



Sixth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Havana, Cuba, 25 August - 5 September 2003

Note on the organization of the High-Level Segment: Round Table of Heads of State and Government (1 September 2003); Interactive Dialogue of Ministers and High-Level Inter-Agency Panel (2 September 2003)

Themes for discussions:

TOPIC 1: The UNCCD as a tool to achieve the Millennium Development Goals as they relate to poverty eradication and food security

This item is proposed for the Round Table of Heads of State and Government in the afternoon of Monday, the 1st September.

Sub-items/Ideas within the theme:

- Strengthen the focus of multilateral debate around poverty in the world rural areas where poverty generates and develops.
- Opportunities and challenges in coalition building for eradicating poverty and preserving the environment at local, national, bilateral and multilateral levels.
- Critical worsening/multiplier effect of land degradation on poverty dynamics.
- Severe destabilization of traditional demographic and migratory dynamics carrying potentially dangerous social and political consequences at the national and sub-regional levels.
- Intensification of socio-economic realities particular to poor dryland communities: the “feminization” of poverty.
- The unique comparative advantage of the UNCCD as the “Dryland and Rural Poor’s Convention”:
 1. The UNCCD is to date the sole international legally binding instrument to tackle directly the issue of land degradation in general and desertification in particular.
 2. The UNCCD embodies a *problematique* essential to the very survival of the vast majority of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the poor amongst the poorest and the maintenance of vulnerable eco systems.
- The vital importance of the national action programmes (NAPs) as territorial platform for the synergetic intervention of other sustainable development programmatic instruments (CBD, UNFCCC, Ramsar, CITES, etc.) for the promotion of local area development programmes targeting food security and poverty reduction.

UNCCD

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TOPIC 2: The UNCCD: A new opportunity for an enhanced framework of cooperation in Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding for the promotion of sustainable development in arid ecosystems.

This item is proposed for the Ministerial Interactive Dialogue taking place on Tuesday 2^d September, following the High-Level Inter-Agency Panel that would launch discussion on the issue.

Sub-items/Ideas within the theme:

- Recurring trends over the past decade related to multilateral ODA funding tend to indicate a net decrease of financial net inflows to rural development (hence direct investment in land and *a fortiori* dryland management). What is the multilateral agencies' response, notably in the UNCCD context?
- It is estimated that between 70 and 80 per cent of world's poor live in rural area. Furthermore, it is amongst those communities that we encounter the highest concentration of the poorest level of society (net income inferior or equal to one US dollar a day).
- In the light of the Monterrey Consensus, the outcome of the Doha WTO Conference and the WSSD, the UNCCD appears as a prime and very effective tool to promote and instrumentalize a new generation of financial packages, conceived as dryland development investments, targeting food security objectives and carrying a strong poverty eradication component.
- The recent developments in the GEF process are very encouraging but should not be considered as sufficient. The GEF *per se* is not a *panacea* and complementary base line co finance is critically important. An increased financial portfolio is required to match current efforts being made for other global issues, such as climate change and biodiversity.



DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY
Monday, 1 September 2003	10:00	Opening Ceremony of the High-Level Segment
	10.30 - 14.00	Statements by Heads of State and Government
	14:00 – 15:30	Lunch Break
	15:30 - 19:30	Round Table of Heads of State and Government
	20:00	Reception
Tuesday, 2 September 2003	10:00 - 11:00	High-Level Inter-Agency Panel (focus on implementation process)
	11:00 – 13:00	Interactive Dialogue of Ministers
	13:00 - 14:30	Lunch Break
	14:30 - 18:00	Interactive Dialogue of Ministers