



Mapping degradation and conservation in the DESIRE Project

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The World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies initiative (WOCAT) started in 1992, in reaction to the Global Assessment of Soil Degradation (GLASOD) by ISRIC. The original idea of WOCAT was to develop a world map similar the GLASOD one, however showing the positive side, i.e. describing what achievements had been made to combat soil degradation.

Since 1992 WOCAT has developed and tested a method for standardized documentation and evaluation of Sustainable Land Management (SLM). It comprises three questionnaires, for documenting “Technologies” (what is actually implemented in the field), “Approaches” (what is needed in terms of “enabling environment” for a successful implementation of a technology) and a mapping questionnaire. The resulting database currently counts more than 350 technologies and over 250 approaches from around 50 countries.

In the DESIRE project the WOCAT mapping tool was used to map area coverage, degree, impact, effectiveness, and other parameters of land degradation and conservation for 16 study sites.

The mapping method in the study sites complements the information provided by the individual case studies on technologies and Approaches. It evaluates what type of land degradation is actually happening where and what is done about it in terms of Sustainable Land Management (SLM). The on-line map database is hosted by WOCAT, and the mapped outputs that can be generated from this database provide a powerful tool to obtain an overview of land degradation and conservation in a country, a region, or worldwide.