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LANDSCAPES FOR 1 BILLION PEOPLE

THRIVING AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES THROUGH INTEGRATED LANDSCAPE STRATEGIES

A Vision for Public Policymakers

March 2026 [English]

GALLOP Initiative and 1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People

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Photos by Conservación Internacional Perú are included on page 6 (bottom left: 3 photos of Alto Mayo landscape, Perú), page 9 (top left), and page 15. Photos by Kijabe Environment Volunteers (KENVO) are included on page 6 (top right: 3 photos of Lari Landscape, Kenya).

In a 2023 G20 interview, World Bank President Ajay Banga underscored the critical importance of strong and enabling policy frameworks: *"If countries introduce the right policies and regulatory frameworks, the investment needed to achieve the SDGs could be reduced by half. This delivers two benefits: it lowers friction in achieving the goals and enables greater private sector participation."*

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SUMMARY

Nations today stand at a crossroads. Crises are mounting and converging, from slowing economic growth, food and water insecurity and rising unemployment, to deepening inequality, climate impacts, and environmental degradation; and trust in institutions is eroding. Yet the answers every country needs lie within its national borders, with the communities threatened most directly by these challenges.

The renowned 2021 Dasgupta Review demonstrated that an economy is embedded in its living ecosystems (see figure 1). Still, too many countries continue to apply familiar approaches that ignore this reality, despite disappointing results. They launch economic development projects here and ecosystem-restoration plans there, in isolation. Their work is fragmented and fails to reflect the powerful interconnections and interdependencies across economic, environmental, and social dimensions that exist at the level of the local landscape, bioregion or territory. By instead embracing such interconnections, **leaders can unleash the power to transform such places into engines of renewal that drive sustainable, long-term economic development**.

Figure 1. The economy is embedded in the biosphere, and is not external to it. *

Nurturing whole landscapes yields high returns: a thriving economy, human well-being, healthy nature and inspiration for a better future. Integrated landscape strategies are being promoted globally by United Nations agencies and environmental conventions to advance sustainable economic growth, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to climate action. Local partnerships are forming in all regions; the map shows just those working with partners of the 1000 Landscapes initiative. Countries across the globe, from Costa Rica to the United Kingdom, are pioneering national initiatives to address the ongoing polycrisis at its roots. Led at the highest levels of government, they provide institutional support for local partnerships, representing all sectors and groups, to develop integrated landscape strategies and action plans for sustainable development.

* Source: figure 17 (*The Economy is Embedded in the Biosphere*) from Dasgupta, P. (2021), *The Economics of Biodiversity: The Dasgupta Review*. (London: HM Treasury). Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Policymakers can advance community-led, integrated landscape management (ILM) as a key solution to the polycrisis and economic revival. The "how" of this approach has emerged from decades of field experience (UNCCD, UNFAO):

- Locally-led ILM can unlock community energy and systemic solutions.
- Governments, in turn, can strategically deploy existing public budgets towards convergence on the ground, supporting local action plans directly.
- Aligning public investments can make funds work harder while rebuilding community trust. Government departments and sectors can work in synergy to support long-term, local strategies, and to engage all groups in society to participate in pursuing these goals.
- This public investment will attract aligned private and philanthropic capital to amplify local solutions to the polycrisis. Public policies and budgets can thus serve as a foundation for comprehensive, unified solutions.

ILM promises to be one of the most efficient and effective ways to address the polycrisis. A policy framework for advancing ILM has three elements at its heart (see figure 6 on page 10):

1. **Designating a dedicated landscape agency** within the government to serve landscape partnerships (LPs) and advise public and civil society policies and programs;
2. **Ensuring government policies, programs and budgets** support LP-generated action and investment plans;
3. **Mobilizing support** for landscape strategies across society, including markets, finance, digital infrastructure and education.

This paper aims to inspire policymakers working at all levels of government to join hands with local actors on the front line of the polycrisis to **pursue this vision**. Leaders have the power to ensure all their **nation's landscapes and the economy thrive**. Now is the time for concerted action to support landscape solutions.

Figure 2. Landscape partnerships collaborating with partners of the 1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People initiative, 2024

