



# Desertification – Coping with Today's Global Challenges

in the Context of the Strategy  
of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

High-Level Policy Dialogue  
Bonn, May 27, 2008

This is a report on the High-Level Policy Dialogue that was held in Bonn on May 27, 2008, under the official title "Coping with Today's Global Challenges in the Context of the Strategy of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification."

The speeches and remarks made by participants have been edited for reasons of space.

The conference was organised by the UNCCD Secretariat in cooperation with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH.

This report seeks to inform and stimulate debate, but is not a statement of policy, and does not represent the official viewpoint of any of the convening organisations, nor of the organisations represented by speakers and conference participants.

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## Foreword



Luc Gnacadja

The fight against drought, land degradation and desertification is now an international priority, and our Strategy<sup>1</sup> is the battle plan, signalling an ambitious yet pragmatic new departure in the life of our Convention.

The Strategy's four objectives are to generate global benefits, to improve the livelihood of affected populations, to enhance the productivity of affected ecosystems and to mobilize resources through building effective partnerships between national and international actors. It is a blueprint to reform the Secretariat and the UNCCD's subsidiary bodies, and to guide Convention stakeholders and partners for the next 10 years as they work to prevent and reverse desertification and land degradation, reduce poverty and promote sustainable development.

The Secretariat's mission now is to put the Strategy into action. An important first step is to inform and foster buy-in from global policy-makers and decision-makers, and I trust that the High-Level Policy Dialogue summarized in this report succeeded in this aim.

I am deeply grateful to the government of Germany for its support, and in particular for the expert help we received from staff of the BMZ and GTZ in the preparation of the Dialogue, which took place at the United Nations Campus in Bonn. I am indebted to Mrs. Karin Kortmann, Parliamentary State Secretary of the BMZ, for her energetic chairmanship of the meeting. And I extend my sincerest thanks to the ministers, vice-ministers, ambassadors and representatives from more than 60 countries, inter-governmental organizations and NGOs who joined the Policy Dialogue.

Together, we took a pragmatic look at the Strategy's implementation, including how to forge the required global partnership and to provide the related institutional platform, and how to enact the necessary reforms of the UNCCD's working bodies. This report not only provides a record of the Bonn proceedings, I trust it will also be helpful to Parties on the occasion of their deliberations on The Strategy at the Seventh Session of the CRIC (2008) and the Ninth Session of the COP (2009) and raise awareness of desertification's immediate relevance to people everywhere.

Luc Gnacadja  
Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

Bonn, September 2008

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<sup>1</sup> See core text of the UNCCD's 10-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to enhance the Implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) in annex to this report (page 41).

## Introduction

Since the inception of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in 1994 and its coming into force in 1996, the world has changed, and not slightly. Building on the foundation laid by Parties during the first decade of the Convention, the Eighth Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 8) in Madrid in 2007 adopted the 10-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to Enhance the Implementation of the Convention 2008–2018, known more simply as ‘The Strategy’. It recognizes that combating desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) is a global environmental challenge, which deserves a specific momentum and strong international mobilization.

Under the present conditions of climate change and the growing scarcity of productive natural capital such as arable land and water, The Strategy aims to rally a global coalition to deliver benefits for people and ecosystems everywhere and generate down-to-earth responses to some of the major international challenges of our time. The protection of land and soil is essential both for adapting to climate change and attaining the Millennium Development Goals. Protecting the land means stemming the factors of forced migrations, reducing the causes of conflicts and alleviating the impact of natural disasters. The UNCCD is the only international treaty addressing the need for sustainable management of the land. As such, it can serve as an instrument for collaborative innovation between all parties fighting for environmental security and justice.

While the international community is testing the limits of the era of easy globalization, the multilateral system can contribute to sowing the seeds of a new paradigm that will have to pay more attention to environmental security and equality. When adopting The Strategy, Parties invited the UNCCD Executive Secretary to consider engaging in policy dialogue to foster awareness of and buy-in to The Strategy among relevant policy and decision-makers.

The High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) was held at the UNCCD secretariat in Bonn, Germany, on May 27, 2008, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Karin Kortmann, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany.

The event discussed ways to forge the necessary global partnership, provide the right global institutional platform and enact the reforms that The Strategy calls for. Ministers and other high-ranking officials from a representative number of country Parties to the UNCCD and international institutions participated in the HLPD with a view to consolidating understanding within the context of the Convention’s strategic orientations. This publication contains the key messages, along with the conclusions of the Chairperson. Its purpose is to help policy- and decision-makers take full account of the discussions in Bonn and facilitate work towards The Strategy’s successful implementation.

## I: Understanding the links

Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary, UNCCD

“Climate change is making desertification one of the greatest challenges of our time.”



Research is highlighting as never before the cause-and-effect cycles of climate change, drought, land degradation and biodiversity loss. Our continually improving understanding of these links calls for a fresh appraisal of desertification’s role in climate change, in adaptation and mitigation efforts and in biodiversity preservation, as well. A growing body of scientific evidence is thus strengthening further the case for practical synergies between the three Rio Conventions.



**Karin Kortmann, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany:**

“From my perspective, this High-Level Policy Dialogue is an opportunity to emphasize the importance of the UNCCD for the environmental and development objectives of the entire planet. The UNCCD is the weapon of choice for combating of the causes and consequences of climate change, drought, soil degradation and the loss of biodiversity in an integrated fashion. Investment in sustainable land management (SLM) in dry and drought-stricken areas is a cost-efficient form of climate protection. It allows us to adjust to climate change in an effective manner and is also essential for the achievement of the MDGs.”

## The economic value of drylands

### Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary, UNCCD

A recent desertification report compiled by a United Nations University (UNU) group of experts in June 2007 tells us that climate change is making desertification “the greatest environmental challenge of our times.”

Unless it is stemmed, enough fertile land could turn arid within the next generation, reducing crop yields, harming food security and creating an environmental crisis of global proportions. The report also points out the alarming socio-economic consequences: unless action is taken, some 50 million people could be displaced within ten years.

### Invest in humanity's survival

We at the UNCCD Secretariat recently reminded the 16th session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) that reducing the risk of desertification and drought effectively contributes to combating climate change, and that enhancing the economic value of dryland areas through sustainable agricultural production systems is a true response to food shortages and problems of access to water. The Convention is part of the strategic response to address these critical global issues.

More and more people agree that concerted action at international level is needed to address desertification and land degradation. The challenge is not just to find adequate financial resources to implement the National Action Programmes, but also to preserve the fertility of land and soil worldwide and help ensure humanity's survival. Investment in sustainable land management is thus crucially important to fighting poverty and hunger.

## Background

### A Strategy for New Times

The UNCCD's operating environment today is very different from when the Convention was opened for signature in 1994. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted in 2000 and attention is increasingly focused on Africa and the least-developed countries, on mitigating and adapting to climate change, and on the need to regulate global agricultural trade.

Growing numbers of environmental refugees and migrants are now shedding new light on the impact of environmental degradation. The scientific environment has also evolved, in the wake of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) on dryland ecosystems. The financing environment, too, has changed profoundly in the last decade.

To deal with these new opportunities and constraints, the Parties unanimously adopted the UNCCD's 10-year strategic plan\* for 2008–2018 at COP 8, held in Madrid in September 2007. The Strategy addresses some of the key challenges, capitalizing on the Convention's strengths to seize opportunities provided by the new policy and financing environment, and create new common ground for all UNCCD stakeholders.

### Four main objectives

The first of the Strategy's objectives is to improve the living conditions of affected populations by diversifying livelihoods and reducing vulnerability to climate change. The second is to improve the condition of affected ecosystems by enhancing land productivity and other ecosystem goods and services. The third objective is to generate global benefits through effective implementation of the Convention itself, given that proper Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and measures to combat desertification and land degradation themselves contribute to conservation, sustainable biodiversity and the mitigation of climate change. The fourth and final objective is to mobilize financial and other resources to support implementation of the Convention through effective national and international partnerships. Progress towards all four strategic objectives will be measured according to carefully-defined indicators.

\* See core text in annex on page 41.

## Protecting forests, biodiversity and soils is “paramount”

**Josep Puxeu,**  
Secretary of State of the Ministry of the Rural,  
Marine and Natural Environment, Spain

The 193 Parties that have ratified this Convention now have to show their commitment. The Spanish government has reiterated its resolve to continue supporting countries that are committed to combat desertification.

Spain is itself severely affected by drought and land degradation. Spain’s fight against desertification is one of our most important national goals. It’s of paramount importance to us to protect our forests, farmlands and soils. But what we’ve done so far is not enough.

I trust that our dialogue here today will enhance the efforts of all governments. In the next few years, we have to ensure that the Convention receives the necessary additional resources to make progress in the spirit of unity that we all experienced at COP 8 in Madrid last year.



*“Resolute support for Africa”*



**Roberto Acosta, Coordinator, Adaption, Technology and Science Programme, UNFCCC Secretariat:** “The IPCC has said that an increase of two degree in global temperature is going to endanger 30 % of the world’s species. Desertification, both a cause and a result of climate change, will have major consequences for the Sahel zone and other parts of Africa. We may lose not just species, but, possibly, entire island nations because of rising sea levels.”

## Background

**Desertification – a global challenge**

Article 1 of the Convention defines desertification as “land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid regions resulting from a variety of factors, including climatic variation and human activities.” These factors include prolonged drought, soil erosion through wind or water, over-farming, the deterioration of the physical, chemical, biological or economic properties of soil, and the long-term loss of natural vegetation.

Land degradation occurs everywhere, but is most damaging in the drylands that cover approximately 41 % of the land surface of the world (hyperarid areas included) and are home to more than 2 billion people. It is here – where the soils are fragile, vegetation is sparse and the climate is particularly unforgiving – that desertification takes hold. According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) 10–20 % of drylands are already degraded.

