

International Year of Deserts and Desertification 2006



1996 - 2006

The Beauty of Deserts - The Challenge of Desertification

UNCCD entered into force on 26 December 1996, 90 days after the 50th instrument of ratification was deposited.

For a party acceding the Convention after this date the Convention enters into force 90 days after this party has deposited its instrument of ratification, accession or acceptance. To date, it has been signed and ratified by more than 190 states. Developing countries as well as developed countries, including such countries not affected by drought or desertification are Parties to the Convention. This mode follows the principle of international partnership.

In October 1997, the first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 1) was organized in Rome, Italy. Rules governing the COP and its subsidiary bodies were established, the functions of the Global

Mechanism, the financial mechanism of UNCCD was set forth, and the permanent secretariat of the Convention (UNCCD Secretariat) was designated.

COP 2, taking place in December 1998 in Senegal, Dakar, concentrated on medium-term strategies of the secretariat. A declaration on the convocation of the first round table of Members of Parliaments on desertification was decided upon.

In January 1999, the Permanent Secretariat of the UNCCD was established in Bonn, Germany - after having served as an interim secretariat based in Geneva.

COP 3, which convened in November 1999 in Recife, Brazil, brought forth a first review of policies, operational modalities and activities of the Global Mechanism as finance broking institution. Consultations took place on the "Recife Initiative" to enhance the implementation of the obligations of the Parties to UNCCD.

In December 2000, COP 4 in Bonn, Germany established a fifth implementation annex for Central and Eastern Europe (Annex V), and adopted the "Recife Initiative." An inter-governmental ad-hoc working group (AHWG) started an in-depth review of country reports on the implementation of the Convention in March and April 2001 at an intersessional meeting in Bonn, Germany.

A comprehensive report, including conclusions and recommendations on further steps in the implementation of the Convention, was adopted and submitted to COP 5 in October 2001 in Geneva, Switzerland.

March - April 2001 - Bonn, Germany

- Intersessional meeting of the ad hoc working group (AHWG)
- Building on a review of national and other reports, a comprehensive report on further steps in the implementation of the Convention is adopted and submitted to COP 5.

October 2001 - Geneva, Switzerland COP 5

- CRIC established as a subsidiary body of the COP.
- Reform of the CST is adopted and a Group of Experts is established.

August - September 2002 - Johannesburg, South Africa

- World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)
- Governments call on the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to become a financial mechanism of the UNCCD

October 2002 - Beijing, China

- Second Assembly of the GEF
- A decision to designate land degradation as its fifth focal area is adopted
- The GEF will be established as a financial mechanism of the UNCCD

November 2002 - Rome, Italy CRIC 1

- Innovative solutions to combat desertification are identified and shared.
- A report is adopted and will be submitted to COP6.

August - September 2003 - Havana, Cuba COP 6

- The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is designated as a financial mechanism of the Convention.
- CRIC 2 recommendations on ways to improve the implementation of the Convention are endorsed.

May 2005 - Bonn, Germany CRIC 3

- New ways mapped to mainstream desertification.

October 2005 - Nairobi, Kenya

- COP 7, CST 7 and CRIC 4 are held.

In 2003, the General Assembly of the United Nations, at its fifty-eighth session, adopted resolution 58/211, deciding that the International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD) would be formally launched on 1 January 2006. The IYDD was designated with a view to raising global public awareness of the increasing challenges posed by desertification, safeguarding the biological diversity of arid lands and protecting the knowledge and traditions of affected communities

The General Assembly of the United Nations, at its fifty-eighth ordinary session, being concerned at the exacerbation of desertification, particularly in Africa, and its far-reaching implications for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), declared the year 2006 as the International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD) as a means of raising public awareness on the issue of desertification and in order to protect the biological diversity and the knowledge and the traditions of communities affected by desertification

(https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/sessions/documents/ICCD_COP8_11/11eng.pdf)

This report provides an assessment of the results and outcomes of the wide range of events and activities that took place in celebration of the IYDD. It concludes that the IYDD offered an important

opportunity to increase awareness and disseminate information about desertification at the global level, while fostering the development and consolidation of stakeholder networks and contributing to the long-term implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the achievement of the MDGs. Combating desertification remains, nevertheless, an important challenge, and in order to perpetuate the momentum generated through the IYDD, it is imperative that appropriate follow-up action takes place.

"...number of special events, publications, resources and media coverage, civil society and networking events and contributions to international conferences and events. The same report highlighted how the IYDD celebrations helped to promote knowledge and increase information exchange in relation to the UNCCD and its implementation, and raise awareness of the challenges of desertification to human security and well-being in drylands"

The IYDD initiatives reported from other parts of the world were varied in nature and content and involved many different stakeholders.

Many of the IYDD events requested the COP, the secretariat and other stakeholders to give due consideration to follow-up initiatives. Outputs from the workshops organized in Bamako (4–6 September 2006) and Beijing (May 29 to 1 June 2006) specifically requested the COP to consider the statements, recommendations and declarations with a view to implementing the recommendations therein.

At the end of the Algiers conference (17–19 December 2006) an agreement was signed by the Ministry of Environment of Algeria, the United Nations University (UNU), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the secretariats of the UNCCD and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in order to strengthen the collaboration of these institutions in the fight against desertification. The agreement also referred to a proposed Decade of Deserts and Desertification (2010–2020), promoted by the conference and subsequently discussed at the UNEP Governing Council session in Nairobi, Kenya, from 5 to 9 February 2007.

The year 2006, there is double reason to celebrate the [World Day to Combat Desertification \(WDCD\)](#), because 2006 is the International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD) and accordingly, the IYDD is the focus of the 2006 WDCD celebrations, and its message is reflected in this year's theme: ["The Beauty of Deserts - The Challenge of Desertification"](#).

2006 - INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DESERTS AND DESERTIFICATION

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Official Documents

[Launch of the International Year of Deserts and Desertification](#)
(1 January 2006)

[Message of the Secretary-General](#) (24 October 2005)
United Nations

[The UN Launches International Year of Deserts and Desertification 2006 to Profile Desertification as a Major Threat to Humanity](#) (23 December 2005)

[2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification: UN Secretary-General interim report is presented to the General Assembly. Press Release](#) (2 November 2005)



UNHCR/J.Clark

[Land Degradation, Desertification Pose Challenge to Achieving Anti-Poverty Goals, UN Says](#) (24 October 2005)

[Press Conference on the International Year of Deserts and Desertification](#) (15 September 2005)

[Resolution A/RES/58/211 of 23 December 2003 on the International Year of Deserts and Desertification](#)



[The official UN site for United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification](#)

<https://www.unric.org/html/english/desertification/official.html>

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