

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Third National Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

June 2006

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Acronyms

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community-based Organization
CEHI	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute
CITES	Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species
CWSA	Central Water and Sewage Authority
EA	Executing Agency
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESU	Environmental Services Unit
ESDU	Environment and Sustainable Development Unit
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GM	Global Mechanism
GOSVG	Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines
IA	Implementing Agency
IFMP	Integrated Forestry Management Programme
IICA	International Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
IWCAM	Integrated Watershed and Coastal Areas Management
KAP	Knowledge Attitudes and Practice
LDC	Lesser Developed Country
LIS	Land Information System
MACC	Mainstreaming Adaptation to Climate Change
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MFP	Ministry of Finance and Planning
MOHE	Ministry of Health and the Environment
NALIMP	National Land Information Management Project
NAP	National Action Programme
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCSA	National Capacity for Self Assessment
NDP	National Disaster Plan
NEAB	National Environment Advisory Board
NEAP	National Environment Action Plan
NEMS	National Environment Management Strategy
NESDEC	National Economic and Social Development Council
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NRMU	National Resource Management Unit
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OPAAL	OECS Protected Areas and Associated Sustainable Livelihoods
SD	Sustainable Development
SGD	St. Georges Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability
SGP	Small Grants Programme

SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SNC	Second National Communication
SPACC	Special Programme on Adaptation to Climate Change
SVG	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VINLEC	St. Vincent Electricity Services

Executive Summary

The purpose of the Third National Report (3NR), as required in accordance with Article 26 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, is to inform the Conference of Parties of the progress made and constraints experienced by St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) in implementing the UNCCD at national level.

SVG is an archipelagic nation comprising the main island St. Vincent, and 34 islands known as the Grenadines, 7 of which are inhabited. The physical characteristics of mainland St Vincent differ greatly from the topography and climate of the Grenadines, making land degradation issues extremely diverse in this small nation. The mainland is volcanic, while the Grenadine chain is low lying with no surface water and minimal top soil.

The Government and people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines have recognized land degradation as a constraint to sustainable development and became a party to the UNCCD on 16th March 1998. Commitment to this Convention is critical, given land degradation's deleterious effects on the major economic sectors of Agriculture and Tourism.

The 3NR for SVG highlights a number of priorities which must be addressed to: (1) facilitate implementation of the UNCCD and (2) improve the quality of life of Vincentians. These priorities include:

The development of a comprehensive environmental policy.

Currently, SVG does not have a comprehensive legislative framework that adequately addresses land degradation and reflects the principles of the CCD Convention. Activities related to land degradation therefore are not designed within the UNCCD framework, and are often subsumed under other environmental projects. Several pieces of legislation directly or indirectly address various aspects of Sustainable Land Management (SLM), making enforcement and management a challenge. In addition, this fragmented approach, coupled with inadequate human and financial resources at national level, has hindered effective implementation of the UNCCD.

The development of a National Action Programme (NAP) for Land Degradation

The NAP will not only highlight the causes of land degradation, but also indicate how these problems are going to be addressed. It will consider, when addressing these problems, the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), the Special Programme on Adaptation to Climate Change (SPACC) project, SLM projects in St. Vincent as well as other national and social development plans such as the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. It is envisaged that by identifying these linkages, the NAP will be implemented in a coordinated manner involving all relevant stakeholders. The NAP when finalized by October 2006 will be forwarded for the approval of Cabinet.

Strengthen and expand the National Environmental Advisory Board (NEAB)

The NEAB, which was appointed by Cabinet, originally consisted of eleven members including representatives from government, private sector and NGOs. The NEAB was established as an advisory body and to facilitate inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral coordination. However, this body must expand its mandate to coordinate the plethora of environmental projects related to SLM, Biodiversity, Climate Change and Biosafety. The NEAB will have to review its composition to take on this expanded role. The new NEAB will be multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral, comprising relevant representatives from government, private sector, NGOs and civil society to ensure a participatory approach to the implementation of these projects. It is expected that the NEAB will be restructured by the end of 2006.

Improve mechanisms for participation of all stakeholders

Methods of participation using consultations, meetings, *inter alia*, must be improved in order to obtain the relevant information from all stakeholders but specifically from persons in the communities with traditional knowledge of the area. This information is absent because of the general perception amongst stakeholders that these meetings do not require their input. While improvements must be made in the manner in which information is gathered, there is also a need to effectively disseminate information to all stakeholders, in a manner which is easily understood. One such tool which can assist in improvement of the participative approach is KAP surveys which will be used to gather data about stakeholders' preference for obtaining and providing information.

Implement measures to ensure sustainable use of national resources and to combat Land Degradation.

