

Successful High-level LANDdialogue draws over 70 senior sustainability experts from Dutch organizations

On April 3rd 2019, the High-level LANDdialogue took place at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague. The fifth edition of the high-level sessions of the LANDdialogue drew over 70 participants and was attended by Minister Kaag for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, around 30 senior sustainability leaders from the private sector, 30 experts from civil society and knowledge institutes and 10 government officials. High-level LANDdialogues have been taking place annually since the launch of the multi-stakeholder initiative in 2014.

The fifth edition consisted of three main sections: an opening panel with an update on latest developments; an inspiration panel from the business community, with examples and 'good practices'; and finally, a future-focused panel on opportunities for future activities and collaborations. All contributions were framed around the main objective of the LANDdialogue: developing practical instruments to contribute to improved land governance in countries where Dutch stakeholders are active.

Five main takeaways

Five main conclusions from the three panels and discussion with LANDdialogue participants were identified. First and foremost, participants stressed the fact that the **urgency** of the topic has only increased in recent years. Moreover, expectations are that this urgency will not cease in the nearby future. This also translates into a strong need for fair and inclusive policies around land rights. Secondly, the **speed of change** was emphasized: things are moving (too) slowly and we have to search for ways to speed things up: organize dialogues around emerging land rights issues faster, work on early warning systems etc. All participants recognized a need for **focusing on the local**: how to make sure that discussions, knowledge and ideas in this setting are translated to strong on the ground impacts. Continued **collaboration** was another requirement for better land governance which was underlined by LANDdialogue partners: stronger ties also need to be established with Dutch embassies abroad. And last but not least: **innovation** was seen as a crucial ingredient for future work on land governance. Innovation in social approaches, in processes, and in technology.

New land governance support programme launched: LAND-at-scale

During her contribution in the opening panel, Minister Kaag for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation underlined the importance of good land governance for achieving the SDG's. She continued by launching **LAND-at-scale**: a new, 6-year, land governance support programme which aims to contribute to upscaling successful initiatives, support new ideas and innovations from the bottom-up, and knowledge synthetization. With the launch of LAND-at-scale Minister Kaag underlined the growth of the LANDdialogue: building on 5 years of collaboration in this setting, lessons learned can now be turned into positive change on the ground. More information about LAND-at-scale is available online: <https://english.rvo.nl/subsidies-programmes/land-at-scale>.

Focus for follow-up activities

The fifth edition of the High-level LANDdialogue led to a number of follow-up agreements and activities. In LANDdialogue's collaboration with the business community, we will continue to organize workshops in line with amongst others the agreements on international responsible business conduct (IMVO-Convenanten) of the pension fund and insurance sector. But also the work initiated with the infrastructure sector will be continued. Land rights will also become more integrated in Dutch trade missions abroad. LANDdialogue will furthermore brainstorm about a possible facilitating role in bringing different stakeholders around the table in case of problems, or as a preventive measure. Ongoing work focusing on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), including workshops,

and the sharing of FPIC experiences in practice, will stay on the agenda. Linked to innovation, the LANDdialogue is interested to share experiences offered by digital solutions, and ways in which fit-for-purpose land administration can foster bottom-up processes. Ongoing work in the field of women's land rights will be continued. Local knowledge and capacity are to be better linked and supported, for example through LANDac's professional learning programme and application of future search methodology. Dutch embassies will continue and expand their involvement in land governance related activities, amongst others through their future roles in LAND-at-scale.

DGIS finalized the High-level LANDdialogue by stressing the importance of land governance to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands. All participants are invited to continue their work in improving land governance in the countries where they are active.

More information

The meeting took place under Chatham House Rule, in case you are interested in knowing more about this meeting and the follow-up agreements made, please contact the LANDdialogue secretariat through: g.betsema@uu.nl; frits-vander.wal@minbuza.nl; and ninja.lacey@minbuza.nl.