

Netherlands communication to the CRIC on the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)

April 2002

Environment and Development Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
P.O. Box 20061
2500 EB The Hague
The Netherlands

April 2002

CONTENTS

Summary

1. Introduction

2. Main findings

- 2.1 General
- 2.2 Participatory processes
- 2.3 Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements
- 2.4 Resource mobilisation and co-ordination
- 2.5 Linkages and synergies
- 2.6 Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems
- 2.7 Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment
- 2.8 Access to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how

Annexes

- 1. List of Abbreviations and Acronyms
- 2. Questionnaire for Embassies
- 3. Questionnaire for Netherlands based organisations
- 4. Overview of the key themes identified for the report
- 5. Detailed Response from interviewed actors on key thematic issues

SUMMARY

The Netherlands ratified the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) in 1995. So far two national reports have been prepared on the Netherlands support in the implementation of the Convention, one for CoP3¹ (1999) and one for CoP4 (2000). These reports cover the activities and financial commitments of the bilateral, multilateral and private funding channels. The present document is an update of the earlier reports² but with a distinct focus. It deals with selected thematic issues as determined during CoP5 in October last year (2001).

The CoP5 created the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) with the purpose to review the implementation process of the CCD in broader perspective. The Committee was asked not only to look at quantitative and financial aspects but to concentrate on seven key thematic issues of strategic importance in the formulation and implementation of the CCD National Action Plans (NAP's).

These themes (in short) deal with:

- Participatory processes
- Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements
- Resource mobilisation and co-ordination
- Linkages and synergies
- Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems
- Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment
- Access to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how.

The developed country parties are asked to report to the CRIC on their support in the implementation of the CCD with regard to these seven issues. The present report fulfils this request and complements the earlier above-mentioned more quantitative national reports by the Netherlands.

The document is the result of a participatory reporting process in which Netherlands actors involved in CCD related activities in by drought affected developing countries, were interviewed on the above seven subjects. The report, therefore, reflects the opinion and experience of the interviewed organisations with regard to the implementation of the convention.

Two broad groups of actors, each representing a different funding channel and, consequently, with their own different perspective, were approached during the reporting process:

- a) Netherlands Embassies in charge of the bilateral co-operation programmes and belonging to the Spearhead Group on Desertification. The Spearhead Group on Desertification is a group of 13 embassies which pay more than average attention to desertification.
- b) Governmental and civil society organisations and research and training institutes based in the Netherlands, and involved in development co-operation in affected developing countries.

Two questionnaires were developed - one for each group - which formed the basis for the interview process (see annexes 2-3). The questions are based on the Report by the Ad Hoc Working Group and the President's Summary of the Open Dialogue Sessions as documented in the Annexes to the CoP5 Report (see annex 4).

This document does not cover the perspective of organisations which benefit from multilateral funding by the Netherlands, since they prepare their own reports.

¹ Conference of Parties nr. 3

² The first report in 1999 to CoP3 on support to African countries and the second in 2000 to CoP4 on support to non-African countries.

1 INTRODUCTION

Background of the report

In June 1995, the Netherlands became the third country to ratify the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), which entered into force on 26 December 1996. The objective of the Convention is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification. So far two national reports have been prepared on the Netherlands support in the implementation of the Convention, one for CoP3¹ (1999) and one for CoP4 (2000). The present document is an update of the earlier reports² and focuses on thematic issues as determined during CoP5.

The CoP5 created the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) with the purpose to review the implementation process of the CCD in broader perspective. The Committee was asked not only to look at activities and financial aspects but also to concentrate on seven key thematic issues of strategic importance in the formulation and implementation of the CCD National Action Plans (NAP's). The themes were formulated as a result of the analysis and discussion of the national reports of all Parties by the Ad Hoc Working Group and the President's Summary of the Open Dialogue Sessions, as documented in the Annexes to the CoP5 Report.

The CRIC will convene in November 2002 to discuss the results of the reporting, and prepare an advice to CoP6, which is due in 2003. During July/August this year, four regional meetings will be facilitated by the CCD Secretariat, in which the delegations will deliver a short presentation on their national reports as an opportunity for peer review and discussion.

The present document examines the Netherlands contribution to the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification in relation to the seven key thematic issues outlined during CoP5 for the review process at the CRIC. The report follows the order of these specific key thematic areas, as requested by CCD Secretariat for reports by developed countries:

1. Participatory processes involving civil society, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations;
2. Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements;
3. Resource mobilisation and co-ordination, both domestic and international, including conclusions of partnership agreements;
4. Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and, as appropriate, with national development strategies;
5. Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought
6. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment
7. Access by affected country Parties, particularly affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how;

Participatory reporting process

In line with the Convention's philosophy, the reporting process was interpreted as an opportunity for dialogue with the Netherlands organisations involved in CCD related activities, in order to increase their commitment to the implementation of the CCD.

Accordingly, the purpose of the reporting exercise was twofold:

- Prepare an update of the Netherlands National Report on the implementation of the Convention for the first session of the CRIC in November 2002
- Disseminate information of the Netherlands obligations for CCD implementation among the Dutch Embassies belonging to the Spearhead Group Desertification and among the other involved organisations

¹ Conference of Parties nr. 3

² The first report in 1999 to CoP3 on support to African countries and the second in 2000 to CoP4 on support to non-African countries.

based in the Netherlands. The Spearhead Group on Desertification is a group of 13 embassies which pay more than average attention to desertification.

Two broad actor groups were identified for participation in the process, each representing a different funding channel, and with different positions and tasks in supporting the CCD process; one group based in the affected developing countries, the other based in the Netherlands. Consequently, the report covers experiences with CCD implementation from the following two perspectives:

- a) Embassies in charge of the bilateral co-operation programmes and member of the Spearhead Group on Desertification.
- b) Governmental and civil society organisations and research and training institutes based in the Netherlands, involved in development co-operation in affected developing countries.

Corresponding to the above two perspectives, two types of questionnaire were designed to start the dialogue with the above organisations (see annexes 2-3). The questions are based on the Report by the Ad Hoc Working Group and the President's Summary of the Open Dialogue Sessions as documented in the Annexes to the CoP5 Report (see summaries in annex 4).

After analysis of the responses, the organisations in the Netherlands were approached for a personal interview and further clarifications. In case of the Embassies this was limited to electronic mailing contacts. On the basis of all the information collected a preliminary report was composed and sent to the organisations involved for feed-back. After this second round of feed-back the final report was composed.

This document does not cover organisations involved in the Netherlands multilateral funding; the respective organisations prepare their own reports. The activities and financial aspects of the multilateral commitments by the Netherlands are described in the earlier reports to CoP3 and CoP4.

With regard to the bilateral co-operation programmes, the report is based on accounts from Netherlands embassies with special interest in CCD issues, members of the Spearhead Group Desertification:

- Netherlands Embassies or Representations in Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Ghana, Uganda, Yemen, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Brazil, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Guatemala.

With regard to organisations based in the Netherlands, the report is based on responses from:

- Co-financing Organisations (MFOs¹): Cordaid, Hivos, ICCO, Novib; SNV (Regional Office Burkina Faso and Cameroon)
- NGO's: NC-IUCN, Both ENDS, Agromisa, ETC Netherlands;
- Government organisations: Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM), Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Directorate General of International Co-operation, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries;
- the Education and Research Institutes, the International Co-operation Centre (CDCS) of the Free University in Amsterdam, Wageningen University and Research centre (Wageningen-UR); University of Utrecht (UU), International Institute for Aerospace Survey and Earth Sciences (ITC) at Enschede.

How to read this report

The reporting process generated a large quantity of information from many different perspectives. This detailed information has been summarised into main findings, which provide an overview of general tendencies, experiences and opinions, which were encountered in the various responses. These Main Findings are presented in the following chapter 2, arranged according to the seven key thematic areas as requested by the CCD Secretariat. Whenever opportune, the type of organisation which generated the described information, is mentioned as an indication of the corresponding perspective.

The details of this very diverse information are very valuable for specific consultations and for further action among Netherlands organisations to improve networking and commitment in benefit of the CCD process. Also this information is valuable for further analysis, leading to conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations which are outside the scope of the present report. Therefore, the individual responses from the interviewed organisations to the seven key subjects are maintained in the report as annex 5.

¹ Mede-financierings Organisaties

It should be clear that the report reflects the opinion and experience of the above interviewed organisations with regard to the implementation of the convention.

2 MAIN FINDINGS

2.1. General

The overall objective of Dutch Development Co-operation is poverty alleviation. For governmental bodies as well as for NGOs this means that activities are supported which focus on this issue. It is the aim of the Netherlands' Embassies to co-operate in programmes and activities that are linked up to the frameworks of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers that have been elaborated by the various countries. Poverty in dry marginal areas can have direct links to the processes of land degradation and desertification. For this reason most development activities in these areas are related to issues of natural resources management and bear relevance to CCD objectives, however they are hardly directly linked to CCD National Action Plans.

Three of thirteen Embassies, which participated in this reporting process as member of the Spearhead group Desertification, indicate a direct relation of their activities to the implementation of the CCD. They are located in the dry areas of Sub-Saharan Africa. The other Embassies are contributing indirectly to the objectives of the convention, at varying degrees.

As for the non-governmental organisations based in the Netherlands, and their partners in developing countries, their activities are often very relevant to the objectives of the convention, but also in an indirect way, and they usually are not very aware of this connection.

2.2. Participatory processes involving civil society, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations

The general approach of activities from governmental as well as non-governmental side has nearly always a participatory focus. It is generally accepted that structural poverty reduction is inextricably linked to the development of civil society. Therefore, the decentralisation and rural development programmes supported by Embassies in a number of countries, always stimulate the involvement and capacity building of local organisations and NGOs, which is in accordance with CCD principles. But support to direct involvement of such organisations in the NAP/CCD planning process is much less common. In Africa, only the Embassies of Senegal and Burkina Faso mention specific support to NGOs and CBOs in the CCD planning process. The Embassy in Mali mentions that civil society is already well represented in the NAP/CCD process.

The Netherlands has strongly supported the formulation process of the NAP/CCD in Senegal, which was based on consultations of all major actors involved in the anti-desertification activities, including grassroots level. In Burkina Faso the Netherlands' Embassy has supported CCD promotion activities by a consortium of NGOs. In Uganda and Brazil the Embassies have supported NGO participation in the international CCD process, while in Uganda participation by NGOs in the WSSD in Johannesburg is promoted. Other examples of direct support by the Netherlands to NAP/CCD include review workshops of the NAP/CCD process in Yemen, and involvement of grassroots organisations in a programme for sustainable pasture management in Mongolia.

While few examples can be found of activities that contribute directly to the implementation of the Convention, indirect support by Netherlands' Embassies to CCD objectives by strengthening civil society is common. Obviously, this happens in projects and programmes that focus on decentralisation and rural development (e.g. in Uganda and Burkina Faso, Yemen, Pakistan), but also sustainable natural resources management (e.g. in Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Guatemala and Nicaragua). Strengthening local governance and capacity building are crucial components in these programmes. The Embassy in Mali has stimulated the formation of an NGO network in the context of its support to two programmes for conservation and integrated management of natural resources in the interior Niger delta. In a number of countries, e.g. in Mali, the government has organised an adequate framework to stimulate a participatory approach at central and local level, and the involvement of NGOs in combating desertification is well established.

The Netherlands Co-financing Organisations for Development Co-operation (MFOs), Hivos, Novib, Cordaid and ICCO, do not implement programmes themselves, but support partners with the implementation of their own programmes. Although their support usually also is not directly focused on CCD/NAP implementation, partners are often involved in programmes and projects aiming at combating land degradation and sustainable livelihood. They work from different policy perspectives but MFOs all strongly support empowerment of civil

society and as such indirectly contribute to the CCD strategy. It is not clear how many of these activities are within the context of the CCD, but the impression is that this proportion is low. Only some MFO's support their partner organisations in the developing countries in actively lobbying their governments for the implementation of the Convention.

Some of the interviewed actors, e.g. in Burkina Faso, report their impression that at local level people are little aware of the existence of the CCD or its projects. They can participate in one of them without knowing. One of the reasons may be a weak civil society, especially when development funding is channelled mainly through governmental bodies. Another remark from Burkina Faso is that people usually are very well aware of the severity of the problems linked to desertification or land degradation. So awareness raising is not the first priority for development organisations, but rather reinforcing the initiatives already existing at the local level.

The Embassy in Brazil has a different approach for stimulating civil society involvement. Funds for demonstration projects with interventions to combat land degradation and desertification are made available through the National Environmental Fund (FNMA). NGOs and local organisation may submit project proposals that qualify for these funds.

