*This MENARID project is a knowledge sharing and learning partnership for improved natural resource management, with Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Yemen, Jordan, and Iran.*

A NEW APPROACH FOR MAPPING AND ASSESSING DEGRADED LANDS (TUNISIA)

Land Degradation and Assessment in Dry Areas (LADA)

Despite the many measures to combat land degradation, this issue has continued to grow, claiming more land every year. It is all the more alarming since it is difficult to make a full and accurate assessment of the current degradation of land in Tunisia. The Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) project developed a methodological approach to assess the degradation and sustainable management of land at the local level, and to promote good practices in combating land degradation.
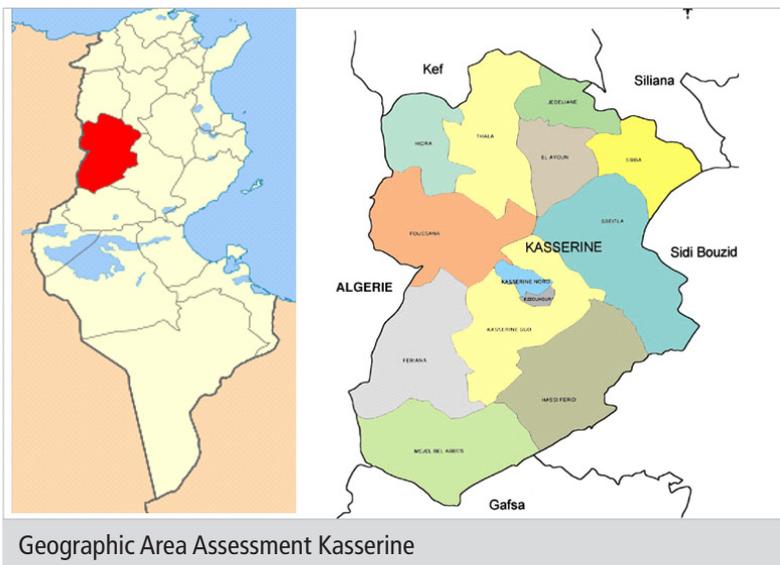
Geographic Area Assessment Kasserine

Source: "pictures from project managers"

Points to Consider

- The LADA project provided the opportunity to train a number of agents in the LADA approach in order to monitor and assess the degradation and to identify good practices.

- To preserve this wealth of expertise and to build on it by extending it across the country's regions, the management structure must have competent staff who are open to this training.

- As land management is primarily the responsibility of farmers and herdsmen, it is important that there are working relationships with these stakeholders, and to ensure that this structure has firm links with local communities in the country's various regions, with relations with NGOs and GDAs.

- Monitoring land degradation and its impact on natural resources, along with actions to combat this degradation, particularly as concerns climate change, requires international coordination, hence the need for contact with the focal points of conventions such as the Rio Convention.

Purpose

This summary describes the work of the LADA (Land Degradation and Assessment in Dry Areas) project that identifies and describes geographical areas suffering from land degradation in the governorates of Tunisia. Through a comparative study of these areas, it identifies the failures and successes in national efforts to combat land degradation and, therefore, build local community capacity to resist climate change. It is intended for policymakers, donors and other partners and supporters.

Suitability

The Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) project started in 2006 with the goal of creating the basis for informed policy advice on land degradation at the local, national and global levels. This was done by assessing land degradation at various geographical scales and time scales and by creating a platform for monitoring it. This document looks at the application of this method in Tunisia.

