United Nations
Convention to Combat
Desertification

G20 GLOBAL
LAND INITIATIVE

5-day training workshop on:

URBAN PLANNING TOOLS FOR ADDRESSING LAND DEGRADATION AND PROMOTING LAND RESTORATION

22-26 July, 2024 / Bangkok, Thailand

ASIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY · 1959

UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON
ECOSYSTEM
RESTORATION
2021-2030

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OVERVIEW

The training workshop titled "Urban Planning Tools for Addressing Land Degradation and Promoting Land Restoration" was held in Bangkok from the 22nd to the 26th of July 2024. The five-day training workshop was developed by the G20 Global Land Initiative Coordination Office (G20 ICO) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and organized in collaboration with the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT). Twenty-one participants from sixteen countries attended the training event.

BACKGROUND

Land degradation is a pressing global issue with far-reaching environmental, social, and economic consequences. Poor, uninformed or absent urban planning can be identified as a significant contributor to this problem. As urban areas expand, especially in cities or municipalities with inadequate planning, they encroach upon vital ecosystems, leading in some cases to soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, and the depletion of natural resources. This issue is particularly pronounced in coastal areas, where the delicate balance between urban development and environmental preservation is often strained. In some instances, local areas lack comprehensive planning, and this deficiency exacerbates the challenges associated with land degradation. The absence of proactive planning measures leaves communities vulnerable to the adverse effects of urban expansion, posing threats to both natural habitats and the livelihoods of local residents. The G20 GLI, keen to promote best practices in urban planning that can have an impact on land degradation and land restoration, developed this training course in to address these challenges.

KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING WORKSHOP

The five-day training workshop was designed for planning officers, civil society organisations, urban planning professionals and other relevant stakeholders, in recognition of their pivotal roles in shaping and implementing sustainable urban planning practices. The objective was to empower participants with the knowledge and brainstorm on ideas in the utilization of urban planning tools to prevent, halt, or reverse land degradation and promote land restoration. Engaging these key stakeholders in a one-week dialogue session would foster collaborative and informed approach to address the challenges posed by land degradation through effective urban planning tools.
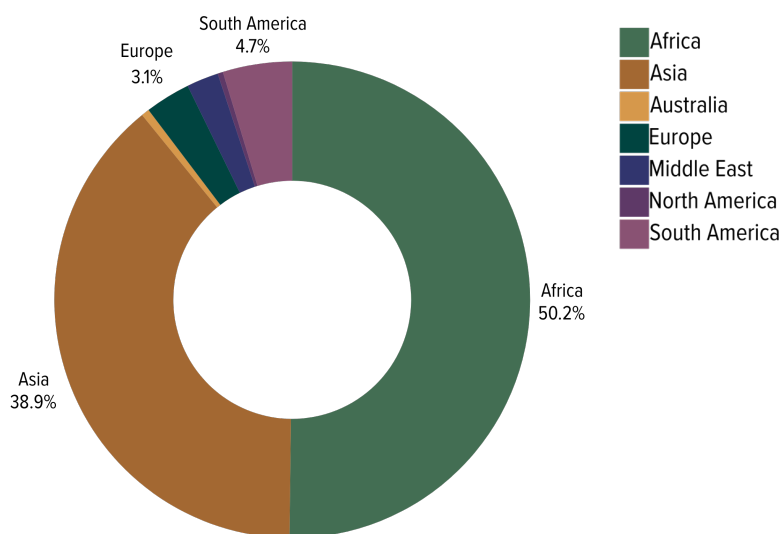
TRAINING STRUCTURE

The training workshop was co-led by Prof. Iyenemi Ibimina Kakulu (G20 GLI) and Prof. Rajendra P. Shrestha (AIT). It was conducted through masterclasses delivered by subject experts. It included case studies and field visits, brainstorming during group activities and during the plenary sessions. Participants made individual country and group presentations on group activity outcomes. The training covered a number of thematic areas including urban planning, global warming and climate change, land degradation and restoration, technology and tools for land restoration and circular economy concepts. Details appear in the training agenda.