Special reference should be made to the NGO Both ENDS. Both ENDS supports the work of environmental organisations, primarily by linking South and North, environment and development, and working between different sectors of society. It has played an active role in mobilising NGOs in the Netherlands and abroad to influence the negotiation process of the Convention in favour of civil society interest. Until last year it was European focal point for RIOD, the international NGO network for combating desertification.

Both Ends has initiated to enhance NGO involvement in the CCD process. They observed that in comparison with conventions such as the CBD and Ramsar, the CCD is still quite unknown among NGOs and other civil society organisations. Its potential value is not being fully grasped and remains untapped. Therefore, networking in the Netherlands has an important task to raise awareness on the CCD among MFO's and NGO's and identify the added value of this convention in the efforts to combat land degradation. Through their extensive network with partners in developing countries these organisations have a great potential for stimulating the implementation of CCD by civil society.

2.3. Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements

The CCD tackles the complex issues of land degradation and desertification which are addressed in various existing institutional frameworks and strategies for poverty alleviation, decentralisation, land tenure policy, environmental action plans, soil fertility protection, soil & water conservation schemes etc.. Moreover, these issues play and interact in institutional environments at different levels from local to national and international level. Some actors noted that in such complex institutional conditions there is a need to focus on a limited number of questions and identify clear objectives in order to reach tangible results. A comparison is made with the CBD which tackles more concrete themes.

With regard to the institutional environment, the main approach followed by the Netherlands' Embassies is to assist developing countries in implementing decentralisation processes in order to promote the development of local level democracy and the right of local communities to self-government. The strategy is to share the responsibility of the management of natural resources with the local population and their organisations which is in accordance with the CBD's Ecosystem Approach. Consequently, Embassies commonly support the strengthening of local institutions that deal with natural resources management, as well as the development of well-defined rights through appropriate legislation (e.g. in Mongolia, Nicaragua, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mali).

The majority of projects and programmes supported by the Co-financing organisations are executed by 'development oriented' NGOs. Therefore, issues dealing with land rights, livelihood security and empowerment of local based organisations, are rather prominent in their activities. Strong links exist between land use rights and secure livelihoods. In Burkina Faso, the Dutch Development Organisation SNV works together with a national civil network called 'Groupe de Recherche et d'Action sur le Foncier' (GRAF), which rallies researchers, decision makers, development workers and rural organisations on the issue of land rights.

2.4. Resource mobilisation and co-ordination, both domestic and international, including conclusions of partnership agreements

Funding channels for combating desertification and land degradation by the Netherlands are partly through the bilateral co-operation programmes (Embassies), partly through the multilateral organisations, the international research organisations and the CCD secretariat, and partly the Co-financing Organisations (MFOs), NGOs and SNV. The financial commitments by the Netherlands of the above bilateral, multilateral and private funding channels are covered by the two earlier national reports on the Netherlands support in implementing the Convention, which have been prepared for CoP3 (1999) and for CoP4 (2002). In multilateral context, the Netherlands contributes to the CCD Secretariat in Bonn and the CCD Global Mechanism situated at IFAD in Rome.

As mentioned before, since 1999 the bilateral country programmes of the Netherlands development co-operation concentrate on a limited number of sectors. In a number of country programmes 'environment' is such a concentration sector. If dryland areas occur in such a country, then the attention to desertification and land degradation is obvious. But even if environment is not a concentration sector, it still remains important in Netherlands policy for development co-operation as a cross-cutting issue and will receive special attention in sectors such as rural development, water management, health, agriculture. A good example is described in the local area approach applied in Nicaragua.

In the same way the issues of poverty reduction and sustainable development, which are strongly interrelated with 'environment' are mainstreamed in the bilateral co-operation programmes. Therefore, in the Netherlands efforts in supporting CCD implementation, the activities to combat desertification often appear in the context of rural development programmes, decentralisation or local governance (see annex 5 for details of the different countries). However, these activities are mostly not yet directly linked to the National CCD Action Plans (NAP/CCD), notable exception being mentioned for Mongolia.

Donor co-ordination and partnership agreements are normally strongly supported by the Netherlands Embassies. In Burkina Faso the Netherlands is 'chef de file' for the CCD process since 1996 and in Senegal the Embassy has the same position in the donor group on environmental issues, playing also a key role in the NAP/CCD process. In Mali the Embassy is member of the Advisory Committee for the NAP/CCD and participates in the meetings of the European donor group on the CCD issues. In Uganda, Ghana, Yemen, Mongolia and Nicaragua the Embassies participate in donor co-ordination meetings on environment related issues.

In the case of the bilateral programmes the new sector approach followed by Embassies has resulted in bilateral funding mainly through governmental programmes. As a consequence, as ETC concludes in its report of 8 Thematic Reviews on behalf of the Ministry, possibilities for Embassies to relate to and finance civil society initiatives have become restricted. For promoting CCD activities ETC recommends that the Embassies should be able to earmark funding for support to civil society.

Both ENDS mentions that the MFO and NGO channel of funding would benefit from a clearer CCD focus in projects and programmes. This should help improve the claim-making power by civil society to governments for increased engagement in the CCD implementation process. Both ENDS' networking initiative (see 2.2) aims to contribute to this objective. Both ENDS remarks that NGOs and other civil society groups working in the field of poverty alleviation and environment usually are already over committed, which forms a constraint to engage in CCD activities. In order to mobilise a critical mass of NGOs in support of the CCD process, it is essential that the NGOs perceive at least the following advantages. There should be a direct linkage between the CCD and their own areas of work and existing work plans, but also their engagement in the CCD process should generate added value for the implementation of their own respective missions.

2.5. Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and, as appropriate, with national development strategies

Synergy between the international environmental treaties is a priority issue for the Netherlands government. At international level it has contributed to the formulation of the Joint Work Programme (JWP) between the Secretariats of the CBD and the CCD. As an initiative of the CBD Secretariat, the JWP aims to contribute to the

coherence of international policy formulation for the concerned treaties. The Netherlands Government promotes an active involvement of CCD in the JWP.

In order to promote the synergy between the environmental treaties - CCD, CBD, FCCC and Ramsar - the Ministry of Housing, Spatial planning and the Environment (VROM), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Directorate General for Development Co-operation (DGIS) and the Secretariat of the CCD have signed a Letter of Intent in September 2001. The LoI promotes 9 specific activities in the following three areas: a) the strengthening of co-operation between the environmental treaties, b) building up synergistic approaches for combating desertification and drought mitigation, and c) identifying scope and incentive measures for a coherent implementation of obligations under CCD and CBD. DGIS has made available funding of US\$900.000 in 2 years within the context of this LoI.

The WSSD in Johannesburg this year will be an important occasion for promoting collaboration between the treaties and on behalf of the UN Secretary General, minister Pronk as Special Envoy of the SG to the WSSD is promoting the synergy among participating countries during the so called Prepcom meetings. VROM has delegated one staffmember during one year at the South African Ministry of Environment to help prepare WSSD.

With regard to synergy at the institutional level, reports note that joint databases and joint reporting frameworks could increase co-ordination and reduce the reporting burden of the CBD and CCD National Focal Points. Also, the opening of a GEF window on land degradation would enhance motivation and balance in synergy projects.

At the national level, land degradation is often implicitly addressed in programmes to improve people's livelihood without being explicitly focused, because the issues are intimately related in the so-called poverty spiral. Interventions related to land degradation cover a wide area and include a great variety of approaches from more technical-ecologically oriented measures to socio-economic and institutional measures. Accordingly, the various CCD related interventions mentioned in the received responses, are part of a variety of National Policies or Programmes for Sustainable Rural Development, Environmental Protection or very often of Poverty Reduction Strategies. It appears that the CCD NAP processes whether in planning or implementation, often overlap with these other Action Plans and Strategies, which again brings up the question of the added value for civil society to make it worth participating.

In this context, according to Both ENDS, existing and un-known cross linkages need to be established and explained. There is a need to 'introduce' the CCD to NGOs both in the Netherlands and in the South, as well as with donor agencies, in a way which clarifies the cross-linkages which are relevant from their point of view. These are for example the direct relationship between CCD related action and other areas, such as water management (ground and surface), wetlands, forest and biodiversity, food security and sustainable land use, ecological restoration, on farm and off farm income generation, gender, indigenous peoples and nomadic livelihoods. It is also necessary to explore and emphasise how the CCD is complementary to other legal frameworks. How it offers new opportunities – legal, financial, institutional, political, conceptual - for civil society participation, policy development, (international) trade related reforms and transfers of power and mandate to actually achieve land, vegetation and water preservation in a concrete manner.

Compared to the other treaties the CCD has a stronger participatory focus with ample space for the involvement of civil society. For creating synergy this is an advantage because, after all, synergy will have to work at the local level. In this line the Netherlands Government (VROM) commissioned a study to the Centre for Environmental Science of Leiden University (CML) to show opportunities for synergy between CBD and CCD. CML concludes that at the local level joint actions could focus on the areas of multi-functional natural vegetation between the arable fields on the one hand, and the protected areas and buffer zones on the other. These actions should have a clear focus on co-management of these lands by local people and the government agencies representing the supra-local interests connected to these lands. Land tenure is a crucial issue in such a process and should be clearly settled. Due to the local trust and political support of the land-based focus, linkage projects that have land degradation as a starting point, linking this with biodiversity issues and visions, are probably the most effective for both CBD and CCD objectives.

A similar local level approach is mentioned by NC-IUCN. NGOs working in different contexts will be more stimulated to co-operate, exchange information and 'lobby' their governments and other actors if their locally based conservation/development groups gives them a clear(er) reason to do so (common ground). Also, nature conservation and restoration should be given enough attention within desertification control approaches, because 'green and/or wet' areas, left relatively untouched by people, can offer crucial protection to people and

production areas against encroachment by arid areas/deserts. Such areas often also have important functions, such as 'natural' soil regeneration and local hydrology regulation.

2.6. Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought

Both the bilateral co-operation programmes and the MFOs and NGOs support programmes and projects with relevant components for combating land degradation and desertification. However, these mostly do not take place in the framework of CCD/NAP's, but rather in various different settings of government or civil society action. Very interesting experiences are generated both in projects and research programmes, which are worth to be shared and multiplied on a much wider scale. More details on the organisations, country and type of experience can be found in annex 5. The Netherlands contributes to the dissemination of such successful experiences in various publications. Examples are the 'Encyclopedia of Sustainability' by Both ENDS, or the 'Agrodok' series by Agromisa.

Relevant interventions are mentioned in projects a.o. on rural development programmes (Burkina Faso, Mali, Uganda), reforestation (Senegal), wetlands (Uganda, Sri Lanka), pasture management (Mongolia), sustainable energy use (Uganda), integrated conservation and development (Uganda). Many interesting experiences are generated in projects supported by MFOs and NGOs and executed by their partners in affected developing countries. These projects are partly specified in the preceding reports for CoP3 and CoP4. The number of partners involved is large.

Very interesting programmes with valuable experiences are co-ordinated and supported by SNV and ETC in areas such as natural resources management, sustainable agriculture, local management of silvi-pastoral areas, soil and water conservation measures, local innovation of agricultural practice. Capacity strengthening and facilitation of platforms and consultation structures at local and district level for planning and decision-making are being promoted. Experiences with the small grants funds administered by NC-IUCN are equally interesting, especially from the perspective of integrating conservation and development.

Little mention was made in the reports on activities that support early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought.

2.7. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment

Most Embassies are not supporting M&E activities related to land degradation caused by drought and desertification. Exception is Burkina Faso where the Embassy, through financial support of CILSS, contributes to the development of M&E indicators for the implementation of the CCD. CILSS has the task to support the National Focal Points of the West African States in the implementation of indicators for monitoring. Also, at national level in Burkina Faso a study is underway on the rehabilitation of land productivity aiming at the measurement of the impact of project interventions. The results of this study will enable the Embassy and other donor and national partners to review and reinforce the interventions related to land degradation and drought effects. Also in Burkina Faso, the exercise by the donor group to propose indicators for poverty reduction (CSLP), is part of this initiative and shows the preoccupation of the Embassy to avail of appropriate indicators in this area.

The Embassy in Yemen supports the introduction of M&E to monitor desertification through the project on Environmental Resources Assessment for rural land use planning. In Brazil drought monitoring has already been established through the national institute INPE. Performance indicators for the FNMA should be established as part of the formulation of a new M&E system. ITC in Enschede contributes to M&E systems through the use of remote sensing (RS) and GIS techniques in e.g. Burkina Faso and other W. African countries.

ETC is in the process of undertaking 8 Thematic Reviews on behalf of DGIS of long-term projects in the NRM and Water Management Sectors, also in view of recent Sector-entry Approach policies. An elaborate analysis framework is developed, based on a qualitative review of around 20 factors (substantiated by around 75 indicators) dealing with various levels of analysis.

