



OBSERVATOIRE DU SAHARA ET DU SAHEL  
SAHARA AND SAHEL OBSERVATORY



**GMES  
AND AFRICA**



African  
Union



Project funded by  
the EUROPEAN UNION

**Global Monitoring for Environment and Security & Africa  
(GMES&Africa)**

**OSS North Africa Consortium**

**Continental Workshop  
On Land Degradation Monitoring in Africa  
Concept note (draft)**

**Abidjan, October 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) will be organizing the continental workshop on land degradation monitoring in Africa of the GMES&Africa project second phase, on **October 3<sup>rd</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022** in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, which will bring together the GMES consortia along with regional and international institutions working on land degradation / restoration monitoring in Africa.

Created in 1992 and based in Tunis in 2000, the OSS is an international scope organization with an African vocation. The OSS members include 26 African countries, 7 non-African countries, 13 organizations (representing West, East, and North Africa, UN organizations) and 3 non-governmental organizations.

The OSS mission is to **support its African member countries in the sustainable management of their natural resources** in an unfavorable context of climate change through:

- The implementation of international **multilateral agreements** on desertification, biodiversity & climate change
- The promotion of **international and regional initiatives** in relation with the major environmental challenges faced by Africa
- The definition of **concepts** & the alignment of Land & Water Resources Management & Climate change Adaptation & Mitigation **approaches & methodologies**.

Land degradation is defined by UNCCD as a complex problem that refers to the persistent reduction or loss of biological and economic productivity of land caused by human activities, sometimes exacerbated by natural phenomena. Land degradation and desertification represent one of the main environmental challenges that African countries are facing. Besides the recurrent drought spells, the highly variable rainfalls and climate change, the predicted impacts are of significance on natural resources, agriculture productivity and socio-economic implications.

According to UNEP, Africa is particularly vulnerable to land degradation and desertification, and it is the most severely affected region. Desertification affects around 45 % of Africa's land area, with 55 % of this area at high or very high risk of further degradation. Desertification already affects between a third and a half of the Africa's land area to some degree which makes Africa the most severely affected region. It causes food production decrease, droughts, ecological imbalance and consequent life quality degradation and impacts health and well-being of inhabitants.

Gathering solid scientific data on the land degradation hotspots and assessing the impact of SLM programs and actions on the ground is crucial to progress in combating desertification and reaching the SDGs targets. Reliable and timely information on land degradation will support the countries to combat land degradation in one or more of the land use categories for a better program planning. Therefore, the OSS will lead the development of a federated portal for monitoring land degradation over the African continent which capitalizes the experiences of African institutions in terms of land degradation monitoring and assessment whilst taking into consideration the African region specificities.

The continental land degradation monitoring workshop will bring different audiences ranging from decision makers, researchers and experts from different consortia and institutions to:

- Raising awareness on the importance of a unique entry point for monitoring land degradation over Africa.
- Sharing best-practices and capitalizing the African and international institutions for monitoring land degradation,
- Setup a collaborative framework for developing land degradation monitoring service for the African continent and develop a roadmap for the service development.

## Presentation

**This workshop will be held with the aim of joining efforts of the GMES consortia, the regional and international organizations working in land degradation monitoring in Africa to develop an EO-federated system for monitoring land degradation in Africa, with respect to international guidelines and taking into consideration the African specific context. It aims to capitalize the experiences of the different GMES consortia, to promote knowledge sharing and best practices on EO use for land degradation monitoring.**

**More specifically, the workshop will aim at:**

- **Promote exchanges on land degradation monitoring in Africa, with respect to the different region specificities and contexts in order to scale up the land degradation monitoring service developed by the OSS consortium during the first phase of GMES&Africa to cover the whole continent.**
- **Capitalize the experiences of the different institutions and experts involved, and build the service extension on best practices.**
- **Develop a common understanding on the system to be developed, the technical approaches and methodologies run behind it for characterizing and monitoring land degradation in Africa.**
- **Develop a roadmap for the service development that describes the coordination, monitoring and evaluation, capacity development, resource mobilization and knowledge management.**

Under the African Union's and UNCCD leadership, the development of land degradation monitoring service covering the African continent will be undertaken by the OSS with the support of the different GMES consortia. The voluntary experts and institutions are welcome to join their efforts to the OSS consortium.

In response to the effects of climate change and desertification, the service will support restoring Africa's degraded landscapes and hence transforming millions of lives in one of the world's poorest region. **Why & How?**

- Through the promotion of collaborative and joint efforts for developing an operational service for land degradation monitoring in support of African countries' efforts to halt and reverse land degradation whilst capitalizing the experiences promoting best-practices sharing
- The service delivers insights on land degradation / restoration hotspots and hence provides critical information to understand the true dimension of restoration needs in Africa.
- The derived products will support the elaboration / establishment of more adapted plans for mitigation and adaptation activities, taking into consideration the land degradation extent and severity.

