

**UN Convention to Combat Desertification - Committee for the Review of the  
Implementation of the Convention (CRIC)**

**Second UNCCD Reporting Exercise**

**IRELAND**

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## **ii) A Summary**

Ireland is a strong supporter of the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification particularly in Africa (UNCCD), which is one of three major conventions which emerged from the 1992 UN Conference on the Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. Following signature and subsequent ratification, Ireland became a party to the Convention on 29 October 1997.

Ireland believes that desertification presents a major threat to those living in developing countries. Ireland continues to mainstream commitments and obligations under the Convention into the Ireland Aid's bilateral aid programme activities in affected priority countries. We also support activities to combat desertification through our contributions to multilateral fora.

Following signature and subsequent ratification, Ireland became a party to the UNCCD in October 1997. Ireland has participated actively in the various Conferences of the Parties which are signatory to the UNCCD and has made both mandatory and voluntary contributions to the UNCCD since 1998. In 2002, Ireland made mandatory contributions of \$16,440.

Ireland's priority countries in Africa are the primary focus of its support for the implementation of UNCCD in developing countries. The attached tables for 2000-2001 in section (iii) outline brief descriptions and budgets for projects Ireland Aid has funded which fall within the remit of the Desertification Convention.

Ireland works through strong partnerships with the governments and people of its programme countries. We support programmes identified by, and responding to, the needs and priorities of those governments. Our Embassies have expressed to those governments an interest in supporting the preparation and implementation of National Action Plans. No direct request for such assistance has resulted. However, many of the programmes we support are related to implementation of the convention and details of these programmes are provided.

**iii) The consultative processes and partnership agreements in which they are involved.**

Ireland is fully committed to working in partnership with the governments - national, regional and local - and people of our programme countries (Lesotho, Zambia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda and Ethiopia). Ireland Aid Country Strategy Papers are developed every three years. The teams preparing these strategies always include representatives of government. Significant consultation takes place both before and during the strategic planning exercises. On completion of the draft plan, it is circulated to government and other partners for comment prior to being finalised. Nothing is included in the 3 year strategies unless it falls within the priorities of, and is agreed by, both sides.

Ireland believed that, in the spirit of partnership, we could only be proactive to the extent of expressing an interest in the preparation of National Action Plans and making it clear that we would be open to receiving well conceived and well coordinated requests for assistance either for preparation of the plans or actions arising out of them. This avoids “North-led” initiatives which do not coincide with the needs and priorities of recipient countries.

**iv) Measures taken to support the preparation and implementation of action programmes at all levels, including information on financial resources.**

In 1999, it was suggested to relevant Embassies that they explore whether our assistance was required by any of our partner countries but nothing came of this initiative. In the consultation process around the preparation of Country Strategy Papers, no requests have emerged for assistance specifically in the context of the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD). However, many activities relevant to the CCD have emerged and have been financed through our country programmes.

Ireland mainstreams its commitments and obligations under the Convention to Combat Desertification into the Ireland Aid's bilateral aid programme activities in affected programme countries and through multilateral contributions. In the bilateral programme for example, we have supported a watershed management approach in the Eastern Tigray region of Ethiopia - integrating soil and water conservation with production/income generation issues in those areas which suffer most severely from desertification and drought. This approach has been highly successful and has simultaneously addressed the problem of land degradation, moisture deficit, food insecurity, providing short-term employment on a cash-for-work basis as well as enhancing the long term production and income-generating potential of watersheds.

The data in the attached table has been prepared in accordance with the OECD DAC guidance note "Data collection on aid targeting the implementation of the Rio Conventions". The table includes activities in the programme countries as well as those supported through other modalities.