Generally, there is limited support by the Netherlands for progress in the design of M&E systems for drought and desertification monitoring, especially with regard socio-economic and institutional parameters and aspects of civil society participation. However, the example of the ETC study indicates the right direction.

2.8. Access by affected country Parties, particularly affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how

The interventions of the Netherlands' government are channelled through training support programmes, whereby South-South and North-South co-operation is an instrument for exchange and transfer of information, technology and technical know-how. Netherlands support in this field also takes place indirectly via capacity building in the different programmes on natural resource management and rural development. Direct training support activities are the funding of the Senegalese training institute Centre Forêt in Thies, and the Ecôle de Faune in Cameroon.

The development-oriented organisations based in the Netherlands promote access to technology and information implicitly through capacity building and training components in the projects they support or implement. These are mostly not directly linked to the implementation of the CCD. Some NGOs do implement activities that are focussed on research and development.

Various education and research centres in the Netherlands have longstanding collaborative relationships with partner institutes in affected developing countries on issues of land degradation and desertification, though most of these have not yet linked up with CCD processes. The International Co-operation Centre (CDCS) of the Free University in Amsterdam engages in projects on farmer innovation and other aspects of CBNRM in various countries in Africa. ETC collaborates in this project. Their results have been published in a recent book "Farmer Innovation in Africa: a source of inspiration for agricultural development".

Wageningen University has been involved in large projects and co-operated in institutional development programmes with universities in various drought prone countries. In the new INREF programme for interdisciplinary research two projects with a strong participatory approach, called Convergence of Science and RESPONSE, are of particular relevance to CCD. The International Co-operation Research Programme in Wageningen aims to contribute to economic development and poverty reduction in developing countries, with special attention to the strengthening of sustainable agriculture and production chains, and nature management. Utrecht University (UU) is involved in pasture management research in Mongolia, while CML of Leiden University is engaged in multidisciplinary research in Northern Cameroon on several aspects of natural resources management.

Some organisations in the Netherlands are dealing with the dissemination of the results of the research by producing research articles or books (CDCS and Wageningen-UR) and by providing consultancy services (like ETC for Participatory Technology Development). For ITC in Enschede education, research and consulting services of both staff and students are the important channels for disseminating technology. The International Agricultural Centre (IAC) in Wageningen conducts international training in various aspects of natural resources management and environment. Various other organisations, such as ILEIA, Both ENDS and Agromisa, have important networks and publications for dissemination of relevant information.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AME	Agriculture, Man and Ecology (ETC project in India)
Both ENDS	Environment and Development Service for NGOs
CAPEN	NGO in Cameroon, partner of SNV
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CBNRM	Community-based Natural Resources Management
CCD	Convention to Combat Desertification
CDCS	International Co-operation Centre of the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam
Centre Forêt	Forest Training Centre in Thies, Senegal
CMDT	Mali Textile Development Company
CML	Centre of Environment Science of Leiden University
CoP5	Fifth Conference of the Parties
Cordaid	Netherlands Co-financing Development Organisation (MFO)
CRIC	Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention
CSLP	Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction
CST	Committee of Science and Technology
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
DES	Department of Environmental Science
DGIS	Directorate General for International Co-operation of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
DLO	Dutch Agricultural Research Organisation of Wageningen University and Research centre (WUR)
ETC	ETC Foundation in Leusden, Netherlands
FNMA	National Environmental Fund of Brazil
FRPH	Dutch Foundation Reserves Przewalski Horses
GO	Governmental organisation
GRAF	Groupe de Recherche et d'Action sur le Foncier
Hivos	Humanist Institute for Development Co-operation (MFO)
IAC	International Agricultural Centre in Wageningen
ICCO	Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation (MFO)
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ILEIA	Centre for Information on Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture
INPE	National Institute for Space Investigation of Brazil (Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais)
INREF	Interdisciplinary Research and Education Fund of Wageningen University
ISWC	Indigenous Soil and Water Conservation project in Africa
ITC	International Institute for Aerospace Survey and Earth Sciences in Enschede
JWP	Joint Work Programme of the CCD and CBD Secretariats
LNV	Ministry of Agriculture, Nature management and Fisheries
MACNE	Mongolian Association for the Conservation of Nature & Environment
MARENA	Ministry of the Environment in Nicaragua

MFO's	Co-financing Organisations for Development Co-operation
MINEF-Nord	NGO in Cameroon, partner of SNV
NAP/CCD	National CCD Action Plans
NC-IUCN	Netherlands Committee of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature
NCU	National Co-ordination Unit
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
NFP	National Focal Points
NGO ADRK	NGO in Burkina Faso
NGO's	Non Governmental Organisation
Novib	Netherlands Co-financing Development Organisation (MFO)
NRM	Natural resource management
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
PAFS	Forestry Action Plan of Senegal
PASA	Programme d'ajustement Structurel du Secteur Agricole
PASAOP	Institutional strengthening programme in Mali
PDRD	Programme for Rural Development
PFI	Project for Promoting Farmer Innovation
PNAE-CID	National Environmental Action Plan for the CCD in Mali
PNGT	Programme National de Gestion des Terroirs
PNPE	National Environmental Action Plan in Mali
PNPW	National Environmental Protection Plan
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategies
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
Ramsar	Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
RESPONSE	Regional food security policies for natural resource management and sustainable economies
RIOD	International NGOs Network on Desertification and Drought (Réseau International des ONG sur la Désertification)
SNDD	National Strategy for Sustainable Development
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation
SNV/BF	Netherlands Development Organisation in Burkina Faso
SNV/CR	Netherlands Development Organisation in Cameroon
SPO	NGO in Pakistan
SRSC	NGO in Pakistan
STP	Permanent Technical Secretariat
SUNGI	NGO in Pakistan
CCD	United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification
UNSO	United Nation Sahelian Office
UU	University of Utrecht
TRP	Tropical Rainforest Programme
VROM	Ministry of Housing, Spatial planning and the Environment
WB	World Bank
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg 26/08-4/09/2002
WUR	Wageningen University and Research centre

Questionnaire for Embassies

1. ***Participatory processes involving civil society, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations***
 - ***Question 1:*** Which strategy and/or activities the Embassy has developed in order to stimulate a participatory approach in the formulation and implementation of the CCD National Action Plans (NAP's) and in the national progress reviews? Which activities are supported in order to stimulate an integrated and participatory approach at grass roots level?

2. ***Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements***
 - ***Question 2:*** What is the Embassy's approach to facilitate an enabling institutional environment aimed at controlling land degradation, particularly providing land ownership and land use rights for the marginalised rural populations? What support is given to development of local organisations and local government in order to stimulate decentralisation and decision-making at the local level?

3. ***Resource mobilisation and co-ordination, both domestic and international, including conclusions of partnership agreements***
 - ***Question 3:*** How does the Embassy contribute to the financial support of the formulation and implementation of the CCD NAP's? What strategy is adopted for stimulating policy co-ordination and what is the experience with partnership agreements with GO and NGO's? What are the decision-making procedures for the allocation of funds and how important is the issue land degradation in this process?

4. ***Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and, as appropriate, with national development strategies***
 - ***Question 4:*** How does the Embassy promote the synergy between the different sectors, organisations and programmes at the various local, national and international levels in order to stimulate a new impulse to CCD implementation? What is the approach of the Embassy to support the integration of international environmental policy in the national strategies for sustainable development (NSSD) and for poverty reduction (PRSP)? How does the sector approach of the Embassy take care of the integration of of land degradation control and poverty reduction?

5. ***Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought.***
 - ***Question 5:*** Which concrete measures or activities, as described above, are supported by the Embassy?

6. ***Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment***
 - ***Question 6:*** How does the Embassy support the set-up of such M&E systems as a contribution to the implementation of the convention? Is there a need within the Embassy for benchmarks and indicators as described above?

7. ***Access by affected country Parties, particularly affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how***
 - ***Question 7:*** What is the strategy of the Embassy to support and promote the access of developing countries to relevant technology, knowledge and know-how as a contribution to the implementation of the CCD, and how successful is this strategy ?

Questionnaire used for organisations based in the Netherlands

1. Considering the importance of the role of civil society in creating broad support for the implementation of the CCD, are your organisation or your partners involved in the participatory processes which aim at creating awareness about the CCD?
Are you involved in such processes aimed at creating awareness of desertification and land degradation in general?
2. Which policy objectives of your organisation or partners directly or indirectly facilitate the the implementation of the CCD?
Which strategies are applied to achieve these objectives?
3. Are your organisation or your partners involved in any networking activities aimed specifically at promoting CCD implementation?
Are you involved in networking which indirectly contributes to combating desertification and land degradation?
4. Are you or your partners in any way involved in the formulation of the National Action Plans (NAP's) for the implementation of the CCD?
How about your contacts with the CCD National Focal Points (NFP's)?
5. Which activities are you or your partners supporting which aim directly at the implementation of the CCD, whether at policy or practice level?
Which activities are you supporting which indirectly contribute to combat desertification?
What links are there in your activities to land use rights and to secure livelihood which indirectly help to combat desertification?
6. How are you or your partners involved in promoting policy co-ordination between different sectors which may lead to a more effective inclusion of CCD objectives in environmental strategies, both in your or your partner's own organisation and at local or national level?
How about measures to promote synergy between the different international environmental treaties (CBD, CCD, FCCC etc.)?
7. Are you or your partners involved in the set-up of or working with M&E systems for drought and desertification? If so, how is taken care of socio-economic and institutional aspects, including the participation by civil society?
8. How are your organisation or your partners contributing to the improved access to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how by affected developing countries?
From your experience, what strategies for example do you suggest to promote a wider distribution of relevant research findings in an integrated context to combat land degradation?

Overview of the key themes identified for the report

1. ***Participatory processes involving civil society, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations***
 - CoP5 emphasises that the role of ‘civil society’ (NGO’s, CBO’s, co-operatives, etc.) as a key ally of government in the development process, should be recognised in order to create broad support for the implementation of the convention. Local area programmes should be developed by identifying opportunities for integrated activities on a territorial basis at grass roots level.
2. ***Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements***
 - CoP5 identified the issue of access and rights to land and secure livelihood as crucial for breaking the vicious cycle of poverty and land degradation. This recognises poverty reduction as the central strategy for individual sectoral policy. The CCD objectives should therefore be incorporated within the strategy for poverty reduction.
3. ***Resource mobilisation and co-ordination, both domestic and international, including conclusions of partnership agreements***
 - Lack of funding was quoted by CoP5 as the most common reason for the delays in preparing the CCD NAP’s. It was pointed out that, considering the Declaration on Commitment adopted at CoP4, it is appropriate for bilateral and multilateral donors to provide catalytic funds to enable completion of the NAP’s. Also, long-term partnerships between donor and developing countries, and between donors, would contribute to improved policy co-ordination and coherence, which improves the availability of funds as well. CoP5 recommends to identify bilateral ‘chefs de file’ in the respective countries to join in the common launching of country driven consultative mechanisms for partnership arrangements under CCD.
4. ***Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and, as appropriate, with national development strategies***
 - CoP5 recognised the need for harmonisation of multilateral environmental agreements (CCD, CBD, FCCC etc.) and for the effective inclusion of the CCD within the national policies and strategic development instruments of the affected countries. Presently there is little co-ordination due to separate implementation instruments and parallel consultative processes for donor commitment.
5. ***Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought.***
 - CoP5 asks to report on current or planned activities aimed at controlling the underlying factors of land degradation or at mitigating its effects. Regional and subregional co-operation networks are considered effective vehicles for exchanging such experience. This item is of special concern to the Committee of Science and Technology (CST).
6. ***Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment***
 - National M&E systems for drought and desertification are considered an essential element of CCD implementation. CoP5 pointed out that much has been achieved in the monitoring of flora and fauna, but much less in relation to drought and desertification. Benchmarks and indicators should, apart from the physical and biological, also include the institutional and socio-economic aspects, as well as those related to participation by civil society. The CST is responsible for the identification of relevant benchmarks and indicators.
7. ***Access by affected country Parties, particularly affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how***
 - CoP5 found capacity-building to be an essential element to stimulate the implementation of the CCD. They identified a broad spectrum of training needs from environmental education at the grass roots, through extension and vocational training in land use and water management, to development of research capacity. Especially mentioned are training for policy-makers at national level, training in economic valuation of the impact of land degradation, and training in interactive decision-making and conflict handling. The CST identified South-South and North-South co-operation as excellent instruments for the exchange and transfer of information, technology and technical know-how. Regional thematic networks can contribute effectively to the development benchmarks and indicators

for M&E (see above), and to stimulate the use and protection of local (technical) knowledge and the dissemination of best practices.

