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LAND DEGRADATION RISKS: KEY TOPICS TO BE FACED OVER THE WORLD

RIESGOS DE DEGRADACIÓN DEL SUELO: TEMAS CLAVE PARA AFRONTAR EN EL MUNDO

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Land degradation is threating biodiversity, soil fertility, food and water security, as well as rural and urban economies. To address this issue, new policies should endorse innovative strategies and management approaches that target key processes such as erosion, soil and water pollution, and the loss of biodiversity. These efforts align to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and attain land degradation neutrality during this convulse Anthropocene.

Across various regions worldwide, there is a growing focus on assessing the significant land degradation processes, ranging from hillslopes to catchment and regional scales. Through direct measurements, experimental methods, and modeling techniques, it becomes evident that land degradation is a formidable challenge for humanity. While the scientific literature provides a comprehensive understanding of land degradation processes in some areas, there is a notable

gap in information regarding the impact of land uses, climate scenarios, and soil-water management at different scales on a broader range of non-studied territories.

This special issue seeks to bring together in-depth analyses of past, present, and potential future land degradation processes, employing modeling techniques with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and *in situ* measurements or experimental approaches. A total of eight research articles, one short communication and one book review delves into the impact of land degradation on human and natural ecosystems, along with strategies to confront these challenges. The interdisciplinary nature of these investigations incorporates economic, social, perceptual, and biophysical data to provide a holistic understanding of the complex issue of land degradation. Some examples of land degradation processes and main topics that can fall within these publications are: i) Soil degradation (erosion, sealing, pollution, etc.); ii) Soil quality indicators and land-use changes; iii) Land consumption and land amelioration; iv) Data monitoring and evaluation instruments; and v) Tools and strategies to achieve land degradation neutrality.