

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE FOR NATURAL RESOURCES IN AFRICA
(UNU-INRA)

Strategic Plan

2015 -2018



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Institute for Natural Resources in Africa



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Institute for Natural Resources in Africa

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Layout: Praise Nutakor, UNU-INRA

Printed By: Pigment Company Limited

(+233 (0) 302 543 121 / +233 243 473 161)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Effective management of natural resources in Africa can spur rapid, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth in the continent. However, in spite of the economic and social benefits, many challenges including human activities – land degradation, water pollution, loss of biodiversity, as well as increased unfavourable climatic conditions, and poor governance, continue to negatively impact on the management of the continent's natural resources. As a natural resources management institute, the United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA) continues to strategically position itself to address the challenges confronting resources management on the continent. This strategic plan (2015-2018) provides the directions for the Institute in the next four years.

The process to develop the plan included a desk review of the previous four-year strategic plan (2011-2014) to identify gaps that would still require attention. This was followed by stakeholder consultation and validation sessions. Taking into consideration existing natural resources management (NRM) challenges confronting the continent, and emerging opportunities in Africa and beyond, the strategic directions for 2015-2018 integrate new approaches into the previous strategic goals. These aim to:

- Empower researchers at African universities and other research institutions to undertake research and dissemination to inform policies on the sustainable, efficient and equitable management of natural resources in Africa;
- Support member states and other UN agencies in generating knowledge on natural resources management issues;

- Strengthen UNU-INRA's organisational structure.

In line with these new strategic directions, the Institute's existing programme areas have also been revised. During the next four years, UNU-INRA will be working on the following programme areas:

- Harnessing Renewable Natural Resources for Efficient and Sustainable Use;
- Promoting a Green Economy;
- Facilitating Good Governance and Management of Non-Renewable Natural Resources in Africa.

To successfully implement the strategic goals, a set of actions will be deployed under the programme areas, with specific focus on the Institute's core activities: research, capacity development and policy advice. In terms of research, the Institute will continue to support African researchers to undertake research on NRM issues to inform policy actions in the priority programme areas. It will also undertake quality research with key universities, research institutions and other organisations including UN Agencies to promote the efficient use of renewable and non-renewable resources.

With regard to capacity development, UNU-INRA will develop and offer internship programmes to enhance the capacity of students and other researchers; carry out training programmes to improve stakeholder understanding of productive ecosystems; and conduct other short-term training activities in relevant programme areas. Moreover, the Institute plans to lay the foundation for the development of flagship post-graduate programmes in strategic areas of resources management



at the end of this strategic period. In this regard, UNU-INRA will pursue discussions already initiated with the University of Dschang in Cameroon and will explore partnership opportunities with other African universities and institutions in the coming years.

Furthermore, the Institute will support African Governments with empirical-based policy advice on NRM issues. It will also provide regular updates on changes on the state of natural resources to key decision makers (local government, state government agencies and other natural resource custodians) through policy briefs and other communication media.

To effectively implement the strategic actions, the Institute will explore opportunities to obtain additional US\$ 10 million contribution to its endowment fund by December, 2018. UNU-INRA also plans to increase the level of special projects contributions to about 5 million USD by the end of 2018. In addition, the Institute will explore opportunities through collaborations with other organisations for research fellows to work on projects at its centres at no cost. Existing reporting, monitoring and evaluation systems such as

project reports and annual reports will be strengthened to enable the Institute remain accountable to stakeholders.

UNU-INRA will also continue to disseminate information on its research findings and other activities to key stakeholders. This will be ensured through the development of a comprehensive communication strategy to complement the implementation of this strategic plan. It is expected that the implementation of this plan will strategically position the Institute to promote the sustainable management of Africa's rich resource wealth in line with the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA) was established in 1985 to bridge the gap between science and natural resources management policies in Africa. A year after the establishment of the Institute, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU), at their 21st ordinary session in Addis Ababa, approved a draft resolution establishing cooperation between UNU-INRA, OAU and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The statutes of UNU-INRA were then approved at the 28th session of UNU Council in 1986. Following a preparatory period, the Institute commenced its activities in 1990.

The mandate of the Institute is to contribute to the sustainable management of Africa's natural resources in a way that maintains the quality of the natural environment and transforms lives. UNU-INRA's main goal is to be a catalyst for knowledge creation and delivery to enhance the efficient use of the continent's natural resources so as to improve livelihoods. The Institute is currently one of the 15 Research and Training Centres / Programmes (RTC/Ps) that constitute the United Nations University's (UNU) worldwide network.

Vision

To be the leading institution in Africa in capacity building for research in natural resources management (NRM).

Mission

To empower African universities and research institutions through capacity strengthening.



Objectives

The objectives of UNU-INRA include the following:

- Assist African countries and other non-African developing countries to better appreciate and mobilise their natural resources to benefit their people;
- Promote the development of natural resources through knowledge generation, application of scientific knowledge, and the development of innovative approaches;
- Increase the understanding of the socio-economic and other dimensions of natural resources in the context of self-reliant development;
- Contribute to the strengthening of African universities and other research institutions by building research and consultancy

capabilities in Africa and other developing countries with respect to their natural resource endowments;

- Encourage inter-disciplinary research and advanced training in the area of natural resources management, and;
- Make scientific knowledge available to policy and decision makers.

Based on its mandate, UNU-INRA continues to address key challenges of natural resources management (NRM) on the African continent. This, the Institute does through the continuous development and implementation of strategic thrusts to guide its operations. Drawing lessons from the previous years' strategic plan (2011 - 2014), this strategic plan (2015 - 2018) will continue to strategically provide the framework to strengthen the capacity of researchers at African universities and other research institutions to undertake research that will inform policies on the sustainable management of the continent's natural resources.

Specifically, this document presents the strategic directions of the Institute from 2015 to 2018. Its aim is to provide guidance to a wide range of stakeholders including UNU council, UNU-INRA's advisory board, management and staff of the Institute and other collaborators.