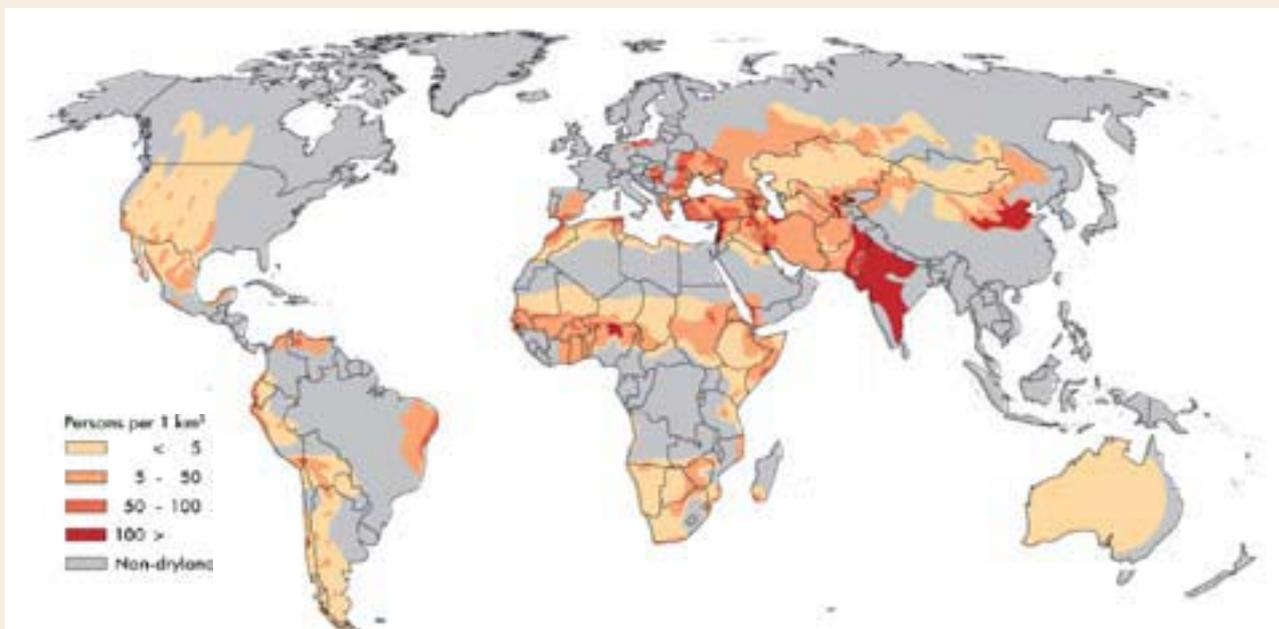
**A vicious cycle**

Today, over 250 million people are already directly affected by land degradation. Africa is particularly threatened because land degradation processes have spread to about 46 % of the continental area. Asia, on the other hand, is the worst hit in terms of the number of people afflicted by desertification and drought.

The world’s drylands not only make up 34 % of the global population, their soils contain over a quarter of all of the organic carbon stores in the world as well as nearly all the inorganic carbon. Drylands are home to eight of the world’s 25 identified biodiversity hotspots. Drylands are also among the earth’s most fragile ecosystems. Climate change aggravates drought, which aggravates land degradation. Land degradation, in turn, releases carbon stored in the soil, thus worsening global warming and climate change.

[www.adb.org](http://www.adb.org)  
[www.biodiversityhotspots.org](http://www.biodiversityhotspots.org)  
[www.millenniumassessment.org](http://www.millenniumassessment.org)  
[www.unccd.int](http://www.unccd.int)  
[www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org)

Population density in drylands of the world (2007)



Source: UNEP/GRID-Arendal Maps and Graphics Library. <http://maps.grida.no/go/graphic/population-density-in-drylands-of-the-world>.

**Alejandra Sobenes, Vice-Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Guatemala:**

“Across 12 % of the land area of our country, or 13,151 square kilometers, desertification is already underway. 45.4 % of the land area has medium or high rates of drought susceptibility. Amongst indigenous people, 13 % fall under high poverty index and have problems of food security. In the areas affected by desertification, men and women lack environmental justice. We, the developing countries, those who are most gravely affected, cannot go on ignoring the degradation of the land. Our demand to developed countries is that we address these problems systematically, together.”

## Fighting degradation depends on agriculture and farmers

**Veerle Vanderweerd, Director of Environment and Energy, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

A vital step forward in land rehabilitation will be to give full attention to agriculture. The farmers of the world are being called upon to feed a growing world population. This makes agriculture the most important driver of land use, land change and degradation.

Farmers are the guardians of land and landscape, and can be our most important agents for land management and rehabilitation. Agricultural research, too, can be a great ally: millions of farmers in India are already using new and advanced techniques of conservation tillage that preserves soil while ensuring high yields.

Unfortunately, however, investment in agriculture has been declining since the mid-1980s. Very few new ideas have found their way into agricultural training and extension services. We need to re-energize our approach to investing in agriculture with an emphasis on conservation and rehabilitation.

### Three reasons

Here are three proximate causes of land degradation, from UNDP's perspective. The first is the insecurity of land tenure. Farmers throughout the developing world subsist under complex arrangements of land tenure that do not provide them with the necessary guarantees of future rights that are essential to anchor land rehabilitation. Women are frequently the primary land managers but all too often have no rights of ownership or inheritance. Without attention to the gender aspects of land governance, we will make little progress.



*“Watchwords are conservation and land rehabilitation”*



The second underlying cause is unwise land-use changes. Forests are being cut down for agricultural livestock. Rangelands are being transformed into crop lands. Wetlands are being drained. Farmers are now farming hill-tops. We must urgently develop better policies for land use and, where necessary, reverse changes that have taken place.

Thirdly, we need better science to help us understand land degradation and how to restore land. While the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment has helped us understand the scale and causes of land degradation, much more needs to be done.

Biodiversity conservation will depend ultimately on land-use decisions. Land management is also an instrument both for climate-change adaptation and for mitigation. Well-managed, well-restored land will withstand changes in rainfall and temperatures far better than degraded land. Well-managed land with good tree cover will sequester carbon. Local land management and restoration is thus an important part of the fight against global climate change.



**Rejoice Mabudafhasi, Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa:** “Preventing land degradation is a lot more cost-effective than rehabilitating it. In South Africa, we have taken a practical approach to work as much as impossible with available resources to create opportunities for improving livelihoods. The rural-urban divide also needs to be considered in the context of land degradation. We have had some success with developing tree nurseries for the pulp industry but also for fuel in rural and peri-urban areas, with programmes to pass on the tree-planting know-how to other communities.”



**Kathleen Abdalla, Acting Head, Division for Sustainable Development, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs:** “Many of you here participated a few days ago in the 16th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development which focused on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa and also undertook a review of water and sanitation decisions. We worked very closely with the UNCCD on preparing and conducting this session and it’s worth noting some of its highlights, especially a very integrated approach to desertification and land and the links to other overarching issues of food crisis, climate change and poverty eradication. With more than 60 ministers from ministries of agriculture, economy and environment attending, this was a way to get the message out to other experts and ministries.”

## Synergies among the Rio Conventions

**Juan Lozano Ramirez, Minister of the Environment, Colombia:**

We must achieve proper synergies with the other Conventions. Cooperation in implementing the UNCCD must be built on the foundation of global consensus. In Bali we agreed that developed countries would work together with developing countries on climate change, biodiversity and combating desertification. But we still need a new inspiration, a revival, to regain the momentum. I support the motion for a major conference of all parties to find new sources of funding, bringing together representatives of all three Conventions and institutions working in development, like the FAO.



**Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity:** “My simple message to you today is that we at the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity are determined to use available synergies between all three Conventions. We have been working together for some time now, for example through our Joint Liaison Group, and based on our past successes, our Parties are calling for even more. Although synergies are best achieved at the national level, we as Secretariats need to support such efforts through education and awareness raising on the important links between biodiversity, land degradation and climate change.”



**Jesca Eriyo, Minister of State for Environment, Ministry of Water and Environment**

### Uganda: A response to worsening climate prospects

There is growing evidence that poverty, desertification, land degradation and drought will worsen with increased climate change. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency of extreme climate events like droughts and floods, thereby contributing to widespread poverty and marginalization in dryland areas and leading to food crises, famine and mass population displacements. Armed conflict and forced migration are increasing as a result.

In Uganda, for example, the increased influx into the streets of our cities of rural families running away from drought and hunger is a growing challenge. Women and children, in particular, can no longer live on the land. Even when collected and brought to their villages, they face extreme hunger, so they return to the cities.

### Country case-histories I

Uganda's National Agricultural Advisory Services are to be strengthened with more resources as of July this year, and we are working with selected 'lead farmers' at village and household levels. We have zoned the country according to the suitability of the soils, the rains and the markets for agricultural produce. We're putting more money now not only into increasing food productivity but also cash crops for export and agro-processing. Finally, we're integrating agro-forestry into this effort, particularly for fruit-growing – oranges, avocados and mangoes are doing very well in our country. Farmers are also being encouraged to grow for the European and US markets, and trained in fruit preservation and storage techniques, including drying and packing.

#### Scarcity in cross-border areas

In some parts of Uganda, there is excess food, in others, food scarcity. A major challenge is also the food scarcity in the neighbouring countries. This has increased the price of food-stuffs and also of animal feeds in border areas even in post-harvest times, when, previously, food used to be plentiful and prices were low. Currently, the food is bought up right away.

## Factors for funding

### Monique Barbut, Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson, Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Providing additional, adequate funding to the Convention depends on three main factors. First of all, sustainable land management needs the targeted implementation of long-term planning. An array of uniform, coordinated, joint measures must be adopted, together with a clear framework for implementation. Second, we need to reduce the duplication of work, as this squanders limited financial resources. Third, we now know that integrated approaches to sustainable land management and combating desertification work most effectively when they take account of the factors of climate change and biodiversity preservation.

As you know, funding to save the environment is limited. More is being made available, but it will be a challenge to ensure these funds are used to improve the lives of people living in rural areas. We need to broaden our traditional, public-sector viewpoint. We have to make sustainable land management more attractive to private investors.



**Laurent Stefanini, Ambassador-Delegate for the Environment and representative of the Agence française de développement (AFD), France:** “One of the AFD’s distinguishing features is that 44 of the 49 countries we operate in are the poorest in the world. Land degradation is a big factor in many of them, and we address it through an integrated approach to climate change, biodiversity and desertification, because all are related.”

#### Collective approach

“We take a very hands-on approach. We don’t believe that the North should just give advice and money while the South does all the work. An example of our collective approach is in Madagascar, where we are working to support agriculture with a Euros 20 million grant in a programme that is developing conservation agriculture techniques to reduce soil erosion (i.e., no tillage, covercrops) and simultaneously saving 15,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year.”



**Peter Holmgren, Director, Environment, Climate Change and Bioenergy Division, UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):** “Within the UN system, collaboration between agencies is very definitely on the rise. We are increasingly responding to the request to work and deliver as one. Moreover, the potential for addressing mitigation when tackling land degradation is very, very significant. Conserving natural resources, improving livelihoods and mitigating climate change in the drylands can become a major win-win situation.”

#### A business opportunity

“We can be much more proactive than before in telling the rest of the world that we can deliver what we all want: increased storage of carbon and, at the same time, rehabilitation of the soil. There’s an incredible market out there for these services and goods. We can debate whether this should be part of ODA, a government-negotiated market mechanism or a voluntary mechanism. But let’s not forget to promote this incredible business opportunity for the drylands.”