Sustainable Land Management is critical to the development of St. Vincent and the Grenadines given the nation's limited land space. Consequently the Government has established a Forestry Department, a Soil Conservation Unit and also an Agricultural Diversification Unit. However, issues such as loss of agricultural lands to housing and squatting, deforestation, sand mining, and natural disasters all contribute to the challenge of managing land as a natural resource. It is hoped that projects such as the Integrated Forestry Management Programme (IFMP) and the National Land Information Management Project (NALIMP) funded by the European Union can assist in the implementation of the UNCCD in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, as well as the UNDP LDC/SIDS Targeted Portfolio Project on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and UNEP project on Preventing Land Degradation through Sustainable Land Management.

Improved mobilization of financial resources at both the national and international levels

Access to financial resources to assist St. Vincent and the Grenadines to meet its obligations under the UNCCD has been difficult. Though funding was provided to produce the First and Second National Reports, there was a delay in obtaining funding to develop the National Action Programme (NAP). However, assistance was given to many countries including St.

Vincent and the Grenadines by the Global Mechanism, which initiated the process of the elaboration of the NAP. Additionally, government contributions continue to be the major source of funding for staff, conservation and agricultural workers and research officers attached to Regional Centres.

This report reflects the format provided by the UNCCD National Reporting Process Help Guide which includes: information on implementation status of the Convention in St Vincent and the Grenadines thus far; strategies and priorities established within the framework of sustainable development plans and policies; the institutional measures taken to implement the Convention; the participatory process in support of preparation of the National Action Programme; the consultative process in support of the preparation of the NAP and partnership agreement with developed country parties; measures taken or planned within the framework of the NAP; information on financial allocations from national budgets in support of implementation of the Convention; and a review of benchmarks and indicators utilized to measure progress and assessment. A country profile is also provided.

1 Implementation Status at a glance

1.1 FOCAL POINT INSTITUTION

Name of Focal Point	Edmund Jackson, Environmental Services Coordinator
Address including e-mail address	Ministry of Health and the Environment Ministerial Building Kingstown St. Vincent svgenv@vincysurf.com
Country specific websites relating to desertification	None

1.2 STATUS OF NAP IN SVG

Date of validation	Draft NAP (still to be validated)
NAP Reviews	None
NAP integration into Poverty Reduction Strategy	No
NAP integration into the National Development Strategy	No
Expected NAP validation	October 2006
Final Draft of NAP exists	No
Formulation of Draft NAP is under way	Yes, first draft produced
Basic guidelines for a NAP have been established	Yes
Process has only been initiated	Since 2002
Process has not yet started	Yes

1.3 MEMBER OF SRAP/RAP

Name of Sub-Regional and Regional Cooperation framework		Involvement in specific topics such as water harvesting techniques, soil erosion
1	IWCAM	Watershed Management
2	NEMS	Environmental Sustainability
3	Regional Action Programme for Latin American and the Caribbean	Benchmarks and indicators, information database, poverty, traditional knowledge and renewable energy

1.4 COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE (Currently under review)

Name of institution	Government	NGO	Male/Female
1 Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	✓		M
2. Forestry Division	✓		M
3. Fisheries Division	✓		M
4. Ministry of Social Development	✓		M
5. Ministry of Health and the Environment	✓		M
6. Environmental Services Unit	✓		M
7. Ministry of Finance and Planning	✓		M
8. Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing	✓		M
9. Ministry of Legal Affairs	✓		F
10. National Youth Council		✓	M
11. National Trust		✓	M
12. NGO Representative		✓	F

1.5 TOTAL NUMBER OF NGOS ACCREDITED TO THE PROCESS: 3

Has an NGO national coordinating committee on desertification been established; if yes how many NGOs or civil society participate in it?	No NGO committee established
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1.6 TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTS AND LAWS PASSED RELATING TO UNCCD

Five relevant acts:

Title of Law	Date of Adoption
1 The Forest Resource Conservation Act No. 47	1992
2 The Wildlife Protection Act No.16	1987
3 The Agricultural Act	1954

4	The Forest Act	1945
5	The National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority Act	2002

1.7 THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS

Number of Partnership Agreements that have been concluded and/or are being initiated within the framework of the UNCCD

	Official Title of partnership	Donor (s), international organization (s), and/or agencies of the UN system involved	Date of (expected) conclusion
1	Support for Preparation of First and Second UNCCD National Reports	UNCCD	2000 2002

List of Consultative meetings on UNCCD implementation

	Name of Consultative meeting	Date/year	Donor Countries involved	International organization (s), and/or agencies of the UN system involved
1	Workshop on Synergies between UNFCCC, UNCBD and UNCCD at the Local level	14-16 Sept 2004	Financed by UNCCD	Secretariats of Rio Conventions