DETAILED RESPONSE FROM INTERVIEWED ACTORS ON KEY THEMATIC ISSUES

1 Participatory processes involving civil society, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations

CoP5 emphasised that the role of ‘civil society’ (NGO’s, CBO’s, co-operatives, etc.) as a key ally of government in the development process, should be recognised in order to create broad support for the implementation of the convention. Local area programmes should be developed by identifying opportunities for integrated activities on a territorial basis at grass roots level.

a) Perspective from bilateral co-operation programmes

Within the Netherlands development co-operation with **Burkina Faso**, the CCD activities are integrated in the rural development sector. The Embassy co-finances the Decentralised Programme for Rural Development (PDRD), which covers 5 provinces. In this programme local organisations and communities identify the activities for combating desertification and land degradation. The Embassy also finances local level activities related to CCD, through the NGO ADRK together with the Dutch Cordaid. Also, the Embassy has supported the organisation of CCD promotion activities by a consortium of NGO’s. It has not adopted a particular strategy to facilitate the participation of NGO’s in the implementation of the CCD, but is open to proposals by NGO’s.

In **Mali** the Government had organised an adequate framework for stimulating a participatory approach at central and decentralised level. Civil society is represented in the CCD Advisory Committee. The Embassy has stimulated the formation of an NGO network in the context of its support to two programmes for conservation and integrated management of natural resources in the interior Niger delta. The involvement of NGO’s in combating desertification is already well established and promoted by the government and bilateral partners. The Embassy finances a programme for transfer of NRM to local communities in the context of combating land degradation.

The Netherlands strongly supported the formulation process of NAP/CCD in **Senegal**, which was based on the participation of all major actors involved in anti-desertification activities. The results of the consultations for the national environmental action plan (NEAP), in which local problems related to the environment and social development were addressed with a special focus on desertification issues, were fed into NAP/CCD. These have helped to gather the input and suggestions of all actors at the grassroots.

In **Uganda** the Embassy supports decentralisation processes in the nine districts, in which the budget support is provided. District Steering Committees have been established to combat desertification and CCD initiatives are started with NGO’s. The initiatives include direct capacity building, but also the support of round table discussions with NGO’s on their involvement in sustainable development. In the three districts, which are the most desert prone of the country, the most important issue is combating desertification. The Embassy also supports NGO participation in the WSSD in Johannesburg, key issue being their involvement in NAP/CCD.

In **Ghana** the natural resources sector has priority for the Netherlands. The attention is focussed on the “Natural Resources Management Programme 1999-2002, hosted by the Ghanaian Ministry of Lands and Forests, while the Ministry of Environment and Science is the custodian institute for the CCD. To facilitate the participatory approach used in the implementation of the NRMP, the Embassy is supporting the establishment and operationalisation of a national platform for NGO’s and CBO’s who are active in the field of natural resources management. This platform is recognised and respected by the implementing authorities of the NRMP as well as all donors contributing to the NRMP.

In all activities supported by the Embassy under the NRMP, the role of local government is addressed and where the need is detected, capacity building and human resource development, linked with dedicated awareness campaign are part of the project and programme designs.

Community participation is eminent in the two projects in **Yemen** financed by the Netherlands, which have direct involvement with the formulation and implementation of the CCD. A review workshop of the NAP/CCD process was organised by one of these projects.

NGO's like SUNGI, IUCN, SPO and SRSC in **Pakistan** receive funding from the Embassy for the development of civil society at grass-root level. However, The Embassy has not developed any direct activity with respect to participatory processes in CCD formulation/implementation.

Similarly in **Sri Lanka**, the Embassy supports three investment programmes on wetlands and conservation with participatory approach at the community level, which indirectly should be relevant for NAP/CCD.

The Netherlands Embassy in Beijing that covers activities in **Mongolia** is supporting in that country a NAP/CCD project, strongly based on the involvement of the local level. It aims at sustainable pasture management by involving both the herder communities and local governments to combat serious overgrazing, due to the overpopulation of livestock and the break-down of the traditional pasture land management systems.

In **Nicaragua** the Embassy developed a participatory approach through the existing projects in so-called "Local area programmes". In this approach existing projects are implementing 'environmental' activities with emphasis on conservation, protection and mainstreaming 'environment' within the area. With regard to the CCD National Action Plan, the Ministry of Environment (MARENA) involves local organisations in the formulation and discussions. The Embassy also links-up environment with gender through strengthening national NGO's and mainstream gender within the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment. This is a regional programme in Central America (involved countries: Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala) and is implemented by IUCN (Costa Rica).

Civil society is playing a crucial role in the environmental arena in **Brazil**. The Netherlands support related to CCD is being channelled in Brazil through a partnership with the National Environmental Fund (FNMA). The FNMA was created in 1989 to function as funding channel for promotion of social participation in the national environmental policy. By working with FNMA the Dutch funding will directly promote involvement of civil society in the implementation of the CCD. NGO's and local organisations are invited through a call for proposals to qualify for FNMA support in demonstration projects focussed on CCD. The Embassy has also directly contributed to civil society involvement in the CCD process by funding the NGO participation in CoP-3 CCD 1999 in Recife.

b) Perspective from development organisations based in the Netherlands

The Netherlands Co-financing Organisations for Development Co-operation (**MFOs**), Hivos, Novib, Cordaid and ICCO, do not implement programmes themselves, but support partners with the implementation of their own programmes. Many such partner organisations are located in countries affected by land degradation and desertification. Although their support usually is not directly focused on CCD implementation, partners are often involved in programmes and projects aiming at combating land degradation and sustainable livelihood. The MFOs all strongly support empowerment of civil society and as such contribute to the CCD strategy. It is not clear how many of these activities are directly within the context of the CCD, but the impression is that this proportion is low.

For example, **Hivos'** policy is to support a) the environmental movement which seeks to maintain or restore the natural balance by opposing negative (policy) developments; and b) producers' organisations and service organisations that bring the use of natural resources into balance with the surrounding ecosystem. Hivos is not directly involved in the formulation or implementation of CCD National Action Plans (NAPs/CCD), nor is it actively promoting such in the relationship with partners. But some partners seem to be directly involved in the implementation of the CCD.

Novib aims to strive for sustainable livelihoods of poor people in Southern and Eastern European countries by means of supporting national, regional and international non-governmental (development) organisations and their projects and programmes. Some of these organisations have been actively lobbying their governments for the implementation of the Convention, such as the Brazilian CAATINGA and the Chilean CODEFF and the Sudanese SECS. Combating deforestation and land degradation and erosion are however core activities of many other partner organisations in areas prone to drought and land degradation.

Cordaid's general objective is structural poverty alleviation based on the multi-dimensional concept of sustainability. Programmes and projects that are funded by Cordaid should improve – or at least not endanger – the ecological, economical, social and financial situation in time and place. Cordaid partners, which are involved in primary production for food and cash, work with the concept of ecological sustainability. Considering the fact that the desertification problem has many sides, their partners in areas where desertification takes place will contribute indirectly to combat desertification. Cordaid also supports partners whose primary aim is environmental protection e.g. the Environment Liaison Centre International in Kenya. They publish Ecoforum, which is also made possible by Hivos' support to the organisation.

Support of programmes aimed directly at combating poverty has high priority for **ICCO**. To provide a relevant contribution to the fight against poverty ICCO works together with partners putting emphasis on sustainability in ecological, economic and social-cultural aspects in their projects and programmes. From this perspective ICCO supports partner organisations in the field of sustainable forest use and sustainable land use in which CCD aspects as land degradation can be found. The 'Sustainable Forest Use Program' of ICCO seeks to reverse tropical rainforest loss and poverty by financing projects that render the forest managed in a sustainable manner an economically valuable asset. Several partners of ICCO are involved in the processes that aim at creating awareness of desertification and land degradation in general, possibly also at creating awareness about the CCD.

The Netherlands Development Organisation **SNV** develops and shares knowledge and skills with local organisations with the aim of better equipping them for their work in structurally alleviating the poverty of both men and women. Information about **SNV** in this report relates to **Burkina Faso** and **Cameroon**. Corresponding to SNV's general policy, SNV/BF does not implement projects any more, but aims at working with farmer or other rural organisations, which plan and carry out their own projects. Some of these projects are in the field of natural resource management. SNV and its partners implement the CCD indirectly. Their programs are not based on the CCD-program, but they respect most of the CCD principles, which are commonly shared. Since the end of the '90's, capacity building of client organisations is the focal mission of SNV/BF.

Considering the need for awareness-raising about the CCD, **SNV/BF** remarks that nowadays you will not find nor in the Sudanian, nor in the Sahelian areas of Burkina Faso any organisation or local partner who denies the severity of the problems linked to desertification or land degradation. However, people are little aware of the existence of the CCD, nor of its projects. They can participate in one of them without knowing. Reason for this lies with the persisting strong presence of the Burkina state bodies in all development projects and programs, the CCD included; the civil society is weak in Burkina Faso. Even most Burkina NGOs depend from funds allocated through these, often centralised state programs. The major tendency is without any doubt one of land degradation, but people are responding by all kind of initiatives, even when most of them are still fragile. So creating awareness *stricto sensu* seems a bit outmoded, the challenge is rather how to reinforce these initiatives. Considering the aforementioned, creating awareness of the CCD is not a priority for SNV/BF in the Burkina context, where most programs are state induced and which is focused on the Sahelian zone of the country. Nor SNV, nor its partners are directly involved in terms of search for CCD funds or circulation of CCD information.

SNV in Cameroon (**SNV/CR**) is not involved in the CCD itself, but supports the NGO CAPEN in its activities for awareness-raising about issues related desertification. For instance, at the occasion of the desertification international days, they sensitised the traditional leaders, organised tree-planting with the local population, and organised debates on regional radio. CAPEN is the focal point of RIOD in the Northern Cameroon, but unfortunately, they do not have any financial means to undertake their duties. SNV/CR's partners MINEF-Nord and CAPEN have participated in the NAP/CCD formulation process, but there is no contact with the CCD Focal Point because its location is too far. It would be more efficient if it was located in one of the provinces that are directly affected by the desertification.

ETC is a Development Foundation which is working on issues related to ecological agriculture, sustainable land use, rural innovation and related participatory and stakeholder processes as well as on policy and institutional dilemmas related to these issues. In its work it gives a high priority to working with CBOs and NGOs. In fact, a substantial part of its assignments are funded by organisations such as NOVIB, ICCO, HIVOS and CORDAID in support of their NGO partners.

The **NC-IUCN** strategy and working-programmes are mainly based on influencing and assisting Dutch Government policy with respect to conservation issues that are directly (in the case of for instance development

co-operation) or indirectly (trade, financial flows, etc.) connected with the Netherlands. Although, the problem of desertification and land degradation is considered of high importance to the NC-IUCN, the organisation as such has not yet been actively involved within the specific CCD process. Main reason for the relatively poor interest shown so far by the NC-IUCN in the field of desertification, especially when compared to tropical rainforests and wetlands, can be justified by the less prominent direct connection between desertification and the 'role' or 'position' of the Netherlands. Lack of capacity and financial resources are also a constraint. However, the IUCN in general - as a broad membership organisation - has always been active in the field of desertification and related issues, as it is for instance demonstrated by the Sahel Programme executed during the late 80's and begin 90's. Interest of IUCN can further be demonstrated by the decision taken during the second World Conservation Congress in Jordan in 2000 to form a Task Force that will be responsible for the development of an Arid and Semi-Arid Lands Global Thematic Programme. This programme will be focussed on five broad areas: (1) conservation of biodiversity, (2) sustainable livelihoods, (3) ecosystem restoration (4) water and wetlands and (5) conventions and policies.

Both ENDS has played an active role in mobilising NGOs in the Netherlands and abroad to influence the negotiation process of the convention in favour of civil society interest. Until last year they were European focal point for RIOD, the international NGO network for combating desertification. Both ENDS is engaged in an initiative to enhance NGO involvement in the CCD process. It aims at informing Dutch NGOs, research centres and other civil society organisations about the actual and potential role of the CCD in abating poverty, land degradation, water related problems, climatic instability and biodiversity loss. It will inform and facilitate Southern NGOs' involvement in promoting and making use of the CCD to create more favourable (legal-institutional and financial) conditions in support of poverty prevention/amelioration and environmental restoration and protection. It should engage Dutch societal players in collaborative actions with Southern NGOs to make better use of the full potential of the CCD - to influence and implement improved policies with an impact on poverty and environment - both at the national and international level. Finally, it should also encourage and facilitate Dutch NGOs and Southern NGOs to participate in international negotiations and to promote optimal interaction between efforts to implement the CCD and other development and environment related national and international agreements and initiatives.