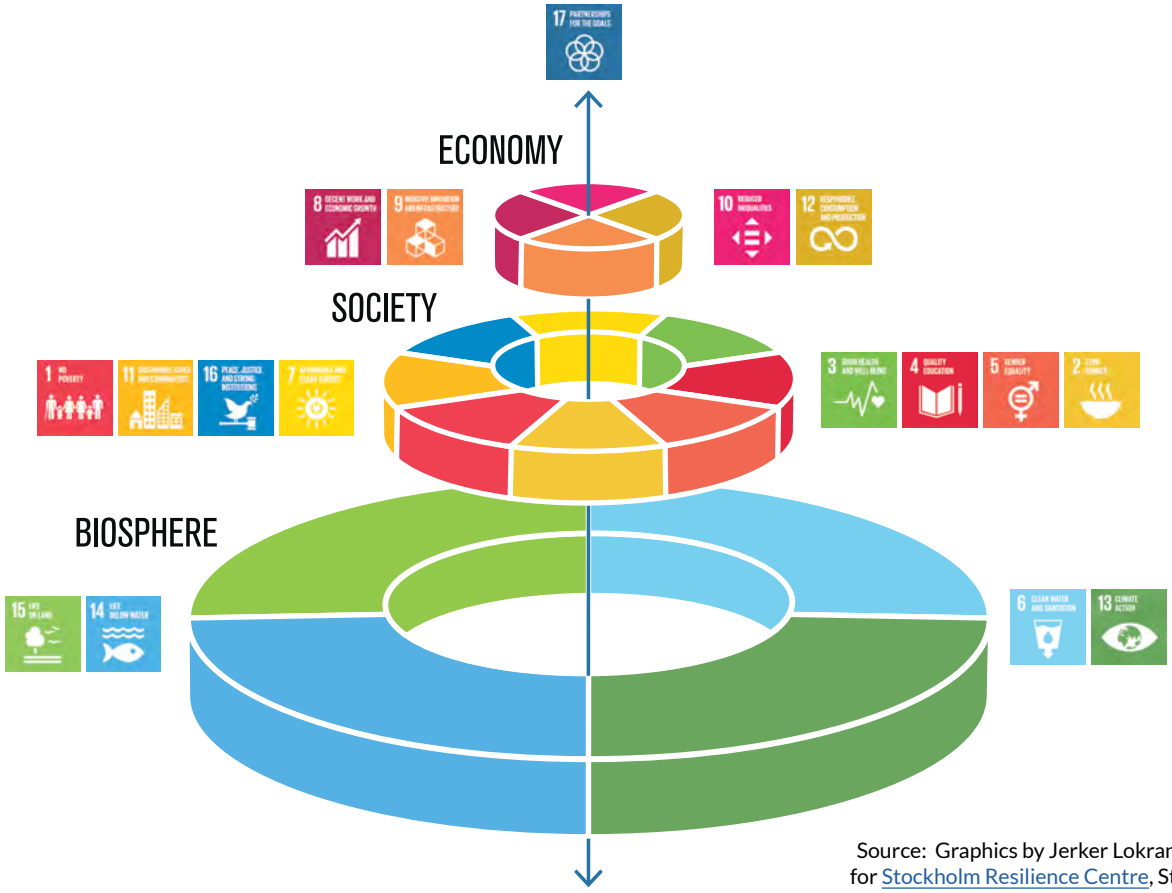
Source: www.landscapes.global

1. THE POLICY CHALLENGE

to mobilize a thriving economy in the midst of a polycrisis

Many national governments have committed to ambitious goals for sustainable economic and social development[1]. But the 2024 G20 Declaration reported Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) achievements at only 17% of intended targets. One key reason for the disappointing results is that national actions are not connecting to local communities. A second key reason is the fragmented action across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. As highlighted by Prof. Partha Dasgupta in the Dasgupta Review of 2021, the economy and society are embedded in the biosphere, not external to it. Living ecosystems generate much of what we produce or consume, as well as critical ecosystem services for people, like healthy watersheds, infectious disease control, pollination, and land-based climate regulation. The Stockholm Resilience Institute illustrates this with their SDG 'wedding cake' (see figure 3).

Figure 3. Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals: A healthy biosphere sustains a healthy society and strong economy



Source: Graphics by Jerker Lokrantz/Azote for Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University CC BY-ND 3.0.

1 Countries' international commitments include: 2030 Sustainable Development Goals; the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), including 2015 Paris Accords for Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) targets; UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) and FAO's agenda for sustainable global food production; UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) land restoration targets to halt and reverse degradation and desertification; post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD); G20 Rio de Janeiro Leader's Declaration; 2024 ICLEI World Congress outcomes; and more.

Yet, economic and financial systems undervalue those ecosystems. Currently, up to half of land worldwide is in various stages of degradation, posing powerful risks to long-term sustainable economic development. The diminished capacity of these degraded resources to support community livelihoods is also triggering migration, with cascading effects on both urban and rural territories (UNCCD 2022).

Thus, we see multiple, interdependent, and mutually exacerbating threats to food security, water, climate change, human health, natural resources, energy, livelihoods, biodiversity, and social stability. These are generating a "polycrisis" in which none of these challenges can be addressed successfully in isolation from the others.

National and state policymakers face a daunting challenge to address this polycrisis while also mobilizing a thriving economy. In most countries, socioeconomic and environmental goals are pursued independently by different national government ministries, without a shared spatial focus. Strategies designed in capital cities far from the communities affected, or focused only on national government actions, have failed to deliver results on the ground. National goals will be unattainable unless there is explicit attention to sub-national policy and to supporting local actions. To fully address the polycrisis, fundamentals must shift to consider the long term and to apply regenerative, transformative, and circular policies and practices to all economic sectors (see G20 and OECD guidance).

2. A RESPONSE THROUGH INTEGRATED LANDSCAPE POLICY

So how can policymakers tackle these complex, interconnected problems? Societies need a new systemic, place-based approach to strengthen local people's role in decision-making and address local ecological and socioeconomic realities. They also need to enable coordinated action across sectors and among government, civil society, and market actors. Integrated landscape management (ILM), implemented by long-term landscape partnerships (LPs), has emerged as a powerful response (UNCCD, UNFAO).

Integrated landscape management: a holistic development approach for the economy, community, nature, and inspiration

ILM promotes holistic, place-based sustainable development to generate benefits for a regenerative economy, human well-being, thriving nature, and inspiration for a better future (see figure 4). ILM engages all stakeholders in the landscape to address problems and opportunities. Numerous other terms, drawn from different entry points for collaborative action, convey the same or similar concepts, like integrated watershed management, integrated territorial development, and bioregional development. The scale for landscape management is bigger than a community but smaller than a province or state, commonly at least 100,000 hectares in size, in order to encompass key ecological, economic, or social features and processes. But a landscape is a socio-ecological unit, and thus landscape boundaries are defined by its stakeholders and may be much smaller or larger.