Name of country that has taken over the role of *Chef de file*: N/A

1.8 PROJECTS CURRENTLY UNDER IMPLEMENTATION WHICH ARE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY RELATED TO THE UNCCD

Name of Project	Project implemented within framework of the NAP/SRAP/RAP	Project Implemented within the framework of UNCCD	Time frame	Partners involved	Overall Budget (US\$)
1 Integrated Forestry Management Programme	Yes	Yes	5-10 years	CWSA, VINLEC	55,000
2 LDC-SIDS Targeted Portfolio Project for Capacity Building and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management (SLM)	Yes	Yes	2006-2009	UNEP, GEF	500,000
3 National Land Information Management Project (NALIMP)	Yes	Yes	TBD	EU, GOSVG	1,271,111
4 Soil Conservation Project			Ongoing	Ministry of Agriculture	314,000
5 Integrated Watershed and Coastal Areas Management (IWCAM) Project	Yes	Yes	5 years	UNEP, UNDP, CARICOM, CEHI	23, 000,000 (total cost)
6 Environmental rehabilitation programme with participation of youth	Yes	Yes	Proposed	UNCCD	4, 875, 308 (total cost)
7 Preventing Land Degradation through SLM	Yes	Yes	Ongoing	UNEP, CEHI, OAS	300,000
8 OECS Protected Areas and Associated Livelihoods (OPAAL) project	Yes	No	Nov 2004-Oct 2009	World Bank OAS, FEEM, GOSVG	7.5 M (total cost)

2 Strategies and Priorities established within the Framework of Sustainable Development Plans and Policies

Prior to the NAP no plans or strategies explicitly targeted land degradation in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This issue was addressed peripherally in sectoral action plans eg. agriculture and forestry. Since the drafting of the NAP, none of these plans have been adapted to harmonize them with UNCCD principles.

On an informal basis, NAP strategies and priorities dovetail with the following recent national policies and plans:

- The National Physical Development Plan (NPDP)
- The Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP)
- NEMO Disaster Mitigation Policy
- The National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS)

The National Environment Management Strategy (NEMS) is being implemented over a 3 year period (2004-2006) and guides environmental management in an integrated manner, by taking into consideration existing plans and priorities in SVG such as the NAP. Further reference to the NEMS indicates activities being implemented within the proposed 3 year timeframe. Linkages with the UNCCD NAP are as follows:

NAP Priority Areas	NEMS linkages with NAP
Poverty	Principle 1: Foster Sustainable Improvement in the Quality of Life Principle 2: Integrate Social, Economic and Environmental Considerations into National Development Policies, Plans and Programmes
Policy and legal framework	Principle 2: Integrate Social, Economic and Environmental Considerations into National Development Policies, Plans and Programmes Principle 3: Improve on Legal and Institutional Frameworks
Information and knowledge management	Principle 3: Improve on Legal and Institutional Frameworks
Public Awareness and National Education Programme	Principle 7: Foster Broad-based Environmental Education, Training and Awareness
Institutional Capacity	Principle 3: Improve on Legal and Institutional Frameworks

Land Use and Tenure	Principle 2: Integrate Social, Economic and Environmental Considerations into National Development Policies, Plans and Programmes
Support for local communities, CBOs and NGOs	Principle 4: Ensure Meaningful Participation by Civil Society in Decision Making
Forest conservation	Principle 2: Integrate Social, Economic and Environmental Considerations into National Development Policies, Plans and Programmes
Soil conservation and management	
Water conservation and management	
Science and technology	Principle 15: Promote Cooperation in Science and Technology
Early Warning Systems	Principle 8: Address the Causes and Impacts of Climate Change Principle 9: Prevent And Manage the Causes and Impacts of Disaster

The National Coordinating Body (NCB) responsible for overseeing implementation and ensuring complementarity with land degradation activities has been replaced by the NEAB, an advisory ministerial body. The NEAB is to be restructured in order for this body to function in its new capacity as NCB. This body is expected to retain its member composition, with representatives from government, civil society and the private sector. Relations with the NFP at this point are informal and any relationship to address implementation of these strategies will have to be established after the NEAB is restructured.

3 Institutional Measures Taken to Implement the Convention

NAPs as part of the National Economic and Social Development and Environment Protection Plans

The NAP is in its initial stages of formulation, but its preparation has been undertaken in tandem with other national economic and social development and environmental protection plans. This therefore facilitates integration with the national development planning framework. The programme is expected to establish linkages with the IPRSP (currently in draft form and expected to be implemented by 2007), the NBSAP, and the NEMS, among others.

Major programmatic obstacles in integrating the objectives of the NAP into social development and environmental management strategies do exist however, and include human resource constraints, budgetary constraints and the ability of relevant implementing agencies to accommodate NAP objectives into their workplans.

