



**GMES
AND AFRICA**



OSS-North Africa Consortium

The Joint Implementation Network On Land Degradation Monitoring in Africa



bnetd





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1. CONTEXT

Land degradation and desertification are among the world's greatest environmental challenges. Africa is particularly vulnerable to land degradation and desertification, and it is the most severely affected region. The livelihood conditions of the African populations are directly affected by land degradation.

GMES&Africa is an Earth Observation programme initiated by the African Union Commission and the European Commission. The programme is aligned to the 7th Priority of the African Agenda 2063 and the African Space Policy, designed to address the growing needs of the African countries in accessing and using Earth Observation data for sustainable development. During the first phase (2018-2021) of implementation, this programme brought together 12 consortia that developed applications and services in the fields of Water and Natural Resources, Marine and Coastal areas. The issue of Land Degradation has been one of the challenges that efforts and services have been developed to help address.

The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) and its partners have played an active role during this **first phase** by developing, at the scale of the North African region, an operational and integrated land degradation monitoring system - **MISLAND** (www.misland.oss-online.org), which relies on international standards, takes into consideration the region specificities and builds on the past experiences. This service was developed in response to end-users needs, and was the subject of great interest in this region and in other parts of the continent.

Considering the effects of land degradation all over the African continent, it is obvious that scaling up such a service at the level of the African continent and considering it as a unique entry point for land degradation monitoring, can only be beneficial for the relevant institutions and stakeholders. The idea of having **MISLAND North Africa** (covering 6 Million Km²) upgraded and upscaled to **MISLAND Africa** (30 Million Km²), was already raised during the second GMES&Africa Continental Forum, held on December 2021 in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire). The African Union Commission (AUC), which is highly encouraging cross-fertilization and knowledge sharing between the different consortia, called upon the OSS to dig deep into this initiative through an inclusive approach during the GMES&Africa second phase.

In partnership with the AUC, the OSS has organised a continental workshop (Abidjan, October 2022) that has brought together, in a synergistic framework, representatives and resource persons respectively from EU, UNCCD, FAO, CILSS, ICPAC, RCMRD, CSE, SASSCAL, AfriGEO, JRC, CICOS, CSIR, CURAT, AGRHYMET, NBA, BNET, Ministry of Water and Forests of Côte d'Ivoire, in order to think of the relevance of setting up a continental land degradation monitoring service, and to agree on the approach to be followed in order to have it implemented.

At the end of this workshop, **the development of an African-wide land degradation monitoring service** (including the islands) was supported by the African Union, and adopted by the participating institutions. The decision was endorsed with the main recommendation of building on the achievements and successful experiences, in particular the MISLAND tool, and considering the various models and approaches developed at the level of African regions and ecosystems, and setting up a network of experts that would support the development of the service, called the Joint Implementation Network.

2. COMMITMENT FOR A JOINT IMPLEMENTATION NETWORK

Several African institutions have followed different approaches to develop their own system for monitoring and assessing land degradation and restoration at various scales (local, national or regional). Like these institutions, the OSS has developed MISLAND (access link: <http://misland.oss-online.org>), for the North African region, based on a kit of harmonized indicators, through a participatory approach and aligned with the UNCCD guidelines, and taking into account the vegetation, soil and climate specificities of the region.

In the second phase of GMES&Africa, special focus will be put to joining efforts for the development of a consensual and African endogenous-based land degradation monitoring service – **MISLAND-Africa**. Such a cohesive and initiative spirit will lead to the implementation of a **federative and unique entry point**, providing spatiotemporal evidence-based services for efficiently monitoring land degradation/restoration patterns, raising awareness and better planning of prioritized in situ interventions or field work campaigns.

It is clear that the success of such initiative strongly relies on the supervision and support of the “**Joint Implementation Network**”, in accordance with the recommendations made at the Abidjan continental land degradation workshop.

The “**Joint Implementation Network (JIN)**” will be coordinating the development process of the MISLAND-Africa service, while validating all the products to be ingested et published through it. The JIN is an open collaborative entity that will make sure that the approaches, models and indicators that are adapted to the different African regions, are integrated in the best possible way.

This concept note defines the objectives of the **Joint Implementation Network**, and the modalities of its operationalisation (opportunities and commitment, functioning, membership, etc).

3. OBJECTIVES AND MANDATE OF THE JOINT IMPLEMENTATION NETWORK

3.1. *IN THE SHORT TERM (DURING AND AFTER SETTING OF MISLAND-AFRICA)*

This JIN is meant to accompany and support the MISLAND-Africa development process with the relevant methods, adapted EO-based data resources and relevant information system technologies.

The aim of the JIN is to setup a network to promote regular exchanges and dialogue between stakeholders to ensure the consideration and the valorisation of the existing land degradation monitoring approaches, models and systems that value EO-based data, to propose harmonised approaches in the generation of MISLAND-Africa products and services.

