

WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2011

Events Around the World

ARGENTINA

Eco-Club San Juan will host a concert on 17 of June in the City of San Juan (Argentina), at 21:00hrs to observe the Day. The concert will be presented by the students of the High School of Music of the University of San Juan. Several staff members of the South American Net of Eco-Club will attend event. Entry is free. For more information, contact: ecoclubsanjuan@yahoo.com.ar

With the aim of celebrating the World Day to Combat Desertification in Argentina, the three days National Environmental Forum on Climate Change and Desertification 2011 was launched the 17th of June this year. The event was organized by the NGOs Fundación Agreste (FundAgreste?), Fundación Altos Estudios Ambientales de la República Argentina (FAEARA) and Fundación Centro de Estudios Ecológicos de la República Argentina (FUCEERA), together with the Center for Prospective Studies of the National University of Cuyo (CEP-UNCuyo) and the Municipality of the City of Koslay Juana (San Luis Province, Argentina). The main objective of all of these organizations was the participatory construction of a document to be presented at the next Conference of Parties of the UN Conventions on Climate Change (COP17) and Desertification (COP10) to be held in Durban, South Africa, and Changwon, Gyeongnam Province, Republic of Korea, respectively.

BÉNIN

Within the frame of its campaign for raising awareness about climate change, the NGO JVE BENIN, in partnership with Directorate General of Forests and Natural Resources of the Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection, celebrates the 2011 World Day to Combat Desertification under the theme: Forests keep drylands working. A conference with actors from the environment sector will be organized Thursday 16 June 2011 à 9 a.m. in the CNCB conference room in Cotonou. For more information, contact: jvebenin@gmail.com

BURKINA FASO

Every year, the NGO from Burkina Faso Association Rélwendé pour le Développement (ARD) promotes and develops several activities and initiatives related to the fight against desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD). The 17th of June is a special date for this organization, which celebrates the World Day to Combat Desertification enthusiastically.

BURUNDI

As part of the celebration of World Day to Combat Desertification, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Commission of Central African Forests (COMIFAC) organized in collaboration with the Government of Burundi, the Global Mechanism, the UNCCD Secretariat and the German Cooperation (GIZ), a sub regional capacity building for UNCCD National Focal Points on the alignment of the NAPs to the 10-year strategy (2008-2018), from 14 to June 17, 2011 in Bujumbura (Burundi).

WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2011

Events Around the World

CANADA

Not-for profit humanitarian group, Raindance Rubberboots in association with the Riverdale Community League observed the World Day to Combat Desertification with a benefit concert at Riverdale Rink House in Edmonton, Canada. The non-profit event was held as part of a month-long Environment Festival organized by Raindance Rubberboots from 1 to 30 June 2011. Live performances by Stephanie Harpe Experience, Light Travels, Matthew Mol, John Spearn and Gautam Karnik were part of the concert. All the bands tried to raise awareness about desertification and drought among all age groups. In addition to the live-music the venue also had an art exhibit on ecology science and kids art creations along with a games table.

CHILE

Chile celebrated the World Day to Combat Desertification in the middle of the development of a national movement to protest against the macro-economic projects which are being carried in the country and which degrade the land and the live in the communities. Chile has been involved with the problems of DLDD for 14 years, when this country ratified the Convention. Every 17th of June the country reminds their inhabitants the importance of being part of the process. The Forestry National Corporation (CONAF) was in charge of coordinating the celebration of the WDCD, and they also gave a conference to the students of Degree of Farming Techniques, from the town of Copiapó.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Dominican Republic celebrates World Day to Combat Desertification on June 17 2011 with a painting contest for children from the border region between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The contest held under the motto "The Beauty of Drylands" aims to improve the childrens' knowledge about the environment surrounding them and to raise awareness of desertification and drought among the younger generation.

The award ceremony rewarding children from both Haiti and the Dominican Republic is also attended by the Minister of Culture and will be held on June 15 in the National Botanical Garden. For more information, contact jgarcia@unccd.int

EGYPT

On occasion of the World Day to Combat Desertification, a workshop will be held at Desert Research Center under the auspices of His Excellency the minister of Agriculture. Scientific community, civil society organizations and media are invited to the event. Press conference will be organized to provide information about desertification status at national and regional level. Several TV interviews will be given by the UNCCD national focal point.

WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2011

Events Around the World

FRANCE

The NGO GTD in association with Tiken Jah Fakoly will celebrate June 17, World Day to Combat desertification, to raise awareness of the public at large and policy makers on the drylands issues. GTD invites you June 17 from 18 p.m. to 20 p.m. at Divan du Monde (75 rue des Martyrs, 75018 Paris, métro Pigalle or Abbesses) to participate in the roundtable: "degraded land, degraded life" and interact with actors of civil society both African and French.

GHANA

Ghana wanted to commemorate this year's World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought by expressing the concern about DLDD that the country has. To this matter, FOE-Ghana organized and released a press statement to the media, the dryland communities and policy makers and the community of development partners in Ghana. The message drew attention on the need of combating desertification in Ghana as part of the efforts to save Ghana's and the global ecosystem and ensuring sustainable development. Related to the awareness-raising, in the WDCD there were some coordinated acts in several communities in the Northern Savannah. They made a demonstration of planting a tree with children from local schools.

INDIA

In India, the World Day to Combat Desertification - 17 June 2011, was observed with a National Workshop organized at Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

IRAN

Hormod Sustainable Development Institute, a non-governmental organization in Iran, has designed a poster, in the Persian language, on the role of plant coverage to combat Desertification. The poster will be disseminated as part of its observation of the World Day to Combat Desertification. Hormod Sustainable Development Institute coordinates and promotes the Plant for the Planet project in Iran. For more information, contact: hormodsdi@gmail.com

ITALY

UPM (Un Punto Macrobiotico International Association) celebrates World Day to Combat Desertification with the project "Un Bosco per la Citta" ("A Forest for the City") on 17 June, 2011. The event promoting the creation of forests in the drier areas of 40 municipalities across Italy is held in collaboration with the Italian National Forest Service, the UNESCO and the Italian Ministries of Environment and Education. So far, 60,000 trees have been planted as part of this project with 20,000 additions expected in the next month. A National Conference to present the project will be held at Reggio Emilia UPM Center and the final results will be published in a book, which would be presented on 16 October during the Congress to celebrate the UN World Food Day.

WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2011

Events Around the World

In order to felicitate the World Day to Combat Desertification, a book titled, “Desertificazione e degrade del suolo (Desertification and Land Degradation)” will be released in an observance ceremony in Trebisacce, Calabria, in Italy on 17 June, 2011. The book is authored by a group of researchers from the Calabria University. It provides a general overview/ Bird’s eye-view of the mechanisms and the effects of desertification and land degradation. A presentation on a desertification project in Sibari province of Italy will also be made during the course of the book launch event.

KENYA

WDCD has been celebrated in Kenya for the last 17 years. This year, the event was held in Gingo Secondary School in Mbita, Suba District. The event was presided by the Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources and coordinated by National Environment Management Authority (NEMA). It was participated by a wide range of participants, including community based organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, UNDP Kenya Country Office, the UNDP Drylands Development Centre, foreign missions, primary schools, secondary schools, and Self Help Groups.

LESOTHO

The Kingdom of Lesotho will celebrate the World Desertification Day on the 24th June 2011 instead of the 17th June 2011. The event will be held in the Leribe District located in the Northern part of Lesotho. This area was plagued by land degradation with visible gullies which healed after the planting of exotic and indigenous trees and other rehabilitation works. Therefore this addresses this year's theme "Forests keep drylands working" and International Year of Forests. Representatives of the Government as well as United Nations Representative will attend the ceremony. Replanting activities and field visits are planned for this day.