Starting with this introduction section, the plan provides the context of the new strategic goals, focusing on the key challenges in natural resources

management and opportunities that can be leveraged. It also outlines the Institute's comparative advantages, presents information on the strategy development process with a brief review of the performance of the previous strategic plan (2011 -2014), drawing lessons from emerging opportunities.

More importantly, the document discusses the strategic directions and programme areas for 2015 - 2018 as well as the implementation plan, with highlights on the strategic actions. It also provides the mechanisms for resource mobilisation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, communications, and outlines the approaches for managing risks.



2

STRATEGIC CONTEXT



2.1 Key Issues in Natural Resources Management in Africa

Africa's development will highly depend on how best the continent harnesses its abundant natural resources. These resources have the potential to serve as an engine of growth for African economies. Historically, the mismanagement of the continent's natural resources has resulted in gross corruption, civil wars, social and economic instability, and environmental damages.

The extent to which the continent can overcome these challenges rests with the formulation and implementation of appropriate policies. This section, which sets the tone for the strategic plan, briefly outlines the challenges and opportunities entrenched in the management of Africa's natural resources for sustainable development.

2.1.1 Challenges

Africa is a diverse and complex continent. Its ecological diversity as well as endemic socio-economic problems frequently present challenges to researchers and policy makers. What appears common to many African countries, however, is the progressive degradation of the natural resource environment manifested by deforestation, desertification, depletion of top soil and declining soil fertility, over-extraction of capture fisheries, pollution of water bodies, and loss of biodiversity. The environmental degradation is frequently driven by poverty, which engenders the rush to satisfy present needs without a careful consideration of the long term consequences. Thus, the pressure to survive today leaves little room for assessing the long term economic costs and benefits of natural resources use. The status of the natural resource base has also been aggravated by climate-related extreme events such as droughts and floods.

According to the World Food Programme, Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the highest prevalence (percentage of population) of hunger. One person in four is estimated to be undernourished. Political conflicts and civil wars in many African countries are not only diverting human and material resources needed for development but are also worsening the depletion of Africa's natural resource base.

Resource curse - the counter-intuitive effect of natural resources abundance, remain one of the main challenges aggravating such instability. Under normal circumstances, it is expected that the rich natural resources endowment should translate into economic



progress for the citizens of any nation. In reality, the history of natural resources wealth in majority of African countries, some will argue, has been a curse rather than a blessing. These resources have not driven the expected economic wealth that comes with having them. There are well documented reports on how revenues from these resources have led to massive conflict, corruption and poverty in Africa. The local populations in return have little to show for their country's wealth and instead, are left with a degrading environment and people at risk of diseases.

Despite the rich deposits in diamond, oil and several other minerals, countries in Africa continue to see a decline in income levels and a rise in health risk of their citizens. Countries like Botswana on the other hand, have shown that resource curse or Dutch disease is a phenomenon that can be reversed. It is not because these countries have abundant natural resources than the others, but rather the strong institutions and policies that they have put in place to manage those resources.

Another important element of the current context that must inform research and policy on efficient and sustainable management of Africa's natural assets is the need to link micro-level decision making with national and global level processes. It is equally important to address issues of ownership and property right structures as well as trans-boundary considerations in natural resources management and conservation.

War and conflict in one zone often have consequences for natural resource use across regions. The traditional usufruct land use regime which defined land as an asset left by the ancestors for the benefit of the living and yet guaranteed for those yet unborn has given way to land as a purely tradable commodity, neglecting non-use values and on and off-site positive externalities.

The current knowledge of what drives the change processes in the natural environment is still underdeveloped and there is the need for further work on accounting for the use of natural resources in economic and social development in ways that improve our ability to manage our resources. As a natural resources management institution, UNU-INRA believes that understanding nature and consequences of existing policies on natural resources management needs to be improved in order to gain further insights into the policy gaps which should be addressed.

2.1.2 Opportunities

Despite the challenges, there is no doubt that Africa is blessed with enormous natural resources; rich and abundant renewable and non-renewable resources. According to the African Economic Outlook (2013) report, 22 countries on the continent have been identified by the International Monetary Fund as resource-rich countries, meaning that most of their annual GDP relies on the revenue generated from those resources. Sub-Saharan Africa alone has more than 11 countries among the world fastest growing economies, with an average growth rate of 8.5%.

In addition, Africa's forests host a very significant proportion of the world's reservoir of diverse genetic resources. The continent has the highest reserves of some of the world's most important natural resources, such as chrome, platinum and manganese. It is also one of the world's major sources of crude oil, gold, diamonds, copper, tin, titanium dioxide, coltan (columbite–tantalite), bauxite and uranium. These rich resources provide ample opportunities for addressing the multifaceted development challenges facing the continent. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Africa's economic fortunes in the past few decades have shown a massive shift, especially in countries with rich natural

resources reserves. The global demand for energy and metal resources has incredibly surpassed supply and this provides great opportunities for the continent to use its natural resource wealth to transform the lives of current and future generations. This is because the continent has made significant progress in other areas including reduction in the rate of poverty, child mortality and improvement in education. Wise investment in the continent's natural resources could provide ample opportunity to accelerate the prospect of economic growth on the continent.

With the understanding that economies that depend solely on natural resources to maintain economic growth are not sustainable in the long run, UNU-INRA will aim to promote new ways of thinking about economic progress, by advocating for the use of the continent's resources to promote

initiatives that provide opportunities for inclusive growth. For a guaranteed future growth, current production and consumption patterns of food and energy on the continent must be based on sustainable processes.

In fulfilment of its mandate to be a think-tank of the UN and its member states in Africa, there is an urgent need for UNU-INRA to strategically position itself to support academic, research and development institutions as well as member states and other regional organisations through capacity building and research on natural resources management. This is one way the Institute will tackle the challenges and expand on the opportunities. The strategy will also seek to enhance collaboration with the UN system.