There is scope within the proposed NAP for supporting other policy instruments. Policy measures and incentive schemes adopted or initiated aiming at encouraging private sector support, notably with regard to technological and scientific cooperation, have not yet been developed, but are highlighted under Principle 5 of the NEMS, which is expected to harmonize with NAP activities once the NAP is completed.

The NAP identifies legislative deficiencies to be addressed in order to support environmental management as a priority area. Measures recommended to address harmonization of the NAP with national plans include public awareness programmes through the use of such tools as KAP surveys and media promotion. It is expected that any gaps existing between the NAP and existing National Sustainable Policies will therefore be resolved once the NAP is finalized.

Linkages achieved with subregional and regional action programmes (SRAPs and RAPs)

St. Vincent and the Grenadines has participated in the development of the Regional Action Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean, which covers the following:

- Identification and use of benchmarks and indicators of desertification and drought
- Information Network on Desertification and Drought (DESELAC)
- Integrated water resource management and water efficiency programs in LAC
- Promotion of agro-forestry and combating poverty
- Best practices, traditional knowledge and technologies
- Promotion of sustainable renewable energy

A number of regional projects in the pipeline that will contribute to assisting St. Vincent and the Grenadines in meeting its commitments under the UNCCD include:

- UNDP-GEF LDC/SIDS Targeted Portfolio Project for Capacity Building and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management (SLM). The project is expected to promote the mainstreaming of SLM in St. Vincent, through institutional, individual and systematic capacity building.
- UNEP Project “Preventing Land Degradation through Sustainable Land Management.” This activity is intended to be a demonstration project in response to the policy and institutional aspects of SLM being addressed in the aforementioned UNDP SIDS Project.
- Caribbean Youth Programme for Environmental Rehabilitation.

These initiatives overlap with the NAP’s objectives.

In addition, the NEMS itself is a national strategy for achieving sub-regional objectives as set out in the St. George’s Declaration for Sustainable Development. Other sub-regional initiatives include:

- Proposed OECS Framework legislation for Biodiversity, a sub-regional response to protecting biodiversity, a component of which will address habitat conservation, a land degradation issue.
- The FAO/CANARI project entitled ‘Participatory Forestry Management’ which addresses aspects of land degradation in managing forest resources. The project supports the improvement of the socio-economic and environmental benefits that can be derived from forest management by analysing, promoting and building capacity for participatory planning and management of forest resources at the regional, national and local levels. SVG is one of seven countries participating in the study.

Strengthening of relevant scientific networks at the national, subregional and regional levels is to be addressed in the NEMS under Principle 15: Promote Cooperation in Science and Technology.

Government response to NAP and institutional framework in support of the NAP

The Government has not officially adopted the NAP and no budget has been officially approved to finance the implementation of the NAP. The NAP process has been initiated and a first draft is in the process of being completed. A final draft to be circulated for review is expected in October 2006.

The NCB was dissolved, and the NEAB, formerly an advisory body, has assumed responsibility for co-ordinating activities to implement the UNCCD. To effectively perform this role, the NEAB is in the process of being restructured, and is therefore not a functioning entity at present. Reconstitution of the NEAB is being addressed under Principle 3: Improve on Legal and Institutional Frameworks of the NEMS.

As a result, the NCB has little to no autonomy with regards to resources, and no secretariat has been established. The MOHE continues to house the NFP for the UNCCD; consequently activities of the NFP are limited by the resources of this Ministry. The NCB lacks the resources to perform its co-ordinating and facilitating role effectively and must explore opportunities to access funding. The NCB does not have the resource capacity to develop the NAP, nor are the linkages necessary to address cross-sectoral issues in place at present.

The NCB is to be composed of various agencies representing national multi-sectoral interests. Opportunities for synergies will therefore exist among complementary programmes. This will serve to enhance the synergistic programming of Convention projects, including the UNCCD. However private sector initiatives involving drylands is not applicable to SVG.

In terms of cooperation and mode of operation of the NEAB, no review has been undertaken to ensure participation from other stakeholders. No evaluation has been made to adequately assess stakeholder participation, and no mechanism has been developed to address this issue at present.

The means of communication or networking among members of the NCB and the groups they represent, especially with regard to civil society organizations, will be determined once the NCB is restructured. Communication involves a combination of email, fax and telephone. This form of communication can be limited by inconsistent feedback, and training may be required to improve the communication process. However, the modality for nominating members to the NCB is transparent.

The NCB has limited capacity with regard to database management. The LDC-SIDS Targeted Portfolio project on Sustainable Land Management is expected to address this aspect of the management process with its component on LIS capabilities.

Institutional, regulatory and legislative framework for coherent and functional desertification control

No institutional framework has yet been developed for coordinating and harmonizing sustainable land management actions in SVG. As SVG concentrates mainly on land degradation, efforts will be focused under the UNCCD on developing capacities for sustainable land management. This will be addressed as part of the UNDP/GEF participatory project currently underway, but no formal capacity building for SLM has yet been undertaken.

