

Assessing the Credibility of Disclosed Corporate Engagements in Landscape and Jurisdictional Approaches

July 2023



About this document

This paper introduces a maturity matrix developed by CDP to assess the credibility of disclosed landscape and jurisdictional approaches (LA/JA) in 2022. The matrix contains the core criteria of effective, robust approaches taken from work by CDP and other thought leaders. Within CDP, the matrix will be used to assess the quality of future LA/JA disclosure through CDP's forests questionnaire.

Landscape Approach

A place-based management approach that involves the collaboration of stakeholders in a landscape to advance shared sustainability goals and build resilience. It aims to reconcile and optimize multiple social, economic, and environmental objectives across multiple economic sectors and land uses. Such approaches are implemented through land-use plans, policies, initiatives, long-term investments, and other interventions.

Jurisdictional Approaches

A type of landscape approach to advance shared sustainability goals where the landscape is defined by administrative boundaries of subnational governments and the approach is implemented with a high level of government involvement.

With a
300%
increase in the
number of companies
disclosing LA/JA
engagement from
2021-2022, there
resulted a need to
develop consensus
around the criteria
that define robust and
effective corporate
engagements in LA/JA.

LA/JAs, when successfully implemented, can address systemic issues of deforestation, biodiversity loss, poverty, and sustainable development at the landscape/jurisdictional scale, typically unsolvable by individual actors alone¹.

Since 2020, CDP has collected information on corporate engagement with landscape approaches through its forests questionnaire. Increasing numbers of companies have disclosed involvement with LA/JA as conveners, partners, supporters, or funders, taking a variety of actions to support sustainability goals at a landscape level. Corporate disclosure on LA/JA in 2020 and 2021 reported preliminary insights into how companies perceive the concept of LA/JA and how to best gather this information², and disclosure in 2022 revealed that companies are increasingly realizing the importance of engaging with LA/JA.

CDP holds the largest data repository on corporate engagements in LA/JA. The concept of LA/JA has been theorised in the literature and implemented by companies, NGOs, and local governments for decades, and it is increasingly being implemented and tested worldwide. With a 300% increase in the number of companies disclosing LA/JA engagement from 2021-2022, there resulted a need to develop consensus around the criteria that define robust and effective corporate engagements in LA/JA.

¹ JA Resources Hub. [How Jurisdictional Approaches Work - JA Hub \(jaresourcehub.org\)](https://www.jaresourcehub.org)

² CDP. [October 2021. Collective action: Corporate engagement in landscape and jurisdictional approaches. CDP Global Corporate Report on Forest Jurisdictional Approaches.pdf](#)

Maturity matrix and criteria

A credible disclosed landscape and jurisdictional initiative must incorporate four key criteria:



1

Scale: Operation of the initiative or strategy should be at the scale of a landscape or jurisdiction. Every LA/JA should demonstrate operation or alignment at the scale of a recognized ecological or administrative area.



2

Multi-stakeholder process or platform: The visions and needs of relevant stakeholders should be included in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of an initiative. Usually, this requires an established or formal governance structure that meets in a frequent and structured way to discuss and make decisions about the course of the landscape goals and implementation strategy.



3

Collective goals and actions: An effective LA/JA should determine and act upon goals shared among relevant stakeholders, addressing sustainable development, human well-being, landscape conservation and restoration.



4

Transparent reporting or information system: Baseline assessments, transparent accountability, and the integration of public monitoring systems are crucial for corporates to demonstrate action, and contributions to landscape level performance and outcomes. According to the 2022 CDP disclosure insights, this criterion is usually the least developed on corporate engagements in LA/JA.

Figure 1. Summary of key elements of LA/JAs



Nearly half of the corporate engagements in LA/JA disclosed in 2022 satisfied these baseline criteria. Many initiatives went further, however, integrating comprehensive reporting frameworks, strong governance systems, or thorough collective action plans. Based on these criteria, companies' disclosure is assessed against the following three levels:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <p>Uncertain</p> | <p>The landscape or jurisdictional approach does not qualify as credible or mature. Initiatives not qualifying either do not operate at the scale of a recognized geographic, administrative, or ecological boundary, or do not demonstrate evidence of addressing or planning to address the additional three criteria.</p> |
| <p>Partial</p> | <p>The initiative is in an early or middle stage of development and demonstrates that it is progressing steadily toward maturity. The initiative should comply with the first criteria of scale and companies should be able to demonstrate that actions or investments are supporting the progress toward complying with the three additional criteria.</p> |
| <p>Comprehensive</p> | <p>The landscape or jurisdictional approach is robust and at a stage of maturity to deliver lasting sustainability outcomes in the landscape in question. Companies engaging in comprehensive initiatives should be able to demonstrate that the initiatives fully incorporate all four criteria of landscape and jurisdictional approaches.</p> |