## II. UNCCD reform and practical implementation of The Strategy



Implementation of the UNCCD has faced a number of problems, chief of which have been insufficient financing compared to its two Rio sister conventions, the UN CBD and the UNFCCC, along with a weak science base. Pro-Convention advocacy, and awareness of its existence, has also been lacking among various constituencies. Its various institutions have at times fallen short and the Parties have struggled to reach consensus. In addition, the Convention itself does not set out specific material objectives and goals fixed in time. The Strategy is designed to address all these shortcomings.

Participants were frank about the reasons for the Convention's disappointing impact in the past, and agreed that the Strategy would come to nothing unless it was also consciously translated into action. That means significant changes for the Secretariat, UNCCD working bodies and signatory-country governments, but several participants pointed out that the conditions for collective action have rarely been better.

## Move fast on The Strategy

**Karin Kortmann, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany**

Frankly speaking, the Parties and working bodies of the UNCCD have not made sufficient use of the potential of the Convention over the last decade. We have met here today as part of an effort to get things rolling again. The ongoing reforms of the UNCCD are important and absolutely necessary.

Germany was part of the Intersessional Intergovernmental Working Group that came up with the 10-Year Strategic Plan and Framework for implementation of the Convention, adopted by all Parties at COP8 of the UNCCD in Madrid last September. But we know that the Strategy by itself is no guarantee for effective implementation or success. If the Strategy is to be successful, then the signatories must quickly move to implement it now and make binding contributions.

### **An EU road-map**

For its part, Germany is working hard to develop an EU road map to serve as the European contribution to The Strategy. Just as important are the ongoing reforms of the UNCCD's organs and institutions. That's why we expressly welcome the UNCCD Executive Secretary's Four-Year Strategic Work Plan for the Secretariat and its internal restructuring, and we look forward to the new phase of constructive and complementary cooperation between the UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism.

### **Align the NAPs**

Within the HLPD framework, let us re-orient ourselves and help define the actions that the Parties must now take. Let us call upon all countries affected by desertification to revise their national action programmes (NAPs) and to develop clear, integrated financial strategies. How can we support these processes with our development aid and cooperation? How can we better integrate international agricultural research into national strategies to cope in a more targeted manner with the socio-economic and ecological causes of these problems? And, especially, how can we lift the Convention up out of the niche it has occupied for so long?



*“Welcoming a new phase of UNCCD and GM cooperation”*



**Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary, UNCCD:** “The good news, and we now know this from grass-roots experience, is that drought and desertification are predictable. Land degradation leading to desertification is reversible.

To a large extent, therefore, DLDD’s severe impact on the livelihoods of affected populations is the result of public and even global policy failure. Failure to converge from the global to the local through strategic partnerships, failure to mainstream at the national level, failure to diffuse the available information and knowledge, failure to disseminate and upscale the good practices, failure to mobilize the required resources.”



**Kathleen Abdalla, Acting Head, Division for Sustainable Development, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs:** “2008 is the Commission’s (CSD) year for review, but 2009 will be a policy year, an opportunity to highlight all the issues we’re discussing here today and reach out to a broad array of different communities. We need broad participation from implementing partners, including farmers, business and industry groups, the scientific community, indigenous groups, trade unions and local authorities. It’s an opportunity to clarify the policy decisions you’d like to see to support the UNCCD and its Ten-Year Strategy and to promote an interlinked approach to these issues.”



**Khaled Al-Shar'a, Director, Office for the Implementation of the Convention and National Coordination, Syrian Arab Republic:** “Are we doing enough for the Convention? Are we putting in as much effort as the global problem demands? Are we confident that our Strategy is effective enough to ensure that, if we meet again ten years from now, land degradation will have diminished from 2008 levels? Climate change, population growth, increasing water scarcity and poverty are very resistant to any efforts so far to slow them down.”

**A matter of political will?**

“For me, neither North nor South have shown the political will necessary to combat desertification. Too often, developing countries feel forced to give priority to other issues, while industrialized countries have been too slow to recognize the significance of climate change and the need for preservation of biodiversity. One resulting problem that both North and South share today is illegal immigration from Asia and Africa to Europe.”



**Zang Chunlin, Deputy Director-General, National Bureau to Combat Desertification, China:** “We see UNCCD as the most powerful tool to cope with desertification and the effects of climate change, which is the greatest challenge of our time. The National Action Programmes therefore must also be the most powerful tools for mainstreaming policy to combat drought, land degradation and desertification at national level. The Secretariat should play a lead role in advocacy and education to put The Strategy into effect.”

## Restructuring and results-based management

Work has started on reforming the UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism and both entities have launched a joint work programme. The UNCCD Committee on Science and Technology (CST) aims at developing commonly-agreed and globally recognized baselines and indicators to monitor drought, land degradation and desertification (DLDD). Meanwhile, the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) is reviewing new and standardized reporting guidelines. These documents will be submitted to the forthcoming seventh session of the CRIC in Istanbul, November 3–14, 2008.

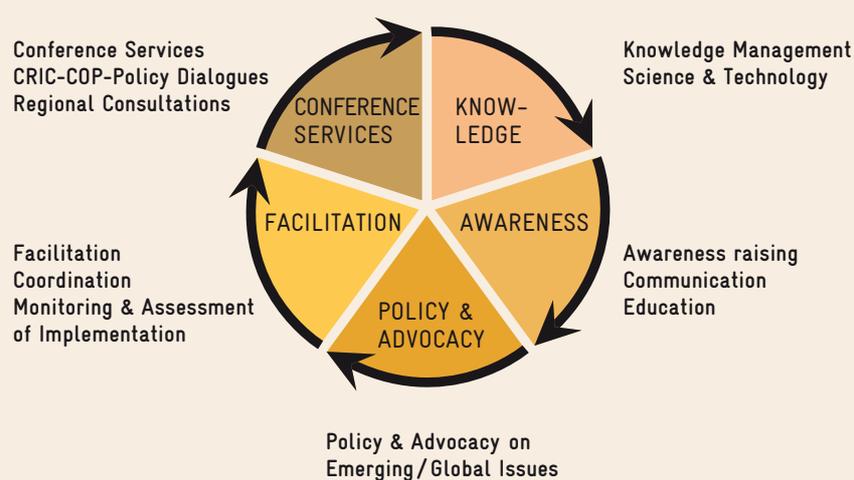
### New plans for the Secretariat

However, the biggest changes are happening at the Secretariat. Since the Strategy was unanimously adopted at COP8 in Madrid in September 2007, the UNCCD Secretariat has drawn up a four-year strategic work plan with a results-based management approach. It includes the key policy orientations of the Secretariat and their rationale, related indicators for each operational objectives and expected outcomes.

Built into the four-year strategic work plan is a two-year work programme for the Secretariat during the current 2008–2009 biennium. Finally, an even more detailed internal work plan spells out the necessary steps for achieving the expected outcomes in terms of five new functional clusters: knowledge management, awareness-raising, policy and advocacy, facilitation and conference services.

UNCCD Executive Secretary Gnacadja is confident that these measures will enhance progress towards more informed policy decisions on drought, land degradation and desertification. “These reforms will help us to mainstream DLDD, sustainable land management (SLM) and pro-poor policies into national and regional development strategies”, he says. “Our new approach should help relevant authorities to prioritize DLDD actions in national and local budget allocations and implement early warning systems on drought. And our awareness-building, policy and advocacy will aim to promote nothing less than an UN-wide coalition on SLM.”

## The UNCCD Secretariat's Clusters of Activities



## The importance of partnerships

**Veerle Vanderweerde, Director of Environment and Energy,  
Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP**

I'm glad that the UNCCD has recognized UNDP as a natural partner in the implementation of its Strategy, and we fully support the UNCCD Secretariat in carrying out its new clusters of activities. The UNDP aims to strengthen its support to improved land governance and land tenure reform and will devote our expertise, particularly at country level, to mainstream desertification and land degradation issues into countries' development plans and strategies. We will assist, when requested, with policy development and want to use the UNDP's mandate to coordinate the UN system at national level to help the UNCCD tackle food insecurity, conflict and crisis for improved land management and land restoration.

### Working as one

Strong partnerships are needed. We at UNDP can provide a lot of governance-related support. We look to our colleagues at UNEP for the science. We look to the FAO and the CGIAR system for the agricultural expertise and the research back-up. We will continue to link on drought issues with ISDR and the humanitarian relief community, and integrate our work on land issues into climate adaptation efforts.



**Meena Gupta, Secretary of State,  
Ministry of Environment and Forests,  
India:** "Some time ago, a number of countries prepared UNCCD National Action Programmes for the implementation of the Convention. However, they may not have aligned the NAPs yet with the specific strategic and operational objectives that are now set out

in The Strategy. In addition, more recent topical important issues such as mitigation and adaptation to climate change and food security may not have been incorporated, either."

### Revisit the older NAPs

"We do need to revisit and revise the NAPs, and I think Parties need to be assisted in this with both technical and financial support. Revising the NAPs should be done in a coordinated way among the major government and non-governmental agencies responsible for implementation, with fine-tuning to bring the NAPs into line with the Ten-Year Strategy. During COP 8 in Madrid, a very important decision was taken to strengthen the regional units to support Parties in the implementation of the Strategy. This really needs to be done very quickly."



**Faumina Tiatia Liuga, Minister of  
Natural Resources, Environment and  
Meteorology, Samoa:** "Small island states like ours take environmental preservation very seriously: you can go to court for cutting down a tree or destroying marine life. The small islands like Tuvalu and Tonga are very, very low and thus vulnerable to rising

ocean levels. The restructuring of UNCCD is good because we need to know where to go when we need help. Samoa has already endorsed and started to implement a National Action Programme. We are grateful to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for its funding to construct sea walls and also to the governments of Venezuela and New Zealand for their support and advice on road construction."

### Food security versus energy security: the challenge of bio-fuels

In a message on the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, on June 17, 2008, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the UNCCD could not only offer a long-term solution to producing more food for more people, but also permit dry and degraded lands to “serve for biofuel production, and thus offer new benefits for their inhabitants.”

The UN Secretary-General called on the international community to recognize that “drylands and marginal lands, where nearly half of the world’s poor live, are not wasteland. Rather, they are potential areas for agricultural intensification for both food and energy needs.”



**Juan Lozano Ramirez, Minister of the Environment, Housing and Territorial Development, Colombia:** “Let’s take a careful look at bio-fuels. In several cases, sustainability is in jeopardy because food sources are being diverted to other uses. I believe we need certification processes and guidelines for the cultivation of bio-fuels to ensure there are no negative secondary effects.”



**Monique Barbut, CEO, Global Environment Facility (GEF):** “This is a hotly-debated issue. We should respect justifiable concerns about it. For my part, however, I support bio-fuels as long as they are developed in a transparent framework.