The aforementioned UNDP/GEF SLM project shall review, restructure and strengthen the land lease systems, putting a strong emphasis on SLM. The NALIMP project is also expected to contribute to this exercise.

No national review has been undertaken of existing mechanisms for coordinating and harmonizing actions to combat land degradation at national and local levels. However, St Vincent is addressing its capacity to implement the core Conventions (UNCCD, UNCBD and UNFCCC) through the recently completed action plan for the NCSA project (funded by the GEF) as well as the OECS' Institutional Strengthening for Environmental Management Project.

The following is targeted for capacity building at the local and national levels under the NCSA initiative: the communication network comprising the public awareness arm of the relevant ministries, as well as the local NGOs. This will ensure a well-functioning information exchange between relevant stakeholders.

Capacity and institution building is also being addressed at the sectoral level eg. Soil Conservation Unit and initiatives of the Forestry Department. CDB projects currently under consideration also include institutional and infrastructural strengthening activities for SVG.

In terms of strengthening existing institutions at the local and national levels since the last report, progress has been minimal. There is no national policy designating a responsible agency to address issues of natural resource management in a holistic and coordinated manner, or an attendant mechanism to facilitate feedback from stakeholders. The NCSA Action Plan is expected to develop strategies to address these gaps.

With regard to the legislative framework, environmental legislation in SVG is piecemeal, sector-specific, and requires consolidation and review.

Enforcement is limited, as are punitive measures related to environmental offences. Specific institutional and human resources capacity needs in order to improve proper law enforcement include general awareness-raising in the form of workshops, and establishing clear procedures for addressing environmental infractions. The needs for awareness raising among the local population for an improved compliance to new legislation include NGO capacity to be strengthened to undertake public awareness activities. This will be addressed under the Small Grants Program in its NGO capacity building project.

Although not being implemented directly through the NAP, a number of projects and programmes have law enforcement as a component eg. UNDP funded LDC SIDS Targeted Portfolio Project on Sustainable Land Management, and UNEP's 'Preventing Land Degradation in Small Island Ecosystems through Sustainable Land Management' Project. Opportunities will be explored to incorporate components of these projects into the NAP framework where possible. The NAP will develop projects based on priority areas identified through a combination of participatory methodologies in the national review process

One such priority area is land tenure. In terms of land tenure, GOSGV's 2002-2004 medium term economic strategy proposed the introduction of an appropriate land management policy, and allocated funding to address land reform issues. Preliminary

work on GIS capabilities has since been completed. Additional funding has been committed through the NALIMP project to undertake a national land tenure review.

4 Participatory Process in Support of the Preparation and Implementation of the National Action Programme

Methods of participation of various actors

The participatory process is fairly effective with a bias on public sector involvement because most of the funding is provided by the National Treasury. Criteria for selecting various actors in national priority identification processes however are not formalized. Selection of participants has been based on stakeholder interest, available skills and competences and availability of persons. While no formal mechanism has been put in place to ensure continuous consultations, elements of outcomes are incorporated in sectoral work plans.

Thus far, the regional FAO/CANARI project 'Participatory Forestry Management' addresses aspects of land degradation in SVG and has undertaken stakeholder analysis in 2006 to identify user groups and explore methods to encourage their involvement in managing natural resources. Appropriate mechanisms are to be developed to refine the participatory process and this will be given special attention in the NAP.

In terms of disadvantaged groups, there are no specific gender biases in this country. Involvement is a factor of availability and expertise. Moreover, there is a larger percentage of professional females than males. Despite this reality, the NAP takes cognizance of gender issues. Regarding youth, a pilot project to address youth employment and land degradation will be implemented by the UNCCD, the draft proposal having been submitted in 2006.

Developing appropriate technologies with the assistance of the private sector, which aim at promoting sustainable land use practices in areas such as cash crop, livestock production, aquaculture, recreation, ecotourism, adherence to mining/extraction industries, has not yet been addressed in SVG, but is the subject of Principle 5 of the NEMS (Ensure meaningful participation by the private sector), which the NAP is expected to harmonize with once completed.

NGO capacity must be upgraded to assume a greater role in the participatory process through training in stakeholder analysis and field research. There is need for an information exchange mechanism among implementing partners. A network of NGOs will facilitate active involvement of national and local stakeholders with regard to the planning and implementation of NAP activities.

The national scientific community is mainly government based and is represented in all local and national forums.

Nature and scope of information, education, and communications

The traditional knowledge system has not been fully employed. However, traditional knowledge is accorded high priority and will have a place in the NAP framework.

