

**Mutual Agreement**  
**on**  
**Regional Research Based Sustainable Land Management (SLM)**  
**Partnership**

Amhara Bureau of Agriculture (hereinafter referred to as "Amhara BoA"), Bahir Dar University (hereinafter referred to as "BDU") and Amhara Regional Agricultural Research Institute (hereinafter referred to as "ARARI") hereby agree to establish "Regional Research Based Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Partnership" (hereinafter referred to as "the Partnership") which is developed through discussions from the Regional Innovation Platform organized under the JICA SATREPS project "Development of Next-generation Sustainable Land Management (SLM) framework to combat desertification in Ethiopia".

The all parties agreed the details of the Partnership as described in the Annex 1, Concept of "Regional Research Based Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Partnership".

The all parties also agreed to be responsible for the implementation of the Partnership, and to coordinate with other relevant organizations in order to contribute for implementation of sustainable land management based on scientific evidence, and for social and economic development in Amhara region, recognizing it as a component of the Agricultural Learning Platform organized by Amhara BoA.

Annex 1 : Concept of "Regional Research Based Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Partnership"

The image shows four handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature is on the left, followed by a small symbol resembling a stylized 'd' or 'f'. To the right of this symbol is a signature that appears to be 'Ter'. On the far right is another signature. Below the first signature is a larger, more complex signature.

Annex 2 : Structure and contents of the partnership

Annex 3 : Image of the strategy on the function 5

Addis Ababa / Bahir Dar, 15th August, 2022

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Witness by

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**Concept of “Regional Research Based Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Partnership”**

**1. Background**

Soil erosion is a major agent of land degradation in Ethiopia, more particularly in the Upper Blue Nile River basin, and it has resulted in on-site and off-site consequences such as decline in ecosystem services, downstream flooding, and reservoir sedimentation. The overall current soil erosion rates are large by international standards. A large portion of Ethiopia's land surface is now prone to meet severe land degradation, which includes the Upper Blue Nile River basin. Furthermore, the land pressure is supposed to be intensified more in future, due to continuous increase of population and its food demands. And the frequency of intensified rain is projected to increase especially in high altitude areas in Northeast Ethiopia according to the recent climate change risk analysis.

Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS) funded the project “Development of Next-generation Sustainable Land Management (SLM) framework to combat desertification in Ethiopia” (hereinafter referred to as “JICA SLM SATREPS”) since April 2017 to March 2023, to contribute for solving the above problems both locally and regionally. So far, about 47 SLM practices have been tested under two contrasting agro-ecologies in the Upper Blue Nile River basin, of which 17 practices (13 technologies and four approaches) have been screened for further verification and demonstration, and to support wider application.

**This SLM Partnership Agreement aims to promote and disseminate evidence-based SLM practices throughout watersheds in the Amhara region by engaging stakeholders.** In order to prevent land degradation and increase productivity among different sectors (crop, forest, and livestock), the regional SLM related institutes need to work together and deliver scientific evidence and new insights to actual interventions in the different Woredas and Kebeles in Amhara region. It is expected to transfer scientific knowledge to practical SLM implementation as an outcome of the JICA SLM SATREPS.

For attaining this, it is imperative to bridge the gap between research-based findings and their implementation/utilization in the real society. It could be achieved when the research results are verified among the relevant partners and are demonstrated involving various stakeholders for wider adoptions in the communities. Similarly, real challenges faced should be captured and taken to the science to adequately set the research targets and bring practical solutions. There is also a requirement to have a structure of continuous cycles,



enhancing both scientific knowledge and implementation. This should take into account the multi-level collaborations and supportive structure leading to effective implementation and adoption of SLM by the local community.

Based on the above-mentioned points, this partnership is established for the purpose of further verification of promising research results and for enhancing institutional arrangements among the related partners for adoption of the best SLM practices. Land degradation is a complex process and its intervention basically demands a concept of transdisciplinary approach. This partnership offers creative ways of solving land degradation, strengthening the weak linkage between science and implementation of SLM, while noting that more stakeholders are to be involved, including research and academic institutions, development partners, farmers, private sectors, and policy makers.

The concept is also fundamental to assist decision makers in integrating high valued SLM technologies with the existing research and developmental programs. This partnership offers the opportunities of positioning relevant stakeholders to enhance this system more effectively by making use of knowledge base from different sources.

## 2. Purpose

Dissemination of effective SLM technologies and approaches based on scientific evidence and through strengthening institutional arrangement among scientific and technological institutes, and governmental and non-governmental development actors in the Amhara region and beyond.

## 3. Expected outcomes

- (1) Enhancement of Learning Environment among the stakeholders
- (2) Institutional arrangement for implementation of science and development activities towards SLM
- (3) Leverage of the resources of ongoing projects

## 4. Partners

- (1) Amhara Bureau of Agriculture (BoA)  
Responsible institute / disseminator and implementer of verified technologies and approaches through engaging experts, development agents, farmers and others
- (2) Amhara Regional Agricultural Research Institute (ARARI)  
Coordinator for verification of research results at farmers' and experimental plots
- (3) Bahir Dar University (BDU)



Coordinator for overall implementation of the Partnership Agreement research activities

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

- (1) Chair: Deputy Bureau Head (Natural Resource Management sector), Amhara BoA
- (2) Vice chair: Director General, ARARI
- (3) Vice chair: Vice president, BDU
- (4) Coordinator (secretariat): Collaborating unit consists of the College of Agriculture and Environmental Science, BDU, and the research team, Tottori university

## 6. Implementation Structure

Under the responsibility of the chair and commitment taken from the vice chairs, the coordinator assembles the RIP at least twice a year, ideally in January and June, as follows:

### Regional Innovation Platform (RIP)

- The purpose of the RIP is to held stakeholder workshop to mobilize the relevant officers and experts involved in SLM for building a common understanding on key issues, sharing responsibilities and jointly plan activities. The relevant officers and experts consist of the representative and/or delegations by the partners and other relevant institutes. They conduct technical meetings to exchange the progresses and results of their researches and activities under ongoing projects/programs, and to jointly plan the development project activities with sharing their responsibilities on the platform.
- At the field level, it needs to involve the various public and private actors in the agricultural and natural resources management sectors, which include farmer groups, research, extension, land administration, education, service providers such as input suppliers and credit institutions.