The following Maturity Matrix combines the four key criteria with the levels of maturity, which can be used as a starting point to determine whether a disclosed initiative contains the elements necessary for lasting positive impact.

| | Operation at the scale of a landscape or jurisdiction | Multi-stakeholder process or platform | Multiple and collective goals and actions | Transparent reporting or information system |
|---------------|---|--|---|--|
| Comprehensive | <p>Scale of initiative corresponds to a recognized geographic, administrative, or ecological boundary.</p> <p>Ex. The initiative works in a subnational jurisdiction partnership between three municipalities that support the management of a watershed.</p> | <p>Several stakeholders from various branches of society involved in the design, monitoring, and implementation.</p> <p>Ex. NGO's, local communities, local governments, private sector regularly meet to collaborate on the initiative.</p> | <p>Goals are determined by all involved stakeholders and support the human well-being, livelihoods, and environmental sustainability of the landscape across time scales.</p> <p>Ex. The landscape stakeholders have agreed on their vision for sustainable development, using collaborative workshops for goal and target-setting in early project stages.</p> | <p>Progress on shared metrics is monitored by several involved stakeholders and is publicly reported.</p> <p>Ex. The company supported the establishment of the landscape initiative's official monitoring system, which transparently tracks progress against the collective goals.</p> |
| Partial | <p>Scale of initiative corresponds to a recognized geographic, administrative, or ecological boundary.</p> <p>Ex. The initiative works in a subnational jurisdiction partnership between three municipalities that support the management of a watershed.</p> | <p>Some stakeholder groups are involved.</p> <p>Ex. The company collaborates with an NGO that is supporting the landscape partnership, with no local representation or collaboration with government.</p> | <p>Goals go beyond internal company objectives and are determined by stakeholders, or plan to be developed collaboratively.</p> | <p>Goals go beyond internal company objectives and are determined by stakeholders, or plan to be developed collaboratively.</p> <p>Ex. A company supports the initiative to improve its traceability and certification strategy, while also having a designated conservation area.</p> |
| Unlikely | <p>Area of initiative is limited to specific sourcing plots/ plantations of company interest, covers several geographically distinct and separate boundaries, or does not describe any boundary.</p> | <p>Only the reporting company is involved in the initiative.</p> | <p>Only internal company objectives are included, or goals have not yet been determined.</p> <p>Ex. Selected goals and qualitative responses only address responsible sourcing.</p> | <p>Only the reporting company carries out monitoring and reporting for their own goals; there is not a collective monitoring framework in place.</p> |

Incorporation into Science Based Targets for Land – Landscape engagement

In May 2023, the Science Based Targets Network (SBTN) launched the first methodology for companies to assess, measure, and set targets to reduce their negative impacts on nature, starting with land and freshwater³. A broad array of stakeholders, including CDP, informed and provided inputs to the development of these targets. The third Land Target, Landscape Engagement, encourages companies to directly engage in landscapes relevant to their direct operations or supply chains, creating enabling conditions for environmental and social sustainability at scale. Referred to in the Land Technical Guidance as the Maturity Matrix⁴, SBTN incorporated the following characteristics of LA/JA, levels of maturity, and matrix into the Landscape Engagement target.



³ Science Based Targets Network. N.D. Set targets. Set Targets – Science Based Targets Network

⁴ Science Based Targets Network (2023). Step 3: Measure, Set, Disclose: LAND (Version 0.3). Technical-Guidance-2023-Step3-Land-v0.3.pdf (sciencebasedtargetsnetwork.org)

We thank ISEAL, SYSTEMIQ, Tropical Forest Alliance and Proforest for their valuable inputs provided on this methodology. We recognize that LA/JAs are an evolving topic, and therefore this methodology must continuously be adapted based on improvements, science, and lessons learned in the journey of companies engaging in LA/JA initiatives.

Author:

Norma Mercedes Pedroza Arceo
and
David Kosciulek

For more information, please contact:

forest@cdp.net

About CDP

CDP is a global non-profit that runs the world's environmental disclosure system for companies, cities, states and regions. Founded in 2000 and working with more than 740 financial institutions with over \$130 trillion in assets, CDP pioneered using capital markets and corporate procurement to motivate companies to disclose their environmental impacts, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, safeguard water resources and protect forests. Nearly 20,000 organizations around the world disclosed data through CDP in 2022, including more than 18,700 companies worth half of global market capitalization, and over 1,100 cities, states and regions. Fully TCFD aligned, CDP holds the largest environmental database in the world, and CDP scores are widely used to drive investment and procurement decisions towards a zero carbon, sustainable and resilient economy. CDP is a founding member of the Science Based Targets initiative, We Mean Business Coalition, The Investor Agenda and the Net Zero Asset Managers initiative. Visit cdp.net or follow us @CDP to find out more.