



# HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs #GlobalGoals [sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2018](http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2018)

15  
LIFE  
ON LAND



PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS

*The achievement of SDG 15 is central to providing environmental support services essential for ensuring safe and sustainable water supplies, sustainable food systems, and mitigating climate change. Actions for implementation directly affect the lives and wellbeing of many indigenous communities, pastoralists and others traditionally viewed as excluded, marginalized or at risk of being left behind. Progress will be achieved more rapidly through an increased understanding of how reaching targets across all the SDGs can accelerate progress in multiple areas, and in more integrated ways.*

## Awareness must be met with action

**Land degradation continues to threaten the lives of over 1 billion people.** Between 1999 and 2013, almost 20% of Earth's land surface covered by vegetation—an area the size of China, India, and the United States—showed persistent and declining trends in productivity, primarily due to poor land and water use and management.

**Deforestation has slowed, but there is a long way to go.** The rate of forest loss has dropped by 25% since 2005, however, Earth's forest areas have still shrunk by 100 million hectares since 2000. Sustainable forest management has nonetheless made progress: the proportion of protected forest areas and forests under long-term management plans is increasing worldwide.

**The biodiversity of mammals, birds, amphibians, corals, and cycads is declining.** The global Red List Index of threatened species has fallen from 0.82 in 1992 to 0.74 today, an alarming trend of decreasing

biodiversity. The primary drivers of this assault are habitat loss from unsustainable agriculture, deforestation, unsustainable harvest and trade, and invasive alien species.

**More areas critical to biodiversity are being protected.** The proportion of key biodiversity areas across freshwater, terrestrial, and mountain ecosystems covered by protected areas continues to increase, however, illicit poaching and trafficking of wildlife continues to thwart conservation efforts, with nearly 7,000 species of animals and plants reported in illegal trade involving 120 countries.

**The fight against invasive species has intensified.** The number of countries that have enacted legislation to combat the spread of invasive species has risen by 19% since 2010, though the overall rate of biological invasions has risen as well, with growth in both international trade and transport.





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## Here is what we need to do



### Know

- ❖ We must recognize the complex, interdependent nature of sustainable resource management, biodiversity, economic activity, and human development. Holistic approaches are required for the achievement of SDG 15.
- ❖ Though forest loss continues, trees are increasing in number and variety across many landscapes, bringing diversity and value to an increasing number of the world's farms, in and around cities, and across highly varied landscapes that have seen forests and trees disappear in previous decades.
- ❖ Increasing the biodiversity of urban food systems can enhance resilience through food and nutrition security. Local food systems have historically proved to be critical to a community's survival in the face of food security crises.

### Plan

- ❖ Integrate approaches to improve conservation of species and ecosystems, restore degraded lands, sustainably increase food production, reduce food loss and waste, and develop more climate-friendly agriculture. Foster adequate communication, coordination and cooperation across the different agreements, instruments, and fora.

- ❖ Invest in nature-based solutions to produce multiple social, environmental, and economic benefits, and to accelerate progress on the Aichi targets and the SDGs. These include traditional mechanisms such as taxes, subsidies, payment for ecosystem services, and conservation trust funds, to more innovative instruments such as green bonds and green lending, biodiversity offsets, impact investment, and crowd funding.

### Act

- ❖ Support and scale-up the adoption of sustainable production systems to manage land, trees and forests, crop, livestock and fisheries in a more sustainable and integrated way, taking agro-ecological knowledge into account.
- ❖ Foster investments in rural areas that involve small-scale producers and supporting their transition to more sustainable practices.
- ❖ Engage with local communities, drawing upon traditional knowledge and promote the inclusion of women and indigenous populations. Secure tenure over forests, pastures and farmlands for local communities and Indigenous Peoples.
- ❖ Build local, sub-national, national, and international capacity to support implementation.