THE INSTITUTE'S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

THE INSTITUTE'S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

UNU-INRA has a number of unique characteristics that underpin its operations. Since its establishment in 1985, the Institute has until 2014 been the only research and training centre or programme of the United Nations University system in Africa. By its mandate, it undertakes independent research without any external influences. UNU-INRA's research and training programmes are of very high relevance to the people of Africa since they aim at informing policies on natural resources management to impact livelihoods.

Below is a summary of the approach to work and what sets UNU-INRA apart:

3.1 UNU-INRA's Approach

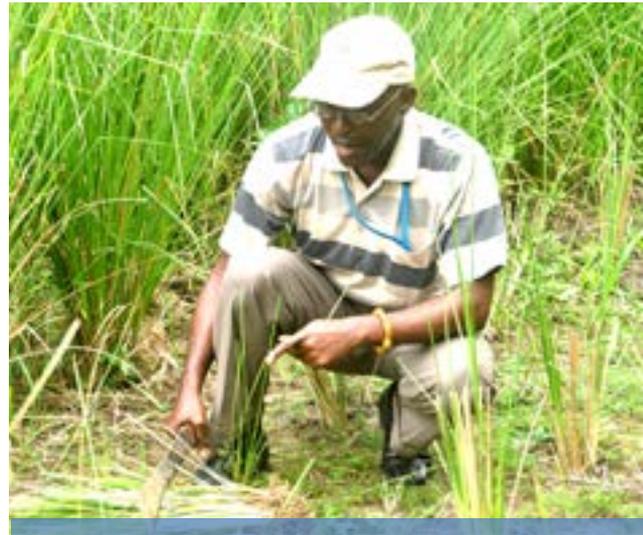
UNU-INRA's activities centre on four core areas: research, capacity development, policy advice and knowledge sharing and transfer.

3.1.1 Research

The Institute conducts innovative and tailor-made cross-cultural and interdisciplinary research on natural resources management (NRM) issues in Africa by using scientific methods and approaches to offer options aimed at contributing to resolving pressing NRM problems. Research projects address challenges in the management of Africa's renewable and non-renewable natural resources.

3.1.2 Capacity Development

The Institute enhances the potential of key stakeholders from universities, research institutions and individuals across Africa through training programmes, so as to



strategically position them to be able to address challenges in the management of natural resources in the continent. This is achieved by developing and organising flagship training programmes on relevant natural resources management challenges including training for professionals on environmental issues as well as the application of tools such as geographical information systems and remote sensing training in natural resources management research in Africa.

3.1.3 Policy Advice

The targeted studies of the Institute aim to inform policy making and to provide policy advice to different stakeholders including African governments so as to inform decisions on the management of the continent's natural resources for sustainable development. As an African institute, UNU-INRA will foster good working relationships with regional organisations, African governments and other policy makers across the continent.

3.1.4 Knowledge Sharing and Transfer

The Institute develops and produces evidence-based materials such as books, working papers, policy briefs, chapters in books, proceedings and conference presentations, journal articles, feature articles and media releases to share research findings with its key stakeholders in academia, government, civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other policy and advocacy groups. It also organises public events such as conferences, seminars, workshops, book launches, and lectures that provide a platform for its stakeholders to share ideas and also offer networking opportunities.

3.2 What Sets UNU-INRA Apart

Although there are other key players addressing natural resources management issues in Africa, UNU-INRA has a number of comparative advantages. First of all, is its sole thematic focus on natural resources management, which is a critical factor in any strategy that aims at transforming the African continent. This is because, natural resources are at the centre of Africa's transformation, contributing almost a third of the continent's recent economic growth.

Secondly, there is a global shift towards transitioning into a green economy. This requires taking into account the interaction between the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development.

Third, the Institute's work is demand-driven and action-oriented buttressed by the Operating Units (OUs) and a College of Research Associates (CRA). The CRA is a network of African scientists that complement the work of UNU-INRA in targeting training and research on natural resources management (NRM) in Africa.

Fourth, UNU-INRA also has a diverse workforce, mostly dominated by highly

qualified African research professionals at its headquarters and at the OU's which are established in Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Namibia, Senegal and Zambia. These scientists, who have the requisite expertise in different areas of natural resources management, support the Institute in fulfilling its mandate.

Fifth, the Institute has a wide client base providing opportunities for networking academia, researchers, policy makers and other key stakeholders. This is clearly important in NRM research which cuts across many disciplines.

Sixth, UNU-INRA has a continent-wide mandate. This allows it to draw on a broad base of experiences, involving a diverse range of African Institutions and individuals carrying out activities in NRM issues.

Finally, UNU-INRA as a UN agency has access to the UN platform, facilitating policy advice and engagement of state and non-state actors. This is especially of great significance given the trans-boundary nature of natural resources management problems.



UNU-INRA in Africa



4

DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY



This plan draws from outputs of a consultative workshop that UNU-INRA organised in early February 2014 involving the Institute's research fellows and three external resource persons, including a member of UNU-INRA's advisory board. The strategy development process specifically involved a stakeholder consultation process and validation.

This strategic plan builds on the key challenges and opportunities identified during the review session on the previous strategic plan, more especially in relation to natural resources management in the African continent.

4.1 Strategy Development Process

As indicated above, a stakeholder consultation session was held, where participants were given the opportunity to share their views on the key challenges and concerns of natural resources management in Africa, which the Institute needed to focus attention on, for the next four-year period.

The participants also had the opportunity to discuss the relevance of strategic directions, and critically analysed the key achievements, challenges and opportunities during the implementation of the last strategic plan. The consultation process led to the development of a detailed feedback which was shared internally with staff for more input. This was further validated at the Institute's 2014 advisory board meeting and staff retreat held in August, 2014. The comments received were synthesised for input into the development of this strategy.

4.2 Performance Review of 2011-2014 Strategic Plan

Analysis of the activities implemented during the 2011-2014 strategic period identified key achievements in the area of research, capacity development, dissemination, resource mobilisation and partnership.