2 Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements

CoP5 identified the issue of access and rights to land and secure livelihood as crucial for breaking the vicious cycle of poverty and land degradation. This recognises poverty reduction as the central strategy for individual sectoral policy. The CCD objectives should therefore be incorporated within the strategy for poverty reduction.

a) Perspective from bilateral cooperation programmes

The Embassy in **Burkina Faso** supports decentralisation processes in order to promote the development of local level democracy and the right of local communities to self-government. The PDRD rural development programme facilitates the emergence and establishment of recognised local organisations. In this context, access to land by disadvantaged groups is a hot issue and the experiences in the PDRD programme on negotiations between the involved actors are very interesting. The Embassy participates in various national deliberations on these issues. The field experiences from supported activities thus contribute to policy and strategy formulation at the national level.

In **Mali** the approach of the Embassy is to support local know-how and traditional management rules. In various regions with strong tendency towards land degradation, the Embassy supports environmental programmes aiming at the development of strong local NRM institutions with well-defined rights, established through by-laws, in which the users themselves are responsible for the management of the local natural resources. The Embassy supports the same approach in wood fuel programmes, in which the local communities manage forest resources as well as the fuelwood market. Combating land degradation is also being promoted indirectly, through support to the formulation of regional and national soil-fertility action plans.

The Netherlands has funded an extensive community forestry programme in **Senegal**. Officially all land belongs to the State, private organisations and individuals can only hold usufruct right if they invest private funds to improved land management. Community forestry has helped people to install improved land management

through reforestation and agroforestry. These and other programmes have raised the land tenure issue and the question of a land law review so as to make private land tenure possible and therewith bank loans for farmers.

The Netherlands will be supporting the legal sector in nine districts in **Uganda**, in which budget support is provided. This includes decentralisation processes and the development of bylaws at local level, which indirectly relate to CCD objectives. The training of local councillors in bylaw making process and best practices has been planned.

The Embassy in **Yemen** stimulates open discussions on land rights through its support of the Environmental Protection Authority. The issue is also part of the supported project on Environmental Resources Assessment for rural land use planning. Furthermore, the Embassy is the main donor to the decentralisation process, which is now official policy.

Land degradation and land use rights are important components of extensive natural resources management projects, which the Embassy in **Pakistan** supports in especially North West Frontier Province (NWFP). Strong Pakistani NGO's like SUNGI, IUCN, SPO and SRSC receive funding for the development of civil society at grass-root level. The embassy actively supports Pakistani NGOs to participate in the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategies.

In **Sri Lanka** the Netherlands is not directly involved in creating an enabling environment for Implementation of CCD, but does contribute actively to the PRS process. A revision of the law on land ownership and land use rights is presently under discussion in **Mongolia**. Together with other interested donors the Embassy in Beijing is closely following the outcome of the discussions and the implications for the land use rights of herder communities.

Environment is a cross cutting issue for the Embassy in **Nicaragua**, so within the programme of Productive Rural Development they are working on e.g. soil conservation, controlling degradation, watershed management, forestry with small and medium farmers. This is all within the context of the Poverty Reduction Strategy. Land ownership and land use rights are big problems in Nicaragua. Because of the war and political situation a lot of farmers do not have their land title. The government has properly titled and registered only a quarter of the nation's farms, and a tangled web of laws on land tenure issued over the past 2 decades has added insecurity of tenure over land. Lack of adequate registration is considered as one of the main rural problems, for which WB is developing an national proposal.

Decentralisation is an ongoing process in **Nicaragua**, supported by the Embassy. Discussions on decentralisation and on National Environmental Policies took place in 152 municipalities who commented on it. About 50 legislative instruments are approved by MARENA and accepted by the National Assembly. Together with IDB, 11 environmental offices are implemented in the municipalities, projected are 43.

The Netherlands' funding in **Brazil** is channelled through the National Environmental Fund (FNMA). This fund plays an important role as partner in the implementation of the democratisation and decentralisation policy of the government. FNMA promotes the empowerment of local organisations and contributes to poverty reduction strategies.

b) Perspective from development organisations based in the Netherlands

The majority of projects and programmes supported by the **MFOs** are executed by development 'oriented' NGOs. Therefore, issues dealing with land rights, livelihood security and empowerment of local based organisations are rather prominent in their activities. For example, **Hivos** seeks to support those initiatives that contribute to access to, benefits from and control over land, especially when it involves marginalised, poor people and women. Since the policy of Hivos is to integrate several sectors and to promote a sustainable development including ecological, socio-political and economic aspects, it is promoting the inclusion of environmental considerations in poverty reduction strategies. This also applies to partner organisations that are situated in the dry lands: all countries in which Hivos support organisations, experience to some degree the effects of droughts and desertification.

Most programmes that **Cordaid** supports in areas where desertification is a real threat, take the desertification process as one of the key factors for intervention design. For example, Cordaid supports partners that are focussing on sustainable production in Sahel zones (mostly related to improving social cohesion) or on specific

problems of marginalised (ethnic) groups (e.g. transformation of production systems for pastoralists). Especially in the Pastoralists' Policy, there is a strong link to land use rights and secure livelihoods.

For **SNV in Burkina Faso** one of the main questions in combating land degradation is how to make land rights more secure for farmers and other land users. SNV collaborates with a national, civil network called 'Groupe de Recherche et d'Action sur le Foncier' (GRAF), which rallies researchers, decision makers, development workers, rural organisations on the issue of land rights. GRAF is exchanging information on existing projects, plans and (land) laws and pleads at national level for articulation of local laws and practices with national 'modern' legislation. The partners of SNV/BF are well aware of the need for more 'perpetuated' land use and farmer organisations have drawn up programs on 'soil fertility management' (e.g. by an union of cotton producers) or on 'common land management' (e.g. by the same union and a pastoralist union). These organisations participate with local administration and technical services in platforms on conflict prevention between 'land use opponents'; some of these structures try to elaborate and have validated local rules (by the law) on land management.

Land tenure is a key institution in all this. Many government policy-makers continue to believe that communal tenure systems impede agricultural investment, despite the fact that research has failed to demonstrate impacts of titling and formal individualisation on investment behaviour in agriculture (at the same time the end of the 'family farm' is promulgated). This is particularly true for Burkina Faso. Institutions like the World Bank, and so indirectly with it the Netherlands, are supporting this arguable and ambiguous statements, which become official politics.

SNV in Cameroon mentions the strategy to insure local community rights on their natural resources by supporting community hunting zones and community forests.

CML (see under 4 synergy) in its conclusions on co-management for creating synergy between CBD and CCD remarks that in the negotiations for co-management land tenure issues should be clearly settled. The study recommends that ownership should be defined locally, but restricted by government-controlled regulations, set in the co-management negotiations, that protect the supra-local interests.

3 Resource mobilisation and co-ordination, both domestic and international, including conclusions of partnership agreements

CoP5 quoted lack of funding as the most common reason for the delays in preparing the CCD NAP's. It was pointed out that, considering the Declaration on Commitment adopted at CoP4, it is appropriate for bilateral and multilateral donors to provide catalytic funds to enable completion of the NAP's. Also, long-term partnerships between donor and developing countries, and between donors, would contribute to improved policy co-ordination and coherence, which improves the availability of funds as well. CoP5 recommends to identify bilateral 'chefs de file' in the respective countries to join in the common launching of country driven consultative mechanisms for partnership arrangements under CCD.

a) Perspective from bilateral cooperation programmes

Funding has not been a constraint for the formulation of NAP/CCD in **Burkina Faso**. However, the implementation of the NAP, which was officially announced in 2000, is slow. Reasons are organisational and institutional constraints within the national co-ordination unit (NCU), and also the limited political influence of the responsible ministry.

The Embassy has been 'chef de file' for the CCD since 1996, and has been able to promote a concerted strategy among donors and national partners. To that extent it has financed two workshops aimed at identifying the constraints in the implementation of the CCD and proposing solutions. Based on the outcome of these workshops, the embassy has co-financed a study for the institutional and organisational review of the NCU. The strategy adopted by the donor group is that all donors are prepared to finance proposed activities within CCD context as long as they are relevant and justified and all parties agree. The group also aims at the integration of NAP/CCD within the Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction (CSLP).

Although 'Environment' is not a concentration area of the Embassy, funding possibilities for NGO's in the area of land degradation exist within the framework of the national action plans and programmes. Specific funding of NGO proposals is also still possible.

In **Mali** NAP/CCD was formulated and approved in 1998. The Embassy has been mainly a technical partner in the participatory process. She has so far contributed as a member of the Advisory Committee, which was created for the implementation of the NAP, and in which also representatives from different ministries and of the international partners are members. She also participates in the informal meetings of the European donor group to the deliberations with regard to NAP/CCD. The NAP/CCD and the National Environmental Protection Plan (PNPE) are put jointly under the responsibility of a Permanent Technical Secretariat (STP) of the National Environmental Action Plan (PNAE-CID). The Embassy has planned financial support to the activities of the STP. As a member of the Advisory Committee, the Embassy supports thematic reflection with the involved partners. Unfortunately, after the official approval of the NAP, the process has lost its dynamics, because of changed priorities in the new Ministry responsible for CCD. Environment is not any more part of the concentration areas of the Embassy. Fund allocation to combat land degradation takes place through the rural development programme (PASAOP), and more specifically the soil fertility action plan.

The National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) is the main strategic reference for sustainable development in **Senegal** and the NAP/CCD is part of that framework. The Embassy, as 'chef de file' of the donor group on environmental issues, has played a key role in the formulation process of the NEAP and the NAP/CCD, through its role in donor co-ordination and by providing financial support for the various pertinent meetings. The NAP formulation process was based on a series of consultation workshops for each of the identified categories of NRM stakeholders throughout the country. The Embassy has financed some of the actor group meetings. Also, the Netherlands supports an Implementation Unit for the Forestry Action Plan of Senegal (Cellule d'impulsion du PAFS). This PAFS is considered a major implementation tool of the NAP/CCD.

The NAP of **Ghana** has not been finalised as yet, and no support has been provided for the formulation process. On the other hand, the Ministry of Environment and Science is supported by the Embassy in making a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Ghanaian Poverty Reduction Strategy. Once the NAP will be finalised the Netherlands Embassy will seriously consider requests for funding.

The Embassy in **Uganda** focuses its activities on three sectors: local governance, legislation and education. Environmental concerns are considered cross cutting and are to be mainstreamed in all activities to encourage sustainable development. The Embassy is, therefore, not directly involved in the NAP/CCD process, but takes part in various related discussions. On the other hand, the Embassy in **Yemen** focuses on the three sectors of water management, agriculture and health. It is only indirectly involved in the NAP/CCD implementation through the above mentioned two projects.

The Netherlands does not contribute financially to the formulation and implementation of the CCD National Action Programme in **Pakistan**, which is more or less dormant. Nor does it actively promote or stimulate the CCD implementation, because ownership by Pakistani Government of the CCD is considered to be low up till now. Within the bilateral co-operation with **Sri Lanka**, 'environment' is one of the three concentration sectors, and NRM has high priority. However, here also, the Embassy is not directly involved in the NAP/CCD process.

Mongolia drafted a National Action Plan to Combat Desertification in 1997. The Netherlands Embassy in Beijing will check the status of the draft action plan and discuss if there is a need for support to update the plan with the relevant Mongolian parties. As part of the Embassy's activities to promote sustainable grassland management a discussion is going on with UNDP to strengthen the co-ordination in this field.

The Embassy in **Nicaragua** does not contribute financially to the NAP/CCD process, only through discussions and donor co-ordination, because it is not a sector. In future a more active participation will be considered.

The Netherlands co-operation programme with **Brazil** concentrates on the environment sector. The international environmental treaties, i.e. the CBD, CCD and FCCC, form the framework for the programme. The National Environment Fund (see above) as such has no responsibility for the formulation of a NAP, but purports to fund studies that give better insight in policy and co-ordination needs. The Embassy has not entered directly into partnerships with other GOs or with NGOs. Donors like DFID and GTZ are interested in also working with the FNMA for filling-in their bilateral programmes. This may lead to donor co-ordination in activities related to CCD. Thus far the Embassy is not directly involved in support of the NAP/CCD which has been formulated, but without much follow-up so far.

