

Halting land degradation through equitable land access and land ownership by Women

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Key words: Access to land; Land distribution; Land management; Land degradation; land restoration; women and land

SUMMARY

Land degradation is a global phenomenon occurring with poor agricultural practices as with poor land choices for urban physical infrastructure development including housing. At scale, land degradation may interfere with the ecosystem services such as the services and benefits derived from topsoil and other terrestrial media. The subtle nature of land degradation makes it thrive relatively unnoticed until it becomes severe. The enormous expanse of global lands requires several more land stewards to promote sustainable land use practices and management. Inclusive access to land by women and youth can increase the number of individuals with a duty of care over land. Based on the globally established competing demands for land, inequitable land access and land ownership can be a hindrance towards halting or reversing land degradation. Land access or outright ownership can be a driver that motivates people to take better care of what is theirs. Unfortunately land ownership still remains in the hands of a few as land discrimination and exclusion of women from access and ownership is still quite common. Social exclusion, where some are excluded from owning land based on their gender or other socio-cultural and socio-economic can result in global apathy, societal apathy, or general apathy, on the subject of land degradation or restoration. Access to land and ownership can provide women with a valid reason to care for land and to develop strategies that halt land degradation and actively promote land restoration. By promoting equitable and inclusive land ownership and granting women and youth equitable rights to land, can promote land restoration initiatives that propel people to act. Youth, women and other marginalized or excluded groups with limited access to land, need to be empowered through land ownership. The freedom to own and use land should not be restricted by gender or youthfulness. Sustainable land management can seek to promote equitable land ownership, ensure equal representation of the building blocks of any society - men, women and youth on matters of land. The journey towards halting land degradation and promoting wise use of land including land restoration needs to be inclusive. The paper presents how women empowerment

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through access to land and land ownership combined with the knowledge of the consequences of uncontrolled land degradation, can promote habitat conservation and sustainable land management (SLM).

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