A landscape offers a strategic mesoscale for integrated planning and investment. ILM builds on a rich foundation of innovative organizational and technical models of regional, territorial, and ecosystem management, as well as cultural and ecological practices of indigenous territorial management. By addressing local challenges systematically, in a spatially explicit and bottom-up manner, the approach can also make sustained contributions to national goals and commitments to the economy, environment, climate, and social well-being.

Figure 4. Integrated landscape management (ILM)

By strategically aligning regenerative farm and non-farm practices, infrastructure, business and markets, and investments in natural habitats, a landscape partnership fosters diversified livelihoods, food security and year-round vegetative cover that protects soils, river flow, biodiversity and climate.

Source: 1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People

Key features of ILM are:

- A multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral partnership or platform for long-term learning, negotiation, and coordinated action in the landscape, assisted by skilled and trusted facilitators
- A long-term vision for development defined by stakeholders for the landscape, encompassing a regenerative economy, human well-being, and healthy nature
- Adoption of agricultural, conservation, and other land-use systems and practices that generate benefits aligned with the landscape vision
- Spatial planning to ensure that different land uses and practices across the landscape—in natural habitats, regenerative production areas, and human settlements–have positive ecological and economic synergies
- Policies and market developments that support integrated strategies for economic goals, social well-being and environmental stewardship.

Implementing initiatives at a landscape scale involves cross-learning and negotiation among diverse stakeholders with varied expertise, from private, public, and civic sectors. Collaboration through a voluntary landscape partnership fosters greater ownership and integrated action toward shared goals. An LP provides a practical mechanism to implement the five key elements of ILM (see figure 5):

- **Build and sustain a multi-stakeholder landscape partnership**
- **Develop a shared understanding** of the landscape—its history and potential futures—among the stakeholders
- **Form a shared vision** or agreed long-term goals among the stakeholders, and then a long-term strategy and short-term action plan to realize that vision
- **Coordinate action and financing** for the projects in the plan
- **Assess impacts and learnings** collectively to adapt the strategy and plan

Figure 5. Five key elements of ILM

Source: 1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People. *Integrated Landscape Management Practical Guide*.

Almost all LPs include local government partners in the collaborative, and many also include state and national government agencies. Such platforms can be one of the most effective ways to inform and coordinate actions by diverse government entities in the landscape.

ILM provides a mechanism to link local and national goals

ILM respects local values and responds to local needs, risks, and priorities. ILM has the potential to generate new jobs, through regenerative and circular economy practices and investments. A more balanced and inclusive economic development pathway offers sustainable employment and livelihood opportunities within a landscape, mitigating and managing the significant risks and costs related to climate change, health, migration, entrenched poverty, and social unrest. ILM in peri-urban areas can foster positive rural-urban linkages. LPs provide a platform for negotiation to align local and national goals.

By explicitly linking production, environmental, and market strategies at the landscape scale, ILM is also key to the agricultural output growth required to feed the world's growing population, while sustaining agricultural ecosystems and managing the risks of climate change. Transforming food systems through regenerative landscapes strategically links regenerative and agro-ecological practices with nature-based solutions. These can be powerful and economical tools for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and drawing carbon out of the atmosphere. Every dollar invested in overall land regeneration is projected to return $7-$30 over time. Such a transformation would provide immense economic benefits to GDP while contributing to climate actions and sustainable development.

There is growing evidence of the dynamic impacts catalyzed by these partnerships on economic growth, natural resource restoration, and human well-being. This includes the TP4D stocktaking of territorial development 2021; the 1000 Landscapes and Regen10 white paper on regenerative landscapes for food system transformation; World Bank assessments of landscape and territorial development programs; and GEF Impact Programs advancing ILM, food systems, and sustainable forest landscapes. Diverse examples from India (Box 1), Kenya (Box 2) and Peru (Box 3) illustrate how ILM can contribute to both local and national goals, and how those impacts can scale with policy support.

BOX 1. MADHYA PRADESH, INDIA: REGENERATIVE DEVELOPMENT IN COTTON-GROWING LANDSCAPES

The Regenerative Production Landscape Collaborative (RPLC) is an innovative jurisdictional (local government-led) landscape initiative in 10 cotton-growing areas of Madhya Pradesh, India that have experienced high degradation due to land use practices. The RPLC goal is to foster agricultural ecosystems that conserve and enhance natural resources and build community resilience while enabling businesses to source responsibly. RPLC is co-financed by the national government, international NGOs, company buyers and philanthropy. RPLC developed a multi-stakeholder landscape coalition and landscape governance structures at the State and Compact levels, to foster partner voices and stakeholder engagement in a shared vision, action plan, and interventions. On-ground interventions support the transition to regenerative farming and create market linkages for the landscape to produce cotton and food crops including wheat, soy, pulses, spices, vegetables, and fruits, by engaging different actors along the value chain. Government partners are building the enabling policy, finance and technology for large-scale transition to regenerative farming. By 2024, 260,000 hectares were under landscape management, and 82,000 farmers were adopting regenerative practices.

