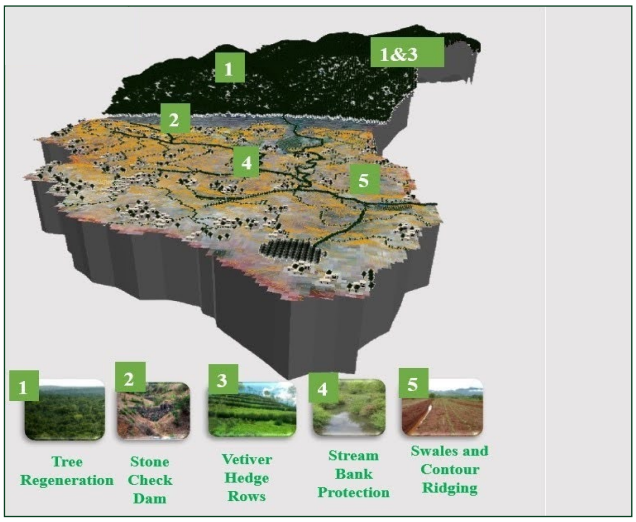
MALAWI GOVERNMENT

AGRICULTURE LAND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT POLICY









2024



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AGRICULTURE LAND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT POLICY

2024

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADD	:	Agricultural Development Division
AEDO	:	Agricultural Extension Development Officer
ALRMP	:	Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy
AIDS	:	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AEZ	:	Agro-Ecological Zones
CAADP	:	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme
CGIAR	:	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CITES	:	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COVID-19	:	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSA	:	Climate Smart-Agriculture
CSOs	:	Civil Society Organisations
DAC	:	District Agriculture Committee
DAES	:	Department of Agriculture Extension Services
DAPS	:	Department of Agricultural Planning Services
DARS	:	Department of Agricultural Research Services
DCs	:	District Councils
DEA	:	Department of Environmental Affairs
DHRMD	:	Department of Human Resources Management and Development
DLRC	:	Department of Land Resources Conservation
DoI	:	Department of Irrigation
DSP	:	District Stakeholder Panel
DWRs	:	Department of Water Resources
EAD	:	Environmental Affairs Department
EPA	:	Extension Planning Area
FRIM	:	Forestry Research Institute of Malawi
GDP	:	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	:	Greenhouse Gases
HIV	:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICM	:	Integrated Catchment Management

LD	:	Land Degradation
LHB	:	Land Husbandry Branch
LHFA	:	Land Husbandry Field Assistant
LHTC	:	Land Husbandry Training Centre
LREP	:	Land Resources Evaluation Project
LUANAR	:	Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
M&E	:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEPA	:	Malawi Environmental Protection Authority
MIP-1	:	Malawi 2063 First 10-Year Implementation Plan
MoA	:	Ministry of Agriculture
MoLHUD	:	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development
MoJCA	:	Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
MPs	:	Members of Parliament
MW2063	:	Malawi 2063
NAIP	:	National Agriculture Investment Plan
NAP	:	National Agriculture Policy
NDCs	:	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGOs	:	Non-Governmental Organisations
NLRIS	:	National Land Resources Information System
ALRMP	:	Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy
NLRMPS	:	National Land Resources Management Policy and Strategy
NSO	:	National Statistical Office
NWRA	:	National Water Resources Authority
PES	:	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PSIP	:	Public Sector Investment Programme
RBM	:	Reserve Bank of Malawi
SADC	:	Southern Africa Development Community
SDGs	:	Sustainable Development Goals
SALM	:	Sustainable Agriculture Land Management
SOC	:	Soil Organic Carbon
SWC	:	Soil and Water Conservation
UNCCD	:	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	:	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate change

DEFINITION OF TECHNICAL TERMS

Agricultural land	: Land being managed for the purpose of producing plant and animal products for the use of humans.
Agro-Ecological Zone (AEZ)	: A land resource mapping unit, defined in terms of climate, landforms, and soils and/or land cover, and having a specific range of potentials and constraints for land use.
Agroforestry	: Farming system that integrates trees and/or shrubs on land being used for crop and pasture production. The system has the potential to improve soil fertility through maintenance and/or building of soil organic matter and biological fixation of atmospheric nitrogen into the soil by the trees.
Climate Smart-Agriculture	: An approach intended to guide actions needed to transform and reorient agricultural systems to effectively support development and ensure food security in a changing climate. The system has three main pillars: (a) sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and income, (b) adapting and building resilience to climate change, and (c) reducing and/or absorbing Greenhouse Gas emissions.
Fragile areas	: Land areas in which soils and ground covers are highly vulnerable to soil erosion and rapid deterioration due to the steepness of the terrain.
Geographic Information System	: A computer and software-based tool for gathering, storing, analyzing and displaying data connected to human activity and/or biophysical (natural) characteristics of specific geographic locations.
Land degradation	: Declining productivity of land resources often caused by inappropriate land management practices by human beings.

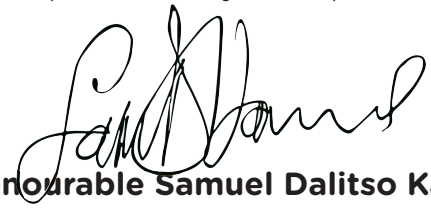
Land tenure	: The relationship between people and land, and the rules that govern how land is used, controlled, and transferred. It can be based on laws, customs, or a combination of both.
Land use planning	: A process of providing a strategic vision or plan for optimal arrangements of land use based on the interests of local residents and other relevant groups, typically organized by local and possibly regional or national governmental authorities.
Payment for Ecosystem Services	: An arrangement (or scheme) in which beneficiaries of ecosystem service provide payments to those that manage the ecosystem.
Remote sensing	: Technology that enables the collection of geospatial information regarding land characteristics through sensors mounted on aerial vehicles or satellites that collect this data without having to do so at ground level.
Soil erosion	: A process that involves detachment and movement of soil particles from one place to another by rainfall, other water sources, wind or landslides, which may result in land degradation.
Soil health	: Capacity of soil to function as a living system to sustain plant life and growth by supplying and maintaining life required levels of nutrients, water, and air.
Sustainable land management	: Management of land in such a way that its present and future productive capacity is not reduced.

FOREWORD

Malawi's economic development and the livelihoods of its population are greatly dependent on natural resources. Land is the natural capital for the development of this agrarian nation. Proper management of its land resources is therefore a prerequisite for the country's sustainable economic growth, wealth creation and poverty alleviation. Recognizing this important role, the Malawi Government developed and subsequently adopted the National Land Resources Management Policy and Strategy (NLRMPS) in the year 2000 that envisioned a nation with reduced land degradation. Despite years of implementing the Policy, land degradation continues to adversely affect all land use-based sectors. Soil erosion has accelerated, resulting in reduced soil fertility to the extent that agricultural production is highly dependent on use of inorganic fertilizers. Accessibility of these inorganic fertilizers is, in turn, dependent on availability of foreign currency and can be influenced by external factors such as the recent COVID-19 pandemic, international conflict, and other international fertilizer market shocks.

In addition, farmers and the general public are affected by the impacts of climate change through reduced harvests that are due to dry spells and/or flooding. These undesired consequences are further aggravated by poor land management practices that need to be addressed. Furthermore, most of the smallholder farmers are using customary land inherited from relatives, with limited land tenure security that offers little incentive to invest in long-term sustainable land management practices. The land holding sizes for smallholder farmers are getting smaller with increasing population pressure and therefore subjected to intergenerational land fragmentations. The small land holdings resulting from fragmentation require proper management to remain productive and meet the needs of the people.

These observations necessitated a review of the NLRMPS 2000 and led to formulation of this new Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy (ALRMP). This Policy is a key national instrument for increasing the productivity of agricultural land that is needed to support Malawi's agriculture transformation and commercialization agenda. The ALRMP is aligned to the Malawi 2063 and the First 10-Year Implementation Plan (MIP-1) under pillar number one which is on Agriculture Productivity and Commercialization, through reduced land degradation and sustainable land productivity and the provision and supply of raw materials for industrial processing nutrition and food security. It provides guidance for mainstreaming Sustainable Agricultural Land Management (SALM) in all land use-based sectors. The Policy affirms Government's commitment to arrest land degradation, improve its productivity and promote sustainable socio-economic development.



