

WORD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2004

Events around the world

ALGERIA

The "Association des Amis de l'Environnement" –AAE- (Biskra, Algeria) organized a joint exhibition with the "Centre de Recherche Scientifique et Technique sur les Régions Arides" (CRSTRA) to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Convention. Ms. Farida Khammar, director of CRSTRA, hosted a conference in Biskra entitled "Desertification: challenges and implications".

For the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the World Day to Combat Desertification on 20 June 2004, the national radio organized three local triplex radios (Tébessa in the east, Bechar in the south-west and Radio Mitidja in the center of the country) held a debate on the fight against desertification in Algeria. The Association of Friends of the Saoura Bechar and the Association Minerve Tébessa represented the NGO part of the CNOA / RIOD. The other participants represented the Regional Directorates of Forestry, Hydraulics, Agriculture and Environmental Inspection (Center, East, and West). At the center level an adviser to the Minister for the Environment and of spatial planning was present. The main themes addressed were the fight against desertification in the steppe zones and the various action plans put in place.

BURKINA FASO

Various organizations organized a series of events to commemorate the day.

BRASIL

Various organizations organized a series of events to commemorate the day.

CAPE VERDE

Various organizations organized a series of events to commemorate the day.

CHILE

Renace, a network of 149 organizations in Chile, will organize on June 17 a conference with the aim of evaluating the progress (and/or the regression) of desertification in Chile in order to draw public attention on the issue of desertification.

GHANA

Friends of the Earth-Ghana undertook awareness raising activities with desert communities to highlight solutions to the process of desertification and so bring hope to affected people. They also issued a press statement to raise public awareness in Ghana about the importance of the Day. Friends of the Earth-Ghana Mr. George Awudi Friends of the Earth - Ghana Email: geobrigkwa@yahoo.com

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Ireland

As part of their “awareness raising” campaign on the occasion of the World Day to Combat Desertification Wingspread will enter a team in the Women's Mini Marathon in Dublin, which is taking place this year on the 7th of June. Wingspread planned to promote the issues of desertification that day, having not only participants walking for the event, but also a display on the finishing post dedicated to the 'Social Dimensions of Desertification Migration and Poverty'. Moreover, as part of 17th of June celebrations, Wingspread is planning to host 'Coffee Mornings' around the country. Mainly in Dublin, Kildare, Westmeath and Cork, the occasion will be used to highlight the social consequences of desertification and the need to denounce not only its causes but also the social ramification of desertification in developing and developed countries.

KAZAKHSTAN

Various organizations organized a series of events to commemorate the day.

KENYA

The Kenyan National NGO Coordinating Committee on Desertification (NCCD-K) and the National Steering Committee will celebrate June 17 in Narok, District of Rift Valley Province in Kenya. The choice of this district is not innocuous; indeed, 75% of Narok district is classified as arid and semi-arid zone, and last but not least, this district is the home of the famous Masai Mara Game Reserve and the key wheat producer district in Kenya. Among the guest, the Minister of Environment, Natural Resources and Wildlife, UN agencies, Private Sector, Members of Parliament, school children and community representatives from other districts of Kenya are expected. The occasion will be used to launch the Desertification Trust Fund.

LYBIA

The tenth anniversary of the UNCCD was commemorated through the General Water Authority, Tripoli that delivered a welcome address and gave a brief description of the plans of the organization to combat desertification. UN staff in Libya joined the event and read the 2004 message of the Secretary-General on occasion of June 17. Approximately 200 persons attended the celebrations, including academics, Government officials, NGOs and the media. Speaking at the celebrations, the Under-Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture reminded the audience to save water and called for new plantations of trees and grass to protect land from converting into deserts. Overgrazing needs to be avoided, he said. In order to raise public awareness, authorities organized for an exhibition that demonstrated plants which help combat desertification. They also screened a new documentary film. Academics and experts in desertification control joined the event to present and discuss a variety of papers on the issue. UNIC Libya organized an exhibition of UN publications, pamphlets and information material in order to emphasize this global environmental problem.

MOROCCO

On occasion of the 2004 World Day to Combat Desertification, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will coordinate from 17th to 19th of June a seminar in Agadir. For this special event, it will organize a series of activities, including cultural and artistic manifestations. On June 18, the Partners of the Moroccan National Action Programme (NAP) are invited to discuss the summary of the follow-up projects for in the framework of the NAP implementation in Morocco.

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NETHERLANDS

The Dutch NGO Both Ends will participate on 19 June in the "Festival Mundial", a multicultural festival in the Netherlands (Tilburg). They are planning to set a stand to show the activities that the organization is undertaken to combat desertification

PAKISTAN

The June 17th SCOPE will organize a seminar with the Pakistan Press Foundation, organization that which works for making media people aware about major developmental issues. The seminar will cover the main reasons of desertification in Pakistan and its possible remedies; it will cover the steps taken by the Government of Pakistan to follow UNCCD. SCOPE, which is a RIOD Focal point, will elaborate steps taken by the civil society organizations in combating desertification in Pakistan.

PORTUGAL

Various organizations organized a series of events to commemorate the day.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The Emirates Environmental Group (EEG) is an environmental, voluntary, non-government organization (NGO) devoted to protecting the environment through means of education, action programs and community involvement. It is the first environmental NGO in the world to be ISO 14001 certified and the only organization of its kind in the UAE with accredited status to the United Nations Convention for Combating Desertification (UNCCD).

EEG is open to men and women of all nationalities, as well as to public and private organizations, academic establishments and international institutions. Its key operations include environmental education and awareness related projects and publications, waste management and recycling campaigns, corporate projects on environment preservation and corporate social responsibility. EEG has been making a sustained endeavor to raise community awareness and pro-action to promote greenery and combat desertification. This year too, the NGO is busy carrying out a planned campaign by organizing a range of activities – a drawing competition for school level students in a public park on the theme of local flora and fauna in February, a free community lecture in April showcasing the UAE's date palm research and cultivation as a tool for combating desertification, a feature in its mouthpiece Wastepaper magazine (issue 17, June 2004) on desertification, and a poster in June to commemorate the World Day for Combating Desertification.