BOX 2. LARI LANDSCAPE, KENYA: SUSTAINING HIGH BIODIVERSITY AND URBAN FOOD AND WATER SUPPLY

The Lari landscape in the central highlands of Kenya has a population of about 135,000 spread over 170 square kilometers, and is an important producer of tea for export and vegetables for nearby urban markets. Kijabe Environment Volunteers (KENVO) was formed in 1994 by local youth leaders to mobilize community members to resist illegal outsider-led deforestation that threatened their livelihoods. The initiative evolved to become a mature landscape partnership of 20 farmer associations, together with businesses, community organizations, and government agencies, described in this multimedia story.

National and local government agencies for forests, nature, agriculture, health and water played critical roles in the Lari LP to mobilize funding, supportive regulation, data, and planning to design and help coordinate their common agendas. The work of the LP is sustaining one of the few remaining indigenous forests in the Aberdare Range, host to unique biodiversity and a critical water source for major urban centers. The collaboration has stimulated regenerative production systems and new eco-labeled markets for vegetables from a 1200-member farmer cooperative, ecotourism, and bottling plants, as well as expanded community health services and education. The subnational government of Kiambu is promoting similar LPs to scale up these impacts across their jurisdiction.

BOX 3. ALTO MAYO LANDSCAPE, PERU: LOW EMISSIONS RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE TROPICAL HIGHLANDS

Alto Mayo, a territorial unit within the region of San Martin, is a global hotspot for biodiversity in the tropical highlands of Peru. With a population of 300,000, there is expanding production of coffee, cacao, beef and farmed fish. Both biodiversity and climate resilience are threatened by the expansion of road infrastructure and agricultural land degradation. The Integrated Regional Strategy for Low Emission Rural Development of San Martin developed landscape-scale strategies to meet local, regional and national goals. The strategy was developed through a multi-year process led by the regional government with key stakeholders in businesses, government, agriculture, forestry, and tourism.

The program for Alto Mayo supports farmers' transition to more sustainable agricultural practices on more than 300 square kilometers of farmland, reinforces effective management of almost 1,910 square kilometers of conservation areas, and ensures road improvements take place only where economic impact is associated with low levels of deforestation. A multiphase investment of $67 million is planned across the landscape, using debt, equity, company and public finance. An in-depth analysis projects that deploying investments in protection, production and connection (road networks) in coordination will significantly increase financial returns and decrease expected costs. Moreover, benefits for the environment, communities, and the resilience of production sectors far exceed the financial returns.

ILM is spreading widely

Continental surveys in 2011-15 documented 457 landscape initiatives in south and southeast Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Many more have been organized in the past decade. 1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People partners are already engaged with several hundred LPs (see map in Summary, page iv). National coalitions of LPs have formed or are in the process of formation, for peer-to-peer learning and collaborative policy advocacy. Examples include Kenya (Kenya Landscape Actors Platform, KenLAP), Brazil (within the Latin American Model Forest Network), India (Common Ground) and Spain/Portugal (Iberian Network of Regenerative Territories).

NGOs, governments, companies, and communities have begun promoting LPs. Global initiatives have worked to systematize, develop, and share knowledge, tools and best practices for practical implementation of ILM, such as Landscapes for People, Food and Nature (LPFN); 1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People initiative; the Global Landscapes Forum, and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Integrated landscape and territorial development approaches have been endorsed by the UN conventions on climate change (UNFCCC, 2016), combating desertification/land degradation (UNCCD, 2017), and biological diversity (UNCBD, 2016); as well as by the UN High-Level Political Forum of the SDGs (2018), UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021); UN Habitat (2019); the United Nations General Assembly (2015); the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2022); and the coalition of Regional Governments (Regions4, 2021).

Major international companies are starting to engage in ILM to manage business risks they cannot handle through their supply chains. Some international business coalitions are promoting landscape strategies, such as the Forest Allies, the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, and the Consumer Goods Forum Forest Positive Coalition. The World Economic Forum and Tropical Forest Alliance report that the number of company-supported landscape and jurisdictional initiatives grew sevenfold from 2016 to 2022. The Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund, the World Bank and other multilateral development banks, and UN agencies are investing billions of dollars in landscape development, as are bilateral donors of the OECD. Still, only a fraction of these funds go to projects in landscape investment portfolios designed, led, and prioritized by local LPs.

A number of countries have set up national programs for integrated landscape action. Notable examples are Australia, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, the Netherlands, Peru, Rwanda, Scotland, South Africa and the U.S. These programs are variously designated as landscapes, bioregions, biological corridors, bio-districts, watersheds, seascapes, landcare groups or other terms. But organizationally, most are still operated and budgeted separately from the main sectoral ministry programs.