## 7. Main functions / Scope of the activities

Under the partnership, the five main functions are expected to demonstrate, and the partners will implement the activities for the functions shown as follows (Refer the Annex 2 "Structure and contents of the partnership").

### (1) Verification of the experimentally tested SLM technologies (Leader: ARARI)

- try the technologies or approaches which have been highly evaluated
- share the datasets or materials, and verify the experimentally tested SLM practices
- approve the Guideline and Manuals developed for implementation of best practices
- develop approach for upscaling
- document the impacts and lessons





**(2) Dissemination of useful SLM methodologies (Leader: BoA)**

- adopt the most effective and efficient SLM practices proven in the previous researches and trial activities
- promote the use of Guideline and Manuals developed by the stakeholders

**(3) Allocation and leverage of the resources (human, land, information, materials, etc.)**

**(All members including communities, Development partners shall contribute)**

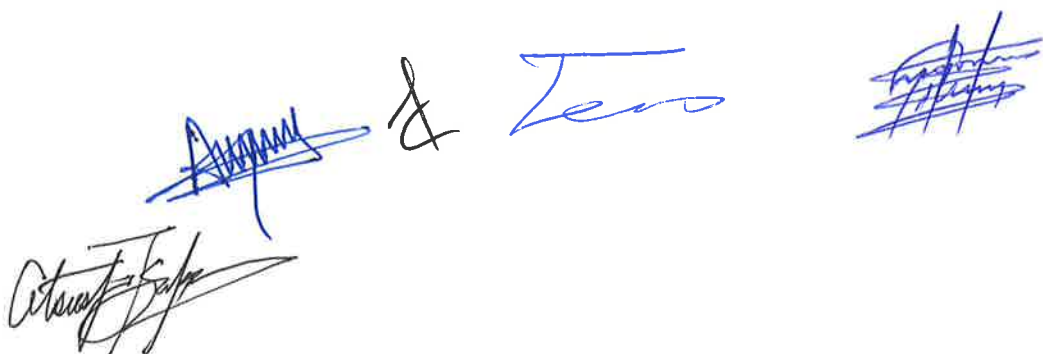
- allocate pilot watershed and research fields based on the experience and needs of the on-going projects for conducting the trial of high potential researches (must be upon commitments by landowners)
- harmonize the duplicated researches or activities among the different partners
- leverage resources among the different researches or development activities based on internal resources and jointly attracted projects from donors
- share human resources for extension service, capacity building, research, social survey, monitoring and evaluation
- superimpose the advanced SLM practices on the ongoing projects in different watersheds

**(4) Set-up of research tasks corresponding to present challenges from the fields (Leader: BDU)**

- share actual challenges and problems farmers are currently facing with, so that the research sectors can set the research tasks based on the reality and take them as the targets for their research plans

**(5) Implement scientific based activities in model watersheds (Leader: BoA)**

- setup a transdisciplinary team from the partner institutes including land users, in cooperation with the collaborative education and research programs (Refer the Annex 3 "Image of the strategy on the function 5")
- hold regular and annual meetings to discuss about project matters
- formulate plausible watershed management scenarios for the model watershed/s based on the experiences gained from SATREPS and other projects
- implement the best scenario that integrates sectors (crop, livestock, forestry, socioeconomics)

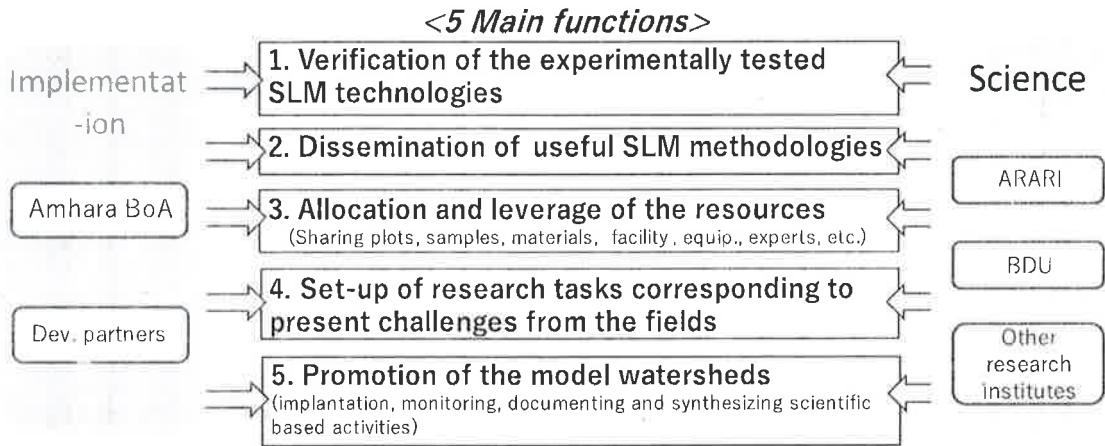


Annex 2

Structure and contents of the partnership

**Regional Research Based Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Partnership**

On the partnership agreement, the following five main functions are outlined:



Annex 3

Image of the strategy on the function 5