4.2.1 Research

During the period under review, the number of UNU-INRA research projects increased significantly. This is largely due to a programme that enables researchers at African universities to spend time at the Institute as visiting scholars. The Institute's research fellows also carried out research projects in partnership with various international organisations, UN agencies, universities and other research institutions.

Notable among research projects carried out within the 2011-2014 strategic framework include:

- Assessment of the Impact of Soil and Water Conservation Technology Interventions and Household Food Security in Selected Communities in Northern and Upper East Regions of Ghana



- Mainstreaming Energy, Climate Change and Green Economy Instruments in Financial Institutions in Africa
- Economic and Financial Analyses of Small and Medium Food Crops Agro-processing Firms in Ghana
- Enhancing Resilience to Climate and Ecosystems Changes in Semi-Arid Africa (CECAR-Africa Project)
- Enhancing Human Security through Developing Local Capacity for Holistic Community-Based Conflict Prevention in Northern Ghana
- Resilient Landscape for Sustainable Livelihoods Project in Northern Ghana
- Dynamics of Land Use Practices and Sustainable Management of Protected Areas in the Eastern Region of Cote d'Ivoire
- Mushroom Research and Development Projects in Namibia and Senegal
- Unleashing the Potential of African Rural Economies through Green Growth
- Potential of an African Grass Species in Healing Industrial and Domestic Sickwater
- Entrepreneurs, held in Senegal;
- Training Programme on Digital Technology, held in Cameroon;
- Training on Profitability Assessment of Aquaculture Enterprises, held in Namibia;
- International Conference on “Sustainable Development of Natural Resources in Africa, held in Ghana;
- International Conference on Human Security, held in Ghana;
- International Conference on “Beyond Rio+20: Emerging Challenges and Opportunities”, held in Ghana;
- Seminar on National and Trans-boundary Water Resources Management in Africa, held in Ghana; and
- Training Workshop on Green Business, held in Zambia.

UNU-INRA has also developed a post-graduate programme on Sustainable Development Diplomacy. In collaboration with the University of Dschang, Cameroon, the Institute's Operating Unit in Cameroon has developed professional Masters Programmes in Wood Technology, Water and Environment. In addition, over 20 seminars were organised under the Institute's visiting scholars' programmes during the period under review.

4.2.2 Capacity Development

The capacity development mandate of the Institute has also witnessed major accomplishment within the period. A number of training activities, workshops, seminars, conferences, visiting scholars and internship programmes were held during 2011 -2014. These included the following:

- Training activities on Geographical Information and Remote Sensing, held in Ghana;
- Training on Edible Mushroom Production Technics for Young

4.2.3 Dissemination

The Institute has produced several working papers, policy briefs and monographs out of its research results and through the visiting scholars programme. As at the end of 2014, about 28 publications had been produced. These include 11 working papers, 11 policy briefs, and 6 monographs.

The table below presents details of these publications:



UNU-INRA PUBLICATIONS: 2011-2014

Monographs	Working Papers	Policy Briefs
Published		
Koomson, T.A and Asubonteng, K.O (2013). Collaborative Governance in Extractive Industries in Africa	Bello, M.O (2014). Nutrient Potentials of Underutilised Plant Species in Nigeria	Tackling Hidden Hunger: The Potential of Underutilised Plant Species (Muibat O. Bello)
Oku, E, Asubonteng, K.O and Nutakor, P (2014). Harnessing Land and Water Resources for Improved Food Security and Ecosystem Services in Africa	Ikemefuna, E.P (2014). Agricultural Intensification and Climate Effect on Soil Productivity in South-Eastern Nigeria	Adapting to Agricultural Intensity and Climate Impacts on Crop Yields (Peter Ikemefuna Ezeaku)
Koomson, T.A, Fonta, W, Frimpong S and Amoh Boateng, N (2014). Economic and Financial Analyses of Small and Medium Food Crops Agro-Processing Firms in Ghana	Haile, W and Abay, A (2014). Potential of Erythrina Brucei, Erythrina Abyssinica and Ensete Venticosum as Organic Sources of N P K on Small Holder Fields in Southern Ethiopia	Feeding the Soil with Local Plant Genetic Resources (Wassie Haile and Abebe Abay)
	Isikhuemen, E.M (2014). Rainforest Degradation in Southern Nigeria: Role of Forestry Institutions	Salvaging Nigeria's Vanishing Forests (Matthew E. Isikhuemen)
	Nnamani, C.V (2014). Nutritional Assessment of Underutilised Traditional Leafy Vegetables of South-Eastern Nigeria	Nourishing the Malnourished (Catherine V. Nnamani)
	Derkyi, M. A. A (2014). Local People's Perception of Conflict Causes, Effects and Coping Strategies across Forest Regimes in Ghana: Implication for Micro-Level Governance	Conflicts Management in Forest Fringe Communities (Mercy Afua Adutwumwaa Derkyi)
	Fosu-Mensah, H (2013). Modelling the Impact of Climate Change on Maize (Zea Mays L.) Yield under Rainfed Conditions in Sub-Humid Ghana	Reducing Climate Change Impact on Food Security in Ghana (Benedicta Y. Fosu-Mensah)
	Water Resource Management Perspectives in Botswana: A Contrast between the Colonial and the Post-Colonial Periods up to 2010	Water Management for Water Security (Mark Nyandoro)
	Djezou, W. (2013). Community Based Forest Management: Mitigating Farmers' Encroachment in Protected Forests in Cote d'Ivoire	