The JIN will thus lead to the establishment of a multi-thematic and experienced team, who will test and validate the MISLAND-Africa prototypes, including the services offered, before they are published, in order to make sure that all African institutions take full advantage of the « MISLAND-Africa ».

3.2. *IN THE LONG TERM (POST MISLAND-AFRICA SUSTAINABILITY)*

The concept and vision behind the establishment of the JIN are in line with the objectives of the GMES&Africa Programme, and closely linked to the Agenda 2063 aspirations.

In the long term, the JIN aims to bring together knowledge and initiatives in the field of land degradation/restoration monitoring and sustainable land management in African countries based on the following missions:

- Facilitate the dissemination of scientific and technical knowledge, raise awareness on good practices in the fight against land degradation and monitor the SLM practices impact;
- Support the African institutions/countries in designing the development/adaptation process of the land degradation indicators monitoring methodologies;

- Support the African countries in designing and implementing policies and monitoring SDGs, especially SDG-15.3.1 and Agenda 2063 aspirations, in particular aspiration 1 “Prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development”;
- Serve as a space for reflection, exchange and consultation between young researchers and seniors, to propose methods and tools adapted to the changing context;
- Promote the development of research and development projects; and
- Ensure the Watch&Prospective and foster the integration of new emerging technologies in the continental land degradation monitoring service.

4. COMPOSITION OF THE JIN

The Joint Implementation Network will bring together each of the 8 GMES&Africa Consortia (6 are dealing with the land and water resources - 2 are dealing with the marine and coastal resources), as well as other international, regional and African institutions and networks, working on land degradation and restoration.

The JIN will work in close collaboration with the OSS as the African institution developing MISLAND-Africa, and with the AUC as lead advisor.

The JIN is open to any expert working on land degradation monitoring in Africa. Its initial composition will be:

- The Committee of Champions-Leaders
- The Awareness Committee

A Coordination Office of the Joint Implementation Network (COJIN) will be established with the representation all these stakeholders (detail in section 8).

5. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

The Joint Implementation Network covers all regions of Africa, including its islands.

The JIN can be seen as a framework of periodic dialogue between the experts working on land degradation monitoring in Africa, who will regularly exchange experiences and share knowledge and good practices. The meetings will be held quarterly starting from March 2023.

6. HEADQUARTERS OF THE JIN

The head office of the JIN is the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS), based in Tunis - Tunisia, and coordinated by a restricted coordination committee appointed by the members, under the AUC supervision.

7. OPPORTUNITIES FOR NETWORK MEMBERS

The JIN membership makes it possible for the experts to:

- Make their papers, experiences and products known through the AUC/consortia channels and the exchange platform that will be developed in the beginning of 2023;

- Have a framework for sharing and developing their project ideas valorizing EO-based resources for land degradation monitoring;
- Promote their own expertise for the benefit of African countries and institutions;
- Access the AUC/consortia Experts Database;
- Share and enrich their knowledge through high-level debates and discussions in a regional (North, East, West, South Africa) and continental framework;
- Benefit from a possible GMES&Africa support to participate in regional and international scientific and technical events, and represent the JIN at regional and international events;
- Share expertise opportunities in relation to EO and natural resources management.

8. OPERATIONALISATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE JIN

8.1. SETTING UP A SELECT COORDINATION COMMITTEE

A coordination committee, made up of land degradation monitoring African experts, including the scientific and technical world from all regions of Africa has been identified (OSS, CSE, ICPAC, RCMRD). This committee should:

- Draw up its rules of procedure;
- Validate the membership of other members;
- Refine the network's operating procedures (regulatory tools, statutes, internal regulations, etc.) and work plans;
- Validate the documents proposed to develop MISLAND-Africa and feed the resulting federative portal for monitoring land degradation over the African continent;
- Produce situational analysis notes on themes of interest.

The committee will work in close collaboration with an OSS technical team, dedicated to the follow-up and animation of the MISLAND-Africa platform.

The network is placed under the aegis of the AUC.

8.2. EXCHANGE SPACE AND AGENDA OF NETWORK ACTIVITIES

The JIN members will have access to an online platform, set up by the OSS, which will serve as a framework for exchange and consultation. Regular meetings (physical or virtual) will be organized to discuss, if necessary, relevant issues or themes.

9. HOW TO JOIN THE NETWORK OF EXPERTS

The JIN is open to professionals involved in SLM, environment monitoring, scientific and technical world (Environment and natural resources management, water agencies, national/regional institutions working on land degradation and land resources restoration and management, academia, NGOs, consultants, students, etc.), with relevant references in their fields of expertise.

To become a JIN member, interested persons must submit a membership application file including:

- a duly completed, dated and signed application form online.
- a Curriculum Vitae of the applicant in the format downloadable via the link <http://projet.oss-online.org/jin/index.html#>.
- the Charter of the JIN, followed by the words "Read and Approved (Annex-1).

The applicant's membership is approved by the network's coordination committee, once the applicant meets the membership requirements.

10. FUNDING

No financial commitment of any kind is attached to this charter. Participation in the activities of the network is voluntary and does not give the right to any remuneration of any kind.

11. LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP

Any member of the network may leave at any time by simple request to the Coordination Committee.

Membership may also be terminated in the event of serious misconduct.

The Coordination Committee, the OSS and the AUC reserve the right to determine what serious misconduct can be, and have the discretionary power to decide.

The committee will review the list of experts every two years, and reserves the right to exclude members who have been totally inactive.

(Annexes below!)



ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 - CHARTER OF THE EXPERT NETWORK ON "MONITORING LAND DEGRADATION IN AFRICA"

- **Considering** that several African regions are affected by land degradation issues and, will therefore experience an exacerbation of this phenomenon;
- **Given** the importance of the assets offered by Earth Observation and geospatial technologies, in particular for the monitoring and assessment of the land degradation and restoration hotspots;
- **Considering** the wide availability, the cost-effectiveness and the fitness of using these EO data in the context of land degradation monitoring, as indicated in the UNCCD guidelines on good practices and international standards for SDG-15.3.1 reporting;
- **Convinced** that the exchange of knowledge and experience between actors involved in the valorization of EO technologies and natural resource management, in an integrated approach, can effectively contribute to proposing appropriate solutions to the issue of land degradation monitoring and management in Africa;
- **Based** on the key messages and recommendations from the second GMES&Africa Continental Forum held on December 2021 in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), and the idea of building on the achievements and successful experiences of GMES&Africa phase-1, in particular to upgrade and upscale **the Monitoring Integrated Services for Land Degradation (MISLAND) tool**, developed by the North-Africa consortium and its partners during GMES&Africa phase-1;
- **Based** on the recommendations and the roadmap from the continental workshop on "land degradation monitoring in Africa" organized by the OSS in partnership with the AUC in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) in October 2022; which brought together in a synergistic framework representatives and resource persons respectively from EU, UNCCD, FAO, CILSS, ICPAC, RCMRD, CSE, SASSCAL, AfriGEO, JRC, CICOS, CSIR, CURAT, AGRHYMET, NBA, BNET, Ministry of Water and Forests of Côte d'Ivoire, and which led to the endorsement of the decision to develop "MISLAND-Africa" - an African-wide land degradation monitoring service (including the islands) by considering the African regions' specificities;
- **Having regard to the statutes of the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) and the African Union (AU);**

The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) sets up a platform for exchange called "Joint Implementation Network", governed by the present Charter.

The following main opportunities are offered to the members of the JIN:

- Make their work and products known through the Network platform, the AUC channels and the different institutions involved in the implementation of GMES&Africa;
- Have a platform for developing and sharing their project ideas valorizing EO-based resources for LD monitoring;
- Promote their own expertise for the benefit of African countries;
- Access the AUC (and other institutions) Experts Database;
- Share and enrich their knowledge through high-level debates in a regional (North, East, West, South Africa) and continental framework;

- Benefit from a possible GMES&Africa support to participate in regional and international scientific and technical events, and represent the JIN at regional and international events;
- Share expertise opportunities in relation to EO and natural resources management;

Anyone who joins the JIN undertakes to:

- Contribute regularly to the (virtual or physical) exchanges and debates of the Network;
- Contribute to the strengthening of the documentary base of the exchange platform (publications);
- Not knowingly publish information or links to false and/or defamatory information;
- Share with their peer's information concerning the forums/events to which they contribute or participate, and which are in line with the objectives and missions of the Network;
- Contribute to the Network's influence by conveying the Network's messages;
- Actively participate in the events organized by the Network (Round Table, Side-event, etc.) during the regional or international meetings in which they also take part physically or remotely;
- Regularly update their references on the exchange platform (address, function/activity, list of publications, etc.);
- Agree that their membership and participation in the Network's activities are not for profit;
- Avoid religious or political debates in the context of the Network's activities;
- Avoid any unlawful practice or conduct that may damage the image of the Network;
- Acknowledge that the Coordinating Committee and the OSS/AUC have the discretion to regulate the JIN activities.

This Charter is a living document and should be adapted as necessary.

ANNEX 2 - MEMBERSHIP FORM



The Joint Implementation Network

On «Land Degradation Monitoring in Africa »

MEMBERSHIP FORM

I, the undersigned,, having read the charter of the JIN on « Land Degradation Monitoring in Africa », hereby submit my application to join, as an active member, and undertake to comply with all the provisions of the Charter, if my application is accepted.

Personal information of the applicant

Last name:

First name:

Qualification (diploma and specialty):

Function:

Organization:

Address:

Postcode, City, Country:

Telephone (including international country code):

E-mail:

Skype:

Affiliation to another professional network?

If yes, name and areas of action of the network:

Return the duly completed Membership Application Form to the address boc@oss.org.tn, attaching the following documents:

- A Curriculum Vitæ of the applicant in the downloadable format via the link <http://projet.oss-online.org/jin/index.html#>;
- The Charter of the Network with the handwritten mention “Read and Approved”.

Done at _____, on _____ . 2023.

Signature :