In bilateral co-operation programmes the new sector approach followed by Embassies has resulted in bilateral funding mainly through governmental programmes. As a consequence, as **ETC** concludes in its report of 8

Thematic Reviews on behalf of DGIS, possibilities for Embassies to relate to and finance civil society initiatives have become restricted. For promoting CCD activities ETC recommends that the Embassies should be able to earmark funding for support to civil society.

b) Perspective from development organisations based in the Netherlands

Part of the funding which the Netherlands contributes to development assistance is channelled through the above-mentioned co-financing development organisations (MFOs). These agencies have a longstanding experience in developing countries with networks of partners that are capable of reaching local organisations and groups. Considering the policies and strategies of the MFOs, in which environment, poverty alleviation, sustainable livelihood and local governance play a prominent role, this alternative channel of financing often addresses issues related the CCD objectives, but apparently to a lesser degree in the context of NAPs/CCD.

The SNV/BF approach to co-ordination is to set-up not only 'horizontal' partnerships (between local actors), but also 'vertical' partnerships, in which local structures try to recognise local rules and conventions for land management and try to and make them validated by national legal institutions. The SNV/BF priorities (see under 2) fit into the principles of participation and partnership, promulgated by the NAP/CCD of the Burkina government. Of course, the partners of SNV operate in an institutional environment, which the CCD helped to initiate, for instance the 'Programme National de Gestion des Terroirs' (PNGT) and the 'Programme d'Ajustement Structurel du Secteur Agricole' (PASA)). With regard to policy co-ordination, SBV/BF remarks that official multilateral policies (also supported by the Netherlands) on land management are often based on narratives, which need to be verified and modified. The relationship between population growth and environment is supposed to be one of increasing land degradation. This narrative should be moderated. Without denying the impact of population or economy growth, positive responses to the degradation tendency are at the same time numerous: in the SNV/BF intervention area agro-pastoral systems are for instance intensifying, thus sustaining ecosystems or yields – although the use of pesticides on cotton can undermine the same system. SNV/BF nor its partners are directly involved in search for CCD funds or circulation of CCD information.

SNV/CR in Cameroon promotes co-ordination between sectors through integrated land use planning activities that are undertaken at the regional and local level (micro-zonage), by which they try to conciliate different sectors (agriculture, forest, husbandry) and promote a sustainable use of natural resources. SNV/CR is not working directly on the implementation of the CDD, but supports many activities related to natural resources management that contribute to the CDD objectives.

It appears that MFOs and NGOs can play an important role by alerting their partners on the possibility of extra CCD funding through NAP/CCD and the Embassies. The above mentioned initiative by **Both ENDS** to enhance NGO involvement in the CCD process will contribute to make more use of the financial potential of the CCD.

The Netherlands Committee for IUCN (NC-IUCN) administers various small grants funds aimed at assisting NGOs in developing countries to protect their environment notably with respect to tropical rainforests (Tropical Rainforest Programme; TRP) and wetlands (Wetlands Programme; SWP). Especially in the case of Africa the major part of their partners tackle problems related to land degradation. However, especially in the case of tropical rainforest the problem of land degradation can not be regarded as an equivalent to desertification. Examples of some funded projects are the protection of wetlands in arid areas of China, Senegal and Mali directly or indirectly affected by land degradation (through changes in hydrology, erosion, destruction of the vegetation, biodiversity loss etc.). TRP funds relevant to land degradation are in Ghana, Togo, Benin (bush fires; cattle, agriculture), Cameroon, DR Congo (cattle; agriculture); Tanzania and Kenya (agriculture) etc.. Some of these partners are active within the CCD but IUCN's impression is that most of them do not actively promote their type of work within the CDD context.

Apart from the CCD Secretariat in Bonn, the CCD created a Global Mechanism, located at IFAD in Rome, with the task to mediate on financing possibilities between donor countries and affected developing countries. **DGIS/DVF** contributes to support this institute. The ministry of **VROM** (see below) supports the Secretariat by delegating one of her staffmembers to Bonn.

4 Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and, as appropriate, with national development strategies

CoP5 recognised the need for harmonisation of multilateral environmental agreements (CCD, CBD, FCCC etc.) and for the effective inclusion of the CCD within the national policies and strategic development instruments of the affected countries. Presently there is little co-ordination due to separate implementation instruments and parallel consultative processes for donor commitment.

Synergy between the international environmental treaties is a priority issue for the Netherlands government. At international level it has contributed to the formulation of the **Joint Work Programme (JWP)** between the Secretariats of the CBD and the CCD. As an initiative of the CBD Secretariat, the JWP aims to contribute to the coherence of international policy formulation for the concerned treaties.

In order to promote the synergy between the environmental treaties - CCD, CBD, FCCC and RAMSAR - the Ministry of Housing, Spatial planning and the Environment (**VROM**), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Directorate General for Development Co-operation (**DGIS**) and the Secretariat of the CCD have signed a **Letter of Intent** in September 2001. The LoI promotes 9 specific activities in the following three areas: a) the strengthening of co-operation between the environmental treaties, b) building up synergistic approaches for combating desertification and drought mitigation, and c) identifying scope and incentive measures for a coherent implementation of obligations under CCD and CBD. DGIS has made available funding of US\$900.000 in 2 years within the context of this LoI.

The **WSSD** in Johannesburg this year will be an important occasion for promoting collaboration between the treaties and on behalf of the UN Secretary General, minister Pronk is promoting the synergy among participating countries during the so called Prepcom meetings. VROM has delegated 1 staffmember during one year at the South African Ministry of Environment to help prepare WSSD.

With regard to synergy at the institutional level, reports note that joint databases and joint reporting frameworks could increase co-ordination and reduce the reporting burden of the CBD and CCD National Focal Points. Also, the opening of a GEF window on land degradation would enhance motivation and balance in synergy projects.

a) Perspective from bilateral co-operation programmes

On country level, sometimes the reality is less effective. In **Burkina Faso** the Netherlands' Embassy together with the donor group encourages synergy through the integration of the NAP/CCD and the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (SNDD) within the Strategic Framework for Poverty Reduction (CSLP). Most of the donors are in favour. However, the effectiveness of searching for synergy is not always present. The National Focal Points (NFP) for both policies (SNDD and CSLP) are in the same Ministry of Economy and Finances, which could help the internal co-ordination. An ad hoc group is studying a proposal on indicators for the CSLP, related to different production sectors (this is severely lacking at present). This is discussed with other donors not taking part in the CCD, as well as with the national partners.

In **Mali** the Embassy's strategy is to promote the mainstreaming of environmental issues for the sustainable development in its bilateral policy reviews and in the CCD Advisory Board meetings. In the context of Mali it is considered difficult to separate natural resources management and rural production systems. The Embassy uses the so-called Dialogue, which is a technical and institutional supporting tool for the STP secretariat, charged to follow-up on the international environmental conventions. Environmental aspects are also part of the M&E systems of the rural development programmes it supports, i.e. institutional strengthening (PASAOP) and investment programme in irrigation, rural roads and drinking water (PNIR), and possibly in future through PRSP. The Embassy also supports the NAP for Soil Fertility.

As mentioned before, the Netherlands is 'chef de file' of the donor group for co-ordination on environmental affairs in **Senegal**. This group is also an instrument of policy dialogue between donors and the Government. As such, the group lobbies for more environmental consideration and promotes the PRSP process.

The Embassy in **Uganda** co-finances the preparation process for the WSSD, in which synergy is a crucial issue. It is pushing for integrating environmental issues into the poverty reduction strategy (PRSP) as the basis for sustainable for development. In **Yemen** the Netherlands promotes synergy through two supported projects

mentioned before. Also, the Embassy is actively involved in the PRSP process. Likewise, in **Sri Lanka** the Netherlands contributes actively to the PRS process.

For activities in **Mongolia**, the Netherlands Embassy in Beijing is not yet involved in promoting the synergy between the multilateral environmental agreements. Mongolia has an approved Interim-PRSP, which includes attention to the need to combat land degradation.

As stated before, in **Nicaragua** environmental activities are integrated within projects/programmes, whereby the Embassy tries to link the various levels (local, national and international). An example is the wetlands project financed by the Netherlands, which is linked to the Ramsar convention. Nicaragua subscribed to Ramsar and the Embassy supports these activities.

With regard to integration of international policies into national strategies, the long-term national rural sector programme 'Agricultural Technology' (financed by Swiss, Dutch, IFAD and WB) fits into the context of PRSP. It is a programme for the coming 16 years, to increase agricultural productivity and family income of 110,000 small and medium-scale farm households through the generation/enhancement of an efficient, demand-driven, agricultural technology knowledge and innovation system. This programme will be carried out in phases of 4 years each. Special issue for the Dutch to monitor will be environmental and gender aspects. So probably within the near future more information will be available on this subject because this programme started in 2001. Aspects of soil fertility, forestation etc. are crucial to reach the formulated objectives. The Embassy is working with the Ministry of Environment on a MoU related to climate change, and also considers supporting a national activity on renewable energy.

The Netherlands support to the implementation of the three environmental treaties – CDD, CBD and FCCC – in **Brazil**, is channelled through one institution, the before mentioned FNMA, which should favour the synergy, especially if this in future happens in co-ordination with other donors.

b) Perspective from development organisations based in the Netherlands

The synergy between the environmental treaties, CCD, CBD, FCCC and RAMSAR, is of special concern to the Ministry of Housing, Spatial planning and the Environment (**VROM**). On request by VROM the Centre of Environmental Science (**CML**) of Leiden University prepared a study on the opportunities for collaboration between the CBD and CCD in West Africa. Main conclusions are that joint actions could focus on the areas of multi-functional natural vegetation between the arable fields on the one hand, and the protected areas and buffer zones on the other. These actions should have a clear focus on co-management of these lands by local people and the government agencies representing the supra-local interests connected to these lands. In this process, land tenure issues should be clearly settled. The recommendation is that ownership should be defined locally, but restricted by government-controlled regulations, set in the co-management negotiations, that protect the supra-local interests. CML concludes also that justified differences between the diversity focus of CBD and the international community, and the land focus of CCD and the national governments, will always remain. Due to the local trust and political support of the land-based paradigm, linkage projects that have land degradation as a starting point, linking this with biodiversity issues and visions, are probably the most effective for both CBD and CCD objectives. At the institutional level, the conclusions are that joint databases and joint reporting frameworks could increase co-ordination and reduce the reporting burden of the CBD and CCD National Focal Points. Also, the opening of a GEF window on land degradation would enhance motivation and balance in synergy projects.

CML continues its study on how to operationalise synergy between the environmental treaties through case studies from Senegal, Burkina Faso and Cameroon for which an associate expert post is available for a person from a DAC-country.

Compared to the other treaties the focus of CCD is more participatory with ample space for the involvement of civil society (“a poor man’s convention”). For creating synergy this is an advantage because it will have to work at the local level. The convention is quite recent (5 years after being signed) and therefore, results so far can be considered quite promising. Still lacking are the elements of enforcement and compliance and dispute settlement. For VROM the relationships between land degradation and health and food security are especially important items. In order to promote synergy a toolbox of possible interventions that serve multiple treaties should be developed, e.g. sinks can be such an instrument (see also IUCN below). The WSSD in Johannesburg this year will be an important occasion for promoting collaboration between the treaties and on behalf of the UN Secretary General, minister Pronk is promoting the synergy among participating countries during the so called

Prepcom meetings. VROM has delegated 1 staffmember during one year at the South African Ministry of Environment to help prepare WSSD.

Since the policy of **Hivos** is to integrate several sectors and to promote a sustainable development including ecological, socio-political and economic aspects, it is promoting the inclusion of environmental considerations in poverty reduction strategies. A switch to organic farming conducive to the economic emancipation of marginalised groups, and the application of environmental criteria in deciding whether to grant loans are examples of how a balance can be achieved. With regard to the environmental treaties, Hivos is the leading party in the Fund for sustainable management of Biodiversity and administers this together with **Novib**. The fund supports international organisations that stimulate the sustainable use of natural resources and make it economically viable. Closely interwoven with biodiversity and sustainable agriculture is the issue of genetic manipulation. Hivos supports organisations, which set up gene banks for local communities and lobbies for farmers' ownership of genetic resources.

SNV/CR mentions that as far as Cameroon is concerned, much funding is being raised in the framework of the CBD and FCCC conventions. SNV suggests that synergy would promote the employ those funds equally in activities related to the desertification issues in the northern part of the country.

