

UNCCD towards new decade

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

UNCCD coming into a new decade

Developed as a result of the Rio Summit, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is a unique instrument that has brought attention to land degradation where exist some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and people in the world. Ten years after its coming into force, the UNCCD benefits from universal membership and is increasingly recognized as an instrument which can make an important contribution to the achievement of sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Ten years of implementation limited by some global factors

After a decade of implementation, Parties recognized limiting factors have prevented optimal deployment of the Convention. The Convention operates today in an environment that has evolved considerably since when it was first negotiated.

The policy environment has changed

Development paradigm has shifted largely since the Rio, especially with adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). More focus on issues - such as Africa and the least-developed countries, stronger commitment for climate change mitigation and adaptation, prospects of global agricultural trade liberalization, and growing numbers of environmental refugees and migrants - are shedding new lights on the impacts of poverty and environmental degradation today.

The scientific environment has changed

With the work of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) on dryland ecosystems, the scientific environment has also evolved, contributing to improved understanding of the biophysical and socio-economic trends relating to land degradation in global drylands and their impacts on human and ecosystem well-being.

The financing environment has also changed profoundly in the last decade

In 2003, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has become a financial mechanism of the Convention. Official development assistance (ODA) flow has increased again after ten years of stagnation, and declining resources for rural development and agriculture. Major cooperating partners have refocused their financing strategies to support country-driven priorities.

This new environment provides the starting point for the new strategic plan of the Convention

During COP 8, held in Madrid in September 2007, the 192 Parties unanimously adopted the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention for 2008-2018 (The Strategy). The Strategy provides unique opportunity to address some of the Convention's key challenges, to capitalize on its strengths, to seize opportunities provided by the new policy and financing

environment and to create a new and revitalized common ground for all UNCCD stakeholders.

The new Strategy is tasked to provide a global framework

The Strategy supports 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.

The strategic objectives and expected impacts of the Strategy

Four strategic objectives with their own long-term impacts will guide the actions of all UNCCD stakeholders and partners to achieve the global vision. These four strategic objectives are: 1)

to improve the living conditions of affected populations, 2) to improve the condition of affected ecosystems, 3) to generate global benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD and 4) to mobilize resources to support the implementation of the Convention through building effective partnerships between national and international actors.

Successful implementation of The Strategy requires efforts from all Parties

All parties are requested to put into operation the implementation of The Strategy in accordance with their national priorities and in a spirit of international solidarity and partnership. Affected developing country Parties, and any other affected country Parties within the framework of its Regional Implementation Annex, are urged to align their action programmes and other relevant implementation activities relating to the Convention with The Strategy.

The secretariat's new Structure

Successful implementation of the strategic plan also requires a strengthening of the core servicing, advocacy and agenda-setting and representation functions of the UNCCD secretariat in order to support Parties, the COP and the subsidiary bodies of the Convention in fulfilling their respective roles. The aim is to make the UNCCD secretariat a robust and highly performing international organization which will facilitate the implementation of the Strategy and build a global momentum on land issues. In light of the vision envisaged in The Strategy, the new structure pays greater attention to the need to support the continuum between "knowledge management", "information and policy advocacy" and "monitoring and assessment of the implementation process" through cooperation and partnership.

OUR MEANS THROUGH COOPERATION & PARTNERSHIP

