



United Nations
Convention to Combat
Desertification



**G20 GLOBAL
LAND INITIATIVE**

NEWSLETTER G20 GLOBAL LAND INITIATIVE / JUNE 2025



Announcement of Winners of the Small Grants Programme - Join the Webinar!

After receiving over 650 innovative applications from 100 countries, the G20 Global Land Initiative is excited to announce the 39 recipients of the first cycle of the Restore Returns Grant (formerly known as the Small Grants Programme for Field Restoration Projects). The selected organisations are driving impactful community-led initiatives in agroforestry, soil and water management, reforestation and capacity building benefiting youth, women, elders and indigenous communities. We invite you to join us on 1 July 2025 for a special announcement webinar where we will introduce the winners and explore their forward-thinking restoration solutions. [Visit the event page](#) and [register here](#). Celebrate the communities doing critical land restoration work globally and learn what's next for the Restore Returns Grant!

Stories

Yasmine Fouad of Egypt Appointed as next UNCCD Executive Secretary

With a strong record in sustainable development reform, Egypt's current Minister of Environment will begin her three-year term later this year.



Building Resilient Agricultural Landscapes Workshop

From 21–25 April 2025, AfricaRice, the G20 GLI and partners hosted a regional workshop in St. Louis, Senegal, focused on tackling land degradation across Africa. The training equipped participants with practical tools and theoretical knowledge to co-design and scale inclusive agricultural landscape practices.



No Longer a Distant threat: Shared Land Crisis Galvanizes Collaboration

Russia, once perceived as largely outside the desertification-prone zones, is now facing land degradation on multiple fronts. Its scientists call for action, including in the boreal and Arctic regions.

Mongolia to Host UNCCD COP17 in August 2026

Mongolia will host UNCCD COP17 in August 2026, bringing global leaders together to tackle land degradation and drought. The event will spotlight sustainable land solutions. Look out for the event registration to join us in Mongolia.





ReVerde: Local Voices in the Global Fight Against Land Degradation

Learn about ReVerde, a documentary-style series that brings to life the human stories behind land degradation spotlighting community efforts. It was spotlighted for Desertification and Drought Day, 17 June.

Update: Call for Independent Scientists to Join New IWG Relunched

The UNCCD relaunched its call for three independent scientists to join the Intergovernmental Working Group, and applications closed on 13 June. Learn about the scope within which the group will work.

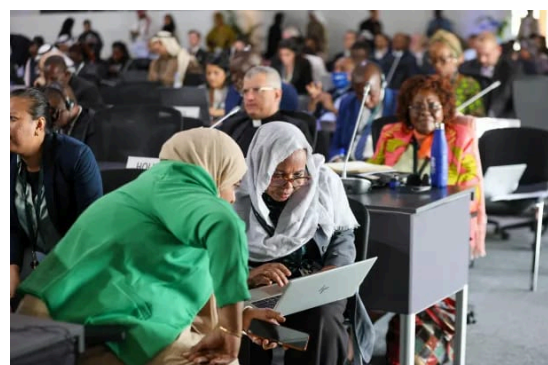


Great Green Wall Featured on Google Arts and Culture

More than a reforestation campaign, it's a symbol of resilience, fighting land degradation, hunger and climate change while empowering inclusive communities. See the campaign featured as featured on Google's Arts and Culture space.

Civil Society to Help Shape UNCCD Post-2030 Strategy

In a commitment to inclusive governance, civil society organisations will participate directly, with a civil society organization representative selected to join the expert group through a call for expressions of interest.





William Troost-Ekong Named Sport4Land Champion

Through his foundation and high-profile outreach Troost-Ekong aims to raise awareness about desertification's impact and support initiatives like the Great Green Wall.

Publications

COP15: Report of the Secretariat on assessment of Progress on Wetland Restoration

Drawing on scientific literature, global data and case studies, the report evaluates restoration commitments and activities in line with Strategic Plan Target 12 and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The findings will guide efforts to accelerate wetland restoration, enhance implementation and align with broader global restoration targets under the SDGs and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Find the report [here](#).

