

UNCCD 25 years: interactive timeline

17-06-2019

On the eve of the World Day to Combat Desertification, the UNCCD library opens the archives to look back the important milestones of the Convention, such as the first scientific evidence of desertification, authentic papers from the negotiation process before 1994 and awareness raising materials. Each month between January and June 2019, the library will display these materials on the 15 floor of the Langer Eugen building in Bonn.

Online visitors can find the highlights of the convention's history on this page and on [Flickr](#).

Who said "desertification" first?

The term "desertification" was first popularized by a French researcher Aubreville in 1949 to describe the process of vegetation cover loss. The term desertification was first applied politically during the Sahel crisis in the 1970s. The UN General Assembly [resolution](#) on international cooperation to combat desertification.

Key dates:

- 1973 – 1991 [pre-convention history](#). Click [here](#) to access the historical records in the UNCCD library
 - 1973 – Five-year Sahelian drought ends
 - 1974 – United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) is established
 - 1977 – United Nations Conference on Desertification (UNCOD) in Nairobi, Kenya. Plan of action to combat desertification (PACD) is established
 - 1978 – UNEP creates Desertification Branch
 - 1978 – 1984 First global assessment of Plan of action to combat desertification with recommendations for countries to establish National Plans of action to combat desertification
 - 1989 – Consultative group for desertification control (DESCON) established
- 1992 – 1994 [Rio conventions process/birth of UNCCD](#). Bo Kjellen of Sweden, the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Convention on Desertification passionately [addresses the press](#) on 26 October 1994.
- [26-Oct-1994 00:25:25](#)
- Bo Kjellen (Sweden), Chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Convention on Desertification, briefs press on the Convention which was recently opened for signature in Paris. Sharing his hopes that the convention will be able to make use of communications and information technology available. He believes solutions to Drylands problem would add to improved security throughout the world.
- <https://www.unmultimedia.org/avlibrary/asset/2230/2230640/>
- [17-Jan-1997 00:27:52](#)

- Ian Williams interviews Bo Kjellen, Chairman of the United Nations Committee on Desertification, for World Chronicle program 654.
- <https://www.unmultimedia.org/avlibrary/asset/2159/2159705/>

More audiovisual files related to desertification, WDCD, special sessions and HLPD

- <https://www.unmultimedia.org/avlibrary/search/search.jsp?mediatype=&q=desertification>
- - 1999 – UNCCD moves to Bonn
 - 2004 – UNCCD celebrates its tenth anniversary
 - [2006 – International Year of Deserts and Desertification](#) (IYDD)
 - 2010 – 2020 UN Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification ([UNDDDD](#))

We have also asked staff members to share their cherished memories from the history of the convention and describe the difference between UNCCD today and the time they joined the organization. Here is what [Melchiade Bukuru](#) ; [Richard A. Byron-Cox](#) , [Marcos Montoiro](#) have shared.

Read more:

- [UNCCD history](#) and [UNCCD 25 years interactive timeline](#)
- [25 years of Growing Together: A convention is born after more than two decades](#)
- 25 years in 25+ UNCCD [key publications](#)
- [Tree planting ceremony - programme](#)
- [A new tree is born in Bonn](#)

Link

[UNCCD 25 years on](#)

Topic

[World Day to Combat Desertification \(WDCD\)](#)
[land degradation](#)
[desertification](#)
[sahel](#)

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