EVENT STATISTICS

APPLICANTS' DATA
A total of 552 applications were received from 96 countries spread across six global regions. The highest interest came from Africa with 275 applications followed closely by Asia with 230 applications, South America with 26 applications and then others.
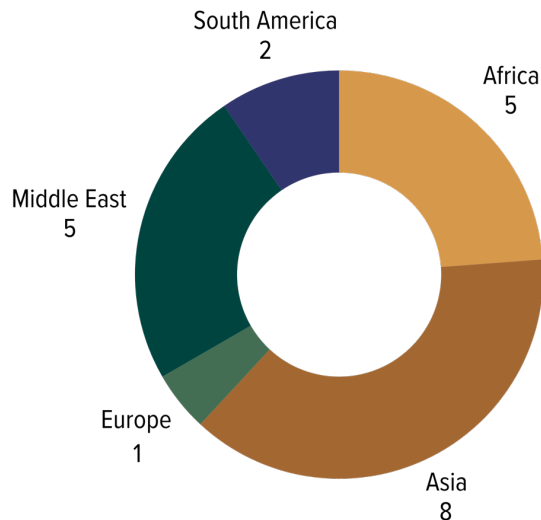
Figure 1:
Applicants by Region

Legend: Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Middle East, North America, South America

Africa 50.2%
Asia 38.9%
Europe 3.1%
South America 4.7%

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ATTENDEES' DATA

Participants were selected based on their sector, experience and potential for advocacy on the learning outcomes from the training. Twenty-one (21) participants were selected consisting of twelve men and nine women from 16 countries and spread across four global Regions to attend. Approximately 15 percent of the participants self-funded their travel and accommodation.

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Figure 2: Participants by Region

KEY LEARNINGS

o The nexus between climate change and land degradation
o The role of planning in halting and reversing land degradation and promoting restoration
o The plethora of planning tools that can be adapted for use in promoting land restoration.
o Witness first-hand the positive outcomes of successful planning and restoration.
o Witness first-hand the negative aspects of poor planning and degradation
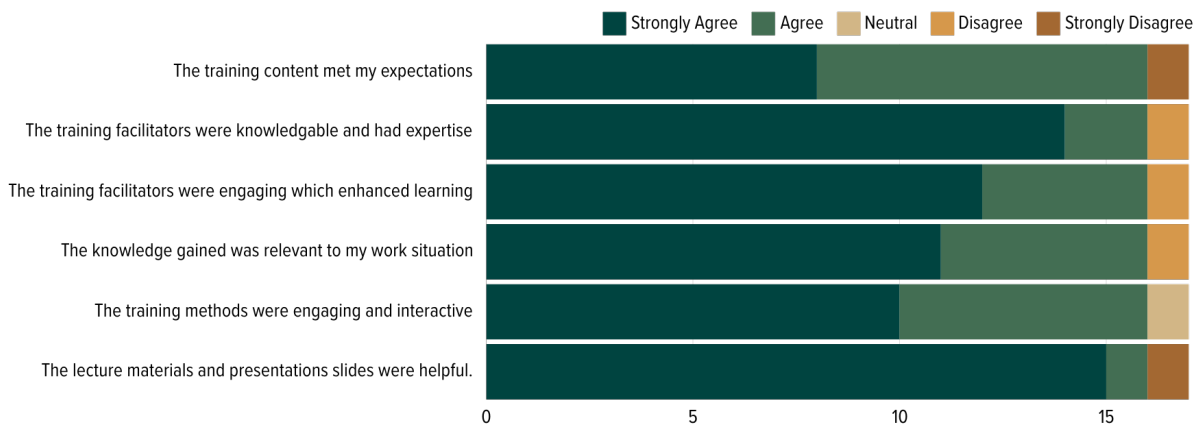
PARTICIPANT COMMITMENTS