Consideration is now being given to exploring this option and consultants are to be contracted to undertake the relevant surveys.

Linkages have been established to promote environmental education, through use of media by the Ministry of Education, and a UNV initiative based at the MOHE for Secondary school forms 1-3. The next step of this process will see implementation of a suitable programme to train teachers at Teachers' College to conduct environmental awareness classes. Additionally, the Integrated Forestry Management Programme has created an Environmental Education Committee. The 'Improve Skills and Capacity Amongst the Agricultural Labour Force Project' has committed funding for the Development of an Agricultural Institute, to begin construction shortly.

There is no formal mechanism to ensure that various categories of actors are involved in the process to provide information as well as to benefit from information networks. Consultations are held at the discretion of the focal point and data dissemination takes place through schools, line ministries and the media.

Participatory awareness campaigns have been undertaken to sensitize the public regarding growing threat to ecosystems and sustainable livelihoods under a scenario of increasingly extreme climatic events.

Extent of uptake

National consultations at the local level will be held to ensure the NAP process is participatory and concerns of the public are addressed. Follow-up activities to ensure continuous feedback from stakeholder will be addressed upon completion of the NAP.

Designating the representatives of various social and institutional categories, at both national and local levels, is by nomination. A representative from a respective Ministry is designated following a request from the NFP.

5 Consultation Process in Support for the Preparation and Implementation of the NAP and the Partnership Agreement with the Developed Country Parties and Other Interested Entities

Degree of participation from international partners

A core group of individuals from government and one NGO have had discussions regarding preparation and implementation of the NAP. Government relies on international donor funding for support of the consultation process. Limited funding has restricted the ability to conduct further consultations and GOSVG is currently exploring funding options given that consultations with communities and government/private sector are planned for September 2006.

Funding was available only for the first and second reports to the UNCCD. The Global Mechanism provided start-up funding for the NAP process.

Funding is available from the GEF to conduct consultations upon application by the GOSVG. The NAP was funded initially through the joint work programme of the UNCCD Secretariat and the GM. The GM sourced funding for supporting land degradation initiatives. As an organ of the UNCCD Secretariat, the GM is charged with sourcing funds to support UNCCD initiatives. GEF has recently become the funding partner of the UNCCD and it is unclear how the GM's role will alter (if at all) to accommodate this development. Understanding and accessing GEF funding is complex (incremental funding), and the application process is not user friendly. The UNCCD Secretariat has been a major partner in the implementation of the convention thus far.

St Vincent and the Grenadines also has a Standard Basic Agreement with the UNDP. The agency will provide funding from its core resources to the GOSVG to implement a number of activities, including the regional project for Caribbean SIDS on SLM (see Section 3).

There are no new measures at this time that involve international partners. Traditional and alternative sources of finance have not been explored due to limited technical capacity. However, steps have been taken to move from the conclusion of partnership agreements to actual implementation.

No country has become *chef de file* of the consultative process, and there is no calendar of activities in place to ensure continuous process monitoring. The national need for international support far outweighs assistance provided.

Establishment of an informal consultation and harmonization process for actions between partner countries

The consultative mechanism is currently informal. Meetings are held on an infrequent basis. The communication and exchange of information has been established between the national GEF focal point, the implementing agencies of the GEF, and the NFP.

UNCCD and GM have been identified as sources for providing funding and technical resources for consultations. It is recommended that an e-group be established to facilitate the exchange of information between GEF and the NFP. A fixed internet line must be available to all participants to execute this arrangement effectively.

Presently, the distribution of roles and tasks among the various partners are not well defined, but they are expected to be clarified during the implementation of the NAP and SLM project.

In terms of donor support, accessing funds from the GEF is difficult. The GEF process is protracted, complicated, and provides less than adequate funding for implementation of Convention activities. GEF has only recently become a funding partner for UNCCD and its resource allocation framework, to provide funding on a country by country basis, is to be evaluated when implemented.

GEF provides funds at national level to conduct workshops explaining the GEF process and to increase awareness of the work of GEF. This will be explored.

6 Measures Taken or Planned within the Framework of National Action Programmes

Adequate diagnosis of past experiences in managing natural resources

Diagnosis of past experiences will be undertaken as part of the NAP formulation process. Review meetings and consultations will provide the opportunity to re-evaluate past experiences in natural resource management and incorporate lessons learnt into the NAP.

National data collection capabilities have been observed as limited. No soil nutrient data is available. Current data sources include the Agricultural census, conducted every 4 years; and the Forest Assessment, which provides information on forest loss and crude assessment of biomass. The LDC and LIS projects will improve data collection capabilities and develop human capacity in terms of specialist skills. The MACC sub-regional initiative will develop a center for research capable of developing indicators. However, the current paucity of data will result in an incomplete country profile.

