

SUMMARY

This report is the result of the obligations assumed by the Chilean Government in relation to the subscription to the Convention to Combat Desertification, which was confirmed by the National Congress and the Executive Office in November 1997. It is our obligation to present this report for its consideration in the Fourth Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP4).

The report was written based on the suggestions included in the guidelines provided by the Convention's Secretariat. They fundamentally aim at aspects such as strategy, participation, institutionalisation, support to international co-operation, specific measures adopted, financial contributions, and following-up and evaluation of the application of the Convention and its National Action Program (NAP) in Chile.

These guidelines were distributed to all national public and private institutions involved in the endeavours of the Convention in Chile. Among them, there are public organisations mainly attached to the Ministry of Agriculture, research institutions, and NGOs. In short, the questionnaire was given to 23 informant institutions considered relevant in the implementation process of the National Program.

This report is not just a large compilation of information supplied and actions performed by these institutions; it summarises relevant facts about the institutional work informed and provides a critical analysis of the state-of-art of Convention's implementation and its NAP.

About the strategic aspect as well as the priorities given to the implementation of NAP, the information provided shows that the Convention does not occupy a relevant place within then institutional priorities. Furthermore, most of these organisations continue developing a traditional attitude which corresponds indeed to the Convention's suggestions but do not show an improved strength and articulation due to the application of the NAP.

The most important fact about the institutional aspect is the structural and operational mechanisms has not yet been consolidated and, consequently, it is necessary to have the different actors strengthen their participation and compromise with the Convention. In doing so, we would be aiming at discovering effective mechanisms of participation at the local, regional, and national levels.

With respects to the participation of the different actors involved, it is necessary to point out that important efforts are being made, but these are not enough to get a stronger thrust in implementing NAP. The scarcity of the institutions' own resources to develop specific activities in the implementation of the Convention in the country and

the low priority generally given to it by all actors work against a stronger, wider participation.

The measures adopted in the application of NAP and UNCCD are diverse. Some of them have their origin prior to the Convention, but in general they reflect a traditional, historical way of operating within the institutions. The measures themselves are quite similar to those related to the way of behaving in the field of desertification in areas such as poverty and degradation of natural resources. These actions imply a budget that, in the last 5 years, exceeds US\$100 million. Moreover, the governmental budget for the next 6 years is in the order of US\$ 2500 million.

What neatly springs from the report is the fact that the Convention and its NAP must find a specific stage of action which would mainly consist in favouring the processes of institutional articulation, the efficient and effective flow of information, and the development of corporate image in relation to this topic, so as to form a platform not only of action but also of support for the attainment of financial resources.