We know that their production can have an impact on the environment, and bio-fuel production should not take precedence over food production. However, bio-fuels are of great interest to the private sector. Bio-fuel production in arid areas could be a very important new departure for us all, and improved with the help of the right technologies. Let us work with the private sector towards conditions that will permit production in arid areas of second-generation bio-fuels\*.”

The contentious issue of biofuels came up at the HLPD in Bonn, as well. Given the spiraling cost of food and growing food insecurity, participants reacted sometimes uneasily to the growing trend in some countries of devoting valuable farmland to the cultivation of crops to produce fuels for combustion engines. Some also pointed out the environmental damage bio-fuel cultivation has caused in some cases.



**Miguel Leonardo Rodriguez, Vice-Minister of Environmental Conservation, Venezuela:** “The cultivation of crops for bio-fuels has a number of negative aspects, including a very deleterious impact on the environment. The hunger for energy of certain actors on the world stage is only growing at a time when farmers in many countries

are less and less able to produce enough food even to feed themselves. 912,000 hectares of natural woodlands are being cleared every year in Latin America just to grow crops for bio-fuels, producing 300,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and thereby contributing both to desertification and to global warming.”

\* Bio-fuels presently stem mainly from sugar cane, corn, wheat and sugar beet. Excessive diversion of these foodstuffs into bio-fuel may increase food prices and lead to shortages in some countries. Corn, wheat and sugar beet also require high agricultural inputs in fertilizers, limiting the GHG reduction that can be achieved. When taking the production and transport of these biofuels into account, their life-cycle emissions frequently exceed those of traditional fossil fuels.

## Soil fertility: The heart of the matter

**Bruno Oberle, State Secretary, Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland**

If the UNCCD really is to be seen as a global Convention, and if we are to make it more explicit and deepen its impact, then we have to dust off and raise up a major issue lurking behind the notion of desertification, and that is soil fertility.

The intrinsic value of soil fertility is central to the enactment of the UNCCD much in the way that energy policy is central to coping with climate change and the fulfilment of the UNFCCC. Likewise, chemicals and pharmaceuticals are key entry points for an approach to biodiversity preservation and the UNCBD. Seen in this light, all three Conventions thus are of direct concern to major economic sectors, resources and human priorities that we all take very seriously.



*“Our demands must be backed up by statistics”*

### **Indicators, “rules of the game” and clear pricing**

What we need above all else, even more than money, is quantitative objectives to serve as the basis for policy decisions and the flow of funding. If we quantify certain measures of soil fertility and then present demands for funds backed up by soil fertility statistics, standards and solid indicators, we can give environment ministries the ammunition they need to influence other political forces and agencies to enact concrete programmes for soil fertility.

Rules on soil use could be hammered out at global level and then adapted to national plans that contain clear prescriptions on soil use and soil fertility. This approach would allow us to work with farmers within a clear system that tells them, “OK, use these funds for soil use, but here are the rules of the game.”

If the UNCCD’s National Action Programmes could also contain clear and acceptable rules on soil use and soil fertility, then I think we have solved the money problem, because we’d be able to attach a price tag to it all and more easily obtain funds for implementation.



**Salifou Sawadogo, Minister of the Environment, Burkina Faso:** “Soil has assumed a primordial role on the political agendas of most Sahel countries over the last five years. In my country, thanks to the support of different aid agencies, we have made progress on preserving the soil, strengthening food security and providing greater autonomy in decision-making for the main actors. The influence of the UNCCD has been decisive in this regard. Of course, we must continue to carefully manage the allocation of natural resources, and Burkina Faso will depend for a long time to come on the quality of its soil. But we fully support the UNCCD Strategy and the reform of Secretariat and can reasonably hope that all those involved will show good faith and concrete results.”

## Country case-histories II



Aghatam Ag Alhassane, Minister of the Environment and Sanitation, Mali

### Mali: How we attract and use external funding

Our land management concept funded by GEF is one reason why Mali joined the TerrAfrica initiative and has now committed itself, together with partners like the World Bank, the GTZ and the Global Mechanism, to elaborating an investment strategy for sustainable land management and agriculture.

On behalf of the government of Mali, I also took the opportunity of this High-Level Policy Dialogue in Bonn on May 27, 2008, to sign a cooperation agreement with Christian Mersmann, the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism (GM). Through this agreement, the GM has undertaken to provide technical and financial assistance to Mali over the 2008 and 2009 period in the amount of US \$ 626,000. We both feel strongly that this agreement reaffirms the GM's readiness to play its assigned role in implementing The Strategy and particularly in achieving Objective 4 on financing and technology transfer.

### Projects with the private sector

Mali will use the funds to develop an integrated investment framework aimed at mobilizing domestic, bilateral and multilateral resources. The aim is to increase the effectiveness and impact of sustainable land management by fully supporting the nation-wide implementation of the TerrAfrica initiative.

We will also employ the GM's financial assistance to combat desertification and land degradation by identifying and drawing on new sources of finance and financial mechanisms within the private sector, especially in the cotton industry. We intend to bring market-based mechanisms into play in the marketing and trade in gum arabic and to take up the financial opportunities available within the framework of climate change adaptation and mitigation.



### III: How desertification undermines food security



“Food security is fundamentally about soil health, water availability and food production, all of which are severely jeopardized by desertification, land degradation and drought”, says Grégoire de Kalbermatten, Deputy Executive Secretary of the UNCCD. “An international symposium in Geneva in April 2006 recognized that one of the basic human rights, the right to food, would be much better guaranteed if we could successfully implement the UNCCD. Many

countries in sub-Saharan Africa have now lost the capacity to feed themselves, turning a continent that was more than self-sufficient in food at independence over 50 years ago into a massive food importer. These new dependencies are not the way forward.”

Global trade regimes and related government policies, he says, significantly influence patterns of land use, food production and consumption and thus also have an impact on the resilience of drylands. For example, trade liberalization can stimulate production for exports, but greater access to fertilizers, pesticides and farm machinery can also degrade soils if not managed sustainably. Moreover, export subsidies for food crops in industrialized countries undermine the price of products produced by developing-country farmers, leading to further soil neglect and degradation. The recent food price crisis has only heightened these concerns increasingly more critical in the context of climate change.

## Desertification is a driver of food prices

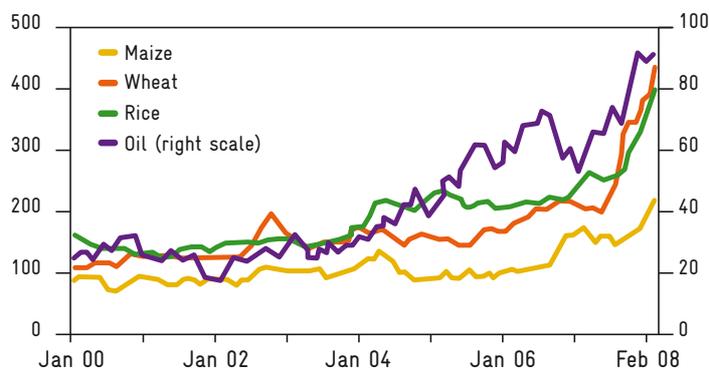
Karin Kortmann, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany

The current food price crisis is attracting an entirely new level of public and political attention to the issue of desertification. Worldwide, some 860 million people are going hungry, 80% of them small farmers and the landless poor in rural areas. We've heard these figures before, but they are now dawning on the general public, because the impact of rising food prices is starting to hit people in industrialized countries and cities, as well.

### The poorest suffer most

According to the FAO, the world food price index rose in 2006 by 57%. For example, rice in the last two months has risen by 75%. In 2006, the price of wheat rose by 120%. We all know that these increases hit the poorest of the poor in particular, and that this upwards spiral hasn't ended yet. The reasons include the growing demand for food and changing dietary habits, rising oil prices, chronically insufficient investment in agricultural productivity, natural disasters as heralds of growing climate change and the increasing demand for bio-fuels. All these factors will continue to drive food prices upwards.

World Commodity Prices, January 2000 – February 2008 (US\$/metric ton)



Sources: FAO international commodity prices database 2008, and IMF world economic outlook database 2007.



**Pierre-Justin Kouka, Special Advisor to the Vice President, International Fund for Agricultural Development IFAD:** “The rural poor are now hit by the triple scourge of poverty, climate change and rising food prices. I'm happy to see that GEF and others here today have said that agriculture is at the centre of all. The world has started to recognize that this is a result of the neglect and decline of investment in agriculture.”

### More synergies, please

“Thirty years ago, a similar crisis led to creation of IFAD. Over the past 25 years, IFAD has committed over US\$ 3.5 billion supporting dry-land development and combating land degradation worldwide. 75% of IFAD projects are located in ecologically fragile and marginal environments. That makes IFAD the second-largest investor in the UNCCD's implementation plan. IFAD is the host of the Global Mechanism office and also one of the implementing agencies of GEF. We'd like to see more synergies created both with GEF and the Global Mechanism to foster the implementation of the UNCCD.”



**Nadhir Hamada, Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Tunisia:** “We firmly believe that there will be no peace or security in the world if we cannot ensure food security. It is time for radical solutions. We would support an international solidarity treaty to eradicate poverty,

financed by a one-dollar tax on every barrel of oil, and an initiative for an international charter for the conservation of water.”



**Jiri Hlavacek, Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Environment, Czech Republic:** “The post-2012 negotiations should not get hung up on the issue of percentage reductions of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. We should think how agriculture, mining industries, land reclamation, food production, transport and

urbanization are eating up the land. We must think about land use and soil conservation at the same time. Also we must consider the social and cultural role of land, and the ethical role of soil, for rural populations, who often come under pressure from industrialization and the cities, even in Europe.”

## Background

### Drylands: Essential to food security

“The food price crisis is a harsh wake-up call”, says UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja. “By 2030, according to the FAO, we will have to have improved food production by 50%, and yet, at the same time, arable land everywhere is shrinking, due to the combined effects of land degradation and climate change.”

800 million people are already in systemic food insecurity. The impact of climate change could mean the loss of 75% of arable and rain-fed land in Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa. According to a UNU group of experts, water shortages around the world could push 50 million people into forced migration within the next ten years. Hardest-hit are the least-developed countries and landlocked developing countries, where the geography of endemic poverty and hunger maps very closely with the geography of degraded land. In many, the upshot is growing poverty, hunger leading to famine, forced migration and conflict. “The world has started to realize that if we want to achieve the MDGs,” says Mr. Gnacadja, “we have to focus more attention on the drylands.”

### Not all bad news

At the same time, combating desertification and achieving sustainable development in the drylands will significantly help mitigate climate change as well as reduce poverty and hunger worldwide. Already producing an estimated 20% of the world’s food, the drylands have the potential to be even more productive – and offer better livelihoods for the people who live there.