Honourable Samuel Dalitso Kawale, M.P.
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

PREFACE

Agriculture remains one of the key sectors for economic growth in Malawi, yet our land and water ecosystems are rapidly losing their resilience, and their capacity to generate goods and services for our socio-economic development as a result of unsustainable exploitation of these resources. Sustainable land management techniques are intended to deliver substantial social and ecological benefits. Better land management practices result in improved water quality and quantity, reduced resource-related conflict, natural disaster reduction, climate change resilience and mitigation, biodiversity conservation, stabilised ecosystem services, decreased poverty and increased security of long-term economic development and improved health and nutrition.

The goal of the Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy (ALRMP) is to guide the implementation and scale up of sustainable land management activities in the country to support country priorities in improving natural resource-based livelihoods. Implementation of the Policy is expected to reduce land degradation and facilitate investments by agricultural sector stakeholders in climate change adaptation and mitigation practices, in line with and guided by the relevant policy and legal frameworks, which themselves are aligned to key policies at the local, regional and global levels. These include the Republic of Malawi Constitution, the Malawi 2063, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Southern African Development Community vision 2050 and its Regional Indicative Strategic Plan.

The formulation of the Policy involved country-wide stakeholder consultations through which a cross-section of farmers, staff from various government departments, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and the private sector were consulted. The Policy has therefore taken into consideration the lessons learnt from the implementation of the previous policy, addressing most of the challenges which were identified during the implementation process of the prior Policy (NLRMPS 2000). One of the main challenges identified was inadequate efforts to raise the awareness of stakeholders to the NLRMPS. Implementation of this Policy will, therefore, involve implementation of better awareness efforts to inform stakeholders about the Policy for enhanced stakeholder coordination.

This ALRMP provides the necessary guidance for the nation to reduce and reverse its rate of land degradation and improve the productivity of agricultural land. Recognising the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and international wars on accessibility of inorganic fertilizers, the Policy also emphasises effective promotion on use of organic fertilizers. Implementation of this Policy is not the sole responsibility of the Malawi Government; it requires involvement, collaboration and partnership of various stakeholders that include development partners, NGOs, media, traditional leaders, civil society, the private sector, researchers and academicians. We, therefore, call upon all Malawians to actively participate in the implementation of this ALRMP.



Dickxie Verson Kampani

SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The Government of Malawi recognises the importance of land as a natural capital for socio-economic development of the country. Sustainable development, therefore, requires proper use and management of the land-based resources. Any land use practice that leads to land degradation is a threat to economic development of the country. Consequently, in the year 2000, Government approved a National Land Resources Management Policy and Strategy (NLRMPS) to ensure that land is sustainably managed. The NLRMPS expired in 2005 but continued to guide implementation of sustainable land use and management practices in the absence of a new Policy. However, a comprehensive review of the NLRMPS identified policy gaps and emerging issues that pose challenges to Sustainable Agricultural Land Management (SALM). Furthermore, over the years, a long-term development plan for the country, Malawi 2063, and most sector policies related to land use and management have been revised. Therefore, a new agricultural land use and management policy was needed to address policy gaps of the former Policy and emerging issues, while harmonizing agricultural land use policy with more recent sectoral policy documents and Malawi's new long-term development plan.

Like its predecessor, the new Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy (ALRMP) intends to promote sustainable use of agricultural land resources in order to increase and sustain its productivity and resilience to climate change while continuing to play a major role in achieving food and nutrition security and economic growth of the country. This will be achieved through the successful implementation of four policy priority areas. The Policy is aligned to the Malawi 2063 and legal frameworks in Malawi. It is harmonized with regional and international land use-based sector policies and frameworks. It has also recognized the importance of collaboration and partnership in the implementation of sustainable agricultural land management through its implementation plan.

This Policy will provide guidance on sustainable land management in the agriculture sector and other sectors for increased and sustained land productivity as envisaged in the National Agriculture Policy (NAP). In turn, the Policy will complement Government's efforts on increased and sustained agricultural production, productivity, diversification, and commercialization.

1.2 Historical Context

Efforts to promote soil and water conservation can be traced back to the British colonial period when in 1936, the first soil conservation officer was appointed to promote Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) in agricultural areas. Ten years later, the first Natural Resources Ordinance that provided for the conservation and improvement of natural resources was enacted. This introduced strict enforcement of the SWC regulations, which included imprisonment for those that failed to comply, a situation that most indigenous people disliked.

During the campaigns for independence, indigenous African politicians began to organize themselves in opposition to many colonial agricultural policies, including Soil and Water Conservation (SWC) regulations. The 1961 general election results enabled many indigenous people to be Members of Parliament (MPs). In 1962, parliament passed a Land Use and Protection Act that replaced the Natural Resources Ordinance of 1949. The new Act contained soil conservation regulations but outlawed use of force and imprisonment for those that failed to comply. Consequently, agricultural extensionists made efforts to persuade farmers to implement recommended SWC measures in accordance with the Land Use and Protection Act, a situation that has continued up to the present.

Soon after gaining independence, Malawi government created a Land Husbandry Branch (LHB) in 1968, under the Extension and Training Services Department in the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources. In 2000, the LHB was reconstituted into the Department of Land Resources Conservation (DLRC) with a mandate to provide efficient and diversified services to land users to promote environmental conservation approaches that would lead to sustainable use of land-based natural resources and improvements in socio-economic development. The DLRC formulated the National Land Resources Management Policy and Strategy (NLRMPS) in 2000 to promote efficient, diversified, and sustainable use of land-based resources both for agriculture and other uses in order to avoid sectoral land use conflicts and ensure sustainable socio-economic development in the country.

Despite years of implementation of the prior Agricultural Land Policy on land resources management, the country continues to experience severe land degradation that is negatively affecting its socio-economic development. A soil loss assessment in Malawi conducted in 2016 revealed that the country was losing, on average, 29 tons of soil per hectare per year. In addition, the findings showed that the lowest estimated soil loss is 0.16 tons of soil per hectare per year in Mchinji district and the highest is 34.17 tons of soil per hectare per year in Blantyre district. The study cited poor agricultural practices as one of the main causes of this high soil loss.

Furthermore, a 2017 assessment of forest landscape restoration opportunities found that 80 per cent of the country could benefit from various interventions of sustainable land management. Accordingly, the National Landscape Restoration Strategy was developed to guide the implementation of sustainable land management interventions to restore 4.5 million hectares of degraded land by 2030.

1.3 Current Status

In recent years, crop yields have begun to decline on average due to low nutrient levels in Malawi farmers' soils, which is in part due to low use of organic and inorganic fertilizers. A study on soil and nutrients loss in Malawi conducted in 2018 revealed that the country is losing 108 grams per hectare of total Nitrogen; 350 grams per hectare of available Phosphorous; and 16.6 grams per hectare of exchangeable Potassium per year. An economic analysis of soil and nutrient loss indicates that a 10%increase in topsoil loss could result in declines in national maize production that would lower national GDP by 1%.

Climate change is affecting Malawi by increasing climate variability and increasing the frequency of dry spells and intense rainfall events. In 2021, the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative ranked Malawi 161 out of 185 countries on climate vulnerability. These changes have led to increased frequency of flooding and droughts, which in turn have contributed to more land degradation.

In an effort to restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by drought, floods, and other extreme weather events, Malawi set a target of achieving land degradation neutrality by 2030 in accordance with the United Nations SDG target 15.3. In line with this, Malawi set a target to improve Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) stocks on cropland from 44.7 tons per hectare estimated in 2015 to 55 tons per hectare by 2025.

1.4 Problem Statement

Soil erosion is one of the most serious environmental problems in Malawi and is associated with depletion of nutrients in more than 60% of the country's agricultural land area. Much of the soil that has been eroded has accumulated as deposits in low-lying areas and water bodies (Lakes and rivers), which can increase risk of biodiversity loss within these aquatic ecosystems. These soil deposits reduce water-holding capacity of rivers and can thereby increase the probability of flash floods during rainstorms. Recent floods in the country have caused loss of human life, livestock, crops and infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, markets and roads. Furthermore, siltation in Shire River has contributed to the reduction of the hydroelectric power stations' generation capacity, which has reduced the reliability of the country's power supply. This in turn has negatively affected industrial development in the country.