Under Preparations for Publication

Promoting Green Economy for Natural Resources Development, Food Security and Poverty Reduction in Africa	Modelling Agronomic and Economic Flux in a Small Watershed in Niger River Basin: case of Kourani-Baria, (Adam Mamadou)	Modelling Agronomic and Economic flux in a Small Watershed in Niger River Basin: Case of Kourani-Baria. (Adam Mamadou)
Harnessing Innovative Indigenous Climate Change Mitigation Strategies for Enhancing Livelihoods of Smallholder Women Farmers in Ghana by Koomson, T.A, Frimpong, S, and Amoh Boateng, N	Using Vetiver Technology to Improve Productivity in Slope Farming (Effiom E. Oku, Emil Olorun A. Aiyelari and Kwabena O. Asubonteng)	Reversing Challenges of Slope Farming and Securing Livelihood in Nigeria (Effiom, E. Oku, Emil Olorun, A. Aiyelari and Kwabena O. Asubonteng)
		Community Based Forest Management: Mitigating Farmers' Encroachment in Protected Forests in Cote d'Ivoire (Djezou Wadjamsse B)
Enhancing Human Security for Holistic Community-Based Conflict Prevention		

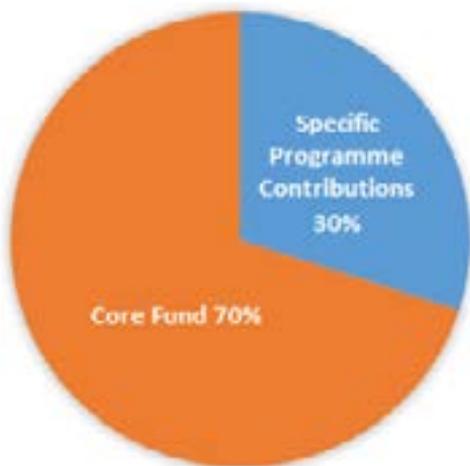
UNU-INRA research fellows have contributed several articles which have been published in leading international journals. The Institute has also disseminated widely its research findings, projects and events through press releases, feature articles and newsletters. The increased participation of UNU-INRA research fellows in international conferences, workshops and other research fora has also played a critical role in enhancing the Institute's visibility.

4.2.4 Resource Mobilisation (2011-2014)

UNU-INRA's funding improved during the period under review. As presented in the chart below, large proportion of UNU-INRA's funding came from its core funding (endowment fund and support from the United Nations University Centre). The Government of Zambia has renewed payment of its contribution, and the Government of Ghana has also continued to make its committed contribution to the Endowment Fund. In addition to this, the Institute was successful in mobilising



support for its programmes by raising more than 2 million USD through Special Programme Contributions (SPC).



UNU-INRA Funding

4.2.5 Partnership (2011-2014)

With regard to achievements in collaborative efforts during the implementation of the last strategic plan, UNU-INRA has played a key role as a think-tank of the UN during the past four years. The Institute provided intellectual leadership in a joint UN programme on human security which brought together five other UN agencies in Ghana. The Institute is currently involved in a new initiative with other UN agencies on Disaster Risk Reduction/Climate Change Adaptation (DDR/CCA). Also, UNU-INRA participated in a meeting to develop a common African position for the Rio + 20 conference.

UNU-INRA has established very strong collaboration with regional organisations. These include the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). UNU-INRA is also collaborating with a

number of universities and think-tanks in Africa on various projects and programmes.

4.3 Building on the Previous Strategy

The implementation of the previous strategic plan witnessed some internal challenges. These include funding and limited geographical coverage of the Institute in Africa. However, in spite of these challenges, there are emerging opportunities in the external environment, which when exploited could transform UNU-INRA into the leading natural resources management think tank that its founders envisaged it to be.

First of all, there is a high interest within the UN, African Union, regional and international bodies for work on NRM issues. This puts the Institute in a position to translate any support emanating from the interest exhibited by international agencies into exciting research and capacity building initiatives.

Secondly, there is recognition of the need for concrete steps to be taken in developing a data repository for natural resources management in Africa and NRM index reporting system. Thirdly, the need to mainstream NRM into development issues such as health, nutrition and economics is clearly evident.

In response to these opportunities, UNU-INRA will adopt an entrepreneurial approach in identifying needs and in building smart partnerships with similar thinking institutes and organisations. The Institute will design and develop robust programmes and knowledge management systems that respond to specific needs of its partners and which will enable it become a renowned authority on natural resources management in the African continent.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PROGRAMME AREAS (2015-2018)

While the challenges associated with the sustainable and efficient management of Africa's natural resources are perennial, the nature of these challenges are constantly changing as a result of various external factors including urban development pressures, climate change, changes in economic circumstances, and changing societal attitudes. However, it is clear from the proceeding discussions that, natural resources will play a central role in the transformation of African economies as the natural resource base of the continent comprises as much as 25% of total per capita wealth compared to only 2% in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries (World Bank, 2006).

In addition, taking into consideration the need to strengthen the research capacity at African universities and other research institutions, as well as the need for UNU-INRA to position itself to provide support to the UN System and other regional organisations, new strategies will be integrated into the previous ones in order to promote the sustainable management of the continent's resources for development.

5.1 Strategic Directions

In line with the above, UNU-INRA has identified three main directions that will shape the Institute's activities from 2015 to 2018. During the plan period, the Institute aims to:



Strategic Directions		
Empower researchers at African universities and other research institutions to undertake research and dissemination to inform policies on the sustainable, efficient and equitable management of natural resources in Africa.	Support member states and other UN agencies in generating knowledge on emerging natural resources management issues.	Strengthen UNU-INRA's organisational structure.

5.1.1 Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic Goal - I: Empower Researchers at African Universities and other Research Institutions

As already indicated, the 2015-2018 strategic plan will build on the previous strategic plan to provide a framework for the Institute in the next four years. So, strategic goal I is similar to the strategy one in the previous strategic plan.

Objective

- Continue to provide a platform for capacity strengthening for African universities and other research institutions in research, knowledge development and delivery.

Strategic Goal -II: Support Member States and other UN Agencies

This strategic goal is in line with a new orientation of the United Nations University (UNU), relating to its mandate of being a think-tank of the UN. UNU-INRA's experiences in working with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Ghana, and with other UN agencies in Ghana and in other countries including Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire and Zambia, suggest that UNU institutes can position themselves to provide support to the UN system.

Objective

- Provide support for the UN and its member states in Africa based on the high interest within the UN and other regional bodies on natural resources management challenges.