## Country case-histories III



**Meena Gupta, Secretary of State,  
Ministry of Environment and Forests, India**

### India: Legislation and risk management for sustainable farming

“We passed the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers’ Rights Act in 2001 and the Biological Diversity Act in 2002. Both are intended to protect plant varieties and traditional knowledge. An authority has been set up to register plant varieties, develop characterization and ensure proper documentation. Reducing the risk faced by farmers due to climate variability is another important part of government action. This has been done through weather-based crop insurance schemes.”

### Forest cover improving

“We have also adopted a watershed approach to ensure sustainable farming. The government of India has set a target of bringing one-third of its geographical area under forest and tree cover, to complement environmental sustainability. I’m happy to report that India’s forest cover has been stable and is even gradually increasing, despite the great pressures of our growing population. The improved forest and tree cover stem from joint management of state forests, involving local communities in government action.”



**Manfred Kern, Sustainable Development, Bayer CropScience, AG, Monheim, Germany:**

“The Strategy can’t just be a wish list with qualitative data and targets. As has been said already, we need quantitative data and measurable evidence. The whole world runs on economic figures. If we can’t assess the value of soil in the near future, we’ll lose the game.”

### Soil more valuable than gold

“We must recognize that soil has a value higher than gold. Unfortunately, the world does not yet appreciate this vital fact. For those of us sitting here, soil is the source of our food, the very future of humanity. But for the urbanized world, soil is just dirt, mud and no-one has a proper understanding of it. I see that The Strategy foresees an important new UNCCD commitment to public information and communication. My recommendation is that the UNCCD starts a million-dollar press and media campaign as soon as possible to create awareness. Soil doesn’t look like a particularly exciting subject, but unless ordinary people come to appreciate its meaning and value and the need for conserving it, they will ignore any strategy on soil created by politicians.”

## IV. Chairperson's summary: How to meet the challenge



Along with the honour of chairing the High-Level Policy Dialogue came the duty of summarizing our discussions, together with the UNCCD secretariat and participating experts, and of preparing proposals to help orient action. The following text cannot hope to record all the many dozens of important statements, arguments and appeals made by participants. But I hope very much that it will serve to build the momentum towards collective action; for whether we are Parties to the Convention, farmers and rural communities, decision makers in public or private sectors or ordinary citizens, our next steps together will determine success or failure in the fight against desertification.

Karin Kortmann, Parliamentary State Secretary,  
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany.

# Outcome of the High-Level Policy Dialogue on the Strategic Orientations of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, held in Bonn, Germany, 27 May 2008

## I. Introduction

1. Far-reaching environmental change is indisputable. The accompanying loss of ecosystem services<sup>2</sup> directly affects human well-being, development and security. Environmental tipping points are fast approaching and an unprecedented era of natural resources scarcity is looming, brought on by global shifts in our climate, reduced access to water, and food shortages. This threat must be faced.
2. Left unchecked, increased food prices will undermine the progress the world has made towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). And food is about land. For the truth of the matter is that most countries facing, or at risk of facing, a food crisis today are also those facing land degradation problems. It is also clear that climate change will hit the drylands hardest, with an expected severe decline in rainfall in most areas and further threats to food security. Therefore, securing the productivity of drylands, rehabilitating degraded land and enhancing land tenure regimes, as required by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), are indispensable steps the world must now take in the fight to prevent future structural food crises and to enhance our resilience to the impacts of climate change.
3. The benefits will be far-reaching, for investing in sustainable land management is a win-win response, as it also implies carbon sequestration in soils and vegetal cover, thus contributing to the mitigation of climate change.
4. **The bridge to local action:** Our Convention has a central role to play in securing the conditions essential to stable rural development, agricultural productivity and food security. Without it, all three will falter. Achieving the MDGs and fulfilling the mandates of the other two Rio Conventions on climate change and biodiversity preservation can be done only through proper implementation of the UNCCD. Quite literally, the UNCCD brings climate-change adaptation and mitigation down to earth, down to the land.

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<sup>2</sup> Ecosystem services are the benefits and amenities generated for society by the existence and development of the natural environment: land, water and air, their flora and fauna and related ecosystems. There are three main types: disposal services act as an absorptive sink for waste and residuals, productive services include raw materials and energy used to produce goods and services as well as physical space, and consumption services provide for the physical and recreational needs of human beings.

5. The Convention protects land as a global common. It is the responsibility of the international community to maintain this global common for the survival and livelihoods of future generations. Yet success will not come through international action alone. Sustainable Land Management (SLM) means local action. Building the bridge between global responsibility and local action is our challenge.

## II. Policy development

6. **The global context of desertification:** Today's global challenges comprise the threats of climate change, environmentally-induced migration, the food crisis, the rising demand for biofuels, conflicts in the drylands and poverty. However, these trends are reversible through improved policies, partnerships, innovative finance and communication, notably towards and at the local level. Partnerships at all levels are the necessary building blocks of the required global coalition to combat desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD). Affected countries, in cooperation with the international community, are urged to move the issues of land management and soil conservation up their list of national and global priorities.
7. **Poverty and hunger:** The geography of endemic poverty and hunger coincides with the map of land degradation. The challenge of rising food prices is an additional crisis for the most vulnerable populations, an aggravation of the silent plight of the roughly one billion of the world's poorest people, most of them affected by DLDD. Food production systems under stress contribute to the "push" factors of enforced migrations and put at risk the human right to food. MDGs and food production targets to feed growing populations are unlikely to be met under the present trends regarding the loss of arable land. The implementation of the UNCCD 10-year strategic plan and framework (2008–2018) (The Strategy) must channel resources towards strategic fields of intervention such as soil fertility and sustainable water management, and must also be linked with national planning instruments such as poverty reduction strategies and agricultural policies.
8. **Climate change, land degradation and MDGs:** Today, climate change is forcing humanity to adjust the focus of international cooperation. By investing more in sustainable land management (SLM), the problems and goals of today (particularly MDG 1 on poverty and hunger and MDG 7 on the environment) can be addressed while helping to reduce the vulnerability, and enhance the resilience, of populations under climate stress tomorrow. Improved land management and rehabilitation, the cornerstone of the UNCCD national action programmes (NAPs), can be re-energized. By strongly linking the UNCCD NAPs with the UNFCCC national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs), the necessary bridges between development and adaptation initiatives can be built, notably in the drylands.
9. **Biodiversity, forests and land degradation:** Land-use change is a major threat for biodiversity and an avoidable source of greenhouse gas emissions; continuous land-use changes are in turn driven by land degradation. There must therefore be recognition at the next Conference of the Parties in 2009 (COP9) that investment in SLM is a prerequisite to achieving both biodiversity targets and forest protection while at the same time contributing to the mitigation of climate change.

10. **Rural development:** The participants at the HLPD shared the views recently expressed by the United Nations Secretary-General on the global food crisis, and felt that action must be taken with a greater sense of urgency and decisiveness. Not only must the immediate needs of vulnerable populations be met, the structural and policy issues that contribute to this crisis, such as trade, tax policies and land tenure, also need to be addressed.

### III. Dialogue on mobilizing for a forward-looking strategy

#### A. The UNCCD reform agenda

11. The UNCCD COP8, held in Madrid in September 2007, mobilized a consensus amongst all Parties on the need to address the above-mentioned challenges. The adoption of The Strategy is an important impulse towards enhancing implementation of the Convention. Together with the reform process of the UNCCD, The Strategy opens the way to a revitalized implementation process.
12. The participants at the Bonn High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) fully endorse the UNCCD reform agenda, emphasizing synergistic action and coalition-building for full mobilization of all resources in order to achieve the Convention's global benefits.
13. They recognize that this reform agenda does not only belong to governments but must also involve civil society and, moreover, mobilize private-public partnerships.
14. They expect that better services will be delivered to Parties through the restructuring of the UNCCD secretariat and the Global Mechanism (GM), through consensus on expected deliverables through results-based management and through strategic plans and work programmes. They endorse the establishment of baselines and indicators through the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and look forward to the benefits of assessment and lessons learned through the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC).
15. The secretariat is called upon to strengthen dialogue and consultation at the global and regional levels.
16. National efforts are needed on the part of affected countries in order to implement The Strategy. These efforts must be actively supported by, and integrated into, national planning and investment frameworks.

#### B. Financing The Strategy

17. In future negotiations relating to investment for climate change and food security, Parties urgently need to highlight the win-win equation between sustainable land management, improving livelihoods and food security and mitigating climate change.

18. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is invited to simplify procedures further. The GEF secretariat and GEF Council members need to respond specifically to The Strategy with robust funding to combat land degradation. Experience with coherent programme approaches under the GEF, such as TerrAfrica, deserves our attention. This includes the joint formulation of investment strategies blending GEF finance with international funding and national counterpart funding, relying on diverse methods for multiple impacts and encouraging systematic coordination.
19. Governments, civil society and the private sector should together devise incentive systems for market-based funding mechanisms so as to encourage the restoration of degraded land.

### C. Enhancing investment in land management

20. The current food crisis and climate change issues are affecting mainly poor people in rural areas. The decline and neglect of investment in agriculture and land management since the mid-1980s are part of the problem. Participants at the HLPD emphasize that:
  - (a) Measures to counteract DLDD offer a direct entry point into reducing the vulnerability of people and ecosystems.
  - (b) Sustainable agriculture must be promoted through best practices and new conservation-oriented technologies, including mitigation through carbon sequestration and adaptation. Science and policy advocacy under The Strategy must now contribute actively to the dissemination of successful innovation, supportive land management and effective social practices.
  - (c) Market forces play a both positive and negative role. While the private sector can introduce necessary technology or generate off-farm income and thus alleviate pressure on land, it can also foster trading patterns that severely undermine local food production.
  - (d) Vast dryland areas might offer the potential to host sites for the production of a second generation of bio-fuels with the help of new technologies, thus generating income opportunities. Nevertheless, given the socio-economic and environmental risks, guidelines for sustainable bio-fuel production need to be developed.
  - (e) More synergism between the UNCCD, the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and the UNFCCC at implementation level needs to be achieved. The UNCCD could recommend practical projects with a focus on increased land productivity, which simultaneously takes into account the issue of climate change and addresses biodiversity issues.

## IV. Parties' views on responses to emerging challenges. What can be done?

21. The following elements should provide orientation and impetus to the thematic and substantive discussions at CRIC 7 and also help shape the agenda at COP 9 dealing with the priority fields of application of The Strategy.

