papua New Guinea	Trinidad & Tobago
Croatia	Indonesia	Paraguay	Turkey
Czech Rep.	Ireland	Peru	United States
Cyprus	Israel	Philippines	United Kingdom and North Ireland
Chile	Italy	Poland	United Arab Emirates
China (People Rep.)	Jamaica	Portugal	Uruguay
Dominica	Japan	Romania	Venezuela
Denmark	Kazakhstan	Russia	

IF YOUR COUNTRY IS NOT LISTED ABOVE, YOU DO REQUIRE A COLOMBIAN VISA.

For those that do not need a visa, upon arrival in Bogota or Cali, immigration officials will stamp a permit on your passport, indicating the number of days you are allowed to stay in the country.

Please note that under no circumstances can a visa be issued upon arrival. CIAT can assist with the procurement of visas for Colombia but will require detailed information at least 20 working days prior travel commencement.

Language of event

The main languages of the event will be English and Spanish, translation services will be provided accordingly.

Organiser / Host

The WOCAT Symposium and the 18th WNM will be jointly organised by CIAT (<https://ciat.cgiar.org/>) and the WOCAT Secretariat (<http://www.wocat.net/>).

Participants

We invite WOCAT members and newcomers, hence a broad range of stakeholders working in the field of SLM at the local, national, and international level. We hope to welcome many of you.

Cost

We will charge a registration fee to be paid in USD and in cash at the venue at the beginning of the meeting. The registration cost DOES NOT include accommodation costs.

Registration cost is as follows:

- USD 100 (covering meals including dinner and lunch at the CIAT campus, starting from Monday evening 12 June until Friday evening 16 June)

Accommodation

All participants will be accommodated either at CIAT's Guest House or in a hotel nearby connected to the venue by shuttle service. Accommodation cost at CIAT's Guest House will be USD 55 per single room / night (breakfast included). Accommodation cost at the hotel nearby will be USD 60 per single room / night (breakfast included).

Any payments at CIAT's Guest House, be it for meals and lodging, will need to be in Colombian pesos, USD cash, approved USD personal checks and USD traveler's checks as **no credit cards are accepted**.

According to CIAT's policy, all participants must have a health and accident insurance during the period of the meeting. CIAT will not assume any legal or financial responsibility related with health problems or accidents.

Sponsorship

Other than in previous meetings, the WOCAT Secretariat is NOT ABLE to offer any sponsorships this time due to a significantly reduced budget. There may be sponsorship options available from projects or other institutions. Therefore, we kindly advise participants who require sponsorship to contact these directly while the WOCAT Secretariat can offer support such as by providing an invitation letter where necessary.

Registration

Please fill out the **on-line registration form [here](#) until Friday, 14 April 2017.**

Your registration will be automatically confirmed. Further information such as about the programme and accommodation you will receive beginning of May 2017.

We are looking forward to your participation. Your participation is important to help develop the WOCAT network according to your needs. WOCAT operates in a decentralised manner and needs your input and initiative!

Yours truly,

The workshop organisers

International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Cali, Colombia

WOCAT Secretariat, Centre for Development and Environment, University of Berne, Switzerland