Land degradation is adversely affecting livelihoods of many Malawians. It is estimated that over 8 million of the 9.4 million hectares of land in the country has been degraded, which highlights just how serious the problem of land degradation has become. As such, land degradation has weakened the country's ecosystem resilience and diminished its capacity to generate goods and services for socio-economic development, which in turn has increased the risk of poverty.

Climate change models indicate that the mean annual temperature in Malawi increased by 0.9°C between 1960 and 2005 and is further projected to increase by 1.1 – 3.0°C by the year 2060. The projections also indicate that there will be further mean annual temperature increases by 1.5 – 5.0°C by 2090. If current agricultural land management practices do not change, this increase in average temperature levels will cause higher evapotranspiration rates, which are likely to worsen land degradation. In addition, projections of future precipitation patterns in Malawi indicate that climate change will result in fewer days per year with rainfall, yet with higher amounts of rainfall per rainy day. The implication of this change in the seasonal distribution of rainfall is that Malawi will likely experience more intense rainfalls, which can cause flooding and increased soil erosion – both of which are associated with further land degradation.

If Malawi's farmers do not make changes to their current agricultural land management practices, national GDP is projected to fall by 3–9% by the year 2030. However, there is evidence that if Malawian farmers adopt appropriate sustainable agricultural land management practices, they will be able to mitigate the expected negative impacts of climate change and thereby maintain or improve livelihoods. The World Bank report has further reported modeling results that show that adoption of landscape restoration and improved land management practices at both farm and catchment levels would increase carbon storage by 139 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent. Adoption of these practices would also improve agricultural productivity by reducing soil erosion in croplands by an average of 14 tons per hectare per year. Investing in improved agricultural land management practices will also reduce risks of flooding, damage to existing infrastructure, and the loss of life associated with heavier rainfall intensities that have been projected.

1.5 Purpose of the Policy

This Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy promotes an Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) approach and recognizes the need for complementary institutional and policy reforms as well as enhancing institutional capacities. The mandate of the Department of Land Resources Conservation (DLRC) in coordinating sustainable agricultural land management needs to be strengthened to cover all land use types, in addition to agriculture, through formulation of enabling legislation. Capacity building is a fundamental enabler for Department of Land Resources Conservation; in particular, capacity building on digitized mapping of land use and management. The Policy will create incentives for improved land management at household and community levels. The ALRMP will complement decentralization by facilitating capacity building for district-level management of land-based natural resources and the creation of a sustainable land management fund.

Implementation of the Policy will ensure that existing policy gaps are addressed, such as weak linkages with existing policies that were observed under the time period of the previous agricultural land management policy. Some of the Policy gaps of the former Policy included emerging issues such as climate change, agricultural land fragmentation, and recommendations related to management of fragile areas such as stream banks, mining areas as well as invasive species. The former Policy was also silent on the impact of livestock on agricultural land resources and how to address the emerging issues related to that.

1.6 Linkages with other relevant Policies and Legislation

The new Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy is linked to a number of national and international policies, legal frameworks and strategic documents as detailed below:

1.6.1 National Level Policies

i. Malawi 2063 and its First 10-Year Implementation (MIP-1)

The first pillar of Malawi 2063, Agricultural Productivity and Commercialisation, calls for promotion of improved and sustainable land management practices, optimal use of land and land-based resources and climate-smart and resilient agriculture, among other things. The Policy is further linked to the Malawi 2063 10-Year Implementation Plan (2021–2030) in promoting sustainable development with a clean and secure environment.

ii. National Agriculture Policy (NAP)

ALRMP is linked to the NAP in that it contributes to attainment of Policy Priority Area 4 on sustainable management of land, water and natural resources.

iii. National Fertilizer Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the National Fertilizer Policy in that it addresses issues of soil health, environmental stewardship and reduction of potential adverse effects of inorganic fertilizer use on natural resources.

iv. National Environmental Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the National Environmental Policy in that it contributes to the promotion of sustainable management, conservation and utilization of the country's biological diversity, (ecosystems, genetic resources and species) for the preservation of national heritage and promotes the sustainable use of land resources primarily, but not exclusively, for agricultural purposes by strengthening and clearly defining security of tenure over land resources.

v. National Climate Change Management Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the National Climate Change Management Policy in that it mainstreams climate resilience in agricultural land resource management.

vi. National Forestry Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the National Forestry Policy in that it has strategies that will contribute to increased forest cover and sustainable management of existing forest resources.

vii. National Irrigation Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the National Irrigation Policy in that it promotes integrated catchment management approaches which will encourage catchment management practices for the benefit of irrigating and non-irrigating communities.

viii. National Land Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the National Land Policy in that it supports generation of agricultural land resource information and knowledge management which will contribute to improving land tenure security, transparency in land administration and improved management.

ix. National Water Resources Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the Natural Water Resources Policy in that it promotes integrated catchment management which will directly contribute to the catchment approach advocated for in the National Water Resources Policy for natural resources management and the protection of buffer zones for water bodies including lakes and rivers.

x. National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy in that it promotes sustainable agricultural land management which will directly contribute to the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy on strategy, monitoring of impacts of pollution and environmental changes including climate change.

xi. National Livestock Development Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the National Livestock Development Policy in that it will contribute to the Environment and Natural Resource Management and Climate Change priority area of the National Livestock Development Policy where issues of climate-smart livestock production and sustainable natural resources management are addressed.

xii. National Parks and Wildlife Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the National Parks and Wildlife Policy in that it promotes sustainable agricultural land management, which will directly contribute to promoting adequate protection of representative ecosystems and their biological diversity. The Policy will do this through promotion and adoption of appropriate land management practices that adhere to the principle of sustainable use as espoused in the National Parks and Wildlife Policy.

xiii. Mines and Minerals Policy of Malawi

ALRMP is aligned to the Mines and Minerals Policy of Malawi in that it directly contributes to environmental management through promotion of agro-ecological mapping and characterization of land attributes, both of which can inform area specific interventions.

xiv. Malawi Decentralization Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the Decentralization Policy in that some of the strategies will be implemented through decentralized structures.

xv. National Gender Policy

ALRMP is aligned to the National Gender Policy in that it aims at reducing gender inequalities and enhancing participation of women, men, girls and boys in sustainable land management.

1.6.2 Legal Instruments

i. The Constitution

ALRMP is aligned to the Republic of Malawi Constitution section 13 (d) which promotes responsible management of the environment to prevent the degradation of the environment by means of environmental protection and sustainable development of natural resources as well as conserving and enhancing the biological diversity of Malawi.

ii. Environmental Management Act (CAP 60:02)

ALRMP is aligned to the Environmental Management Act which provides for the protection and management of the environment as well as conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources.

iii. Forestry Act (CAP 63:01)

ALRMP is aligned to the Forestry Act which among others provides for participatory forestry management, research, protection and rehabilitation of environmentally fragile areas.

iv. Customary Land Act (CAP 59:01)

ALRMP is aligned to the Customary Land Act which provides for the management and administration of customary land to support sustainable land management investments.

v. Land Act (CAP 57:06)

ALRMP is aligned to the Land Act which governs all land in Malawi as an overarching framework.

vi. Local Government Act (CAP 22:01)

ALRMP is aligned to the Local Government Act which devolves authority to the local government authorities to manage land resources in accordance with related laws.

1.6.3 International Agreements and Protocols

Malawi is party to several international agreements and protocols, and these include, among others, the following:

i. Sustainable Development Goals

ALRMP is directly aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals on poverty, hunger, climate action, and life on land.

ii. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

ALRMP is directly aligned to United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in addressing issues of land degradation through sustainable land management.

iii. United Nations Framework Conversion on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

ALRMP is aligned to the Paris Agreement on Nationally Determined Contributions.

iv. United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD)

ALRMP is aligned to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity through promotion of sustainable use of components of biological diversity.

v. Comprehensive African Agriculture Programme (CAADP)

ALRMP is aligned to Pillar 1 of the CAADP on sustainable land and water management.

vi. Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance

ALRMP is aligned in terms of land use planning which integrates wetlands and their resources.

CHAPTER 2

BROAD POLICY DIRECTION

2.1 Policy Goal

The goal of the Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy is to promote sustainable use of the country's agricultural land resources in order to increase and sustain its productivity and climate change resilience while contributing to national food and nutrition security and economic growth of the country.