### A. Partnership and shared responsibilities

22. Implementing The Strategy is a matter of concern to all Parties to the Convention and demands their full commitment.
23. **Affected-country Parties** should prioritize the fight against DLDD, undertake the consequent governance and policy reforms, assure appropriate land tenure rights and provide for allocating funds in national budgets. NAPs should be harmonized and aligned with national development strategies and policies, fostering cooperation with civil society and the private sector.
24. **Developed-country Parties** should acknowledge the renewed relevance of DLDD in the context of the emerging food crisis, climate mitigation and adaptation, and biodiversity conservation. They are invited to earmark additional funds, before COP 9 takes place, in support of rural development, agriculture and food security as spelled out by strategic objective 4 of The Strategy.
25. **The UNCCD secretariat and the GM** are to give advice, support the sharing of experience and support advocacy and mainstreaming. Participants welcome the efforts and the progress of the secretariat in launching the reform process and look forward to more effective collaboration between the secretariat and the GM. They are in favour of the GM's role in supporting financial strategies for enhanced UNCCD implementation at national level.
26. **The role of the private sector** as an actor in implementing The Strategy needs to be promoted by all Parties.

### B. Advocacy

27. Critical action must be taken in consensus-building to reorient the Convention on the path towards concrete actions that benefit affected countries and help generate global benefits.  
The Convention carries an important message: land conservation is a global common and the land is the medium through which global food security, social security and peace, biodiversity, and mitigation of climate change can be achieved. The economic value of land conservation and restoration must be properly assessed under The Strategy. By setting a reference value for land as a public good, funds could be raised both to help finance programmes to combat DLDD and to clarify the Convention's contribution to assuring these vital services.

28. Calls were made for a “Stern report” on land degradation. Parties must follow through with their promise to consult and specify regional commitments for The Strategy before COP9 in the autumn of 2009.
29. Parties and UNCCD bodies should advocate that the interrelation between DLDD and climate change adaptation and mitigation are made more explicit and recognized through institutional and financing arrangements in the post-Bali road map. They should also advocate programmatic and synergistic approaches for SLM under the GEF's fifth replenishment round (GEF 5: 2011–2015).
30. In the current post-Bali period of the UNFCCC process, the secretariats of the UNCCD, the UNFCCC and the CBD, together with the Rome-based agencies (the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP)), should undertake pilot studies of joint implementation of measures to increase carbon sequestration in vegetation and soils.
31. Under GEF 5, support for The Strategy of the UNCCD could be emphasized through stronger scientific evidence, assessment and capacity-building, long-term monitoring, reduction of knowledge gaps and understanding of impacts. Advice regarding such knowledge should be made available to countries for action at the local level.
32. The UNCCD secretariat is invited to organize a global private-sector advocacy forum and to document economic opportunities in the drylands, with a view to a major information campaign.

### C. Funding

33. The promises made in Rio (1992), Monterrey (2002) and Gleneagles (2005), and the prospects for support to affected countries from the multilateral system, must refocus priorities onto the rural scene and the 2012 horizon when the Kyoto Protocol expires.
34. Measures for combating DLDD, including action programmes at all levels, will benefit from the necessary return of investment into rural development and sustainable land and water use. They should thus become an integral part of national and regional policies securing the conditions for agricultural production and food sustainability. Bilateral development partners and the investment banks must proactively integrate SLM into their policy and procedures.  
The COP should invite the secretariat and the GM to develop and propose a management matrix for such cooperation.
35. A fresh review of the current portfolios of the international financial institutions will help to identify the potential of DLDD investments in the context of agricultural sector programmes and rural development and their contribution to agricultural production.

36. Today, climate change must be regarded as one of the most important paradigms of international cooperation. Parties in the pertinent forums must gradually build an international land coalition and pursue advocacy for climate finance to combat land degradation. An aim for The Strategy should be increasingly to enable policy change and to assist affected countries in finding or fine-tuning access to existing, emerging or innovative climate funding, such as market-based mechanisms or carbon funding. Resources such as the US \$25 billion International Development Association (IDA) replenishment in the World Bank, which includes adaptation as a cross-cutting issue, might thus be used to implement The Strategy at country level.
37. Efforts must be taken to resist the tendency to marginalize UNCCD issues within GEF finance, and the building of links between the GEF and the UNCCD NAPs must be facilitated. In order to foster implementation of The Strategy, Parties should set markers for assessing the effectiveness of the Convention, including quantitative targets.

#### **D. Knowledge and science**

38. Parties stress the lack of consistent assessment of economic and financial losses resulting from DLDD and the related loss of ecosystem services, as well as the neglect of the potential of drylands for alternative income generation. The absence of the topic of land degradation in discussion of the current food price crisis suggests that UNCCD actors must build their capacity to deliver ready-made information, arguments and solutions whenever the situation calls for them.
39. In addition, The Strategy needs quantitative goals, underpinned by evidence-based facts and a clear assessment methodology, in order to attract investment.
40. Work towards a better understanding of the existing links between climate change adaptation and mitigation schemes for drought preparedness on the one hand and mitigation in the UNCCD context on the other must be undertaken. This includes issues to do with drought risk management.
41. To buttress the knowledge base on livelihood, climate change and biodiversity, it would be appropriate to create an intergovernmental panel on land and soil. In the interim, a report on climate and land degradation by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) would be welcome.
42. A methodology should be developed and presented to the Clean Development Mechanism Executive Board to identify the land, agriculture and sequestration nexus. Together with this, major data providers and analysts should team up under the Convention's reformed CST in order to articulate the trends of land degradation and its effects on food security, other relevant MDGs, climate change and loss of biodiversity.

43. Analysis of successes and failures and scientific output on data, facts and trends must be made more informative in order to enable policy choices. It is particularly necessary that enhanced scientific information on DLDD should motivate policy makers who do not always have at hand the necessary materials for addressing longer-term environmental challenges.
44. Robust science that can strengthen the evidence base for sound environmental and socio-economic policy on land- and soil-related issues under The Strategy must be encouraged.

### **E. Regional implementation**

45. Given the structure of the Convention, cooperation within regions will continue to be an important vehicle through which to address DLDD. Regional coordination mechanisms should pave the way for effective implementation.
46. Better scientific dialogue and regional studies could investigate concrete needs and activities which create real comparative advantage by addressing them at the regional rather than the global or national level. Such issues might include, for example, a better division of labour for analytical work and application research, management of trans-border ecosystems, such as joint management of watersheds, leveraging the potential of economies of scale for administration and implementation of certain programmes, and the development of financial strategies.

## Glossary of terms and abbreviations

- AFD Agence française pour le développement, the French Development Agency [www.afd.fr](http://www.afd.fr)
- BMZ Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany [www.bmz.de](http://www.bmz.de)
- CGIAR Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research [www.cgiar.org](http://www.cgiar.org)
- CDM The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) allows emission-reduction (or emission removal) projects in developing countries to earn certified emission reduction (CER) credits, each equivalent to one tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>. CERs can be traded and sold, and used by industrialized countries to meet a part of their own emission reduction targets under the Kyoto Protocol. <http://cdm.unfccc.int>
- CO<sub>2</sub> Carbon dioxide
- COP The Conference of the Parties (COP) was established by the UNCCD as its supreme decision-making body. It comprises representatives of ratifying governments and regional economic integration organizations, like the European Community. It has met biennially since 2001 and periodically reviews the implementation of the Convention
- CRIC The Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) holds its yearly sessions during and also between the ordinary sessions of the COP. CRIC 7 is to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, back-to-back with the First Special Session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), Nov. 3–14, 2008.
- CSD The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was created in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED, and to monitor and report on implementation at local, national, regional and international levels. The CSD's current cycles of work (2008–2009) focuses on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. [www.un.org/esa/sustdev](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev)
- CST The UNCCD's Committee on Science and Technology (CST) advises the COP on scientific and technological matters relating to combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought. The CST is a subsidiary body of the COP; it is multi-disciplinary and composed of government representatives with relevant expertise. Its efficiency and effectiveness is being improved in line with overall reforms to strengthen the UNCCD.

- DLDD Drought, land degradation and desertification
- Drylands [Drylands](#) have limited supplies of fresh water and great variations in yearly rainfall. They cover over 41% of the world's surface area and more than 2.3 billion people live there. Approximately 1 billion of these depend directly on the natural resources of the drylands for their livelihoods.
- EU European Union
- FAO The UN Food and Agriculture Organization [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)
- GEF The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is a financial mechanism for the four international environmental conventions – the UNCCD, the UNFCCC, the UNCBD and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. The GEF helps fund initiatives that assist developing countries in meeting the objectives of the conventions and also collaborates closely with other treaties and agreements. [www.gefweb.org](http://www.gefweb.org)
- GM The Global Mechanism (GM) helps the COP to promote funding for Convention-related activities and programmes. Rather than raise or administer funds, the GM encourages and assists donors, recipients, development banks, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and others to mobilize funds and to channel them to where they are most needed. The GM is hosted by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in Rome. [www.global-mechanism.org](http://www.global-mechanism.org)
- GTZ The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH is an international cooperative enterprise for sustainable development, with offices in 69 countries. Federally owned, the GTZ supports German government's development-policy objectives and the BMZ is its major client. [www.gtz.de](http://www.gtz.de)  
The GTZ's Convention Project to Combat Desertification (CCD Project) was established in 1999 for the BMZ and is based in Bonn. [www.gtz.de/desertification](http://www.gtz.de/desertification)
- HLPD The UNCCD's High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD), held May 27, 2008, in Bonn, Germany
- ICRISAT The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics [www.icrisat.org](http://www.icrisat.org)
- IDA The International Development Association (IDA) is part of the World Bank. Established in 1960, IDA aims to reduce poverty by providing interest-free loans and grants for programmes in the world's poorest countries.

- IFAD The International Fund for Agricultural Development  
[www.ifad.org](http://www.ifad.org)
- IPCC The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch)
- ISDR The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  
[www.unisdr.org](http://www.unisdr.org)
- Joint Liaison Group In 2000, the three Rio Conventions established a Joint Liaison Group (JLG) to enhance cooperation across the three Conventions. The JLG meets regularly and is strongly supported by the three Secretariats, demonstrating the importance that each attaches to inter-convention coordination.
- MDGs The UN Millennium Development Goals  
[www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)
- Millennium Ecosystem Assessment  
The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment of the consequences of ecosystem change for human well-being involved the work of more than 1,360 experts worldwide from 2001 to 2005.  
[www.millenniumassessment.org](http://www.millenniumassessment.org)
- NAPs The UNCCD's National Action Programmes (NAPs) are one of the key instruments in the implementation of the Convention. National Action Programmes are developed through a participative approach involving local communities and spell out the practical steps and measures to be taken to combat desertification in specific ecosystems.
- NAPAs The UNFCCC's National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) provide a process for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to identify priority activities that respond to their urgent and immediate needs with regard to adaptation to climate change.
- ODA Official development assistance (ODA) is funding offered by donor government agencies directly to recipient governments or through multilateral development agencies.
- Post-Kyoto regime The Kyoto Protocol came into force in 2005 and was the first global treaty to address global warming by committing developed-country signatories to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by agreed amounts by the year 2012. The post-Kyoto regime refers to an as-yet undecided framework for how the world should proceed after that date.