3. POLICY BARRIERS AND GAPS

to achieving collaborative landscape solutions

National and state governments have a critical catalytic role to play in scaling ILM. Yet, as reported in our 2022 White Paper, *Public Policy to Support Landscape and Seascape Partnerships: Meeting Sustainable Development Goals through Collaborative Territorial Action*, few countries offer systematic policy and institutional support for LPs to establish and thrive. Key barriers and gaps include:

- **Lack of information:** Local landscape initiatives and strategies are ignored in policy processes. In most places today, government plans, at every scale, ignore the plans developed by communities and LPs. This exclusion reflects conventional patterns of decision-making and investment. By the same token, local groups are often unaware of important government programs or policies that could support or constrain their work.
- **Fragmentation:** Public policies, planning, and budgets are highly fragmented and siloed. Economic objectives and policies often lack the coherence necessary to address current realities and future needs. Government funding typically focuses on individual projects in specific sectors (e.g., agriculture, infrastructure, health, biodiversity), rather than on clusters of projects across sectors that could generate synergies for landscape economic development, social welfare and healthy nature.
- **Lack of incentives:** Governments provide few incentives or mechanisms for landscape actors to collaborate. Policies do not incentivize communities to participate in integrated, locally led planning for comprehensive actions. For example, government programs around water, agriculture, and biodiversity might each require a community to organize a different committee, even if the main activities are the same. In rural areas, priorities around land and resource use are often set by governments and corporations far away. LPs are poorly connected with one another.
- **Lack of support:** There are few integrated technical and legal services available for LPs. Few LPs have access to technical, management, legal, training, or data support that meets the needs of ILM. Most services for LP establishment and development are provided through short-term programs of national NGOs or international NGOs or agencies. Government agencies often provide only a limited range of services; there is little coordination of services among agencies. Local landscape actors lack access to critical datasets needed for collaborative planning and monitoring.
- **Disconnection:** Public and private-sector actions within landscapes are disconnected. Government planning focuses on design and finance for activities and investments implemented by government entities. LPs urgently need public support and services to help them build constructive bridges with private companies and financial institutions.
- **Lack of appropriate financial mechanisms:** Financial institutions are not organized to fund coordinated landscape investments. A central challenge for LPs is engaging the business and finance communities and coordinating the required funding to meet their holistic action plans. Financial mechanisms often lack environmental, social, and governance features critical for landscape regeneration. Financial models and instruments that are sectorally-focused or short-term are a poor fit.

4. POLICY SOLUTIONS

to promote integrated landscape development

Policy solutions that take a systemic and place-based approach to sustainable development will be more effective. A landscape-centric vision and policies can connect government budgets and structures, civil society, and market mechanisms, to align local and national goals. This calls for empowering local landscape actors as contributors to governance decisions, not merely consulted. For LPs to thrive long-term, governments can develop supportive and aligned policies, promote learning and knowledge exchange, provide capacity-building and technical services, and facilitate access to financial and business services. Moreover, policies can be made adaptable to local contexts. Practical policy guidance for landscape (territorial) approaches may be found from EcoAgriculture, GALLOP, Cornell and Columbia Universities, from the international TP4D coalition, and from Commonland and partners. Broader work on multilevel governance mechanisms also provides relevant insights, for example from UN-Habitat, University College of London-G20, and the UN Food Systems Summit. Landscape policy can become a cornerstone for better governance more generally.

A policy framework for advancing ILM has three elements at its heart:

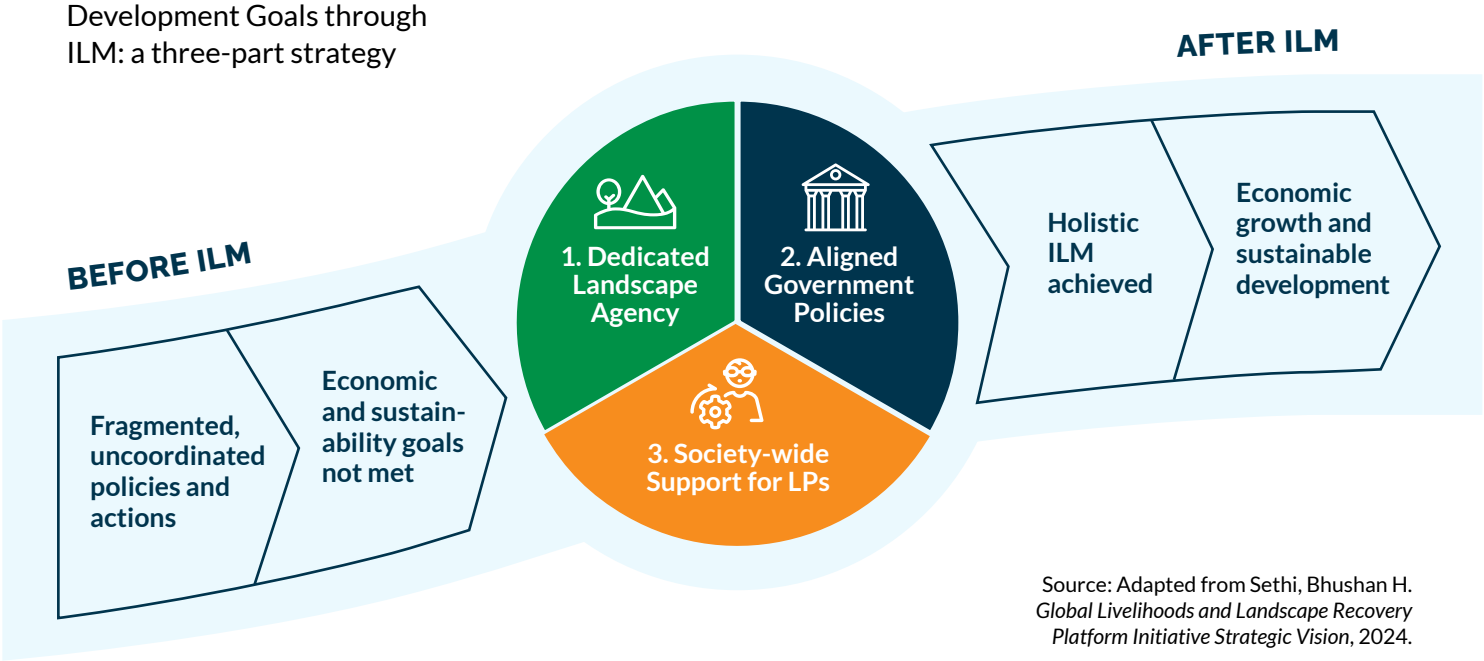
1. **Designating a dedicated landscape agency** within the government to serve landscape partnerships and advise public and civil society policies and programs