Strategic Goal -III: Strengthen UNU-INRA's Organisational Structure

The strategic goal I and II complement each other in the sense that they emphasize the programmatic aspects of the Institute's work. Strategic goal III focuses on the organisational structure and performance of the Institute.

Objective

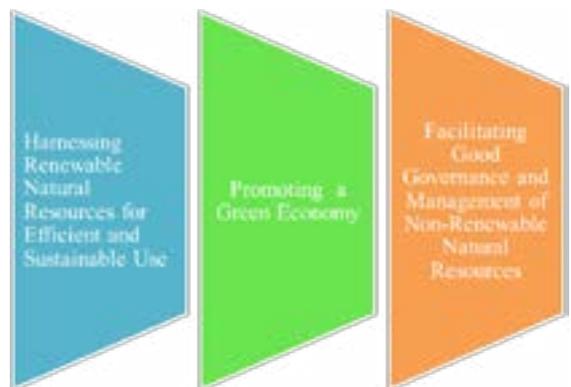
- Ensure that UNU-INRA has the requisite structures and capacity to operationalise its activities and to deliver its expected outputs and outcomes.

The three strategic directions will consolidate achievements of the last four years and sharpen the focus of the work of the Institute during the 2015-2018 plan period. It is believed that through this, UNU-INRA will be able to redefine its capacity strengthening role and its ability to empower African universities, research institutions and support other organisations to play a central role in improving livelihoods through the efficient

management of natural resources on the African continent.

5.2 Programme Areas

Within the context of the new strategic directions, existing programme areas (PAs) have been refined to reflect the new focus and take advantage of emerging opportunities. For example, work on governing and managing the extractive industries will not only be deepened to include issues of equity but also broadened in scope to include NRM governance issues, in general. Consequently, during the 2015-2018 plan period, UNU-INRA will work in the following programme areas:



As with the strategic directions, the themes under these programme areas are similar to those under the previous programme areas in the 2011-2014 strategic plan. The Institute believes that the redefined programme areas will make room for the development of large scale and more ambitious projects. They will also provide ample opportunities to develop projects that are at the intersection of the needs of member states and those of the UN.

These programme areas fall within two thematic clusters of UNU work programme. These are:

- Global Development and Inclusion and;
- Environment, Climate and Energy.





PA 1: Harnessing Renewable Natural Resources for Efficient and Sustainable Use

Over the past few decades, human activities have put intense pressure on biological resources in such a way that, there is not enough time for them to regenerate adequately. Renewable resources are usually considered as the foundation for livelihoods and food security in many African countries. This is because it is estimated that about 70 percent of the labour force in many African countries work in agriculture, which largely depends on renewable natural resources including land, water, forest and livestock.

However, in view of population growth, water availability has become insufficient in many countries across the continent. Despite this, pollution of the limited water resources seems to be on the increase. Soil erosion due to poor cultural practices, deforestation and overgrazing are also main problems affecting renewable natural resources management.

These issues, which are leading to environmental degradation and food insecurity on the continent call for a more vigorous approach to the management of Africa's renewable resources. In line with

this, this programme area will address issues affecting renewable resources on the continent. Its specific thematic areas will include:

- Evaluating and monitoring the state of renewable natural resources including land and water resources in Africa;
- Introducing technologies for improved on-and off-farm water use and management, including recycling and water harvesting;
- Understanding the potential and challenges of payment on ecosystem services (PES), and;
- Exploring climate change adaptation through forecasting, early warning and adaptive capacity development for sustainable livelihoods.





PA 2: Promoting a Green Economy

African economies are undoubtedly highly dependent on natural resources, which underpin the development of many nations across the continent. However, as indicated above, the exploitation of these resources has resulted in many challenges including the degradation of biodiversity and ecosystems, leading to persistent poverty and low human development on the continent. Addressing these issues in a sustainable way, which simultaneously takes into consideration the economic, social and environmental dimensions, has brought about the concept of green economy.

Under this programme area, UNU-INRA aims to encourage policy formulation, implementation and investment in the use of natural resources to promote inclusive growth, social protection and environmental protection. The main themes for this programme area include:

- Providing empirical evidence on how green growth strategies can unleash the potential of rural African economies;
- Training stakeholders on payment for ecosystem service (PES) as a potential means of lifting poor rural households out of poverty and ensuring future environmental security and sustainability;
- Designing strategies to develop and sustainably exploit the potential of biodiversity-based industries; and
- Determining the environmental and economic impact and relevance of invasive species on biodiversity and food security.



PA 3: Facilitating Good Governance and Management of Non-Renewable Natural Resources

Many African countries are rich in non-renewable resources including oil, gas and minerals, which account for a greater portion of export revenue in these countries. Despite this, most of these states lack strong institutions that are required to promote the formalisation of resource flows, control environmental impacts, and effectively channel the revenue stream from natural resources to national economic and social development. Lack of accountability and transparency in managing these resources has led to conflicts, corruption and poverty in some of these countries.

The focus of this programme area therefore, is to address some of the issues related to the management of non-renewable resources in Africa. This will include equity and governance considerations. Its priority themes include:

- Determining the potential of large and sustained private sector investment in the extraction and value addition to Africa's agro-minerals including local phosphates and rare elements
- Understanding and managing mineral extraction and conflicts;
- Conducting needs assessment and capacity development for negotiations and implementation of natural resources-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs);
- Examining policy options to create incentives for investments in alternative energy production (bio/hydro energy solar, wind).



6

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY



The effective management of natural resources in Africa requires a collaborative approach. Working together with relevant stakeholders within and outside the continent, UNU-INRA will deploy vibrant tactical actions towards the achievement of the strategic goals.