NC-IUCN emphasises the need for a stronger synergy between the different environmental treaties, especially in its contacts with the Netherlands government, and notably between the CCD and the Convention on Biological Diversity. From their experience with the small grants funds for respectively Tropical Rainforests and Wetlands and on the basis of many demands of NGO's working in desert/savannah/dry forest types of ecosystems, NC-IUCN is convinced that there is a big need for a similar fund that covers those ecosystems. Such a fund would increase the presently rather limited possibilities for NGO's to obtain support for small-scale conservation oriented activities in dry ecosystems. It would enhance co-operation on field level as well as national and international level within an eco-regional approach, which is better able to tackle effects but also the causes of land degradation. Such a fund would also enhance the synergy between the different international environmental treaties and to promote the participation of the civil society. NGOs working in different contexts will be more stimulated to co-operate, exchange information and 'lobby' their governments and other actors if their locally based conservation/development gives them a clear(er) reason to do so (common ground). Also, nature conservation and restoration are not being given enough attention within desertification control approaches, while 'green and/or wet' areas left relatively untouched by people, can offer crucial protection to people and production areas against encroachment by arid areas/deserts. Such areas often also have important functions, such as 'natural' soil regeneration and local hydrology regulation.

5 Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems for mitigating the effects of drought.

CoP5 asks to report on current or planned activities aimed at controlling the underlying factors of land degradation or at mitigating its effects. Regional and sub-regional co-operation networks are considered effective vehicles for exchanging such experience. This item is of special concern to the Committee of Science and Technology (CST).

a) Perspective from bilateral co-operation programmes

In **Burkina Faso** the most concrete measures supported by the Netherlands with respect to the rehabilitation of degraded land are in the context of the Decentralised Rural Development Programme (PDRD). With regard to early warning systems, the Embassy supports CILSS financially in a regional initiative for the development of approaches and instruments for monitoring and their implementation.

The Embassy in **Mali** supports M&E systems as part of the rural development programmes, i.e. in the institutional strengthening programme (PASAOP) and the investment programme for irrigation, rural roads and drinking water (PNIR). In the context of the PRSP the Embassy is prepared to support an environmental early warning system (National Environmental Information System) possibly as part of a regional network ROSELT.

The reforestation projects in **Senegal** funded by the Netherlands, are important instruments for the rehabilitation of degraded lands. They implement and train local people in soil conservation related activities, and in measures to improve water retention and soil fertility through agroforestry techniques.

In **Uganda** the Netherlands supports three projects worth mentioning with respect to the rehabilitation of degraded lands: The National Wetlands Programme, Sustainable Energy Use in Households and Industry, and Kibale Semliki Integrated Conservation and Development Project.

The Embassy in **Yemen** has supported the introduction of GIS techniques for following the process of land degradation through the above project on Environmental Resources Assessment for rural land use planning.

The issues of land degradation and loss of biodiversity, are recognised by the Embassy in **Nicaragua** as serious problems. They are taken up within the before mentioned Agricultural Technology Programme. This programme will contribute to develop local adaptation and diffusion of improved and profitable technologies compatible with sustainable agricultural practices. In **Guatemala** the Environmental Programme in the Cuchumatanes region that is supported by the Netherlands' Embassy is targeted towards the ecological vulnerability also in some dryer parts of the area. The final aim is to bring back a balance between the actual and the optimal land use with the aim to come to ecological stability in the area.

In **Brazil** the objective of funding FNMA is to stimulate new experiences in combating desertification through demonstration projects carried out by NGO's and local organisations. These lessons learnt will be disseminated for wider application. Simultaneously, the capacity of these implementing groups will be strengthened.

b) Perspective from development organisations based in the Netherlands

Combating deforestation and land degradation and erosion are core activities of many **MFO** partner organisations in areas prone to drought and land degradation. They do so through direct interventions such as integrated watershed management, soil and water conservation, water harvesting techniques, irrigation and reforestation; or by raising awareness, facilitating knowledge exchange, and effectuate lobby. For example, in Western Africa, various **Novib** partners in Senegal, Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso work on combating desertification through soil conservation, promotion of ecological farming, reforestation and a focus on pastoralist communities.

The following programmes which **ETC** co-ordinates or is actively involved, directly deal with desertification and land degradation: Indigenous Soil & Water Conservation programme in Africa, co-ordinated by VU Amsterdam (funded by DGIS) and now followed up by a Innovative Farmer Programme, to be funded by UNSO; the Agriculture, Man and Ecology (AME) Programme implemented by ETC India in the Southern states of India, of which important parts of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh are considered semi-arid and highly prone to desertification and land degradation. Other Programmes and projects in which ETC plays an active role and which have impact on work in the sphere of the CCD are the following: PROLLINOVA (Promoting local level innovations in Agriculture), a network platform for innovation with farmers; ILEIA, a now independent Foundation set-up, nurtured and made independent by ETC (see section 7 of this Annex); PTD Network, an informal network of organisations and individuals involved and promoting participatory approaches to farmer innovation.

One of the specialisation sectors of **SNV** is 'natural resource management' (NRM), in which field SNV/BF in the last three years has chosen for two main lines: a) capacity strengthening of farmer and other rural (meso-level) organisations 'in their mission of natural resource management', and b) facilitation of platforms and consultation structures at local and district levels on management of common property resources. This policy has been chosen due to the disengagement of state services. In the future there will be more emphasis on the first mentioned priority than on the second. SNV/BF is contributing to farmer land use initiatives through projects on sustainable agriculture and on local management of silvi-pastoral areas. This kind of initiatives fit into the main lines of the CCD program in Burkina Faso (the PAN/LCD).

ICCO partners are involved in networks indirectly contributing to combating desertification and land degradation, e.g. in forestry networks in the different regions. Recently a mid-term review was held among 28 Sustainable Forest Use partners (20 respondents), directly contributing possibly as well

Hivos is not involved in networking activities specifically aiming at the promotion of CCD implementation. Some of the partners are participating in such network, especially in Africa and Latin America. Hivos has regular communications with its partners. Most of the organisations are working in rural areas and part of them

is situated in dry land areas. Rehabilitation of land and forest, biodiversity promoting activities, water harvesting are pivot in many of the projects, almost all of them in the context of economic activities to reduce poverty. Some partners are supported for their explicit activities in enhancing and empowering civil society targeting environmental issues, human rights and gender. Hivos is involved in many issue-based networking activities and electronic listservers i.e. forests, biodiversity, genetechnology, seeds. When partners in dry land areas are supported for their sustainable agriculture activities, it will contribute directly to combating desertification. Hivos also financially supports networks on sustainable agriculture and biodiversity. It supports organisations that are involved in forest issues, either in campaigning or reforestation or agroforestry activities.

A substantial part of activities financed through the Funds administered by **NC-IUCN** tackle issues of land degradation (in many cases not equal to desertification). NC-IUCN's primary objective is to promote nature conservation, which in turn is an effective tool to combat desertification. For instance, the role of natural forests (tropical dry forest), wetlands and savannahs as 'buffers' against further degradation and as tools for future restoration need more attention. However by promoting conservation through projects and policy work they also emphasise the importance of sustainable use as a crucial aspect of conservation. For instance, sustainable use of wildlife in savannahs (instead of cattle breeding) might be an alternative that leads ecologically and in many cases also economically to a more sound land-use. Three years ago the Centre of Environmental Science in Leiden (CML) and the NC-IUCN organised an international seminar on the importance of savannahs in Africa and the possibilities for a different and less destructive use.

The active promotion of the concept of the ecological impact of the Netherlands (and to a lesser extent the EU) with respect to biodiversity and natural resources outside our borders is also in line with the CDD. For instance, the dumping of European meat on West African markets is (was) a clear example of a negative incentive that had a direct effect on African cattle herds and the problem of overgrazing.

6 Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment

National M&E systems for drought and desertification are considered an essential element of CCD implementation. CoP5 pointed out that much has been achieved in the monitoring of flora and fauna, but much less in relation to drought and desertification. Benchmarks and indicators should, apart from the physical and biological, also include the institutional and socio-economic aspects, as well as those related to participation by civil society. The CST is responsible for the identification of relevant benchmarks and indicators.

a) Perspective from bilateral cooperation programmes

The CILSS has the task to support the National Focal Points of the West African States in the implementation of indicators for monitoring. The Embassy in **Burkina Faso** contributes indirectly, through the financial support of CILSS, to the development of M&E indicators for the implementation of the CCD.

At national level a study is underway on the rehabilitation of land productivity aiming at the measurement of the impact of project interventions. This study is co-financed by the Embassy with GTZ and USAID. The results of this important study will enable the Embassy and other donor and national partners to review and reinforce the interventions related to land degradation and drought effects. Also the exercise by the donor group to propose indicators for poverty reduction (CSLP), is part of this initiative and shows the preoccupation of the Embassy to avail of appropriate indicators in this area.

In **Senegal** impact monitoring is still lacking. The M&E systems used in the Community Forestry programmes funded by the Netherlands are mostly designed for controlling operational data on project level. The Centre of Ecological Monitoring for NRM (CSE) should become more involved. In **Yemen** the above project on Environmental Resources Assessment for rural land use planning introduces M&E to monitor desertification.

In **Nicaragua** the national government supported by IDB is working on a national information system on environment. The Embassy considers M&E as important, specially at this moment when researchers are warning for a long term dry period (el Niño) which will have serious consequences for small farmers.

Brazil has already drought monitoring (INPE) established. Studies to be funded by the FNMA Fund may shed more light on Brazil's needs in terms of monitoring and evaluation of desertification. The Embassy requires the FNMA to establish performance indicators in the first year of the new programme funded by the Netherlands as part of the formulation of a new M&E system.

In the other countries covered by this report the Embassies are not supporting activities related to monitoring drought and desertification, neither physical nor related to institutional and socio-economic aspects.

b) Perspective from development organisations based in the Netherlands

The **MFOs**, **NC-IUCN** and **SNV** in Burkina Faso are not involved in the setting up of M&E systems for drought and desertification. Some of their partners probably are, but they are not aware which. The International Institute for Aerospace Survey and Earth Sciences (**IITC**) contributes to M&E systems through the use of remote sensing (RS) and GIS techniques in e.g. Burkina Faso and other West African countries.

ETC is in the process of undertaking 8 Thematic Reviews on behalf of DGIS of long-term projects in the NRM and Water Management Sectors, also in view of recent Sector-entry Approach policies. An elaborate analysis framework is developed, based on a qualitative review of around 20 elements (substantiated by around 75 indicators) dealing with the following levels of analysis: Accountability and ownership at target group level for NRM; Ownership at the level of NGO or government support institutions for NRM activities; The internal project environment (processes, approaches, involvement of stakeholders, facilitation); The external project environment (policy, institutional, socio-economic and ecological wider environment).

7 Access by affected country Parties, particularly affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how

CoP5 found capacity-building to be an essential element to stimulate the implementation of the CCD. They identified a broad spectrum of training needs from environmental education at the grass roots, through extension and vocational training in land use and water management, to development of research capacity. Especially mentioned are training for policy-makers at national level, training in economic valuation of the impact of land degradation, and training in interactive decision-making and conflict handling. The CST identified South-South and North-South co-operation as excellent instruments for the exchange and transfer of information, technology and technical know-how. Regional thematic networks can contribute effectively to the development benchmarks and indicators for M&E (see above), and to stimulate the use and protection of local (technical) knowledge and the dissemination of best practices.

a) Perspective from bilateral co-operation programmes

In **Burkina Faso** other donors support specific programmes for capacity building in the area of the environment (Belgium). The Embassy has not undertaken any action for training and extension related to the implementation of the CCD, but is open for proposals. However the aforementioned study on the institutional review of the National Co-ordinating Unit for the CCD (CONAGESE) should lead to pertinent proposals for human resources strengthening. The donors have indicated their interest to finance such a proposal.

In **Mali** the Netherlands does not directly support access to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how, but only through the rural development programmes. Also in **Uganda** there is no direct support in this area, but the Embassy is documenting all practical experiences it has gained during implementation of some of the projects for possible replication.

The Netherlands has funded in **Senegal** a Forest Training Centre (Centre FoReT) in Thies, which is increasingly focused on integrated land use management and is recognised as a centre of excellence. The funding includes scholarships for further training and study visits abroad.

In **Yemen** the Embassy is strongly involved in the civil service reform program, which is the first step towards capacity building. It involves staff reduction by 75% and salary increase. In **Sri Lanka** the Local Environment Fund offers a few opportunities. Elements are contained in the three activities mentioned in section 1. The Embassies for **Pakistan** and **Mongolia** have no specific strategy to promote the access to relevant technology. In **Nicaragua** training, education and capacity building activities are components of the before mentioned Agricultural Technology Programme and the provision to the mayor stakeholders of the appropriate social and environmental information and knowledge base are part. The actors include researchers, extensionists and

producers to ensure that practice of sustainable agriculture is consistent with economic, social and environmental criteria.

