

The International LAND Network (iLAND)

iLAND is a project to support the growth and development of an international network of **permaculture Learning and Demonstration projects**.



Aims of the iLAND Network

The aims of the iLAND project are:

1. To encourage more good quality demonstration projects that feature permaculture design to be created and to grow and operate effectively
2. To help national and regional permaculture organisations and networks to establish their own LAND systems, informed or guided by iLAND information.
3. To increase the availability and accessibility of high-quality permaculture courses and education resources, particularly in languages other than in English.
4. Support and enhance the skills, knowledge, confidence and experience of educators, facilitators and pioneers in the field of permaculture education and related disciplines.

The intention is that the iLAND network will help permaculture to be demonstrated, learned and valued by many more people, as the best way to understand permaculture is to see it in action.

By achieving these aims the iLAND network will enable more people to benefit from demonstration education projects so that, for example, they can implement the underlying principles and techniques of sustainable food growing, soil health, good nutrition and ecologically sound land design.

What is an iLAND centre?

Essentially, iLAND centres are 'Learning And Demonstration' centres – however, a fuller version of the LAND acronym that describes all the dimensions of activity they are involved in is 'Learning-Action-Networking-and-Demonstration' Centre.

iLAND Centres are projects which show, explain and describe to trainees, visitors, volunteers and an interested public, how to apply the principles, ethics and practices of permaculture in their local area and region. They are good examples of permaculture in practice. They need not focus exclusively on permaculture, and will often provide education in and demonstration of the essential principles and practices of agroecology, sustainable nutrition, and / or sustainable water management, sanitation and health issues, as well as ecological building and renewable energy.

The international iLAND network aims to cater for people from all walks of life, speaking many different languages, so that they can learn the principles, ethics and practices of permaculture in a locally and culturally relevant way. The network aims to help iLAND centres develop stronger local and regional groups, networks and organisations, by sharing best practice between the projects, and by learning from other relevant projects. The iLAND network is also a way for the global permaculture movement to collaborate more in proving that permaculture works, by educating more people, and collecting information and research from different centres.

The iLAND project learns from and is inspired by successful permaculture and agroecology education projects around the world, including the UK LAND project that created a network of over 80 LAND centres, with over 40,000 people visiting those centres during the initial phase of the project¹.

iLAND Network Objectives and Outcomes

The Objectives and Outcomes for the iLAND network project are:

- **LEARN:** each centre will deliver or host introductory permaculture courses, practical permaculture short courses and Permaculture Design Certificate courses, support the training and development

¹ See <https://www.permaculture.org.uk/land>

of teachers in these and related disciplines, and encourage the formation of local or regional **teachers guilds** for collaboration and peer-to-peer support.

- **RESOURCES:** to create and improve permaculture education resources that are useful to iLAND Centres and other demonstration projects in languages appropriate to each centre's region.
- **NETWORK:** create an international network of publicly accessible best practice learning and demonstration centres, covering the world's major languages, with a set of agreed criteria and a system of validation to endorse those centres.
- **QUALITY ASSURANCE:** to enable teachers and courses that want or need accreditation to access existing proven quality assurance systems within the permaculture movement where they are relevant and available (note: this is not a condition or criteria for iLAND centres)
- **OUTREACH:** iLAND centres will deliver local presentations, host group visits, and host regional or national skill sharing and training event for new and existing practitioners, and provide volunteer or work experience opportunities for local people.

The Benefits of the iLAND Network

The project seeks to create a variety of benefits and types of support for iLAND centres:

- A set of iLAND Criteria that help projects to understand and implement the important elements and relationships that create an effective, informative and inspiring permaculture learning and demonstration centre.
- Access to shared resources (such as curriculum guidelines: Introduction; Practical Permaculture; PDC; Training of Teachers; Diploma) and support for translations, including developing new courses or formats to ensure they are appropriate to the local and regional populations for each centre.
- Access to best practice examples of how other centres have been successful, to help support, develop and expand their work e.g. Case Studies and good practice guides.
- Belonging to a recognised network so that projects can share skills and engage with each other, including 'twinning' between centres, that is also collaborating with a range of national and international permaculture organisations to provide increased credibility and higher profile.
- A web profile that provides an opportunity for projects to 'show and tell' to potential visitors, funders and the network, building a feeling of being part of a global network and community.

Criteria for iLAND Centres

The purpose of the iLAND Criteria is to help projects to understand and implement best practice in permaculture demonstration and education. They aim to help guide decision making for projects so that they can cater effectively for a growing local and regional interest in permaculture, and so that they can connect with farmers, schools, community groups, researchers and others to show how permaculture education can address their needs and challenges.

To work toward becoming a recognised iLAND centre you need to provide evidence to:

- demonstrate the 10 essential criteria
- meet or work towards the 4 desirable criteria.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA:

EDUCATION, LEARNING & DEMONSTRATION CRITERIA:

- 1) **Demonstration:** demonstrate local sustainable food growing and permaculture in action on site, with appropriate signage and information available to aid understanding.
- 2) **Learning:** have a programme of permaculture training and events, including involvement in local-regional permaculture tutor training and a system of quality assurance for PDCs.
- 3) **Resources:** have educational & training resources available for visitors, and be committed to helping develop and improve existing and new education resources, including in the most relevant language(s) for your region

DESIGN CRITERIA:

- 4) Have a project design for your site (land design) and project (e.g. education systems design) that you are committed to implementing which clearly incorporates permaculture ethics, principles and methods, with the design on display.
- 5) At least one project member has completed a Permaculture Design Course (PDC).

