

THE COUNTRY REPORT OF TURKEY

On the Implementation of the

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION

TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

in those countries experiencing serious drought and /or

desertification, particularly in Africa

**PREPARED FOR THE THIRD SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE
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COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (CRIC 3)**

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SUMMARY

Turkey is one of the 191 countries that became a party to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) which was signed by the Minister of Environment on behalf of Turkish Government in 1994 in Paris. The Convention was approved and ratified by the Turkish Parliament in 1996 and 1998 respectively with the Law 4340. The Turkey's perspective for accession to the Convention is not only to promote the implementation of measures needed but also to express the solidarity with other affected countries, in particular developing country parties and to cooperate with all stakeholders in the global environmental issues.

Turkey was an affected developing party when it becomes a party to the Convention. Taking into account the recent development performance accomplished by the country as a whole, Turkey is now taking part as a developed affected country in Convention related activities. It belongs particularly to the regional group of Annex IV of the Convention which constitutes those countries of the Regional Implementation Annex for Northern Mediterranean. Turkey has regularly participated to the activities of the Regional and Sub-regional Action Programs (RAP and SRAP) of Annex IV since 1998.

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Turkey is responsible for the coordination of the implementation of the Convention at national level. By doing this, the Ministry closely cooperates with other relevant national institutions and stakeholders. The Ministry also pays particular attention on strengthening regional and international co-operation.

The National Coordinating Body (NCB) was established for evaluation and reviewing the achievements made and difficulties faced in the implementation of the Convention at national level. It composed of technical and administrative staff of key institutions that are the key actors involved in combating drought and desertification. A subject- specific Division at the Ministry of Environment and Forestry serves as secretariat of the NCB. The NCB meets regularly and serves as consultant body for all national activities and the related institutions over the country. The National Action Program (NAP) as a prerequisite responsibility of the country parties, was finalized in the mid of 2004 as a result of several meetings and consultations during a 3 years period. It has been completed through the consensus with representatives of several Ministries, (Environment, Forestry, Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Energy and Natural Resources, Foreign Affairs etc.). Several NGOs representatives were also the members of the NCB. The draft text of the NAP was endorsed by the Minister of Environment and Forestry and then sent to the Parliament for approval.

In order to effectively coordinate the Convention related issues, a specific Division of Combating Desertification was established in the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and was assigned as the secretariat and coordinator of the NCB's activities in close contract with the National Focal Point.

Since the NAP is the key operational tool for transforming the provisions of the Convention into concrete actions and measures, it is realized that the NAP should address and identify the existing conditions in the country and then gather all relevant information with active participation and contributions of all stakeholders in all stages.

COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES AMONG COUNTRIES AND TURKEY'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT

Turkey, with all related organs, supports and willing to actively join to the related international and regional cooperation in implementation of the Convention as it is mandated in the Convention particularly through Articles 12, 13, 14 and so on. In addition to the current national development plans Turkey has increasingly been involved in the international and regional cooperation processes as a part of national policy in order to regularly follow up the international agenda. In this regard, Turkey has given particular attention to the commitments and provisions made not only by UNCCD but also by the Agenda 21 of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) as well as the Poverty Reduction Strategies etc. which are directly or indirectly linked with desertification and drought.

Due to the general economic circumstances of the country and the limited resources allocated, Turkey's aid programs for affected countries particularly in Africa are inefficient at present. Turkey therefore provides financial assistance mostly through diplomatic missions. However, recent growing trends, optimistic progresses achieved and up-to-date economic projections have shown that Turkey's aid and support programs are likely to increasingly grow in the next years.

The aid programs and collaborative works of Turkey focus mostly on the countries in the Middle East, Central and the West Asia, due to the geographical closeness, historical linkages and traditional co-operation between Turkey and these countries. Although it is still limited, Turkey has supported several initiatives and provided development assistance for information sharing and exchange of experiences, transfer of technology, education and training of staff, technical visits as well as machinery and equipment aids. Such activities including improvement of land use management practices, rehabilitation of degraded lands and reforestation are taken into account in providing supports.

The figure below shows some examples of desertification related assistance including equipment, technical expertise, land management, staff training etc. provided by Turkey to the affected countries.

Figure: Turkey's supports to the countries seriously affected by desertification and drought.

Country	Project/program title	Implementing Agency	Timeframe	Budget (USD)	Scope of Project
Uzbekistan	Afforestation around Aral Lake	Ministry of Environment and Forestry	2004	22.000	Donation of afforestation equipment including 2 tractors
Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan	Forestry measures to be taken to reverse negative impacts on Aral Lake	General Directorate of Forestry	2003	2.500	Technical assistance through expertise and land surveys
Algeria , Nigeria	Aid to the International cooperation for Combating to African Locust invasion	Turkish Air forces	2004	60.000	Pesticide transportation by an Aircraft (C-130)
International Agricultural Research Center on Dry land (ICARDA)	Turkey's membership to CGIAR	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs	204-2005	-	Expertise assistance
NEMEDCA-Drought Net of ICARDA	Partnership	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs	-	-	Multilateral cooperation on the field of drought and desertification
Turkmenistan	Establishment of "Turkish-Turkmenistan Friendship Forest"	Ministry of Environment and Forestry	2004	201.500	Forest plantation, project design, nursery practices, technical expertise
Countries in Central and West Asia, Balkan and Eastern Europe	Combating Desertification in Eurasia countries	Turkish Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA)	1996	48.323	International Symposium on Combating Desertification in the Eurasia countries
Afghanistan	Organization of a subject-specific seminar for the experts from Afghanistan in Turkey	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (DG of Rural Affairs)	2004	53,333	Technical training seminar for the experts on irrigation, rural development, soil protection, Remote sensing, GIS, watershed management etc.
Sudan, Ethiopia, Cameroon	Technical workshop for the experts from that countries	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (DG of Rural Affairs)	2004	500	Technical training of the experts on protection of soil and water resources, rural infrastructure etc.