The project in numbers

4 years

Partners

Tunisian Ministry of Agriculture, GEF, UNEP, and FAO

Contact

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The Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) project was designed to develop and implement a general method for assessing and mapping degraded lands. The assessment was carried out at the local, national and global levels, and took into account the circumstances, causes and impacts of land degradation.
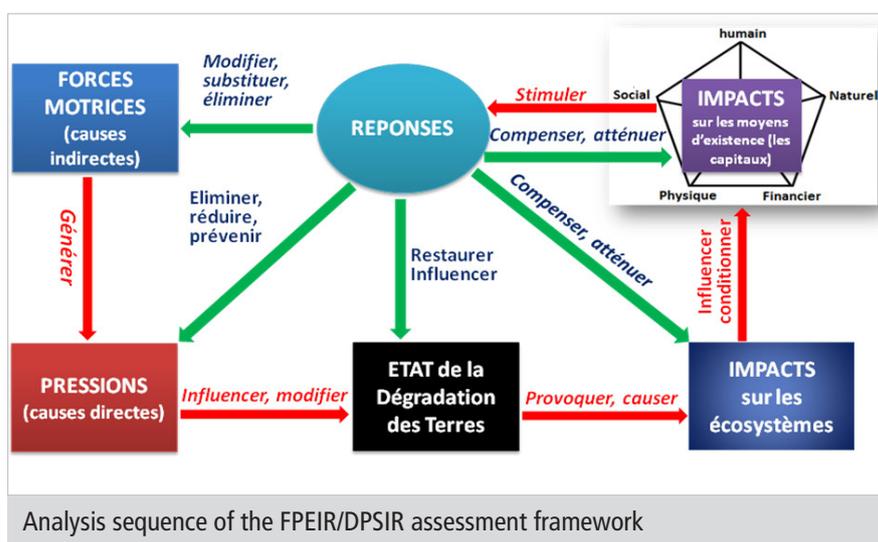
At national level, a 1:50000-scale map of the land-use systems was produced, identifying and describing the various existing systems. A map of the degraded lands and sustainably managed lands was also developed, which demonstrated the type of degradation threatening the lands, their size and their degree of degradation. The maps also revealed the type of conservation practices used, their scale and their effectiveness.

Analysis sequence of the FPEIR/DPSIR assessment framework

At the local level, three governorates (Siliana, Kasserine and Medenine) were selected for a more in-depth study on land degradation and sustainable land management. In these regions, some areas underwent more detailed land-degradation or best-practice assessment. This made it possible to carry out a comparative study of the level of soil degradation in the predominant land-use systems, and so reveal the successes and failures in controlling land degradation.

The local assessment used a data-collection and analysis process based on a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the regions under study and the natural resources, and on the calculation of socio-economic indicators through participative surveys and an analysis of the strategies to manage livelihoods developed by households. The assessment also relied on the collection of secondary information from organisations and institutions responsible for land-use management, planning and decision-making.

Interaction between the socio-economic and biophysical factors, and political and institutional involvement were analysed using the Driving forces, Pressures, States, Impacts, Responses (DPSIR) model. The results of this assessment made it possible to:

- Analyse biophysical and socio-economic data on the current status of lands, along with water and land conservation practices.

- Study information on the local population's perception of the status of the lands, of the causes of the current situation and of the changes in the quality and quantity of resources.

- Increase local participation in the decision-making process concerning land use and controlling land degradation.

- Build the capacity of local participants in carrying out local assessments and in developing a system to monitor land degradation.

- Help local decision-makers and facilitate appropriate decision-making for the sustainable management of resources.

FORCES MOTRICES (causes indirectes) – DRIVING FORCES (indirect causes)

Générer – Generate

PRESSIONS (causes directes) – PRESSURES (direct causes)

Influencer, modifier – Influence, change

ETAT de la Dégradation des Terres – STATE of Land Degradation

Provoquer, causer – Lead to, cause

IMPACTS on ecosystems – IMPACTS on ecosystems

Influencer, conditionner – Influence, determine

IMPACTS sur les moyens d'existence (les capitaux) – IMPACTS on livelihoods (resources)

Humain – Human

Social – Social

Naturel – Natural

Physique – Physical

Financier – Financial

Stimuler – Stimulate

REPONSES – RESPONSES

Modifier, substituer, éliminer – Change, substitute, eliminate

Eliminer, réduire, prévenir – Eliminate, reduce, prevent

Restaurer, influencer – Restore, influence

Compenser, atténuer – Counteract, mitigate