2.2 Policy Outcomes

Upon successful implementation of the Policy, the following outcomes will be realized:

1. Increased area under sustainable agricultural land management;
2. Improved institutional capacities, cooperation, collaboration and partnerships for sustainable agricultural land management;
3. Improved agricultural land resource information technology generation and usage for planning and monitoring of agricultural land use and management;
4. Regulated agricultural land use management; and
5. Enhanced environmental conservation and management of agriculture landscapes.

2.3 Policy Objectives

The objectives of the Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy are to:

1. Increase area under sustainable agricultural land management practices;
2. Improve institutional capacities, cooperation, collaboration and partnership in sustainable agricultural land management;
3. Improve agricultural land resource information technology generation and usage for planning and monitoring of agricultural land use management;
4. Strengthen enforcement of regulations and practices governing use and management of agriculture land; and
5. Enhance environmental conservation and management of agriculture landscapes.

2.4 Guiding Principles

The implementation of the Policy will be guided by the following principles and core values:

1. Environmental sustainability to ensure intergenerational equity;
2. Sustainability of interventions ensuring continuity of interventions by farmers and the general public well beyond assistance through projects;
3. Gender equity and inclusivity ensuring participation by all stakeholders including youths, women and other vulnerable groups;
4. Integrated catchment management approach; and
5. Accountability for results to ensure cost effectiveness of funds spent on interventions.

CHAPTER 3

POLICY PRIORITY AREAS

Given the severity and extent of agricultural land degradation in Malawi, it is vital that consented and collaborative efforts are made to promote interventions that are capable of making significant progress towards improved sustainable agricultural land productivity. To this effect, this Policy has identified the following four priority areas for the next five years in order to achieve the overall goal:

1. Agricultural land degradation control and climate change resilience;
2. Institutional capacity strengthening and partnerships;
3. Agricultural land information, knowledge acquisition and management; and
4. Enforcement and incentivisation for sustainable agricultural land management.

3.1 Policy Priority Area 1: Agricultural Land Degradation Control and Climate Change Resilience

The aim of this policy priority area is to reduce and reverse the rate of agricultural land degradation, improve soil health, and enhance climate resilience for increased land productivity.

Agricultural land degradation is a physical process that can result in long-term loss of ecosystem functions and agricultural land productivity. It manifests through soil degradation, soil erosion and nutrient losses which create significant economic, social and environmental challenges such as lower crop yields, a reduction in food production and decreased food and livelihood security. Unfortunately, agricultural land degradation is widespread and severe in Malawi, involving an estimated 80% of the total land area of the country. Fortunately, adequate implementation and scaling up of sustainable agricultural land management practices in Malawi has the potential to improve soil organic carbon stocks and thereby avoid, minimize, and/or reverse land degradation, and thereby make significant contributions to economic growth, poverty reduction and food security.

Climate change is defined as a statistically significant change in average climatic conditions (average weather) of a given area or region that persists for an extended period of time, potentially decades or longer. Adverse changes to climate and weather patterns can exacerbate existing vulnerabilities of Malawi's natural resource base. For example, changes in rainfall patterns can have significant effects on soil surface run-off, soil erosion, soil-water availability, floods, droughts, groundwater recharge and storage, water quality, water demands for irrigation, crop and domestic uses, and a whole range of other environmental and economic activities. Climate-smart agriculture practices have the potential to build the resilience of farming systems and farmer's livelihoods as a way to address the impacts of climate change in agriculture.

Policy Statements

The Policy will ensure that:

3.1.1 Agricultural land degradation is controlled

Strategies

a. Promote adoption of integrated catchment management approach among stakeholders;

b. Promote rehabilitation of degraded fragile areas; and

c. Promote adoption of rainwater harvesting technologies.

3.1.2 Climate resilience is mainstreamed in agricultural land resource management

Strategies

a. Promote climate-smart technologies in all value chains in reference to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs);

b. Scale up adoption of site-specific, best-bet, integrated soil fertility management technologies among farmers, including women and the youth; and

c. Support emerging climate-resilient interventions such as agro-ecology, nature-based solutions, regenerative agriculture, and others.

3.2 Policy Priority Area 2: Institutional Capacity Strengthening and Partnerships

This policy priority area intends to strengthen institutional capacity of the Department of Land Resources Conservation and improve coordination, collaboration, and partnership amongst various sustainable land management stakeholders.

The Department of Land Resources Conservation's institutional capacity has been weakened because of persistent vacancies; abolishment of an agricultural Land Husbandry Field Assistant (LHFA) post at the Extension Planning Area level; inadequate funding; low generation of innovations; and closure of the Land Husbandry Training Centre (LHTC). In addition, the absence of a strong mechanism to promote institutional collaboration in land use and management has resulted in most institutions involved in these areas working in isolation. This lack of institutional collaboration makes it difficult to jointly plan, implement and monitor activities on land use and management. Subsequently, institutions working in these areas are not adequately complementing each other's efforts, which makes it difficult to achieve consolidation of achievements at the national level.

Government funding for sustainable agricultural land management activities has not been adequate to sustain implementation of interventions for a long period. The reason for this is that most sustainable agricultural land management interventions currently are funded by development partners and are mostly short-term and unpredictable. Despite the involvement of many projects, private institutions, NGOs and private sector institutions in activities that promote sustainable agricultural land use and management, weak coordination among these various players in SALM is a major challenge. Weak coordination of these players has also resulted in promotion of different approaches, technologies, and incentive mechanisms by different actors.

Policy Statements

The Policy will ensure that:

3.2.1 The Capacity of the Department of Land Resources Conservation is strengthened

Strategies

a. Support recruitment of staff in the Department responsible for Agricultural Land Resources Conservation;

b. Support the revamping of the Agricultural Land Husbandry Training Centre of excellence; and

c. Facilitate creation of a climate-smart agriculture unit in the Department responsible for Agricultural Land Resources Conservation.

3.2.2 Stakeholder collaboration, coordination, engagement and partnership is strengthened

Strategies

a. Support the revamping of existing thematic and national coordination mechanisms for sustainable agricultural land management;

b. Facilitate the harmonization of sector policies on the protection of buffer zones for rivers and other water bodies; and

c. Support the review of relevant curriculum of all training institutions that include a focus on natural resources management.

3.2.3 Sustainable agricultural land management programmes are adequately financed

Strategies

a. Lobby with the authorities responsible for government budget processes to increase financial provision for sustainable agricultural land management; and

b. Develop a resource mobilisation strategy to support sustainable agricultural land management programmes.

3.3 Policy Priority Area 3: Agricultural Land Information, Knowledge Acquisition and Management

Adequate and up-to-date information on the country's agricultural land resources is required for making informed decisions related to agricultural land investment, development, and management. Use of up-to-date agricultural land resources information enables effective identification and analysis of agricultural land management-related problems and development of appropriate solutions. To achieve this, accurate acquisition and management of agricultural land resources information data is very important. This data is dynamic and changes regularly in respect of agricultural land use and agricultural land cover changes over time. As such, it is recommended that agricultural land evaluation is updated after every five years.

The current national agricultural land information data was generated in the 1990s through a Land Resources Evaluation Project (LREP) that FAO supported. This information is very old and needs to be reviewed. The LREP data is a good baseline for future land evaluation; however, it is in analogue form and requires to be transformed into digital data for analysis with modern technologies. Furthermore, reports of other agricultural land resources information are not easily accessed by other stakeholders including the district offices.

The main challenges in this area include low capacity for regular generation of agricultural land resources information, development and maintenance of agricultural land resources management information system, dissemination of the agricultural land resources management information to stakeholders and the general public, and digitisation of the existing analogue agricultural land management information.

Policy Statements

This policy will ensure that:

3.3.1 Agricultural land resources information and knowledge management is strengthened

Strategies

a. Support timely generation and dissemination of agricultural land resources information using multimedia platforms;

b. Ensure safekeeping of data and information through proper management of the library; and

c. Support establishment of an agricultural land resources information management system.

3.3.2 Acquisition and management of agricultural land information is strengthened

Strategies

a. Promote acquisition and updating of agricultural land resources information;

b. Facilitate agro-ecological mapping and characterization of attributes to inform area-specific interventions; and

c. Promote collaboration and partnerships with local, regional and international agricultural land resources information management institutions.