6.1 UNU-INRA Business Model

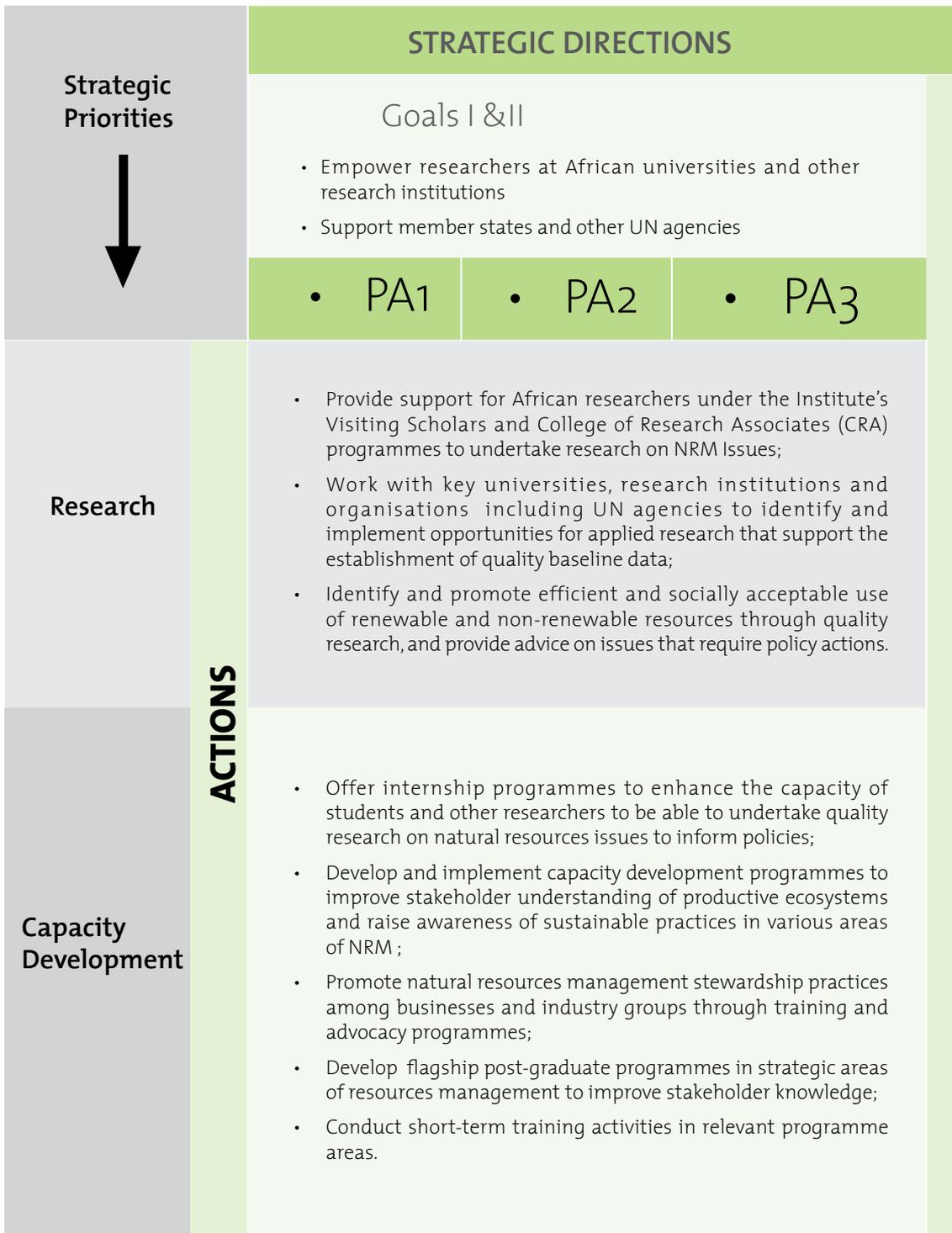
The Institute's operational modalities will include staff at its headquarters, the Operating Units (OU), visiting scholars

and the College of Research Associates (CRA). It is envisaged that not more than 10 senior research fellows will be located at the headquarters. The CRA will be restructured so as to link the past to the future. Specifically, a new approach will aim to identify bright young researchers who will work directly with CRA fellows.

A new policy about the location and functions of the OUs will also be explored. One possible option is for the mandate of the OU to be based on regional and/or agro-ecological specificities.



6.2 The Plan



<p>Policy Advice</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support African Governments with empirical-based policy advice to implement multilateral agreements and national regulatory frameworks that stimulate and promote sustainable NRM; • Improve accessibility and use of the best available science, and research (including social and economic) on natural resource condition, threats and natural resource management issues available to stakeholders; • Provide regular updates on changes in resource condition to key decision makers (local government, state government agencies and other natural resource custodians) through policy briefs and other communication media. 	
	<p>ACTIONS</p>	<p>Goal III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen UNU-INRA's organisational structure 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put in place mechanisms and structures to improve the efficiency of the Institute; • Encourage collaboration among the OUs on research projects to maximise synergy; • Develop a database and create alumni of past fellows, visiting scholars and interns and organize regular fora, at least once every year for knowledge sharing; • Continue to carry out periodic capacity building programmes to share ideas and improve knowledge. 	

6.3 Resource Mobilisation (2015-2018)

To be able to carry out its programmes, projects and activities successfully, UNU-INRA will continue to explore opportunities for expanding the number of countries contributing to its Endowment Fund. In this regard, a multi-prong strategy will be utilised. This will involve approaching countries individually and equally through the regional organisations such as ECOWAS,

West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) and the African Union. The target is to obtain an additional US\$10 million contribution to UNU-INRA's Endowment Fund by December 2018.

As in the past, UNU-INRA will also continue to respond to calls for proposals and develop special programmes / projects to be submitted to donors. Every effort will be made to request for funding support only in areas that address the priority thematic

programmes of the Institute. In terms of growth, the Institute envisages to increase special projects contributions (SPC) to about 5 million USD by 2018. It should be noted that SPC have increased by more than 2 million USD since 2010, more than any time in the history of the Institute. This has been mainly due to UNU-INRA's ability to leverage its own research to attract external funding. This approach will be pursued in the future by developing in-house research that is forward-looking.

