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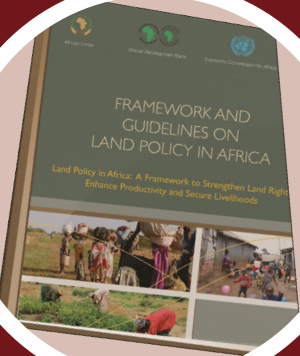


Economic Commission  
for Africa

## Land Policy Initiative

# Land Policy Initiative (LPI): A response to the Rio Conference on Sustainable Development

*Implementing the AU Declaration  
on Land Issues and Challenges in  
Africa to achieve Rio commitments  
on sustainable development*



## Addressing Land challenges is at the core of efforts to achieve sustainable development

Twenty years ago, the first global environment conference, known as the Earth Summit, led to the

adoption of Agenda 21 which set the framework for addressing the pressing and emerging challenges of sustainable development. Several chapters of agenda 21 highlight the land related challenges that are at the core of the various pillars of sustainable development.

### Land in Rio Commitments

Key land issue in Agenda 21	Specific land challenges (Agenda 21)
Combat Poverty (Chapter 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inadequate participation of communities in sustainable management and protection of natural resources</li><li>• Inadequate/absence of legal frameworks for land management, access to land resources and land ownership (specially by women) and for the protection of tenants</li></ul>
Promote sustainable human settlement development (Chapter 7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of sustainable land-use planning and management</li><li>• Inadequate/absence of human settlement planning and management in disaster-prone areas</li></ul>
Integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources (Chapter 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Haphazard approach to land resources planning &amp; management</li><li>• Inadequate policies to support sustainable land management</li><li>• Weak planning, management and evaluation systems for land</li><li>• Weak institutions and coordinating mechanisms for land and land resources</li><li>• Lack of active involvement and participation in decision-making on land use and management by local communities</li></ul>
Promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development (Chapter 14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inadequate land use planning information and education for agriculture</li><li>• Inadequate of land conservation and rehabilitation mechanisms</li></ul>
Recognize and strengthen the role of indigenous people and communities (Chapter 26)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of recognition of the land rights of indigenous people and protection of their lands from (environmentally, socially and culturally) unsound activities</li><li>• Inadequate dispute-resolution arrangements in relation to settlement of land and resource-management concerns</li></ul>

## **LPI responds to the call of the Rio Conference on Sustainable Development**

A pan-African Land Policy Initiative (LPI) was established in March 2006, by the African Union Commission (AUC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and African Development Bank (AfDB) with the aim of developing a framework that strengthens land rights, in order to enhance productivity, improve livelihoods and achieve sustainable development.

Since its establishment, the LPI has made significant milestones, including the development of the *Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa* (F&G), adopted by the 13th Ordinary Session of AU Assembly Heads of State and Government in July 2009, through an AU *Declaration on Land issues and Challenges in Africa*, calling for its effective implementation at regional and national levels.

In essence the LPI was a response to the call by Agenda 21 to address land related issues in order to achieve sustainable development. The LPI achieved the following specific milestones during 2006-2009:

- Regional assessment studies on land related issues in all five regions of Africa;
- Multi-stakeholder regional consultative workshops in all five regions to build consensus on issues and modalities to address challenges;
- Development of a *Framework & Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa (F&G)* adopted by African Ministers responsible for land management in March 2009;
- Adoption of a Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa by Heads of States and Government of the African Union at the AU Summit in July 2009.

The recommendations made by Agenda 21 on land related challenges in order to promote sustainable development are well represented in the F&G, a vital tool for developing and implementing comprehensive land policies. The table below demonstrates how the LPI has contributed to the implementation of land challenges highlighted in Agenda 21.