3.4 Policy Priority Area 4: Enforcement and Incentivisation for Sustainable Agricultural Land Management

This policy priority area intends to provide enforcement mechanisms and a framework for incentivising sustainable agricultural land management practices among stakeholders.

During its initial post-independence era, Malawi did not have written laws to enforce and incentivize sustainable agricultural land management practices, despite the fact the British colonial government had enforced a set of soil and water ordinances. At the dawn of Malawi's democratic era, the government's agricultural extension system changed from intense regulatory enforcement to a more educative and persuasive approach. During the same time, the country experienced high agricultural land degradation, despite having policies like the National Land Resources Management Policy and Strategy. This has been partly attributed to the lack of appropriate laws to support policy implementation. Attempts to pass an Agricultural Land Management Bill did not materialize. Consequently, there has been an increase in settlement and cultivation on fragile and marginal lands as well as conversion of prime arable land into other non-farmland use.

In the absence of agricultural land use and management regulations and incentives promoting sustainable agricultural land management, coupled with increasing agricultural land pressure due to rising rural population densities, there has been a rise in the use of land in marginal and fragile areas, such as: (a) increased cultivation of annual crops along river banks and beds; (b) cultivation in areas with very steep slopes and shallow soils; (c) conversion of forests for agriculture and or settlement; (d) settlement in wetland areas; and (e) sand mining along riverbanks. All these types of land use contribute to agricultural land degradation.

Policy Statements

The Policy will ensure that:

3.4.1 Sustainable agricultural land management practices are enforced

Strategies

a. Support enactment of agricultural land resources conservation and management laws;

b. Support implementation and enforcement of agricultural land resources conservation and management laws;

c. Support implementation of agricultural land-related laws that foster investments in sustainable land management; and

d. Promote adherence to standards and quality control measures for various sustainable agricultural land management practices.

3.4.2 Market-based incentives for sustainable agriculture land management are promoted

Strategies

a. Support development and implementation of market-based incentives for sustainable agricultural land management in respect of gender transformation;

b. Introduce, prioritize and implement innovative funding mechanisms such as Payment for Ecosystem Services, payment for watershed services, green water schemes, carbon marketing and others; and

c. Promote social marketing approach for sustainable agricultural land management to drive individual and community behavior changes on stewardship of agricultural land-based natural resources.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Effective implementation of the Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy requires robust partnerships and collaboration with all key stakeholders within the agriculture sector. These stakeholders include farmers, Civil Society Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations, academic and research institutions, development partners, the public sector and the private sector. In recognition of this, the Policy outlines the comprehensive roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in the implementation of the policy framework as follows:

4.1 Institutional Arrangements

Implementation of the Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy requires clear institutional frameworks to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, good coordination and accountability.

i. Office of the President and Cabinet

The Office of the President and Cabinet will provide overall direction and guidance on the implementation, monitoring and review of the Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy.

ii. National Planning Commission

The National Planning Commission will:

a. Oversee the implementation of development plans and coordinate the efforts of different stakeholders in achieving objectives of the Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy as it relates to Malawi 2063; and

b. Support policy integration and monitoring and evaluation.

iii. Ministry responsible for Agriculture

The Ministry responsible for Agriculture will:

a. Lead in the development, coordination and monitoring of Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy and its implementation;

b. Ensure that agricultural land conservation and management sector development initiatives conform to the national environment and natural resource management goals and objectives;

c. Mobilize the requisite financial, human and material resources for the public investments in the agricultural land conservation and management sector;

d. Ensure efficient, coordinated and effective delivery of agricultural land conservation and management sector services by public and private sector players;

e. Support private sector investments in the agricultural land conservation and management sector by identifying high-return areas and leading in advocating for a conducive fiscal environment;

f. Ensure objective socio-economic evaluations of investments in agricultural land conservation and management interventions;

g. Ensure mainstreaming of agricultural land conservation and management issues in agriculture and national investment initiatives are prioritized;

h. Facilitate preparation of reliable sectoral statistics and information for policy planning and implementation on agricultural land use planning and agricultural land conservation and management in line with the Malawi Agricultural Statistics Master Plan;

i. Provide platforms for policy dialogue and actively engage in the consultative policy process in the formulation, planning, reviewing and implementation of agricultural land conservation and management sub-sectoral policies and strategies;

j. Promote decentralization of agricultural land conservation and management sector programme design and implementation to districts and Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) in line with the provisions of the National Decentralization Act and Policy; and

k. Decentralize decision making on agricultural land conservation and management sector focusing on policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation, involving decentralized structures such as District Agriculture Extension Coordination Committees, District Agriculture Stakeholder Panels, Village Agriculture Committees, and Area Stakeholder Panels, which are all part of the decentralized administrative system in agriculture.

iv. Ministry responsible for Finance

The Ministry responsible for Finance will:

a. Mobilize financial resources for public investments in the agricultural land conservation and management sector;

b. Allocate sufficient public funds from the National Treasury to the agricultural land conservation and management sector, in line with the Government's CAADP commitment to investing at least 3% of the annual agricultural sector budget on agricultural land conservation;

c. Support resource mobilisation and accountability for agricultural land resources management investments;

d. Facilitate the smooth implementation of the Eco-Payment System to communities managing catchment areas that safeguard marginal areas prone to agricultural land degradation; and

e. Monitor prudent use of public financial resources allocated to the ministry responsible for Department of Agricultural Land Resources and Conservation.

v. Ministry responsible for Economic Planning and Development

The Ministry responsible for Economic Planning and Development will;

a. Maintain sound macro-economic conditions that provide an environment conducive for investments by private sector and development partners in agricultural land conservation and management;

b. Undertake independent impact evaluations of returns to agricultural land conservation and management sector public investments using either the National Statistical Office of Malawi (NSO) or independent evaluators; and

c. Monitor projects, programmes and activities of the public sector through PSIP and the harmonized M&E System.

vi. Ministry responsible for Lands

The Ministry responsible for Lands will:

a. Promote proper land-use policies and practices in collaboration with the ministry responsible for agricultural land resources conservation that have bearing on agriculture land conservation and management sector investments;

b. Identify land suitable for agricultural land conservation and management investments;

c. Review land Policies and Acts to ensure policy coherence and complementarity; and

d. Roll out land reform programme aiming at strengthening agricultural land tenure security.

vii. Ministry responsible for Natural Resources

The Ministry responsible for Natural Resources will:

a. Promote sustainable conservation and management of agricultural land and natural resources, in liaison with the ministry responsible for agricultural land resources conservation; and

b. Enforcement of agricultural land resources conservation through legal and regulatory frameworks.

viii. Ministry responsible for Statutory Corporations

The Ministry responsible for Statutory Corporations will promote sustainable conservation and management of agricultural land and natural resources in all areas they tap resources for the services they provide to the consumers, in liaison with the ministry responsible for the agricultural land resources conservation.

ix. Ministry responsible for Energy

The Ministry responsible for Energy will promote effective channels that facilitate the availability of adequate, reliable clean energy (hydroelectricity, solar, and gases) to minimize use of wood and charcoal.

x. Ministry responsible for Mines

The Ministry responsible for Mines will promote sustainable conservation and management of agricultural land and natural resources during and after the extraction phases in liaison with the ministry responsible for resources conservation.

xi. Ministry responsible for Climate Change and Environmental Affairs

The Ministry responsible for Climate Change and Environmental Affairs will promote the availability and use of carbon sequestration technologies in the sustainable conservation and management of agricultural land and natural resources, in liaison with the Ministry responsible for Agricultural Land Resources Conservation.

xii. Ministry responsible for Education

The Ministry responsible for Education will ensure that the country's education curriculum at all stages adequately incorporates up-to-date agricultural land conservation and natural resource management sector development issues.

xiii. Ministry responsible for Transport and Public Works

The Ministry responsible for Transport and Public Works will promote the development of infrastructure with ancillary structures that minimize agricultural land degradation (soil erosion).

xiv. Ministry responsible for Local Government

The Ministry responsible for Local Government will provide policy direction on matters related to decentralization.

xv. Ministry responsible for Justice

The Ministry responsible for Justice will:

a. Provide support to the ministry responsible for agricultural land resources conservation in undertaking review of the agricultural land conservation and management sector legal and regulatory frameworks in line with the prevailing national constitution and international standards; and

b. Ensure that the legal and regulatory frameworks governing the agricultural land resources and conservation sector are effectively upheld to promote agricultural land resources conservation and management sector investments.