Established Technical programmes and functional integrated projects to combat desertification

The informal exchange of information that occurs at the national level ensures relevant elements of projects are integrated and incorporated into the NAP. Several projects identified in Section 4 of this document will have linkages to the NAP.

Indirectly, the SPACC project addresses land degradation issues in the Grenadine islands of Bequia and Union through ecosystem management. The OPAAL project, initiated in 2004-2005, is designed to support livelihoods and reduce poverty in the Grenadines through protected areas management.

Specific Projects to be implemented through the NAP include:

- National Integrated Forestry Management Programme. (IFMP)
- LDC SIDS Targeted Portfolio Project on Sustainable Land Management.
- Preventing Land Degradation in Small Island Ecosystems through Sustainable Land Management Project.
- Integrated Watershed and Coastal Area Management Project. (IWCAM)
- Watershed Management Plan for the Colonarie Watershed.
- Development of Sustainable Watershed Management Plan for the Yambou Watershed.

The GOSGV established the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDEC) in 2001 with responsibility for the development of the national poverty reduction strategy. The IPRSP was completed and finalized in June 2003. The IPRSP is a blueprint for developing policies and programmes to address poverty reduction in the medium term. In 2003, the NESDEC act was passed, legally institutionalizing the body (which comprises representatives from Government, civil

society and the community) to address social and economic issues. In addition, several national development plans and strategies identify specific activities to address local ecological and socio-economic conditions and to improve the economic environment with a view to eradicating poverty-see also Section 3 of this document. Management indicators to ensure these projects address land degradation will be addressed during the preparation of the NAP.

Planned measures that have implications for land degradation include:

- SPACC
- MACC
- VCA Methodologies
- SNC to UNFCCC

Institutional capacity building is identified as a priority area under the NAP. Within the NAP process, integration of SLM into the national physical development plan, strengthening human resource capacities of relevant departments, and improved mechanisms for communicating environmental information to all stakeholders are the main features for capacity building at the institutional, participatory and consultative levels.

Specific actions to strengthen institutional capacity include the LIS project for technical and scientific capacity building; regional project activities of IWCAM including the review and development of policy and legislation, training and environmental monitoring; and capacity building for CBOs under the Small Grants Programme.

Effectiveness of measures in local capacity building

Institutional strengthening for CBOs in particular is needed to ensure implementation of the Convention, particularly at the local level. The NAP relies on the strategic framework outlined by the GEF/SGP to provide financial and technical assistance to CBOs in order to address global environmental problems at community level.

7 Financial Allocations from National Budget in Support of Implementation as well as Financial Assistance and Technical Cooperation

The Government proposes to finance implementation of the NAP through funding mobilized from International and National sources, with at least 50% being sought from International support in the form of grants and soft loans to co-finance relevant projects. The main partners targeted include agencies of the UN system. Multi-lateral cooperation will be achieved in collaboration with other CARICOM countries and a Round Table of donors interested in supporting St Vincent will be organized.

No plans are in place for a National Desertification Fund. At the National level, Government funding for the Environmental Services Unit (office of the NFP) forms part of the budgetary allocation to the MOHE. More than 75% of budgetary allocations cover staff salaries, leaving minimal funding for project design and implementation. Allocation would change depending on the resources available and the needs of the NAP process at any given time.

However, the GOSVG does support land degradation in the form of soil conservation research and management activities through the Soil Conservation Unit, as well as reforestation efforts through the Forestry Department.

To raise additional funding for the implementation of major projects dealing with land degradation and drought, the government will consider the introduction of an environmental tax. Complementary funds for NGO involvement in project implementation are being actively pursued from private sector and NGO sources.

8 Review of Benchmarks and Indicators Utilised to Measure Progress and Assessment

Developing environmental monitoring and observation capabilities at the national level is critical for proper implementation of the UNCCD and therefore continues to be a priority for SVG. SVG currently lacks any systematic benchmarks or indicators for assessing the implementation of the UNCCD or the extent of land degradation. The country is engaged in numerous capacity-building projects that assist in strengthening regional and national efforts in developing indicators of sustainable development (see Section 6).

SVG attended the UNCCD Workshop on the Development of Benchmarks and Indicators on Land Degradation and Drought in the Caribbean, February 24-27, 2003, in St. Lucia. The outcome of this forum saw the creation of a working group to develop indicators for the sub-region. The country is also participating in the five-year MACC Project, which will develop a Caribbean Climate Change Center (CCCC). The centre should possess the capacity for developing and testing key climatic indicators for the region, taking into consideration impacts on the tourism, agriculture, fisheries and infrastructure sectors.

St. Vincent & the Grenadines will also benefit from regional project activities under the IWCAM project, including environmental monitoring and the NALIMP project to upgrade LIS capabilities.