2. **Ensuring government policies, programs and budgets** support LP-generated action and investment plans

3. **Mobilizing support** for landscape strategies across society, including markets, finance, digital infrastructure and education.

Figure 6 illustrates how, together, these can accelerate national economic development and sustainable development. The national landscape program in Costa Rica (Box 4) has put many of these elements into action.

Figure 6
Achieving Sustainable Development Goals through ILM: a three-part strategy



Source: Adapted from Sethi, Bhushan H. *Global Livelihoods and Landscape Recovery Platform Initiative Strategic Vision*, 2024.

BOX 4. INSTITUTIONALIZING THE LANDSCAPE APPROACH IN COSTA RICA

Costa Rica demonstrates how a national program can institutionalize the landscape approach. Its National Biological Corridors Program, coordinated by the National System of Conservation Areas under the Ministry of Environment and Energy, was created by policy in 2006. The program integrates ecological, social, and productive dimensions under a participatory governance framework that is designed to reconcile livelihoods, conservation and sustainable territorial development. By 2024, Costa Rica had developed 51 multifunctional biological corridors, engaging over 1,500 institutional and community actors. These cover a third of the country's territory to form an interconnected mosaic.

1. Designating a dedicated landscape agency within the government to serve landscape partnerships and advise public and civil society policies and programs

A dedicated landscape agency (LA) can provide a strategic focal point for government action in support of integrated landscape development. While many countries have designated agency roles to work with specific landscape programs, and there are many good lessons learned, none has been institutionalized to do so across ministries, in collaboration with LPs. Working together, the LA and LPs can drive landscape management through community-driven vision and action with top-down policy and budgetary support. Policymakers can first decide how they want the LA to operate, including its roles, position in the government structure, and values.

- **The role of the landscape agency**: The LA may play diverse roles. The agency could liaise with all types of place-based holistic collaboratives on the ground, such as bioregions, functional territories, biocultural landscapes, integrated watershed areas, and indigenous territories. The LA could help align state and national government funding and top-down support for LPs' bottom-up planning and initiatives. The agency could share and foster knowledge exchange among ministries, and advise ministerial planning and budget allocations to achieve cross-sectoral synergies that support local integrated action plans. It can also help to connect flows of local, private, and climate funds to help create economic opportunities. Decentralized offices of the LA could strengthen and sustain local capacities for facilitating and implementing LPs, and provide LPs with guidance on landscape governance, laws, inclusive and nature-positive business practices, market mechanisms, and integrated landscape monitoring. They could directly provide technical, legal, financial and digital services to LPs, or support NGOs, CSOs or other government agencies or parastatals to provide those services. The LA could also promote more constructive engagement of businesses with LPs.
- **Position of the agency within the government structure**: The LA has a functional mandate; its organization can be structured to fit the national context. Thus, it could be placed within a central coordinating agency, such as the President's Office or Planning Commission; within an existing government ministry with land and resource-related mandates; or as a separate authority. It is important that the agency have strong working relations with all the ministries already active with landscape or territorial initiatives. The agency should simplify communities' access to resources, not impose an additional bureaucratic layer with overlapping functions.
- **Values for success**: Experience from around the world suggests some key ingredients for success in public support for LPs. It is important that public policy explicitly endorse LPs for integrated territorial development. Also, central are a commitment to support participatory landscape governance, and constructive government engagement with existing landscape partnerships and networks. Service provision for LPs requires strategic coordination among providers, with long-term support services tailored to locally defined needs. LA's and other government actors can champion equitable access to public and private services, inclusive mobility and transportation and strong territorial rights. They might support LPs to address the impacts of large-scale extractive industry activity, and respond to environmental and economic shocks, including those arising from prolonged crises or conflicts.

2. Ensuring government policies, programs and budgets support LP-generated action and investment plans

LPs, as well as the landscape agency, will be most effective with a robust national policy framework in place. Through these, landscape strategies can be incorporated into government planning processes and analyses, programs and budgeting, and investment, with key roles for sub-national governments. Enhanced governance mechanisms can enable sustainable development into the future. For example, policies that secure land and resource tenure, recognize informal land uses, and promote gender equity enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of ILM. Meanwhile, by seeking inputs from LPs, national government processes can help to ground state and national policies.