Besides expanding the Endowment Fund and developing special projects, UNU-INRA will seek collaborative arrangements that allow researchers to visit the Institute at no cost, especially through secondment programmes.

6.4 Partnership (2015-2018)

As an Institute that is positioning itself to better serve African Governments, institutions and organisations with empirical-based policy advice and relevant capacity development programmes on natural resources management matters in Africa, partnership with like-minded organisations is very crucial to UNU-INRA's core activities. The Institute will intensify its partnerships with international, regional and national organisations and networks to obtain maximum results from limited resources. It will seek to forge strategic partnerships with key institutions to derive sustained long-term benefits. Specifically, in implementing this strategic plan, UNU-INRA will:

- Assess existing institutional relationships;
- Develop a set of criteria for identifying new partners;
- Establish or strengthen partnerships where there is scope for complementing each other's financial, technical and human resources;

- Establish protocols for entering into medium and long-term institutional arrangements
- Continue to work on establishing partnerships with the private sector to forge synergies.

6.5 Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation

Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation are important elements of this strategy and its implementation. These will enable UNU-INRA to be accountable to African countries and other partner organisations investing in its activities. Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation will also enable key stakeholders to learn about the effectiveness of actions being undertaken so that they can be adjusted if necessary. These will also ensure that programmes and investments achieve desired outcomes.

6.5.1 Reporting

UNU-INRA will improve on its existing reporting systems and also institute other effective mechanisms of documenting its activities. It will continue with existing reporting modalities such as annual reports, the financial reporting systems-ATLAS, which is a customised financial and project management software, as well as internal progress and final reports on projects, programmes and events.

The Institute will enforce a more effective use of Pelikan, which is a customised project management software developed by UNU. This will also help provide regular and timely updates on all projects that the Institute is implementing.

6.5.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

A close monitoring of all UNU-INRA's activities will be done through the regular activity reports and projects progress reports. Also, the Institute will continue to carry out evaluations of its



training activities, workshops, seminars, conferences and other events to determine the appropriateness of the contents and the effectiveness of the organisation and delivery. Periodic evaluation of the Institute's partnerships and collaborations will also be undertaken to provide feedback for decision making.

6.6 Communications

The aim of communication is to get the right information to the right people through the right medium in a timely manner. Advancement in information and communications technologies (ICT) continues to have great impact on knowledge dissemination and transfer. This has compelled many institutions like UNU-INRA to prioritise the dissemination of research results in more innovative ways to the benefits of target audiences.

In implementing this strategic plan, UNU-INRA will step up its efforts to disseminate widely. A comprehensive communication strategy will be developed and the Institute will also continue to enhance the capacity of its communications team to improve delivery. The following concrete efforts shall be taken to communicate better with the Institute's key stakeholders:

- **Academia** – Continue to produce scientific reports including working papers on its research projects to share knowledge with students and faculty members in universities and other institutions. Improve on mode of delivering academic seminars, workshops, fora and conferences to make them more impact driven.
- **African Governments and other Policy Makers** – Continue to make its findings readily available through policy briefs, seminars, workshops, conferences, and through other platforms including stakeholder engagement and panel discussion sessions.
- **Private Sector** – Engage sector industries more closely to share

information on the Institute's activities and their impact on economic well-being.

- **General Public** – Share information on research results with the public to inform them on the impact of the findings on livelihoods through press releases and feature articles. News stories will be complemented with targeted media advocacy campaigns on issues of public interest to derive more impact. Social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook will also be leveraged for knowledge sharing.

6.7 Managing Risks

The implementation of the strategic actions outlined in this document is highly dependent on the successful coordination of collaborative actions between UNU-INRA staff and also with other organisations and institutions including African universities / institutions, international, regional and national partners and UN agencies. UNU-INRA's ability to secure sufficient financial resources will also determine how these activities are executed. This section provides a brief outline of some of the key anticipated implementation risks and discusses the actions that will be taken to address them.

6.7.1 Insufficient Funding

UNU-INRA aims at securing sufficient funding to implement the strategic actions in this plan. The Institute will continue its resource mobilisation drive more extensively with African countries that are yet to contribute to its endowment fund and also with international and regional partners and other donors.

6.7.2 Duplication of Projects

UN agencies have their respective research teams and consultants that carry out natural resources management related projects. With the new strategic direction to support them in knowledge generation,



there could be competition and duplication of projects. UNU-INRA will seek to build synergies with UN agencies to carry out policy relevant projects to promote the Post-2015 Sustainable Development agenda.

6.7.3 Poor Stakeholder Relationship

Every collaboration carries significant risk associated with potential breakdown in the relationship between the parties

involved, usually due to factors such as miscommunication or conflicts over roles. Management of this strategy will require effective management of stakeholder relationships on an ongoing basis to promote constant information flow. Due diligence will be taken to ensure that projects / programme agreements provide appropriate mechanisms for resolution of inevitable differences or conflicts that may arise in the course of project delivery.



CONCLUSION

UNU-INRA is on a good course, which has been clearly demonstrated by the SWOT analysis undertaken and the performance review of the previous strategy. The Institute's key achievements, challenges and opportunities show that there are many opportunities to be taken up. There is an increasing awareness of what the challenges are. UNU-INRA therefore has opportunities it could take during the 2015-2018 plan period especially as there are critical issues that need attention. Existing challenges call for a new thinking on how to work in different regions and ecological zones; and on sharing knowledge, skills and lessons within and between regions and different ecological zones.

Within this context, the CRA remains an important modality which will be used to make a difference. OUs will be restructured taking into account context specific modifications that may be necessary. In fulfilment of its mandate, UNU-INRA will conduct short-term training activities in relevant programme areas. It will pursue the development of post-graduate programmes in a pragmatic manner. UNU-INRA's association and collaboration with universities at locations where it has operating units is a fertile



ground for developing joint post-graduate programmes.

For a successful implementation, the Institute will develop a resource mobilization strategy, a communication strategy and an implementation plan to accompany this strategic plan.



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