## Objectives and Rationale

In Africa, despite the high number of institutions working on land degradation monitoring and the long experience acquired in this field, a weak exchange between the institutions for a better capitalization and alignment of the products and services at the continental level, is observed. This can be due to the reduced awareness, the lack of framework of collaboration and cross-fertilization, the absence of federated approaches and the weakness of infrastructure for data access and processing of large data volumes covering the whole continent, etc.

The main objectives of the continental land degradation monitoring workshop can be summarized here below:

- Present the land degradation monitoring service developed by the OSS consortium during the first phase of GMES&Africa.
- Capitalize the experiences of the different experts and institutions working on land degradation / restoration in Africa.
- Develop a common understanding of the system architecture and deliverables, technical and scientific approaches with respect to the harmonized kit of indicators to be developed.
- Establish a roadmap for the system development whilst taking into consideration the participatory approach and regular monitoring and exchanges.
- Discuss the role of academia and private sector and the relevance of establishing a dedicated "land degradation monitoring in Africa" network.
- Exchange on the training activities and communication aspects, reporting procedures and networking exchanges.

The outcomes, the actions to undertake and the key recommendations will be approved at the end of the workshop by the participants and will be transcribed in the workshop report that integrates the main recommendations and outputs which will be disseminated online for them.

## Expected results

At the end of the workshop, it's expected that:

- Awareness and understanding on the “land degradation monitoring in Africa” service, products delivery, approaches and methodologies, harmonized kit of indicators are improved;
- An operational action plan and roadmap for the service development, is prepared based on the experiences of the different consortia, experts and institutions;
- A concept-note on the “land degradation monitoring in Africa” network is initiated;
- Academia and private sector role in the service development is discussed and their integration is planned;
- Communication between the GMES&Africa consortia, the regional and international institutions, academia and the private sector network is setup/reinforced.
- Best practices sharing between the consortia partners on monitoring land degradation using EO data and products is promoted.

## Target groups

- GMES Consortia;
- Regional and international institutions working on land degradation monitoring (UNCCD, FAO, etc.) ;
- Joint Research Commission (JRC) ;
- Universities, academia and private sector;
- Highly involved stakeholders;
- Experts working on land degradation monitoring in Africa.

## Participants

Participants will come mainly from the consortia institutions and universities involved in the second phase of the GMES&Africa project, Regional Economic Communities, the African Union Commission; the European Commission, regional and international institutions, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system, academia and the private sector, final beneficiaries of land degradation monitoring service such as policy and decision makers, water and natural resources managers, etc.

All other interested entities or organizations will be welcome to participate.

The workshop will be an interactive engagement platform for Consortia, institutions and experts to have a common understanding about the land degradation monitoring service covering Africa, that will be developed by the OSS in the framework of GMES&Africa second phase.

The logistics will be communicated on time, the OSS will take in charge the GMES Consortia invited guests, namely issuing the tickets, DSA, visa fees, COVID Test fees.

The sessions of the land degradation workshop will be crafted as per the main workshop objectives. The different sessions will start with a brief presentation of the land degradation monitoring service developed by the OSS consortium during the first phase of GMES&Africa followed by the presentation of the different consortia and institutions experiences on land degradation monitoring and 5 panel discussions:

- Land degradation monitoring service covering Africa: concept and development ;
- Role of academia and private sector in the service conception ;
- Cross-fertilization with ongoing projects, programs and initiatives dealing with land degradation monitoring in Africa ;
- Communication and training ;
- Roadmap and action plan for the service development.

## Provisional timetable

Time	Activity
<b>Day 1</b>	
<b>Session 1: Welcoming ceremony</b>	
08:00 a.m. – 09:00 a.m.	Welcome and participants registration and installation
09:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	<b>Statements by:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Tidiane Ouattara, GMES&amp;Africa Program Coordinator</li> <li>• Representative of the European Union Commission</li> <li>• Representative of UNCCD</li> <li>• Representative of FAO</li> <li>• Representative of CILSS</li> <li>• Representative of the Ivory Coast government</li> <li>• Mr. Nabil BEN KHATRA, OSS Executive Secretary</li> </ul>
10 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family photo</li> <li>• Stand visit by officials</li> <li>• Press conference</li> <li>• Coffee-break</li> </ul>
<b>High-level discussion panel</b>	
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	High level discussion panel on the continental land degradation monitoring in Africa with a focus on "Land degradation in Africa: <b>where are we and what should we do?</b> "
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<b>Lunch break</b>
<b>Session 2: EO for land degradation monitoring: Experiences showcasing</b>	
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of the GMES&amp;Africa Program (AUC), Dr. Tidiane Ouattara, GMES&amp;Africa Program Coordinator</li> <li>• Overview of land degradation monitoring service over Africa, concept and expected functionalities</li> <li>• UNCCD Guidelines for monitoring land degradation</li> <li>• Overview of African institutions and initiatives in land degradation monitoring: Experience of OSS, FAO, JRC, CILSS, ICPAC, RCMRD, SASSCAL, AfriGEO, CSE, etc</li> </ul> <p>Discussions and exchanges</p>
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	<b>Exposition / Coffee break</b>
<b>Session 2 (cont.): EO for land degradation monitoring: Experiences showcasing</b>	
4:00-5:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of African institutions and initiatives in land degradation monitoring: Experience of OSS, FAO, JRC, CILSS, ICPAC, RCMRD, SASSCAL, AfriGEO, CSE, etc</li> <li>• Other institutions interested in sharing their experiences?</li> </ul>
5:00 p.m.- 5:30 p.m.	<b>Wrap-up of day 1</b>