- **Incorporating landscape priorities into the national planning process:** Most countries have a central entity responsible for high-level planning, which sets goals and targets, and provides budgetary and action guidelines to ministries. It is helpful if this body has a political and legislative mandate to define sustainable and holistic ILM policies that support bottom-up decision-making and inter-ministerial collaboration. The planning body can then ensure that national plans and financial resource allocations incorporate and align with local landscape priorities and plans. Working with the landscape agency, planners can also ensure that LPs receive critical information to inform their action plans, both technical and about relevant public programs.
- **Including landscape dynamics in economic and financial analyses:** Ministries of economics, finance, and national planning often rely on short-term economic and financial values to inform government programs and budgets. The landscape agency needs to be in regular dialogue with these ministries. It is recommended that landscape dynamics be incorporated into their analyses, using comprehensive methods of cost-benefit analyses that also value factors such as economic resilience, equity, ecological, and social values of investment. Integrated landscape finance strategies can be used to unlock new sources of funding for the SDGs, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs), National Land Degradation Neutrality plans and Nationally Determined Contributions to Climate Change (NDCs). National dialogue platforms for financial actors from across the capital continuum can support this work.
- **On a national scale, synchronizing programs and budgets across ministries:** To support community-driven, holistic landscape development, national ministries can design mechanisms that better align their sectoral planning and actions. This can involve regular horizontal review and co-design of plans, drawing on inputs mobilized from LPs and other local, regional or state institutions. There is already considerable innovation in this direction. Examples in Africa include the GPS-Development initiative in Benin, Ghana's Land Degradation Neutrality pilot, and Kenya's county-level integrated planning. The UN Conventions on climate, biodiversity, land degradation and wetlands are working to integrate national planning and reporting, using a shared spatial approach. Models of cross-ministry coordination for landscape action have been developed in Australia, Ethiopia, India and Scotland.

- **At a landscape scale, synchronizing programs and budgets across sectors and jurisdictions:** Coordinating public sector budgetary outlays and programs can facilitate alignment, manage risks, and promote community action. LPs can assist with cross-sector landscape planning if underpinned by clear policy scaffolding. For example, in Antananarivo, Madagascar, planners representing five ministries from three regions collaborated to develop a five-year plan to ensure access to secure and sustainable food and wood energy supplies for farmers, fishers, and forest managers. They secured financial and technical support for their joint territorial plan from various public agencies and other Malagasy institutions, benefitting some 250,000 people across nine districts.

- **Publicly financing landscape investments:** Combining government investments in ILM with communities' social capital and an engaged private sector is key to solving the polycrisis. Government programs can make four types of financial contributions to LPs. The first is through grant financing for the organization and management of LPs—the top priority identified for both LPs and financiers. The second is by aligning different flows of public finance within the landscape, as described above. The third is to catalyze scalable business models through direct financing of selected projects in the landscape investment portfolios, both public and co-finance with private sector investors. The fourth is by providing financial support services to help LPs mobilize financing for projects and businesses in their investment portfolios.

- **Co-investing with the private sector:** Governments can mobilize private company investment in landscape-friendly commercial projects in a variety of ways. They can directly incentivize and co-invest with companies to make such projects more bankable. As landscape initiatives mature, governments can help structure blended finance vehicles that link commercial investments with social and environmental investments across the landscape, or even across many landscapes. Policymakers can make integrated landscape finance a central pillar of a country's strategic investment framework. For example, public development banks could be directed to channel specialized funding, such as that from climate funds and carbon credit programs, into landscape investment portfolios. Such a framework could also influence international and multilateral agencies to align their policy advisory, financial structuring, and technical assistance practices to promote integrated landscape investment. Innovative financial models and instruments are emerging to operationalize these strategies.

- **Strengthening the roles of sub-national governments:** While national government policies are essential, the principal government linkages for LPs on a day-to-day basis are with local governments, such as states, municipalities, cities and districts. They are active partners in most multi-stakeholder LP platforms, providing key information, ideas and collaborative opportunities for the partnerships. In turn, they secure valuable inputs for government decision-making and program design, as well as opportunities for co-financing with the private sector and civil society. In some cases, the subnational government is the lead convener or facilitator of the LP. Local governments may join together to organize or participate in landscape partnerships (e.g., '*mancomunidades*' in Central America). National governments can empower and strengthen the capacities and resources for local governments to play these roles.

3. Mobilizing support for landscape strategies across society, including markets, finance, digital infrastructure and education

Governments can be catalytic in encouraging private and civil society organizations to align their activities with locally-led landscape strategies. In particular, they can promote comprehensive landscape education, incentivize collaboration, connect LPs with market actors, and mobilize digital infrastructure.

- **Connecting landscape partnerships with market and financial actors:** Product supply chains, from production to recycling and reuse—within a landscape development strategy—are crucial to ensuring sustainable management of landscapes. The landscape agency, as a support service for LPs and sub-national governments, can advise businesses on the responsible management of natural resources in market activities, the use of public and philanthropic subsidies, and social protection safety nets. They can also provide guidelines on sustainability, risk assessment, and cost-benefit analysis.
- **Mobilizing digital infrastructure for landscapes:** Digital communications, the internet, and cloud-based systems are now accessible from anywhere. Governments can promote user-friendly digital infrastructure specifically for LPs. These can increase efficiency, inclusion and effectiveness, and strengthen governance accountability and budgetary transparency. Digital data and analysis can help actors to understand, in an integrated way, the state of the economy, natural resources and climate at a landscape scale. Digital tools can potentially facilitate key processes of ILM, such as partner communications; collaborative mapping; monitoring of resource supply chains; participatory impact tracking; and monitoring, reporting, and verification for ecosystem service payments.
- **Promoting comprehensive landscape education:** Historically, landscape management has not been perceived as a critical asset for development. Policymakers, administrators, private entities, and the public all need enhanced insights into and capacities for ILM; education at all levels could be transformative. Knowledge can be shared through social media channels, such as educational and informative videos for various stakeholders, in multiple languages. An example is the training program developed for district government leaders in Tanzania on 'landscape climate-smart agriculture'. ILM could be incorporated into school curricula in agriculture, science and civics.
- **Incentivizing public-private-civic collaboration:** Policymakers can craft incentives that encourage landscape collaboration and collaborative investment among public agencies, citizens and the private sector. For example, India has committed policy and financial outlays to incentivize private sector participation in renewable energy, ensuring it reached its target ahead of schedule.