The benchmarks of the NAP are to be developed for each priority area when detailed projects and sub-programmes are developed, with specific objectives, activities, target outputs, results and timeframes. Monitoring of each programme area should be conducted by the implementing agency.

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12. FAO/CANARI ‘Participatory Forestry Management’ Concept Note, (2004)
13. OECS Protected Areas and Associated Livelihoods Project Document Latin America and Caribbean Region, (2004)
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**ANNEX A: UNCCD Country Profile
St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

This UNCCD country profile has been provided by: **MOHE**

Name of focal point institution/ministry/office: **MOHE**

Date: **19/06/06**

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Ministerial Building
Kingstown
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Telephone: **784-485-6992**

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E-mail: svgenv@vincysurf.com

Biophysical indicators relating to desertification and drought

1. Climate -

1.1 Index of aridity: *Not computed*

1.2 Normal rainfall: 250 mm (average monthly)

1.3 Rainfall standard deviation:

Sub-national Areas (annual)	mm
1 South coast	3800
2 Interior	6000
3 Grenadines	1250

2. Vegetation and land use - *Not available*

2.1 NDVI (normalized difference vegetation index): *not available*

2.2 Vegetation cover (%) of total land area): 35 %

2.3 Land use (percent of total land): 84.6 %

Land use	1990 - 1999	2000- 2005
Arable land		17.95%
Irrigated land		10 sq km

2.4 Surface albedo: *not available*

3. Water Resources - *Aggregated data for this resource is not currently available. The Central Water and Sewerage Authority and the Ministry of Agriculture have some activity and project specific data but no collation of these data has been done.*

- 3.1 Fresh water availability (million m³):
- 3.2 Fresh water resources per capita (million m³):
- 3.3 Agricultural water use (million m³) _____
- 3.4 Industrial water use (million m³) _____

4. Energy

Consumption – *Only data fro electrical energy production and use is available. Data for gas, oils and bio-fuel shave not been computed. There are plans to have these computed under the Second National Communication for the Convention on Climate Change.*

- 4.1 Energy use per capita (kg oil equivalent):
- 4.2 Agricultural energy use per hectare (millions of BTU):

Production - *Not available*

- 4.3 Energy from renewable excluding combustibile renewables and waste (% of total supply):

Renewables–Consumption by sector – *Not available*

- 4.4 Industry (% of total renewable consumption):
- 4.5 Residential (% of total renewable consumption):
- 4.6 Agriculture (% of total renewable consumption):

5. Types of Land Degradation - *The various categories of Land Degradation has been determined but no quantification per category has been done.*

Type of degradation	1990-1999		2000-2003	
	Million ha	Percent of total area	Million ha	Percent of Total area
Overgrazing				
Deforestation				
Soil Erosion/degradation				
Bush encroachment				
Desertification				
Partially Degraded Areas				

6. Rehabilitation - *Not available*

Lands under rehabilitation	1990 - 1999	2000 - 2005
Rehabilitation of degraded cropland (km ²)		
Rehabilitation of degraded range land (km ²)		
Rehabilitation of degraded forest		

Socio-economic indicators related to desertification and drought

7. People and economy

7.1 Population (Total): **106,253 (2001)**

- Population: Urban (percent of total): **43.7**
- Population: Rural (percent of total): **56.3**

7.2 Population growth (annual %): **0.8**

7.3 Life expectancy (years): **69 (males), 72 (females)**

7.4 Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births): **19.2**

7.5 GDP (current US\$): **409 million**

7.6 GNI per capita (current US\$): **3,845.78**

7.7 National poverty rate (% of population): **37.5**

7.8 Crop production (metric tons): **N/A**

7.9 Livestock production (metric tons): **N/A**

8. Human development

8.1 Primary education completion rate (%age group): **92.9**

8.2 Number of women in rural development (total number):

8.3 Unemployment (% of total): **20 %**

8.4 Youth unemployment rate (age 15-24): **25 %**

8.5 Illiteracy total (% age 15 and above): **11.9%**

8.6 Illiteracy male (% age 15 and above):

8.7 Illiteracy female (% age 15 and above):

9. Science and technology

9.1 Number of scientific institutions engaged in desertification-related work (total number): *Not available*

ANNEX B: List of Individual Stakeholders Consulted

Edmund Jackson, National Focal Point - MOHE

Neri James, Senior Health Officer - MOHE

Lystra Culzac Wilson - MOHE

Rowena Kirby-Straker - Fisheries Division, MOHE

Morrison Baisden - Consultant

Clive Bishop - Consultant

Nigel Weekes, Director - Parks, Beaches and Rivers Authority

Colville Alexander - National Emergency Management Organization

Fitzgerald Providence - Integrated Forestry Management and Development Programme

Anthony Bowman - Physical Planning Unit