Rio Conventions	The three Rio Conventions – on Biodiversity (UNCBD), Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Desertification (UNCCD) – derive directly from the 1992 Earth Summit <a href="http://www.cbd.int/rio">www.cbd.int/rio</a>
SLM	Sustainable land management (SLM) involves land-use practices that ensure land, water, and vegetation adequately support land-based production systems for current and future generations. SLM’s key principles are the productivity, security and protection of natural resources, economic viability and social acceptance. The concept includes but also goes beyond sustainable agriculture, as it includes all land resources regardless of whether they serve agricultural purposes or not.
TerrAfrica	TerrAfrica is a partnership that aims to address land degradation by scaling up harmonized support for effective and efficient country-driven SLM practices in Sub-Saharan African countries. <a href="http://www.terrafrica.org">www.terrafrica.org</a>
The Strategy	The UNCCD’s short name given to the 10-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to Enhance the Implementation of the Convention (2008–2018). Full text of the Strategy at <a href="http://www.unccd.int">www.unccd.int</a>
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity <a href="http://www.cbd.int">www.cbd.int</a>
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. <a href="http://www.unccd.int">www.unccd.int</a>
UNCED	The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, also known as the “Rio Earth Summit”.
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme <a href="http://www.undp.org">www.undp.org</a>
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme <a href="http://www.unep.org">www.unep.org</a>
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change <a href="http://www.unfccc.int">www.unfccc.int</a>
WFP	The World Food Programme, the Rome-based UN food relief agency <a href="http://www.wfp.org">www.wfp.org</a>
WSSD	The World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, August 26–September 4, 2002 <a href="http://www.worldsummit2002.org">www.worldsummit2002.org</a>

## Key dates for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

- June 1992 The UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), recommends that the UN General Assembly establish an “Intergovernmental Committee for a Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and or Desertification”, known as INCD.
- June 17, 1994 The INCD adopts the final draft of the Convention, along with four regional annexes for Africa, Asia, Latin American & Caribbean and the Northern Mediterranean, at a meeting in Paris. June 17 becomes the date of the annual World Day to Combat Desertification. The Convention opens for signature in Paris in October this year.
- December 26, 1996 The Convention enters into force, 90 days after ratification by the 50th signatory country.
- Sept. 29 – Oct. 10, 1997 1st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 1), held in Rome. The Committee on Science and Technology (CST) holds its first session in parallel, October 2–3.
- Nov. 30 – Dec. 11, 1998 COP 2 meets in Senegal, Dakar. Among its decision is to establish a permanent UNCCD Secretariat, with Germany as the host nation.
- January 1999 The permanent secretariat of the UNCCD opens in Bonn, Germany.
- November 15–26, 1999 COP 3, convening in Recife, Brazil, launches the Recife Initiative to enhance the implementation of the obligations of the UNCCD.
- December 11–22, 2000 COP 4 in Bonn, Germany adopts Annex V to the Convention covering Central and Eastern Europe and formally approves the Recife Initiative. An ad-hoc working group (AHWG) starts an in-depth review of reports on the implementation of the Convention.
- October 2001 COP 5, meeting in Geneva, agrees to establish the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC). From this year onwards, the frequency of the COPs also moves from an annual to a twice-yearly, or biennial, basis.

- August 26 – Sept. 4, 2002 The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) is held in Johannesburg, South Africa, during which governments call on the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to become a financial mechanism of the UNCCD.
- August 25 – Sept. 5, 2003 COP 6 in Havana, Cuba, marks the UNCCD's transition from awareness-raising to implementation. Among the decisions were the designation of the GEF as a financial mechanism to the Convention.
- 2003 The Global Environmental Facility (GEF) adopts land degradation as a GEF Focal Area and launches an Operational Programme on sustainable land management, turning the GEF into one of the main sources of funding for the UNCCD.
- October 17 – 28, 2005 COP 7 in Nairobi, Kenya, approves inclusion of NGO activities in COP's official programme of work and reviews the recommendations in the report of the UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). This leads to establishment of the Intersessional Intergovernmental Working Group (IIWG) tasked with developing a 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention.
- 2006 – 2007 With strong German government participation and a core consultancy team from Canada and Namibia, the IIWG works on successive drafts of the 10-Year Strategic Plan and Framework.
- 2006 Designated the International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD) by the UN General Assembly, 2006 witnesses numerous special seminars and conferences, exhibitions, film festivals and publications to highlight the nature and urgency of combating land degradation and desertification throughout the world.
- September 3–14, 2007 COP 8 in Madrid unanimously adopts the 10-Year Strategic Plan and Framework 2008 – 2018 (“The Strategy”) to enhance implementation of the Convention.
- November 26, 2007 The First Extraordinary Session of the COP convenes in New York to complete the budget discussions initiated at COP 8, and approves the UNCCD's core budget for the biennium 2008–2009, amounting to 14,896,000 euros.
- March 2008 Serbia becomes the 193rd country to ratify or accede to the Convention. At the same time, the tally for the number of National Action Programmes (NAPs) prepared and adopted reaches 102, including 41 African countries and 29 Asian and Pacific countries. 11 subregional and two regional action programmes are also underway to boost the efficiency of national programmes and promote joint sustainable management of shared rivers or lakes and other cross-boundary ecosystems.
- May 27, 2008 First UNCCD High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on implementation of “The Strategy” held at UNCCD Secretariat headquarters in Bonn, Germany

## ANNEX

# Core text of the 10-Year Strategic Plan and Framework<sup>3</sup>

### The vision

The aim for the future is to forge a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability.

### Strategic objectives and expected impacts

The following “strategic objectives” will guide the actions of all UNCCD stakeholders and partners in the period 2008–2018, including raising political will. Meeting these long-term<sup>4</sup> objectives will contribute to achieving the above-mentioned vision. The “expected impacts” are the long-term effects intended by the strategic objectives.

#### Strategic objective 1: To improve the living conditions of affected populations

**Expected impact 1.1.** People living in areas affected by desertification/land degradation and drought to have an improved and more diversified livelihood base and to benefit from income generated from sustainable land management.

**Expected impact 1.2.** Affected populations’ socio-economic and environmental vulnerability to climate change, climate variability and drought is reduced.

**Indicator S-1<sup>5</sup>:** Decrease in numbers of people negatively impacted by the processes of desertification/land degradation and drought.

**Indicator S-2:** Increase in the proportion of households living above the poverty line in affected areas.

**Indicator S-3:** Reduction in the proportion of the population below the minimum level of dietary energy consumption in affected areas.

#### Strategic objective 2: To improve the condition of affected ecosystems

**Expected impact 2.1.** Land productivity and other ecosystem goods and services in affected areas are enhanced in a sustainable manner contributing to improved livelihoods.

**Expected impact 2.2.** The vulnerability of affected ecosystems to climate change, climate variability and drought is reduced.

**Indicator S-4:** Reduction in the total area affected by desertification/land degradation and drought.

**Indicator S-5:** Increase in net primary productivity in affected areas.

<sup>3</sup> Full and complete text of the 10-Year Strategic Plan and framework, including formal preamble, at [www.unccd.int/meetings/global/hlpd/docs/strategy-eng.pdf](http://www.unccd.int/meetings/global/hlpd/docs/strategy-eng.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this strategic plan, “long term” means ten years or more.

<sup>5</sup> The indicators contained in the strategic plan are indicative of the types of indicators to be established to provide information on the trends in affected areas. These global indicators are to be refined further by the Committee on Science and Technology (CST).

### **Strategic objective 3: To generate global benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD**

**Expected impact 3.1.** Sustainable land management and combating desertification/land degradation contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the mitigation of climate change.

**Indicator S-6:** Increase in carbon stocks (soil and plant biomass) in affected areas.

**Indicator S-7:** Areas of forest, agricultural and aquaculture ecosystems under sustainable management.

### **Strategic objective 4: To mobilize resources to support implementation of the Convention through building effective partnerships between national and international actors**

**Expected impact 4.1.** Increased financial, technical and technological resources are made available to affected developing country Parties, and where appropriate Central and Eastern European countries, to implement the Convention.

**Expected impact 4.2.** Enabling policy environments are improved for UNCCD implementation at all levels.

**Indicator S-8<sup>6</sup>:** Increase in the level and diversity of available funding for combating desertification/land degradation and mitigating the effects of drought.

**Indicator S-9:** Development policies and measures address desertification/land degradation and mitigation of the effects of drought.

#### **The mission**

To provide a global framework to support the development and implementation of national and regional policies, programmes and measures to prevent, control and reverse desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought through scientific and technological excellence, raising public awareness, standard setting, advocacy and resource mobilization, thereby contributing to poverty reduction.

#### **Operational objectives and expected outcomes**

The following “operational objectives” will guide the actions of all UNCCD stakeholders and partners in the short and medium term<sup>7</sup> with a view to supporting the attainment of the above-mentioned vision and strategic objectives. The “outcomes” are the short and medium-term effects intended by the operational objectives.

<sup>6</sup> Indicators pertaining to Parties’ implementation are to be further developed and refined.

<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of this strategic plan, “short and medium-term” means for a period of three to five years.

### **Operational objective 1: Advocacy, awareness raising and education**

To actively influence relevant international, national and local processes and actors in adequately addressing desertification/land degradation and drought-related issues.

**Outcome 1.1:** Desertification/land degradation and drought issues and the synergies with climate change adaptation/mitigation and biodiversity conservation are effectively communicated among key constituencies at the international, national and local levels.

**Outcome 1.2:** Desertification/land degradation and drought issues are addressed in relevant international forums, including those pertaining to agricultural trade, climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, rural development, sustainable development and poverty reduction.

**Outcome 1.3:** Civil society organizations (CSOs) and the scientific community in the North and the South are increasingly engaged as stakeholders in the Convention processes and desertification/land degradation and drought are addressed in their advocacy, awareness-raising and education initiatives.

### **Operational objective 2: Policy framework**

To support the creation of enabling environments for promoting solutions to combat desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.

**Outcome 2.1:** Policy, institutional, financial and socio-economic drivers of desertification/land degradation and barriers to sustainable land management are assessed, and appropriate measures to remove these barriers are recommended.

**Outcome 2.2:** Affected country Parties revise their national action programmes (NAPs) into strategic documents supported by biophysical and socio-economic baseline information and include them in integrated investment frameworks.

**Outcome 2.3:** Affected country Parties integrate their NAPs and sustainable land management and land degradation issues into development planning and relevant sectoral and investment plans and policies.