Day 2	
<b>Session 3: Land degradation monitoring service for Africa</b>	
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<p><b>Theme 1: Land degradation monitoring for Africa</b> Animation: OSS representative</p> <p><b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives of the GMES consortia, regional and international institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> RCMRD representative</p>
10.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.	<b>Exposition / Coffee break</b>
11:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.	<p><b>Theme 1 (continuation): Land degradation monitoring for Africa</b> Animation: SASSCAL representative</p> <p><b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives of the GMES consortia, regional and international institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> ICPAC representative</p>
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<b>Lunch break</b>
<b>Session 4: Role of academia and private sector in the service delivery</b>	
2:00 p.m.- 3:30 p.m.	<p><b>Theme 2: Role of academia in the service delivery</b> Animation: CSE representative</p> <p><b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives of the GMES consortia, academia and universities</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> SASSCAL representative</p>
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	<b>Exposition / Coffee break</b>
4:00-5:00 p.m.	<p><b>Theme 3: Role of private sector in the service delivery</b> Animation: ICPAC representative</p> <p><b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives of the GMES consortia, private sector</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> RCMRD representative</p>
5:00 p.m.- 5:30 p.m.	<b>Wrap-up of day 2</b>



Day 3	
Session 5: Communication & capacity building	
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<p><b>Theme 4: Dissemination and outreach for land degradation monitoring for Africa</b>  Animation: ICPAC representative  <b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication officers of GMES consortia, representatives of regional and international institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> OSS representative</p>
10.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.	<b>Exposition / Coffee break</b>
11:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.	<p><b>Theme 4 (continuation): Dissemination and outreach for land degradation monitoring for Africa</b>  Animation: SASSCAL representative  <b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication officers of GMES consortia, representatives of regional and international institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> RCMRD representative</p>
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<b>Lunch break</b>
2:00 p.m.- 3:30 p.m.	<p><b>Theme 5: Training and capacity building on the service use, products and services</b>  Animation: ICPAC representative  <b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives of the GMES consortia, end-users, private sector and academia</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> OSS representative</p>
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	<b>Exposition / Coffee break</b>
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	<p><b>Theme 5 (continuation): Training and capacity building on the service use, products and services</b>  Animation: CSE representative  <b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives of the GMES consortia, end-users, private sector and academia</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> SASSCAL representative</p>
5:00 p.m.- 5:30 p.m.	<b>Wrap-up of day 3</b>

Day 4	
Session 6: Roadmap for the service development	
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<p><b>Theme 6: Roadmap for the service development</b> Animation: OSS representative <b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representatives of the GMES consortia, academia and universities</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> SASSCAL representative</p>
10.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.	<b>Exposition / Coffee break</b>
11:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.	<p><b>Theme 6 (continuation): Roadmap for the service development</b> Animation: OSS representative <b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representatives of the GMES consortia, regional and international institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> CSE representative</p>
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<b>Lunch break</b>
Session 7: Action plan for the service development	
2:00 p.m.- 3:30 p.m.	<p><b>Theme 7: Action plan for the service development</b> Animation: UNCCD representative <b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representatives of the GMES consortia, regional and international institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> FAO representative</p>
3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	<b>Exposition / Coffee break</b>
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	<p><b>Theme 7 (continuation): Action plan for the service development</b> Animation: UNCCD representative <b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representatives of the GMES consortia, regional and international institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> FAO representative</p>
5:00 p.m.- 5:30 p.m.	<b>Wrap-up of day 4</b>

Day 5	
Session 8: Cross-fertilization	
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<p><b>Theme 8: Cross-fertilization and experiences capitalization</b> Animation: ICPAC representative <b>Expert group discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representatives of the GMES consortia, regional and international institutions</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitator:</b> OSS representative</p>
10.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.	<b>Exposition / Coffee break</b>
11:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.	<p><b>Theme 9: closing session</b> Wrap-up of the workshop</p> <p><b>Closing ceremony</b></p>
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	<b>Lunch break</b>