xvi. Ministry responsible for Youth Development

The Ministry responsible for Youth Development will:

a. Promote the youth to actively participate in agricultural land resource conservation and management activity projects and programmes; and

b. Support advocacy in empowering youth with knowledge and skills in sustainable agricultural land management.

xvii. Ministry responsible for Gender and Social Welfare

The Ministry responsible for Gender and Social Welfare will:

a. Provide support to the agricultural land resources conservation and management stakeholders to effectively mainstream and transform gender and HIV & AIDS issues in their activities; and

b. Collaborate with the ministry responsible for agricultural land resources management in empowering vulnerable groups' access to agricultural land resources conservation and management productive and marketing assets

xviii. Ministry responsible for National Parks and Wildlife

The Ministry responsible for National Parks and Wildlife will:

a. Facilitate integration of natural resources conservation and mitigation of human wildlife conflict in management of game reserves; and

b. Promote ecotourism and co-management of national parks and game reserves through bee-keeping into the natural rejuvenated forests in the catchment areas under the agricultural land conservation and management designated areas.

xix. Department of Agricultural Research Services (DARS), Forestry Research Institute of Malawi (FRIM) and other Research Organisations

The Department of Agricultural Research Services (DARS), Forestry Research Institute of Malawi (FRIM) and other Research Organisations will:

a. Spearhead sustainable agricultural land management in line with its mandate under the ministry responsible for agricultural land resources and conservation;

b. Collaborate with research and academic institutions (in particular LUANAR, Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and FRIM among others), to generate technologies and release them through Agriculture Technology Clearing Committee;

c. Evaluate all new sustainable agricultural land management technologies coming into the country; and

d. Prioritize sustainable agricultural land management research agenda to reflect on government priorities in line with NAP.

xx. District Councils

The District Councils will:

a. Provide support to the district institutional structures such as District Agriculture Committee (DAC), District Stakeholder Panel (DSP), and their related grass-root structures (Area Development Committees, Village Development Committees and Village Natural Resources Management Committees), as they incorporate agricultural land conservation and natural resources management sector issues in their developmental plans, in line with the National Decentralization Policy and Act;

b. Provide adequate allocation of financial resources to agricultural land conservation and natural resources management development at district level;

c. Monitor use of state and non-state financial resources allocated to agricultural land conservation and natural resources management activities at district level; and

d. Promote the establishment of District Sustainable Agricultural Land Management Fund to support agricultural land conservation and natural resources management activities in the districts.

xxi. Academic and Research Institutions

The Academic and Research Institutions will:

a. Ensure that academic, technical and vocational and training institutions incorporate sustainable agricultural land management in their training curricula;

b. Prioritise sustainable agricultural land conservation and management research programmes on appropriate sustainable agricultural land management technologies and their adoption rates; and

c. Actively participate in the provision of independent technical advice on agricultural land management policy implementation.

xxii. Farmer-Based Organisations (FBOs)

The Farmer-Based Organisations (FBOs) will:

a. Organize and strengthen farmer groups for increased scaling-up of sustainable agricultural land management activities;

b. Empower women, youth and other vulnerable groups to engage in agribusinesses associated with sustainable agricultural land management activities (such as tree nursery production and selling, honey production etc.); and

c. Take an active role in improving access to farm input markets, credit and extension services, and output markets linked to sustainable agricultural land management sector.

xxiii. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

The Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) will:

a. Facilitate mutual accountability and transparency on sustainable agricultural land management investments in collaboration with government;

b. Promote evidence-based policy advocacy initiatives that result in desired policy changes and public and private sector investments; and

c. Guarantee that the concerns of the stakeholders in the sustainable agricultural land management sector are heard and that the government is held accountable to its commitments to the citizens of Malawi.

xxiv. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Development Partners (DPs)

The Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Development Partners (DPs) will:

a. Guarantee the provision of technical and financial support to the sustainable agricultural land management consortium is within the national policy frameworks;

b. Guarantee effective coordination of donor support to the sustainable agricultural land management sector to eliminate duplication of efforts with respect to the NAIP; and

c. Provide assistance in institutional capacity building, monitoring and evaluation of the sustainable agricultural land management sector investments based on the indicators outlined in this Policy.

xxv. Private Sector Investors

The Private Sector Investors will:

a. Engage with policymakers through established policy dialogue platforms;

b. Guarantee that reliable planned investments in the sustainable agricultural land management sector follow the principles of mutual accountability and transparent private sector investment as promoted by the New Alliance and Grow Africa initiatives; and

c. Engage in partnerships with the Government of Malawi and foreign investors to raise requisite capital for sustainable agricultural land management sector investments.

xxvi. Ministry Responsible for Human Resources Management and Development

The Ministry Responsible for Human Resources Management and Development will:

a. Ensure that the vacant positions in the establishment are addressed through recruitment, training and deployment to specified areas; and

b. Facilitate the identification of training needs assessment and implement a training management plan in addressing the gaps in agricultural land conservation and natural resource management sector.

xxvii. Malawi Environment Protection Authority

The Malawi Environment Protection Authority will:

a. Coordinate, monitor, supervise and consult on all activities relating to utilization and management of the environment and natural resources;

b. Coordinate and monitor all activities concerning the protection and management of the environment, conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources;

c. Promote international and regional co-operation in the protection and management of the environment, conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources shared between Malawi and other countries; and

d. Ensure sustainable agricultural land management through enforcement of policies and laws.

4.2 Implementation Plan

Annex 1 is the implementation plan for the Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy, which specifies goals, objectives, strategies, the responsible entities, and the timelines for activity implementation. It is anticipated that DLRC and the stakeholders will be developing specific annual plans of action and budgeting based on the policy implementation plan.

4.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

Annex 2 is the monitoring and evaluation plan for the Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy. It specifies targets for a set of indicators through which performance in achieving specific outputs will be assessed. The Agriculture Land Resources Management Policy will be reviewed at mid-term and a comprehensive review after 5 years of implementation.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Policy Implementation Plan

Policy Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Policy Priority 3.1: Agricultural Land Degradation Control and Climate Change Resilience			
Policy Statement 3.1.1: The Policy will ensure that agricultural land degradation is controlled			
To increase area under sustainable agricultural land management practices	Promote adoption of integrated catchment management approach among stakeholders	DRLC, Department responsible for Forestry, DWRs, NGOs, CSOs, EAD, Ministry responsible for Local Government	2024-29
	Promote rehabilitation of degraded fragile areas	DLRC, Department of Surveys, Department of Forestry, EAD, DWRs, CSO, NGOs, Private Sector, Ministry responsible for Transport and Public Works	2024-29
	Promote adoption of rainwater harvesting technologies	DLRC, Ministry responsible for Finance, DCs	2024-29
Policy Statement 3.1.2: The Policy will ensure that climate resilience is mainstreamed in agricultural land resource management			
To increase area under sustainable agricultural land management practices	Promote climate-smart technologies in all value chains in reference to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)	EAD, DLRC, CSO, NGOs, Farmer Organisations, Development Partners, Private Sector	2024-29
	Scale up adoption of site-specific, best-bet, integrated soil fertility management technologies among farmers, including women and the youth	DLRC, DARS, CSO, NGOs, Farmer Organisations, Development Partners, Private Sector, Academia	2024-29
	Support emerging climate-resilient interventions such as agro-ecology, nature-based solutions, regenerative agriculture and others	DLRC, CSO, NGOs, Farmer Organisations, Development Partners, Private Sector, Special interest networks	2024-29
Policy Priority Area 3.2: Institutional Capacity Strengthening and Partnerships			
Policy Statement 3.2.1: The Policy will ensure that the capacity of the Department of Agricultural Land Resources Conservation is strengthened			
To improve institutional capacities, cooperation, collaboration and partnership in sustainable agricultural land management	Support recruitment of staff in the Department responsible for agricultural land resources conservation	DLRC, Civil, Local Assembly Service Commission, Civil Service Commission	2025-27
	Support the revamping of the agricultural land husbandry training centre of excellence	DLRC, CSOs, NGOs, Farmer Organisations, Development Partners, Private Sector	2024-29
	Facilitate creation of a climate-smart agriculture unit in the Department responsible for agricultural land resources conservation	DLRC, CSOs, NGOs, Farmer Organisations, Development Partners, Private Sector	2024-27