Meet the Interns:



Benedict Ballman

Intern

Benedict Ballman is a passionate advocate for climate change action and responsible emerging technology. With a B.S. in Public Policy and Economics (Honors) from Vanderbilt University, he leads conversations at global forums including UNCCD COP16 and the START Summit in St. Gallen. As co-founder of Tomorrow in Focus, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, Benedict leverages AI to democratise storytelling and empower changemakers. His groundbreaking work includes producing Imagine Land 2040 - the United Nations' first AI-powered film and an award-winning milestone in digital advocacy. Read more [here](#).



Ian Murage

Intern

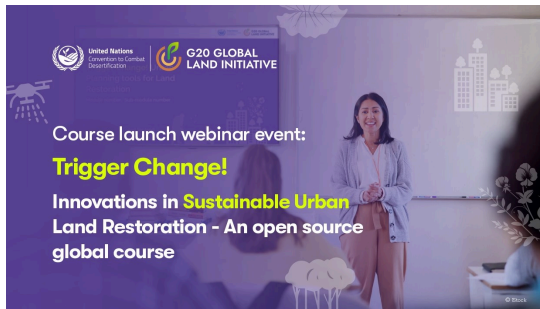
Ian Murage is an emerging environmental leader with a strong background in climate change, sustainability and community-driven development. Currently pursuing an MSc in Climate Change and Sustainability at Kenyatta University, he brings research-based insight and a results-oriented mindset to the G20 Global Land Initiative. Ian's experience spans grassroots project leadership, digital innovation and strategic partnerships through his role as Chairperson of the Friends of Fizi Foundation. Passionate about translating research into impact, he supports the Initiative with data-informed strategies that promote land restoration, resilience and inclusive environmental governance. Read more [here](#).

Vacancies

[Logistics Support for the Organisational Process of CRIC 23/COP17 \(2 Positions\)](#)| Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) (Deadline: 23 June 2025)

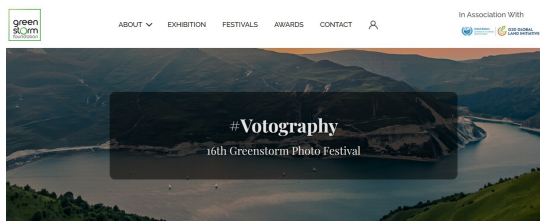
[Indigenous Peoples Engagement](#)| Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) (Deadline: 29 June 2025)

Events



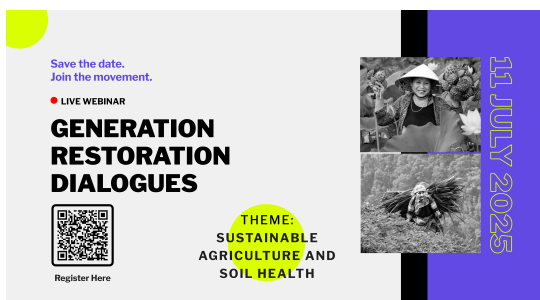
Ready to Trigger Change in Cities?

Dates: 26 June 2025 | [Africa Region](#)
08 July 2025 | [Latin America Region](#)



16th Greenstorm Photo Festival

Dates: Ends 30 June 2025
Voting for the best photograph of the world's most beautiful wetlands is under way. Have your say. Vote [here!](#)



Webinar: Sustainable Agriculture and Soil Health

Dates: 11 July 2025
This is where the world's leading experts in land restoration are breaking down knowledge and sharing insights. Don't miss a session. Register [here!](#)



Faith4Land Masterclass: Empowering Faith Communities for Land Restoration

Dates: 3 - 7 November 2025
A fully funded capacity-building event for faith leaders working on land restoration.
Location: London, UK
Register [here!](#)



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United Nations

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United for land

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