# The Land Policy Initiative's response to Rio Commitments

## Agenda 21 Reference/Issue

## LPI Specific Response (F&G/AU Declaration)

### **Integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources** (Chapter 10)

- The AU Declaration on Land commits African countries to catalyze land policy formulation and implementation
- The F&G provides guidance on how to integrate land administration/management into governance systems
- LPI supports integration of land policies with natural resource management strategies and poverty reduction programmes
- The F&G provides guidance to revamp land laws and administration structures/institutions for land governance
- The F&G points to how institutions responsible for land governance are to operate in a transparent, accountable, and efficient manner, demonstrating how they can be harmonized and their respective mandates rationalized
- The F&G provides direction on how Land policy processes can recognize the role of local and community-based land administration/management institutions and structures, alongside those of the state
- The F&G calls for removal of age-old rigidities in traditional structures and systems which tend to discriminate against women and the youth

### **Combat Poverty** (Chapter 3)

- One LPI objective is to mainstream land in Africa's development agenda including in poverty reduction programmes
- As per the F&G, land policies are to be developed and implemented through participation of communities, non-state regulatory and administrative structures, organs of civil society and other public sector groups
- LPI is supporting ongoing regional co-operation and integration initiatives through building convergence in land policy frameworks, processes and management systems, e.g. ECOWAS
- Developing and implementing a capacity development framework for land policy working closely with local institutions to enhance decentralized, transparent, efficient and cost-effective delivery of land rights and other services

**Agenda 21  
Reference/Issue**

**LPI Specific Response (F&G/AU Declaration) - cont'd**

**Promote  
sustainable  
agriculture and  
rural development**  
(Chapter 14)

- The F&G calls for the recognition of land as a central input to agricultural production, processing and marketing demonstrating how the Land sector can ensure that the systems of property under which land is held and used is clarified for the variety of agricultural forms and participants in that sector
- The Declaration and the F&G call for securing land resources through a variety of tenure systems that guarantee returns in investments and improvements to agricultural production for smallholders alongside other producers
- The F&G highlights the need to adequately address the issue of land use planning for an efficient delivery of services including the acquisition of land for relocation of existing populations, reservation of easements and development of the physical infrastructure necessary for faster development in these areas

**Promote  
sustainable  
human settlement  
development**  
(Chapter 7)

- LPI is working closely with UNHabitat to support efforts towards physical planning, provision of housing (or shelter), and service delivery in response to the rapid urbanization challenges
- The F&G outlines ways to work towards properly planned communities with affordable and legally secure land and housing (or shelter) rights, and access to complementary services including water and electricity irrespective of tenure and structure status

**Recognizing and  
strengthening the  
role of indigenous  
people and their  
communities**  
(Chapter 26)

- The F&G is categorical about the need for Land policy reforms to address the marginalization of particular ethnic groups and certain indigenous people
- The Declaration and F&G underline the need for Land policy processes to provide for the necessary interface between state and indigenous systems, particularly with regard to the certification of land rights
- The F&G highlights the need to protect pastoral ecosystems



environmental sustainability, and peace and security. In this regard, the LPI has recently developed a draft strategic plan that outlines its vision, mission, goals and objectives as well as specific actions to be implemented during 2012-2016. The main objectives are summarized here below:

## **Supporting the implementation of the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges**

In its second (post-declaration) phase the LPI is focusing efforts towards supporting African member states and stakeholders in implementing the *AU declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa* in order to ensure land plays its pivotal role in socio-economic development,





## LPI Objectives

The objective of LPI is to facilitate the implementation of the Declaration of Land Issues and Challenges in Africa through:

1. Advocating for the inclusion of land in Africa's development agenda
2. Facilitating dialogue on land related issues with a view to raising awareness on the importance of addressing challenges that hamper the appropriate utilization of land
3. Coordinating and galvanizing the efforts of partners towards effective synergies and partnerships for the implementation of the African agenda on Land Policy, as stated in the Declaration
4. Facilitating capacity building at all levels in support of land policy development and implementation in Africa
5. Promoting networking and knowledge sharing at all levels in order to promote evidence based land formulation and implementation
6. Developing and building capacity for monitoring and evaluation tools and systems in support of land policy development and implementation
7. Providing technical support and advisory services to RECs and members states on land policy development and implementation
8. Facilitating resource mobilization in support of land policy related research, advocacy, capacity building, technical support and advisory services



## Vision

A peaceful and prosperous Africa realized through equitable access, efficient and sustainable utilization of land

## Mission

Driving the implementation of the Declaration of Land Issues and Challenges in Africa, ensuring all land users have equitable access to land and security of all bundles of land rights, through effective partnerships, dialogue and capacity building for participatory and consultative land policy formulation and implementation, and efficient and transparent land administration in both customary and statutory jurisdictions

## Goal

Assisting member states in the implementation of the Declaration on land issues and challenges in Africa, in accordance with the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa, in order to achieve socio-economic development, peace and security, and environmental sustainability

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