Policy Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Policy Statement 3.2.2: The Policy will ensure that stakeholder collaboration, coordination, engagement and partnership is strengthened			
To improve institutional capacities, cooperation, collaboration and partnership in sustainable agricultural land management	Support the revamping of existing thematic and national coordination mechanisms for sustainable agricultural land management	DLRC, DAES, DoI, DARS, Department responsible for Forestry, DCs, Ministry of Justice, Law Commission, Academic Institutions, CSOs, NGOs, Farmer Organisations, Development Partners, Private Sector	2024-26
	Facilitate the harmonization of sector policies on the protection of buffer zones for rivers and other water bodies	DLRC, DCs, DoI , DAES, CSOs, NGOs, Farmer Organisations, Development Partners, Private Sector, National Water Resources Authority, DWRs	2024-25
	Support review of relevant curriculum of all training institutions that include a focus on natural resources management	DLRC, DAES, DoI, DoF, DWRs, DCs, CSOs, NGOs, Development Partners, EAD, Research and Academic Institutions	2024-27
Policy Statement 3.2.3: The Policy will ensure that sustainable agricultural land management programmes are adequately financed			
To improve institutional capacities, cooperation, collaboration and partnership in sustainable agricultural land management	Lobby with the authorities responsible for government budget processes to increase financial provision for sustainable agricultural land management	DLRC, DARS, DAES, DoI, DCs, Academic and Research Institutions, NGOs, Farmer Organisations, Development Partners, Private Sector	2024-27
	Develop a resource mobilisation strategy to support sustainable agricultural land management programmes	DLRC, DAES, DCs, NGOs, Farmer Organisations, Development Partners, Private Sector	2024-29
Priority Policy Area 3.3: Agricultural Land Information, Knowledge Acquisition and Management			
Policy Statement 3.3.1: The Policy will ensure that agricultural land resources information and knowledge is strengthened			
To improve agricultural land resource information, technology generation and usage for planning and monitoring of land management	Support timely generation and dissemination of agricultural land resources information using multimedia platforms	DLRC, DAES, MoA (ICT), Ministry responsible for Information, Department responsible for Forestry, DoI, DWRs, Research and Academia	2024-29
	Ensure safe keeping of data and information through proper management of the library	DLRC, Development Partners	2024-29
	Support establishment of an agricultural land resources information management system	DLRC, Development Partners	2024-29

Policy Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Policy Statement 3.3.2: The Policy will ensure that acquisition and management of agricultural land information is strengthened			
To improve agricultural land resource information, technology generation and usage for planning and monitoring of agricultural land management	Promote acquisition and updating of agricultural land resources information	DLRC, Development Partners	2024-29
	Facilitate agro-ecological mapping and characterization of attributes to inform area-specific interventions	DLRC, Development Partners	2024-29
	Promote collaboration and partnerships with local, regional and international agricultural land resources information management institutions	DLRC, Ministry responsible for Foreign Affairs, Department responsible for Surveys, Department responsible for Forestry	2024-29
Policy Priority Area 3.4: Enforcement and Incentivisation for Sustainable Agricultural Land Management			
Policy Statement 3.4.1: The Policy will ensure that sustainable agricultural land management practices are enforced			
To strengthen enforcement of regulations and practices governing use and management of agriculture land	Support enactment of agricultural land resources conservation and management laws	DLRC, DAPS, Department responsible for Forestry, Ministry responsible for Lands, MEPA, NWRA, Ministry responsible for Justice	2024-29
	Support implementation and enforcement of agricultural land resources conservation and management laws	DLRC, Department of Forestry, Ministry responsible for Lands, MEPA, NWRA, Ministry responsible for Justice	2024-29
	Support implementation of agricultural land-related laws that foster investments in sustainable agricultural land management	DLRC, Department responsible for Forestry, Ministry responsible for Lands, MEPA, NWRA, Ministry responsible for Justice	2024-29
	Promote adherence to standards and quality control measures for various sustainable agricultural land management practices	DLRC	2024-29

Policy Objective	Strategy	Responsibility	Timeframe
Policy Statement 3.4.2: The Policy will ensure that market-based incentives for sustainable agricultural land management are promoted			
To enhance environmental conservation and management of agriculture landscapes	Support development and implementation of market-based incentives for sustainable agricultural land management in respect of gender transformation	DLRC, DAES, Ministry responsible for Lands, Ministry responsible for Local Government, Department responsible for Surveys, NWRA	2024-29
	Introduce, prioritize and implement innovative funding mechanisms such as Payment for Ecosystem Services, payment for watershed services, green water schemes, carbon marketing and others	DLRC, Ministry responsible for Local Government, Ministry responsible for Lands, Ministry responsible for Finance, EAD, RBM, Ministry responsible for Trade and Industry	2024-29
	Promote social marketing approach for sustainable agricultural land management to drive individual and community behavior changes on stewardship of agricultural land based natural resources	DLRC, DAES, Ministry responsible for Information, Department responsible for Forestry, CSOs	2024-29

Annex 2: Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the ALRMP

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
Policy Priority Area 1: Agricultural Land Degradation Control and Climate Change Resilience							
Outcome: Increased area under sustainable agricultural land management							
To increase area under sustainable agricultural land management practices	Promote adoption of Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) approach among stakeholders	Integrated Catchment Management scaled-out	Area under ICM (hectare)	198,679	230,000	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Willingness of farmers to adopt Integrated Catchment Management technologies
		Farmers trained in Integrated Catchment Management	Number of farmers trained in Integrated Catchment Management	490,000	600,000	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Willingness of farmers to participate in integrated catchment trainings
		Stakeholders involved in Integrated Catchment Management	Number of stakeholders involved in Integrated Catchment Management	11	17	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Stakeholder interest and willingness to participate in Integrated Catchment Management
	Scale up adoption of site-specific, best-bet, integrated soil fertility management technologies (area specific fertilizers and soil health technologies) among farmers, including women and youth	Site-specific, best-bet, integrated soil fertility management technologies replicated	Area under best-bet integrated soil-fertility management technologies (hectares)	436,431	1,098,024	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Farmer willingness to adopt site-specific best-bet integrated technologies
		Farmers adopting on-site-specific best-bet integrated soil fertility management technologies	Number of farmers adopting on-site-specific best-bet integrated soil fertility management technologies	1,375,000	2,244,491	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Interest and willingness of farmers to participate in trainings on integrated soil fertility management

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
		Male farmers adopting on-site-specific best-bet integrated soil fertility management technologies	Number of male farmers adopting on-site-specific best-bet integrated soil fertility management technologies	550,000	897,796	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Interest and willingness of male farmers to participate in trainings on integrated soil fertility management
		Female farmers adopting on-site-specific best-bet integrated soil fertility management technologies	Number of female farmers adopting on-site-specific best-bet integrated soil fertility management technologies	618,750	1,010,021	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Interest and willingness of female farmers to participate in trainings on integrated soil fertility management
		Youth farmers adopting on-site-specific best-bet integrated soil fertility management technologies	Number of youth farmers adopting on-site-specific best-bet integrated soil fertility management technologies	206,250	336,674	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Interest and willingness of youth farmers to participate in trainings on integrated soil fertility management
	Promote rehabilitation of degraded fragile areas	Degraded steep slopes rehabilitated	Area (hectare) of steep slope rehabilitated	39,736	46,000	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Local communities support and involvement in rehabilitation efforts
		Degraded riverbanks rehabilitated	Length (meters) of stream banks rehabilitated	20,000	23,000	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Local communities support and involvement in rehabilitation efforts

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
	Promote adoption of rainwater harvesting technologies	Rainwater harvesting technologies disseminated (in-situ, reservoirs and tanks)	Number of technologies disseminated	4	6	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Willingness of farmers to adopt disseminated technologies
		Rainwater harvesting technologies scaled-out	Area under rainwater harvesting technologies	161,570	411,386	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Willingness of farmers to adopt rainwater harvesting technologies
		Farmers trained on rainwater harvesting technologies	Number of farmers trained on rainwater harvesting technologies	343,750	562,000	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Interest and willingness of farmers to participate in trainings on rainwater harvesting technologies
	Promote climate-smart technologies in all value chains in reference to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)	Climate-smart technologies in all value chains in reference to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) disseminated	Number of climate technologies in reference to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) disseminated	5	6	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Farmer interest and willingness to adopt climate smart technologies
		Climate-smart technologies replicated	Area under climate-smart technologies (hectares)	501,884	525,000	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Willingness of farmers to adopt climate smart technologies
		Farmers trained on climate smart technologies	Number of farmers trained on climate smart technologies	1,255,710	1,312,500	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Willingness of farmers to participate in climate smart technology trainings