5. FIRST STEPS

to advance landscape policy

Policy changes to support multi-functional landscape action can be incremental. To make such shifts pragmatic and actionable, policymakers could begin with these concrete steps to engage the country's landscape leaders and motivate government leaders in the economic, social and environmental sectors.

- **Form a Landscape Task Force (TF):** The TF could be government-led, or initiated outside government but closely involving it. The TF would assess how the government currently supports ILM and LPs. It can look at policies, programs, decision-making structures and institutions, and how these might be improved. The TF could explore ways for ministries to develop a common landscape framework to coordinate planning for the SDGs, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, Land Degradation Neutrality, National Adaptation Plans and Nationally Determined Contributions to climate change. The TF could develop a draft strategy and action plan to support LPs, as input into broader policy dialogues.
- **Make an inventory:** Identify and engage existing LPs and collaborating businesses, NGOs and public programs. An early activity of the TF would be to inventory existing ILM-supportive government, NGO and business schemes and the formal and informal LPs that aim for integrated, multi-stakeholder place-based development (regardless of what they are called). The TF can consider how the LP's define their social, ecological, and physical boundaries, and the structures within which they operate– geographic, socioeconomic, institutional, and governance. A structured consultation between LP leaders and the task force can illuminate ways that policy currently supports or thwarts landscape initiatives.

- **Raise awareness:** Organize national dialogues to raise awareness of ILM as a key solution to the polycrisis, and devise a Strategy and Action Plan to Support LPs. Policymakers can organize cross-ministerial dialogues, exchanges and field visits (with skilled facilitators) to learn about landscape approaches and hear from landscape leaders. Finance and economy ministries and multilateral development banks can provide insights into landscape risks and opportunities. Exploring mechanisms to mitigate the costs associated with disaster risk, biodiversity loss, and climate change losses is key. These dialogues can generate the design principles for a landscape agency and its relationships with the LPs and national policy and government programs.

- **Build capacity:** Organize a strategy to build government agency capacity on ILM. Knowledge and capacities to implement ILM will be a key driver for all other changes. Thus, awareness and capacity building is required at all levels of government, including the landscape agency and task force. This may be done through publications, educational dialogues, and multimedia platforms, technical guidance on facilitation of ILM across landscapes, and interactive capacity development. Field visits and dialogues with LPs can deepen understanding.

- **Pilot projects:** Pilot and refine new processes in selected landscapes. Building on the above results, the government can select LPs with which to pilot government support processes and services. Selection criteria may consider LPs that are already operating, and landscapes where economic opportunities are being threatened by ecological and other long-term risks. These LPs can develop economic and sustainable development plans with the support of the landscape agency. The LA can then work with the relevant ministries and national planning bodies to prioritize funding and support, ensuring more effective utilization of public budgets. Initial efforts can build on existing government outlays, while engaging private sector actors in the landscape. Learnings from the pilots can guide the government's scaling strategy.

A CALL TO ACTION!

Only a landscape focus can offer different actors in society a common foundation to integrate their plans and actions to achieve resilient economies, sustainable development, and a range of international commitments. While place-based solutions must be grounded in communities' own contexts and priorities, national and sub-national governments play a critical catalytic role in their success, and in ensuring that collective efforts achieve impact at scale. Now is the moment for government leaders to take decisive and concerted policy action by devising their own strategic roadmap towards this landscape vision.

gallop initiative

Over the past decade, GALLOP has examined policies and institutional design to enable scale and effective collaboration among all stakeholders engaged in integrated landscape management (ILM). The initiative aims to foster a genuinely bottom-up articulation of community and landscape or watershed needs, and to systematically map these into top-down public sector planning and budgetary outlays. GALLOP explores ways to harmonize institutions and delivery mechanisms—bringing together public services, corporate social responsibility initiatives, private sector engagement, and community priorities—to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), while reducing national emissions and strengthening climate adaptation. It serves as a platform for developing enabling policies that integrate capital sources that can support diverse actors and the full ILM value chain, through multiple entry points such as ecosystem restoration, regenerative agriculture, agri-horti-forestry systems, and others.

Visit GALLOP

LANDSCAPES FOR 1 BILLION PEOPLE

1000 Landscapes for 1 Billion People (1000L) is a coalition of organizations united in a shared mission to advance local landscape efforts to sustain and restore ecosystems, build rural prosperity, confront climate change and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. Our goal is that by 2030, landscape partnerships will deliver sustainable solutions across 1000 landscapes for 1 billion people–aligning actions to meet global targets for addressing food and water insecurity, biodiversity loss, land degradation and climate change. 1000L is building the infrastructure to help landscape partnerships connect and ally with one another, strengthen their capacities and leadership, access digital data and tools for greater impact, and mobilize financing to scale landscape investment.

Visit 1000 Landscapes