o To promote land restoration efforts through the development of comprehensive action plans.
o To integrate land restoration into environmental laws and promote research in land degradation.
o To implement educational campaigns and promote sustainable urban planning practices.
o To seek future collaboration with various stakeholders, including government ministries and agencies, local communities, NGOs, international organizations, and academic institutions for achieving their land restoration goals.
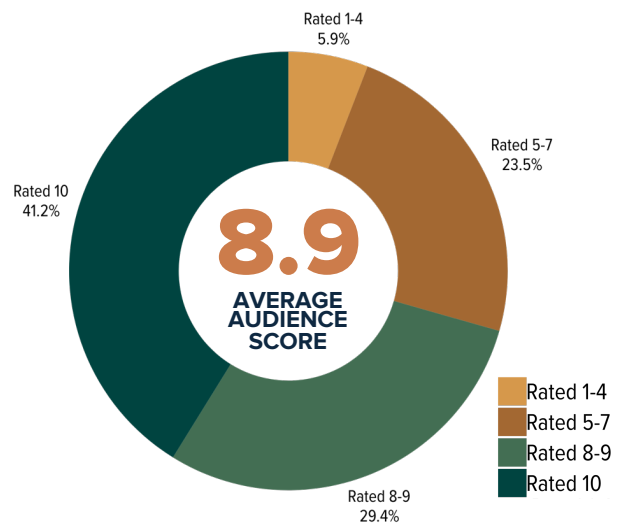o To promote green infrastructure and enhance biodiversity.

FEEDBACK

Participants provided feedback through an online survey, on the training sessions and overall rating of the workshop event. 17 participants responses are shown in Fig's 3 and 4 as follows:

Figure 3: Participants feedback on course delivery

Figure 4: Participants Overall Event Rating
(1 = Poor; 10 = Outstanding)

ANNEXURE
TRAINING AGENDA

DAY / DATE	MORNING SESSION *09.30 AM - 12.00 PM*	AFTERNOON SESSION *01.00 PM - 04.30 PM*
DAY 1 *(22 July 2024)*	1. Registration 2. Inauguration 3. An Overview of Climate Change, Land Degradation and Restoration 4. Understanding the Climate Change and Land Restoration Nexus 5. Land Degradation and Restoration: An Urban Perspective **Trainers:** Prof. Iyenemi Ibimina Kakulu, Prof. Rajendra Shrestha	6. Development Control for Disaster Risk Reduction in Urban Planning 7. Case Studies: Poor Urban Planning and Land Degradation 8. Case Studies: Urban Planning for Land Restoration **Trainers:** Dr. Malay Pramanik, Prof. Vilas Nitivattananon
DAY 2 *(23 July 2024)*	1. Master Classes On Urban Planning, Technology/Tools for Land Degradation and Restoration & Group Sessions 2. Contemporary Urban Planning Tools and Methodologies: Big Data and AI Technologies For Urban Planning Application 3. Technology In Sustainable Urban Planning - Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Remote Sensing, Drones and Other Technological Innovations in Urban Planning **Trainers:** Ms. Joann Lee, Dr. Sarawut Ninsawat, Dr. Manzul Hazarika,	4. Circular Economy in Urban Planning and Land Restoration 5. Country presentation / experience sharing **Trainers:** Prof. C. Visvanathan, Prof. Rajendra Shrestha
DAY 3 *(24 July 2024)*	Session: Field Trip Site 1: Successful Planning for Restoration Site 2: Planning Failures and Land Degradation **Trainers:** Prof. Vilas Nitivattananon Prof. Rajendra Shrestha	

DAY / DATE	MORNING SESSION *09.30 AM - 12.00 PM*	AFTERNOON SESSION *01.00 PM - 04.30 PM*
DAY 4 *(25 July 2024)*	1. Lessons Learned from Field Trip, Tools that Can be Employed, Actions to Take 2. Analyse and Extract Key Insights from The Recent Field Trip (data, degradation patterns, challenges and opportunities, lessons) **Trainers:** Prof. Iyenemi Ibimina Kakulu , Kpobari Peter Visigah	4. Town Planning Practices in Thailand 5. Brainstorming What Can Be Done (developing an action plan for local communities, collaborative strategies) **Trainers:** Dr.-Ing Rattikarn Khambud, Prof. Rajendra Shrestha
DAY 5 *(26 July 2024)*	1. Commitment And Pledges for Long-Term Goals for Land Restoration 2. Participants share individual commitments and group discussion **Trainers:** Prof. Iyenemi Ibimina Kakulu , Kpobari Peter Visigah, Joann Lee	3. Setting long-term goals related to land restoration and sustainable urban planning through structured networking, knowledge exchange, collaboration 4. Training evaluation/Participants' feedback 5. Closing Program and Awarding Certificates - Closing Remarks: Ms. Joann Lee, UNCCD G20GLI - Vote of Thanks: Ms. Narumon Wangnai, Program Director, AIT Extension