Capacity building of local organisations and also within FNMA, is part of the objectives of the co-operation programme with FNMA in **Brazil**. The Fund's call for proposals focuses mainly on training and capacity building of civil society. The demonstration projects are expected to generate new knowledge and experience. Even so, Brazil as a country is at a stage of economic development, where it can provide appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how on its own.

b) Perspective from development organisations based in the Netherlands

The International Co-operation Centre (CDCS) of the 'Vrije Universiteit' of Amsterdam is strongly involved in research activities, which aim at contributing to a better understanding of land degradation and land rehabilitation processes in Africa. CDCS is currently engaged in projects on farmer innovation in Africa, research on the rehabilitation of the environment on the northern part of Central Plateau of Burkina Faso, research on Community Based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa, and research on environmental aspects of land reform in South Africa.

This is reflected in a recent book "Farmer Innovation in Africa: a source of inspiration for agricultural development", C.Reij and A. Waters-Bayer (eds). London, Earthscan Publications Ltd. 2001. The book describes the results of two Dutch-funded programmes that focused on farmer innovation in land husbandry – Indigenous Soil and Water Conservation in Africa (ISWC) and Promoting Farmer Innovation in Rainfed Agriculture (PFI) in several African countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso and Cameroon). The case studies in this book are relevant to the CCD, as it recognises the significance of local knowledge and seeks to build upon it. Cases from e.g. Machakos in Kenya, the Basin Arichidier in Senegal and the Northern Central Plateau in Burkina Faso demonstrate very promising results of SWC interventions, which not only halt land degradation but also increase production. The Netherlands Embassy in Burkina Faso supports a large project together with GTZ to document the data on improved production by DRS/SWC techniques.

The involvement of CDCS in the CCD has mainly been indirect, without participating in the formulation of NAPs. In the above PFI project direct contacts existed in Uganda with the CCD co-ordinator. Most of CDCS work is of immediate relevance to the CCD, but time limitations prohibit people get directly involved with the CCD planning process. Limited contacts occurred with Focal Points in Uganda and Burkina Faso. In this latter country they were involved in trying to insert some new ideas into CONAGESE, which is responsible for the CCD.

Wageningen University and its Department of Environmental Science (DES/WU) have a long standing co-operation with partners - mainly universities - abroad and a significant and growing group its PhD students (>30%) comes from developing countries. During the last decade, research groups from DES have been involved in large projects and co-operated in institutional development programmes (financed by the NUFFIC) with universities in CCD relevant countries, e.g. Burkina Faso, Bolivia, Kenya and Eritrea. DES/WU contributes to CCD by creating awareness about the desertification problems, the training of staff members and the development of tools to combat desertification. In the period of 1992 - 2002 Wageningen University has executed an interdisciplinary research programme in Burkina Faso on the "Use and Management of Natural Resources in the Sahel region". Main partner in this project, funded by WU and co-ordinated by the Erosion, Soil and Water Conservation Group, was the University of Ouagadougou. The main research question was under which conditions the farmers would be prepared/willing to improve their resource management practices. Research was focused on the physical aspects of the sahelian soils, traditional and new erosion measures and social and economic aspects of a sustainable management of silvo-pastoral areas. In this research project more than 25 Burkina-be and Dutch researchers, 15 PhD students and about 300 MSc students (Niger, Burkina-Faso and the Netherlands) have participated.

Wageningen University continues funding research, development and education (RDE) in the North-South Interdisciplinary Research and Education Fund (INREF) with partners in Latin America, Africa and Asia, including China and the former Soviet Republics in the Caucasus and Central Asia. INREF replaces the WU satellites of the past decades. It has an approximate size of 1,3 million Euro/year, and has been approved for the five-year period 2000-2004. Two INREF projects with a strong participatory approach are of particular relevance to CCD. The project "Convergence of science" focuses on inclusive technology innovation processes for better integrated crop and soil management. This project aims at new pathways for technology development and dissemination. The objectives are to facilitate improved innovative performance in actor networks so as to

provide a sustainable capacity in the local (decentralised) context. The project will be implemented in Ghana and Benin. The other project is called "Regional food security policies for natural resource management and sustainable economies" (RESPONSE). The focus is on agro-ecological conditions and livelihood strategies in less-favoured areas. These are characterised by high risk and vulnerability due to unfavourable and erratic climatic regimes and frequent market imperfections that lead to high transaction costs. Attention will be given to adaptive management regimes that are characterised by a built-in capacity for coping with environmental variability and adaptable in response to changing soil-weather conditions. This project should produce tools for decision-making at policy level.

The Dutch Agricultural Research Organisation (**DLO**) is the applied research branch of Wageningen University and Research centre (**Wageningen-UR**). The DLO Research Programme 'International Co-operation' (DLO/IC) aims to contribute to economic development and poverty reduction in developing countries, with special attention to the strengthening of sustainable agriculture and production chains, and nature management. The programme implements a demand-driven approach in which the research agenda is determined jointly with governments, research partners, NGOs and the private sector in the South. This is done within the framework of policy priorities formulated by the Netherlands' Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, the major sponsor of the programme. The programme's objectives include to generate and disseminate knowledge and to build research capacity in the South with a focus a.o. on food safety and sustainable rural development. The programme has a life span of 4 years (2002-2005) and an annual budget of some 3.2 million Euro. The program is co-funded with an additional 2 million Euro annually from national and international donors. The DLO institutes implement the programme together with partners in the South such as National Agricultural Research Centres, NGOs, International Research Centres and private companies. Of the five main research themes in particular Sustainable agriculture and environmental quality; International nature management and Enabling policies for international agreements, address issues related the CCD, albeit not strictly desertification but rather land degradation in general. Projects of particular relevance to policy and technology development for combating land degradation in drylands are executed with partners in the Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Burkina Faso, Ghana and densely populated rural areas in Southern Africa.

The Plant Ecology department at Utrecht University (**UU**) is involved in a project on grazing in a Mongolian steppe and the consequences this has for desertification. One of the side-results of this project, which is carried out in co-operation with several Mongolian Institutions, is to create awareness on the subject of desertification. The project started in 2000. The research aims a.o. at the improvement of knowledge about the process of overgrazing, vegetation degradation and the resulting desertification. The study is carried out in Hustain Nuruu, a national park in the forest steppe region of Mongolia and is embedded in the larger "Hustain Nuruu Steppe Reserve project" (HN-project), a long lasting Dutch Mongolian co-operation. The HN-project is aimed at the restoration and conservation of the biodiversity of the steppe ecosystem and financed by DGIS and the Dutch Foundation Reserves Przewalski Horses (FRPH). The Mongolian Association for the Conservation of Nature & Environment (MACNE) is responsible for the management of the park and its wildlife. Exchange of knowledge and data is an important component of the project, with the goal to extend the monitoring program with indicators of grassland degradation. In 2002 a group of Mongolian Biologists is trained at Utrecht University in research methods and nature conservation in a Special Fellowship Programme financed by NUFFIC. The aim of the SFP is capacity building in Hustai National Park and other Mongolian institutes working on the conservation of the steppe ecosystem.

The Centre of Environmental Science (**CML**) of Leiden University is involved in multidisciplinary research in Northern Cameroon on several aspects of natural resources management. Especially the investigation on pasture degradation is relevant in CCD context. Components of this research project are: species productivity and characteristic, human activities and their impact, local knowledge and perception of the problem, and identification of adequate methods for pasture evaluation.

Dissemination of research findings

CoP5 noticed that the inadequate dissemination of research findings hampers access to appropriate knowledge in developing countries. In this context, **CDCS** tries to publish all findings and distribute these as widely as possible. For **ITC** education, research and consulting services of both staff and students are the important channels for disseminating technology. They favour a much stronger link between researchers and policy makers, and a stronger focus by researchers on the constraints for research results on implementation. **UU** recommends a strong co-operation with local organisations to promote a wider distribution of relevant research

findings in an integrated context, combined with a strong focus on dissemination of research findings at national and local level.

Hivos supports organisations and networks that undertake and promote sustainable agriculture. In the projects of partner organisations that are situated in dry land areas, several activities can be seen as contributing to improved access to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how, such as publications, newsletter, information centres, demonstration centres, presentations, exchange visits, workshops and meetings.

Cordaid's partners work at various levels and with a wide variety of strategies. One of these is the empowerment of rural communities by enhancing access to new production systems and technology. Lessons learnt need to be inventoried.

One of the spin-offs of the Sahel programme of the **Wageningen University** is the publication series "Tropical Resource Management Papers", in which many research results are documented and disseminated as widely as possible.

According to the experience at WU, the activities of the researchers at universities in many developing countries, are not directly related to the most urgent needs of their society although this situation is changing. Therefore, their points of view and experience are not always sufficiently incorporated in the development of new strategies. Collaboration with partners abroad (south-south and south-north) can change this and experience is that most of WU former MSc and PhD students play an active role in their field of experience as staff members of NGO's and National Research Institutes. Within the context of the new Sector Approach of DGIS, WU strongly suggests to stimulate the creation of national - or regional task forces including governmental representatives, NGO's and researchers. These task forces (groups of "young angry men and woman" including researchers) should be asked to translate existing strategies and national/regional plans and "the different points of view" into practical, sustainable projects indicating priorities, the executing agencies as well as the needs for research and training. WU has expressed several times to its partners abroad to be willing to support this type of processes and initiatives. Very important is that these task forces get a broad mandate and are politically supported by their own governments.

The International Agricultural Centre (**IAC**) is part of Wageningen UR and provides capacity development support for professionals and organisations in the agriculture, food and natural resources management sectors. IAC provides training in Wageningen and abroad in courses with relevance for CCD issues. Relevant programmes include training for policy-makers and programme managers at (sub)national level, on subjects such as economic valuation of the impact of land degradation, training in interactive decision-making and conflict handling, on leadership and adaptive management of natural resources, and on livestock - environment interactions. Training is focused on improving peoples' livelihoods, food security and sustainable management of natural resources.

The **Agromisa** Foundation is a Dutch non-profit NGO whose aim is to strengthen the social and economic position of the underprivileged rural population in the south. It focuses on capacity building of intermediate and civil society organisations to achieve its objectives. Agromisa supplies information and advice on small-scale, sustainable agriculture and related topics to individuals and organisations on demand. Research results are translated into application at field level. This information is disseminated through the 'Agrodok' series on small-scale sustainable agriculture and Q&A service. Agromisa's strategy is now to increasingly integrate informal local knowledge with findings from research institutions in its publications. It contributes to the NAKS Network for Agricultural Knowledge Sharing and the INTERDEV network. To improve dissemination of technology Agromisa recommends that the research agenda should focus on farmers' needs from the beginning, and researchers should incorporate the dissemination of results as an element to be investigated.

The NGO Both ENDS is performing strategic co-operation through the publication of the 'Encyclopedia of Sustainability' in which inspiring examples of land and water use are described (including publication on the website). The Encyclopedia covers five themes of sustainable use: River basin management, ecological restoration, land rights, non-timber forest products and biotechnology & 'non-gentech' approaches. At the moment the Encyclopedia covers more than 30 case studies, all relating to the domain of desertification.

ETC is involved or responsible for hosting a programme, with activities that all can be labelled as (participatory) technology development, information exchange and documentation programmes. ETC has developed itself as a Resource Centre in the field of sustainable land use, natural resource management and rural innovation. It provides access to wide networks of organisations and individuals interested in these domains. An initiative of ETC is **ILEIA**, the Centre for Information on Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture, which publishes the only periodical on development of this kind of agricultural approach and focuses on indigenous

knowledge and participatory technology development for the South with a global outreach. By documenting the diverse experiences of small farmers, with special reference to those in marginal areas, ILEIA has highlighted their role in the creation of agricultural knowledge, and the importance of this knowledge for ecological sustainability and food security. Recent issues of the magazine have dealt with themes such as agro-biodiversity, desertification, farmer innovation, and agroforestry. The ILEIA library and documentation centre, housed in the ETC office in The Netherlands, is known as a rather unique grey-literature library. More and more ETC and ILEIA are expanding their activities in the electronic domain.

As for **SNV** in Burkina Faso, it's not the lack of technology or knowledge, which is the bottleneck, because in Burkina Faso most appropriate technologies are more or less available; the problem lies in the same kind of disarticulation mentioned before in relation to local land rules and national legislation (see 2): there is little connection between land use practices and expressed needs for improvements (by farmers) and available technology packets at regional and national level, developed by agricultural research.

To put it in simple terms: the last ten years have seen a resurgence of interest in managing land and natural resources in West Africa. A big step forward would be to intensify the existing efforts in the field to fill up the gap between land tenure legislation and official agricultural technology policies on one hand and the diverse reality of land management practices in rural areas on the other hand. SNV contributes by stimulating and validating (or ratifying) local conventions and institutions on land or natural resources management, and by promoting research-action programs between farmer/ cattle breeder organisations and knowledge institutions (agricultural research included) on fertility management and/or land tenure issues.