PAKISTAN

The Environment Ministry of Pakistan actively celebrated the World Day to Combat Desertification by organizing various informational events across the country. The Federal Secretary of Environment launched an awareness poster and a brochure to mark the occasion. The brochure talks about the government’s Sustainable Land Management Project, which is implemented in conjunction with UNCCD, UNDP and the GEF. The brochure talks about measures that could be taken and how to overcome threats to dryland forests. It also focuses on this year’s theme of, “Forests Keep Drylands Working”. To help its readers better understand the dryland forests, the brochure also carries color pictures of multi-purpose indigenous trees found in the dryland forests. The unveiled poster carries pictures of two such trees, *Salvadora oleoides* (Peelu in local language) and *Commiphora Wightii* (Guggal). The text on the poster describes the commercial and the local use of both the species. It also called out to save both the species from extinction.

On 17 June, the Society for Conservation and Protection of Environment (SCOPE) organized a candlelight vigil to venerate the theme, “Forests keep drylands working” in Mithi, Pakistan. The members of the civil

WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2011

Events Around the World

society and people from all walks of life participated in the vigil to raise awareness on desertification, loss of vegetative covers and overgrazing. SCOPE took this opportunity to urge the government in quicker implementation of the National Action Programme to fight against desertification, land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought. The Drynet Network and the International Land Coalition also participated in the vigil. SCOPE works in close coordination with the local communities in the drought-affected drylands to guarantee sustainable land management and to educate the locals about the complex environmental issues. It also helps locals manage natural resources.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

The Republic of Korea celebrates the World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD 2011) with various events to enhance public awareness and concerns about desertification as well as to commemorate the hosting of the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) to the UNCCD. For more information, contact unithlee@nate.com.

SENEGAL

Senegal will host the Global observance event in Dakar back-to-back with the First Africa Drylands Week taking place from 10-17 June. Over 100 scientists and representatives of government, international and civil society organizations from around the world will attend. The speakers will include Luc Gnacadja, UNCCD Executive Secretary, representatives of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Professor Jeffery Sachs, Earth Institute of Columbia University, Dennis Garrity, ICRAF Director-General, and Godwin Kowero, Executive Secretary of the African Forest Forum and other dignitaries. Djibo Leity Ka, Senegal's Minister of State, Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection, will preside over the World Day to Combat Desertification.

SOUTH AFRICA

The Deputy Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs for South Africa, Rejoice Mabudafhasi commemorated the World Day to Combat Desertification by launching the Bathlabine Soil Conservation Project in Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality, Limpopo. The Bathlabine community has been facing a serious soil erosion problem for years, which has resulted in a significant drop in the crop yields. Mr. Mabudafhasi referred to this experience in his keynote address by saying, "There is a close relationship between livelihoods and soils that are rich in biodiversity. Healthy soils produce life, and yet soil health depends a lot on how individuals use their land."

South Africa's National Botanical Institute is presently working on a comprehensive report for the government to indicate the degree of land degradation across the country.

WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2011

Events Around the World

SPAIN

undación IPADE, in cooperation with the UNCCD, will host an observance event in Madrid. During the event, the renowned footballer Mr. Carlos Marchena, will be designated the new Drylands Ambassador to support the fight against desertification. Mr. Marchena holds the Champion of the World and Champion of Europe titles awarded to the Spanish National Football team. Among the planned activities of the Day are a press conference, a tree planting ceremony with Mr. Marchena, a panel session, the projection of the movie "La mar del silencio" and a cocktail reception. High profile personalities from different fields will attend. For more information, contact aperez@unccd.int.

SUDAN

On the occasion of the World Day to Combat Desertification, the UNESCO Chair of Desertification organized a press conference in Sudan in collaboration with the Sudanese Association for Combating Desertification (SACD) and Sudan UNCCD Focal Point. The professor Mukhtar Ahmed Mustafaand, President of SACD, led the conference to a wide audience in order to present the lecture of "Desertification is a major constraint in sustainable agricultural development". This symposium was focused on capturing the attention of the different communities in Sudan and mobilizing them in the fight of combating desertification.

SWITZERLAND

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is celebrating the World Day to Combat Desertification at its headquarters in Geneva. It would be distributing and broadcasting information related to desertification, land degradation and drought. The staff members of the WMO can access information related to combating desertification in the various parts of their office. There would be displays in the cafeteria, the main building, notice boards at strategic points; WMO's external relations division would be actively spearheading the circulation of info kits to the staff members. For more information, visit <http://www.wmo.int>.