**Outcome 2.4:** Developed country Parties mainstream UNCCD objectives and sustainable land management interventions into their development cooperation programmes/projects in line with their support to national sectoral and investment plans.

**Outcome 2.5:** Mutually reinforcing measures among desertification/land degradation action programmes and biodiversity and climate change mitigation and adaptation are introduced or strengthened so as to enhance the impact of interventions.

### Operational objective 3: Science, technology and knowledge

To become a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to desertification/land degradation and mitigation of the effects of drought.

**Outcome 3.1:** National monitoring and vulnerability assessment on biophysical and socio-economic trends in affected countries are supported.

**Outcome 3.2:** A baseline based on the most robust data available on biophysical and socio-economic trends is developed and relevant scientific approaches are gradually harmonized.

**Outcome 3.3:** Knowledge on biophysical and socio-economic factors and on their interactions in affected areas is improved to enable better decision-making.

**Outcome 3.4:** Knowledge of the interactions between climate change adaptation, drought mitigation and restoration of degraded land in affected areas is improved to develop tools to assist decision-making.

**Outcome 3.5:** Effective knowledge-sharing systems, including traditional knowledge<sup>8</sup>, are in place at the global, regional, subregional and national levels to support policy-makers and end users, including through the identification and sharing of best practices and success stories.

**Outcome 3.6:** Science and technology networks and institutions relevant to desertification/land degradation and drought are engaged to support UNCCD implementation.

### Operational objective 4: Capacity-building

To identify and address capacity-building needs to prevent and reverse desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.

**Outcome 4.1:** Countries which have carried out the national capacity self assessment (NCSA) implement the resulting action plans to develop the necessary capacity at the individual, institutional and systemic levels<sup>9</sup> to tackle desertification/land degradation and drought issues at the national and local levels.

**Outcome 4.2:** Those countries which have not previously undertaken capacity needs assessments engage in relevant assessments processes to identify capacity needs for tackling desertification/land degradation and drought at the national and local levels.

<sup>8</sup> Excluding traditional knowledge on genetic resources.

<sup>9</sup> See the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) "Resource Kit for National Capacity Self-Assessment", 2005, page vi, for a description of the various levels at which capacity can be developed.

### **Operational objective 5: Financing and technology transfer**

To mobilize and improve the targeting and coordination of national, bilateral and multilateral financial and technological resources in order to increase their impact and effectiveness.

**Outcome 5.1:** Affected country Parties develop integrated investment frameworks for leveraging national, bilateral and multilateral resources with a view to increasing the effectiveness and impact of interventions.

**Outcome 5.2:** Developed country Parties provide substantial, adequate, timely and predictable financial resources to support domestic initiatives to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.

**Outcome 5.3:** Parties increase their efforts to mobilize financial resources from international financial institutions, facilities and funds, including the GEF, by promoting the UNCCD/Sustainable land management (SLM) agenda within the governing bodies of these institutions.

**Outcome 5.4:** Innovative sources of finance and financing mechanisms are identified to combat desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought, including from the private sector, market-based mechanisms, trade, foundations and CSOs, and other financing mechanisms for climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and for hunger and poverty reduction.

**Outcome 5.5:** Access to technology by affected country Parties is facilitated through adequate financing, effective economic and policy incentives and technical support, notably within the framework of South-South and North-South cooperation.

SECRETARIAT OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION  
UPDATE ON RATIFICATION OF THE UNCCD as at 4 February 2008

1 Mexico	04/03/95	46 Turkmenistan	18/09/96	91 Dominican Republic	26/06/97
2 Cape Verde	05/08/95	47 Zambia	19/09/96	92 Equatorial Guinea	26/06/97
3 Netherlands	27/06/95	48 Lao (PDR)	20/09/96	93 Guyana*	26/06/97
4 Egypt	07/07/95	49 Haiti	25/09/96	94 Seychelles	26/06/97
5 Senegal	26/07/95	50 Chad	27/09/96	95 El Salvador*	27/06/97
6 Ecuador	09/06/95	51 Swaziland	10/07/96	96 Ethiopia	27/06/97
7 Lesotho	09/12/95	52 Nepal	15/10/96	97 Kuwait	27/06/97
8 Finland	20/09/95	53 United Kingdom	18/10/96	98 Angola	30/06/97
9 Togo	10/04/95	54 Jordan	21/10/96	99 Belgium*	30/06/97
10 Tunisia	10/11/95	55 Morocco	11/12/96	100 St. Kitts and Nevis*	30/06/97
11 Guinea-Bissau	27/10/95	56 India	17/12/96	101 Armenia	07/02/97
12 Mali	31/10/95	57 Ghana	27/12/96	102 Saint Lucia*	07/02/97
13 Uzbekistan	31/10/95	58 Myanmar*	01/02/97	103 Nigeria	07/08/97
14 Afghanistan*	11/01/95	59 Argentina	01/06/97	104 Kazakhstan	07/09/97
15 Peru	11/09/95	60 Burundi	01/06/97	105 Bahrain*	14/07/97
16 Sudan	24/11/95	61 Yemen*	14/01/97	106 Tajikistan*	16/07/97
17 Canada	12/01/95	62 Paraguay	15/01/97	107 Ireland	31/07/97
18 Sweden	12/12/95	63 Luxembourg	02/04/97	108 Cambodia	18/08/97
19 Denmark	22/12/95	64 China	18/02/97	109 Dem. Rep. of Congo	09/12/97
20 Switzerland	19/01/96	65 Pakistan	24/02/97	110 Kyrgyzstan*	19/09/97
21 Niger	19/01/96	66 Côte d'Ivoire	03/04/97	111 Zimbabwe	23/09/97
22 Mauritius	23/01/96	67 Cuba	13/03/97	112 Sierra Leone	25/09/97
23 Bangladesh	26/01/96	68 Mozambique	13/03/97	113 South Africa	30/09/97
24 Burkina Faso	26/01/96	69 Iran	29/04/97	114 Chile	11/11/97
25 Spain	30/01/96	70 Greece	05/05/97	115 Jamaica*	11/12/97
26 Micronesia	25/03/96	71 Barbados*	14/05/97	116 Dominica*	12/08/97
27 Israel	26/03/96	72 Namibia	16/05/97	117 Costa Rica	01/05/98
28 Portugal	04/01/96	73 Grenada*	28/05/97	118 Malta	30/01/98
29 Panama	04/04/96	74 Cameroon	29/05/97	119 Nicaragua	17/02/98
30 Lebanon	16/05/96	75 Austria*	06/02/97	120 Liberia*	03/02/98
31 Algeria	22/05/96	76 Iceland*	06/03/97	121 Comoros	03/03/98
32 Gambia	06/11/96	77 Antigua and Barbuda	06/06/97	122 St Vincent & Grenadines	16/03/98
33 Malawi	13/06/96	78 Syrian Arab Republic	06/10/97	123 European Community	26/03/98
34 Germany	07/10/96	79 Djibouti	06/12/97	124 Turkey	31/03/98
35 Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	22/07/96	80 France	06/12/97	125 Marshall Islands*	06/02/98
36 Oman*	23/07/96	81 Tanzania	19/06/97	126 Venezuela*	29/06/98
37 Bolivia	08/01/96	82 Guinea	23/06/97	127 Sao Tome and Principe	07/08/98
38 Mauritania	08/07/96	83 Italy	23/06/97	128 Belize*	23/07/98
39 Eritrea	14/08/96	84 Kenya	24/06/97	129 Azerbaijan*	08/10/98
40 Benin	29/08/96	85 Brazil	25/06/97	130 Niue*	14/08/98
41 Norway	30/08/96	86 Honduras	25/06/97	131 Romania*	19/08/98
42 Mongolia	09/03/96	87 Madagascar	25/06/97	132 Cook Islands*	21/08/98
43 Central African Rep.	09/05/96	88 Malaysia	25/06/97	133 Samoa*	21/08/98
44 Gabon*	09/06/96	89 Saudi Arabia*	25/06/97	134 Viet Nam*	25/08/98
45 Botswana	09/11/96	90 Uganda	25/06/97	135 Fiji*	26/08/98

136 Indonesia	31/08/98	156 Georgia	23/07/99	176 Belarus*	29/08/01
137 Kiribati*	09/08/98	157 San Marino*	23/07/99	177 Poland*	14/11/01
138 Guatemala*	09/10/98	158 Vanuatu	08/10/99	178 Slovakia*	01/07/02
139 Japan	09/11/98	159 Republic of Korea	17/08/99	179 FYR of Macedonia*	03/06/02
140 Tuvalu*	14/09/98	160 Liechtenstein*	29/12/99	180 Andorra*	15/07/02
141 Nauru*	22/09/98	161 Czech Republic*	25/01/00	181 Somalia*	24/07/02
142 Tonga*	25/09/98	162 Philippines	02/10/00	182 Bosnia and Herzegovina*	26/08/02
143 United Arab Emirates*	21/10/98	163 Cyprus*	29/03/00	183 Ukraine*	27/08/02
144 Rwanda	22/10/98	164 Albania*	27/04/00	184 Maldives*	09/03/02
145 Sri Lanka*	12/09/98	165 Australia	15/05/00	185 Latvia*	21/10/02
146 Uruguay*	17/02/99	166 Suriname*	06/01/00	186 Brunei Darussalam*	12/04/02
147 Monaco*	03/05/99	167 Trinidad and Tobago*	06/08/00	187 Russian Federation*	29/05/03
148 Republic of Moldova*	03/10/99	168 New Zealand*	09/07/00	188 Lithuania*	25/07/03
149 Qatar*	15/03/99	169 Croatia*	10/06/00	189 Bhutan*	20/08/03
150 Solomon Islands*	16/04/99	170 Bahamas*	11/10/00	190 Timor-Leste*	20/08/03
151 Singapore*	26/04/99	171 United States of America	17/11/00	191 D.P. Republic of Korea*	29/12/03
152 Colombia	06/08/99	172 Papua New Guinea*	12/06/00	192 Montenegro*	06/04/07
153 Palau*	15/06/99	173 Bulgaria*	21/02/01	193 Serbia*	18/12/07
154 Republic of the Congo	07/12/99	174 Thailand*	03/07/01		
155 Hungary*	13/07/99	175 Slovenia*	28/06/01		

\*Accession



“Now that the international community as a whole has recognized that the UNCCD is a critical tool in the fight against poverty, our efforts can start bearing tangible fruit. Combating desertification and land degradation must show more results. The Strategy adopted by the Parties is the clearest sign yet of the international community’s resolve to capitalize on the potential of the Convention and turn it into a major weapon in the fight against poverty.

“I’m convinced that, with the willingness of the Parties to implement The Strategy, we can now move the UNCCD process forward an important step and give much more impetus to the many efforts already being undertaken in affected countries.”

Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary, UNCCD



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