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
	Support emerging climate-resilient interventions such as agro-ecology, nature-based solutions regenerative agriculture, and others	Agro-ecology strategy developed	Number of agro-ecology strategies developed	0	1	Department responsible for agricultural land resource conservation reports	Stakeholder participation
Policy Priority Area 2: Institutional Capacity Strengthening and Partnerships							
Outcome: Improved institutional capacities, cooperation, collaboration and partnership for sustainable agricultural land management							
To improve institutional capacities, cooperation, collaboration and partnership in sustainable agricultural land management	Support recruitment of staff in the department responsible for agricultural land resources conservation	Staff recruited at the department responsible for agricultural land resources conservation	Vacancy rate at department responsible for land resources conservation	40%	0%	Staff return report from the Department responsible for agricultural land resources conservation	Availability of resources for staff recruitment and availability of qualified candidates
	Support the revamping of the Agricultural Land Husbandry Training Centre of excellence	Land Husbandry Training centre of excellence revamped	Number of Land Husbandry Training centre of excellence revamped	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds
	Facilitate creation of a climate-smart agriculture unit in the Department responsible for agricultural Land Resources Conservation	Climate-Smart Agriculture unit established	Number of Climate-Smart Agriculture Units established	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
	Support the revamping of existing thematic and national coordination mechanisms for sustainable agricultural land management	Thematic and national coordination mechanisms for sustainable agricultural land management revamped	Number of thematic and coordination platforms for sustainable agricultural land management revamped	0	4	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds
	Facilitate the harmonisation of sector policies on the protection of buffer zones for rivers and other water bodies	Law on protection of buffer zones enacted	Number of laws on protection of buffer zones enacted	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Political will
	Support the review of relevant curriculum of all training institutions that include a focus on natural resources management	Curriculum of all training institutions with a focus on natural resources management reviewed	Number of curriculums for training institutions with a focus on natural resources management reviewed	0	4	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Willingness of training institutions to incorporate natural resource management issues in their curriculum
	Lobby with the authorities responsible for government budget processes to increase financial provision for sustainable agricultural land management	National budget allocated to sustainable agricultural land management	Percentage of annual national budgetary allocation to sustainable agricultural land management	0.01%	0.1%	Financial statements	Willingness of stakeholders to finance sustainable agricultural land management programmes

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
	Develop a resource mobilisation strategy to support sustainable agricultural land management programmes	Resource mobilisation strategy on sustainable agricultural land management programmes developed	Number of resource mobilisation strategies developed	0	1	Resource mobilisation strategy	Willingness of stakeholders and availability of funds
Policy Priority Area 3: Agricultural Land Information, Knowledge Acquisition and Management							
Outcome: Improved agricultural land resource information technology generation and its usage for planning and monitoring of agricultural land use and management							
To improve agricultural land resource information technology generation and usage for planning and monitoring of agricultural land use management	Support establishment of an agricultural land resource management system	Agricultural land management information system established	Number of agricultural land management information systems established	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds
	Ensure safe-keeping of data and information through proper management of the library	Agricultural land resources management and conservation physical library reconstituted	Number of agricultural land resources management and conservation physical library constituted	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds
		Virtual land resources management library developed	Number of virtual land resources management library developed	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds and stakeholder collaboration

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
	Support timely generation and dissemination of agricultural land resources information using multimedia platforms	Agricultural land resource information products generated	Number of agricultural land resource information products generated	6	8	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds
		Number of agricultural land resource information products disseminated	Number of agricultural land resource information products disseminated	6	8	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds
	Promote acquisition and updating of agricultural land resources information	Agricultural land resource information products acquired	Number of agricultural land resource information products acquired	6	8	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds
		Agricultural land resource information products updated	Number of agricultural land resource information products updated	6	8	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds
	Facilitate agro-ecological mapping and characterisation of attributes to inform area specific interventions	Agro-ecological zones mapped and characterised	Number of agro-ecological maps produced	8	10	Department of responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
	Promote collaboration and partnerships with local, regional and international agricultural land resources information management institutions	Collaboration and partnerships with agricultural land resource management institutions established	Number of collaboration and partnerships with agricultural land resource management institutions established	3	5	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Willingness of stakeholders to collaborate and enter into partnerships
		Collaborative agricultural land resource programmes implemented	Number of collaborative agricultural land resource programmes implemented	6	9	Department responsible for land resource conservation annual reports	Availability of funds
Policy Priority Area 4: Enforcement and Incentivisation for Sustainable Agricultural Land Management							
Outcome: Regulated agricultural land use management							
To strengthen enforcement of regulations and practices governing use and management of agricultural land	Support enactment of agricultural land resources conservation and management laws	Agricultural land Management Act developed	Number of Agricultural land Management Acts developed	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Availability of funds
	Support implementation and enforcement of agricultural land resources conservation and management laws	Messages on agricultural land management laws developed	Number of messages on agricultural land management laws developed	1	4	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Willingness of stakeholders to collaborate

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
	Support implementation of agricultural land related laws that foster investments in sustainable agricultural land management	Agricultural land related laws that foster investments in sustainable agricultural land management enforced	Number of agricultural land related laws that foster investments in sustainable agricultural land management enforced	0	15	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Sectoral collaboration
	Promote adherence to standards and quality control measures for various sustainable agricultural land management practices	Climate-smart agriculture manual updated	Number of climate-smart agriculture manuals updated	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Availability of resources
		Rain-water harvesting manual updated	Number of rain-water harvesting manuals updated	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Availability of resources
		Conservation agriculture manual updated	Number of conservation agriculture manuals updated	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Availability of resources
		Land husbandry management manual updated	Number of land husbandry management manuals updated	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Availability of resources

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
Policy Priority Area 4: Enforcement and Incentivisation for Sustainable Agricultural Land Management							
Outcome: Enhanced environmental conservation and management of agriculture landscapes							
To enhance environmental conservation and management of agriculture landscapes	Support development and implementation of market-based incentives for sustainable agricultural land management in respect of gender transformation	Guidelines on market-based incentives and sustainable agricultural land management developed	Number of guidelines on market-based incentives and sustainable agricultural land management developed	0	1	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Availability of funds
		Market-based incentives for sustainable agricultural land management interventions implemented	Percentage of female farmers benefitting from market-based incentives' interventions on sustainable agricultural land management	55%	65%	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Active participation of women in sustainable agricultural land management practices
			Percentage of male farmers benefitting from market-based incentives' interventions	45%	60%	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Active participation of men in sustainable agricultural land management practices

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
	Introduce, prioritize and implement innovative funding mechanisms such as Payment for Ecosystem Services, payment for watershed services, green water schemes, carbon marketing and others	Farmer households' participation in innovative funding mechanisms (Payment for Ecosystem Services, payment for watershed services, green water schemes, carbon marketing)	Percentage of farming households participating in the innovative funding mechanisms	0%	15%	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Opportunities for collaboration and partnerships in innovative funding mechanisms
		Land conserved through use of innovative funding mechanisms (Payment for Ecosystem Services, payment for watershed services, green water schemes, carbon marketing)	Area of land conserved (hectares) through use innovative funding mechanisms	0	500,000	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Willingness of farmers to participate in innovative funding mechanism programmes

Objective	Strategy	Policy Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2024	Targets 2029	Means of Verification	Assumptions/Risks
	Promote social marketing approach for sustainable agricultural land management to drive individual and community behavior changes on stewardship of agricultural land-based natural resources	Extension services on sustainable stewardship of agricultural land-based natural resources provided to farmers through social marketing approach	Number of farmers reached with extension messages on sustainable stewardship of agricultural land-based natural resources through social marketing approach	285,000	5,000,000	Department responsible for land resource conservation reports	Willingness of farmers to adopt land

Designed by
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