CRITERIA FOR WORKING WITH VISITORS, VOLUNTEERS & COMMUNITY:

- 6) Be able to receive volunteers and visitors.
- 7) Have strong connections with sustainable food networks, locally or across your region / country.
- 8) Have appropriate health & safety procedures and risk assessments in place, as necessary.

iLAND NETWORK CRITERIA:

- 9) Be willing to share skills and relevant information with other projects in the iLAND network, including via the iLAND webpages within the website of IPEN.
- 10) Be willing to contribute to iLAND project monitoring and evaluation and work with IPEN to help achieve more of our shared target outcomes.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA:

ORGANISATION CRITERIA:

- 11) Be well organised with the aim of continuing to develop your management, communication and education skills.
- 12) Contribute to establishing a national (or regional) LAND centre system hosted by an appropriate national permaculture organisation or network, or a collaborating networks in your global region.

MONITORING AND RESEARCH CRITERIA:

- 13) Have a programme of monitoring or research. This might include: visitor and training numbers; outcomes of education activities; ongoing records of planting and yields; records of other activities e.g. relating to water, sanitation, health; systematic photographic recording of the site; other research activities.

SKILL SHARING CRITERIA:

- 14) Be willing to host or help generate national or regional skill sharing and training events

Support offered

Support is offered by IPEN (the International Permaculture Education Network) for a pilot group of 10-12 iLAND centres. This support will also create a network to connect these pilot centres. The network will help each centre develop their permaculture education systems and the education resources to be used by those centres. This will be achieved by a) a Working Group which supports iLAND Centres and b) the pilot network members working together to achieve their common objectives and the criteria of the project.

In more detail, the support for the pilot centres includes:

- Project development support, including good practise guidance on site development, interpretation support and materials. This will be from the iLAND Working Group and any additional advisers working nationally or in the IPEN network.
- Design support for specific design issues that will improve the site for visitors and volunteers.
- Access to guidance for delivering presentations, introductory permaculture, practical permaculture and PDC courses, for teacher training and the IPEN resource bank.
- Support from IPEN for fund-raising for pilot iLAND centres to become more effective venues for demonstration, skill sharing and learning.

Pilot iLAND centre projects will need to be committed to delivering:

- Introductory, practical permaculture and PDC courses and presentations about permaculture, and training of permaculture teachers who are native to the centre's country and culture.
- Increased learning and visiting opportunities directly linked to local food projects.
- A permaculture demonstration centre, with adoption of complementary systems that help spread

learning and practice in the wider community, such as village demonstration plots, farmer-to-farmer training, school permaculture gardens and 'barefoot consultants'.

How the iLAND network contributes to the work of IPEN

IPEN has been established as an open network to work collaboratively to '*increase the coherence and effectiveness of permaculture education globally*'. The iLAND network aims to be very valuable to the global permaculture education-for-action movement, by strengthening demonstration of permaculture in a variety of situations, encouraging teacher training, and aiming to host a wider variety of courses, to reach a wider range of people who can benefit from permaculture in their lives. In particular, IPEN wants to work with the network to make more high-quality permaculture education resources available across a number of widely used languages.

Any monitoring and evaluation carried out by projects will contribute to research on the effectiveness of permaculture education, in a wide range of situations. The education and research potential of an international demonstration network is important for the medium and longer term. IPEN will work to develop this potential across the network as a whole over the coming years.

Who can apply iLAND centre principles

- Any land based permaculture project can apply iLAND centre principles and use the guidance and resources that IPEN makes available through its iLAND webpages.
- The iLAND project values diversity, so the network aims to show how permaculture principles and ethics can be applied by projects in a variety of cultural, economic and climatic situations.
- Learning and Demonstration projects need to be accessible and regularly open to visitors – once a year would not be enough!

iLAND Project Budget and iLAND Pilot Project Selection

IPEN has a small amount of funding to support the development of a pilot iLAND network, that has been received from:

- Ecoforest Garden Trust, which hosted 12 PDC courses in southern Spain with over 100 PDC graduates and over 600 visitors and volunteers from many countries during 2000-2005;
- IPEN core funds from winning the Lush Spring Prize, 2018 (Young Project Category).

To get started we want to support up to 12 iLAND Centres that can be seen as good practice examples in Africa, Central Asia, South East Asia, Latin America and Europe. We will focus our support carefully so that we can make sure that a) permaculture is seen and understood by more people, especially in languages other than English, and b) projects can be supported where relatively small amounts of money can go a long way. The aim is to use the IPEN budget as match funding (e.g. up to 50%), to help each best practice projects to access additional funding (e.g. the other 50%+) that will help their centre to be an even better demonstration of permaculture, which can be learnt from, copied or adapted by many other projects in their country or around the world.

The IPEN coordinators have limited capacity and resources, therefore initially we are approaching established national and regional permaculture organisations and contacts to identify prospective projects that could be selected as members of the pilot iLAND centre network. You can contact us if you believe your project would be a good member of the pilot iLAND Network.

IPEN Coordinators email: info@ipenpermaculture.org

Version 5, Sept 2018: With thanks to the UK LAND project, from which this concept and its criteria were adapted. We welcome your feedback and comments on all materials, resources and services - please let us know, by contacting the IPEN coordinators.