

**Report by the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

**on measures taken to support the implementation
of the United Nations Convention to Combat
Desertification with a particular focus on affected
developing country parties in Africa**

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Contents

- Contents 3
- 1 Summary 4
- 2 Introduction 5
 - 2.1 The UK, sustainable development and poverty elimination 6
- 3 The UK approach to combating land degradation 7
 - 3.1 Guiding principles for DFID activities in support of the UNCCD 8
 - 3.1.1 Mainstreaming 8
 - 3.1.2 Addressing the causes of desertification 8
 - 3.1.3 Sustainable land management must pay 9
 - 3.1.4 The importance of assets 9
 - 3.1.5 The importance of local support services 9
 - 3.1.6 The importance of credit 10
 - 3.1.7 The importance of markets 10
 - 3.1.8 Addressing risk and vulnerability 10
 - 3.2 Examples of DFID’s activities in support of the UNCCD 10
 - 3.2.1 Safety nets 11
 - 3.2.2 Risk management and livelihood diversification 11
 - 3.2.3 Voice, empowerment and local capacity building 11
 - 3.2.4 Agriculture 12
 - 3.2.5 Land tenure/administration 13
 - 3.2.7 Water resources and drought preparedness 13
- 4 The UNCCD, the next 10 years 13
 - 4.1 Integration and mainstreaming 14
 - 4.2 Highlight externalities 14
 - 4.3 Increased concentration on the causes of desertification 15
 - 4.4 Challenge and standards function 16
 - 4.5 Monitoring and assessment 17
- 5 UK activities in support of the convention in Africa 18
 - 5.1 General Africa policy 18
 - 5.2 Commission for Africa 18
 - 5.3 NAPs/projects 18
 - 5.3.1 Multilateral commitments 18
 - 5.3.2 Bilateral commitments 20
 - 5.3.3 Global commitments 22
 - 5.3.4 Research 24
- Annex 1 Abbreviations and acronyms 26
- Annex 2 Acknowledgement 28

1 Summary

This is the fourth formal report to be presented by the United Kingdom (UK) on measures taken to support the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), in accordance with Article 26 of the Convention. Previous reports have covered measures taken to support the Convention in affected country Parties in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe. This report focuses on Africa and covers measures taken since the third report of July 2002 in affected developing country Parties subject to desertification. The UK also takes the opportunity to illustrate the approach it believes is necessary for successful implementation of the UNCCD objectives in the years ahead.

The Department for International Development (DFID) is the UK government department responsible for development and the elimination of poverty through the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and is the UK lead department for the UNCCD. In the context of combating desertification, two linked MDGs are being supported: Goal 1 aims to eradicate extreme poverty and Goal 7 to ensure environmental sustainability. DFID contributes directly and indirectly to the general obligation of the UNCCD to "integrate strategies for poverty eradication into efforts to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought" through bilateral and multilateral aid programmes.

Poverty reduction in Africa is a primary goal and by 2005/06, the UK will have increased its annual bilateral assistance budget for sub-Saharan Africa to £1.067 billion and its contributions to multi-lateral aid to £1.218 billion. Further, the UK Prime Minister launched the Commission for Africa in February 2004 to take a fresh look at Africa's current situation and make proposals for global action. The Commission will review management of the environment and natural resource base, including developing a sustainable future for agriculture as part of its work. The UK has identified addressing the development challenge in Africa as one of its priorities for the UK Presidencies of the Group of Eight (G8) and European Union (EU) in 2005.

In its support to sustainable development and the eradication of world poverty, the UK aims to achieve its goals through its commitments to development partners. DFID works with governments, civil society, businesses, academic and research communities, and multilateral institutions. DFID now uses Poverty Reduction Budget Support (PRBS, formerly known as Direct Budget Support) explicitly to link the provision of financial assistance to partner government's commitments to poverty reduction. For Africa specifically, the UK Government supports the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a basis for a new relationship for development based on mutual accountability between African governments and development partners.

The UK believes that it is through poverty reduction that the objectives of the UNCCD can be best achieved. The UK firmly believes that the means of addressing issues surrounding desertification and land degradation are best assimilated within the broader contexts of development plans and policies of affected country Parties, whose overall objectives are the eradication of poverty and sustainable development. Combating desertification is

challenging and requires an interdisciplinary and crosscutting approach that is long-term and sustained.

The UK reiterates its support for the implementation of the Convention's objectives. Assisting with the development and implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) in affected country Parties is the primary way the UK creates direct synergies with the objectives of the Convention and the measures required to combat desertification.

The UK believes there are a number of principles key for success in combating desertification. In addition to adopting an integrated, mainstreamed approach it is important to understand and address the underlying causes of land degradation in addition to giving conventional support with technology development and promotion. In Africa this requires an approach that considers amongst other things, the impacts of restricted access to resources, inadequate rural services on the ability of rural people to address land degradation and, in some cases, conflicts.

The UK Government is committed to meeting the UN target of spending 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) on official development assistance (ODA). Total UK official development assistance will rise to almost £6.5 billion by 2007/08. The UK is working with governments and other donors to pursue measures to improve the effectiveness of its aid, including the assistance given through UN agencies and other multilateral donors.

DFID is closely involved in the regular programmes of multilateral organisations supported by the UK whose activities relate to the objectives of the Convention. Of particular note in the current reporting period is the UK contribution to the Third Replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Of the £2.2 billion new funding agreed in August 2002, the UK share over four years is £102 million with an additional voluntary contribution of £15 million. The UK continues its commitment to other land and water related initiatives such as the international Global Water Partnership.

The UK is actively engaged through its bilateral and multilateral support programmes, in combating desertification and land degradation, in partnership with a large number of affected country Parties in each region and with other donors.

2 Introduction

This fourth report by the United Kingdom (UK) on measures taken to support the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) sets out the policy context within which the UK provides its development assistance to combating desertification, and outlines some of the activities currently undertaken in support of the UNCCD with a particular focus on Africa. The report also takes the opportunity of the 10th anniversary of the UNCCD to examine the evolving role of the Convention and strategic directions which the UK believes will form an important part of the future of the UNCCD.

2.1 The UK, sustainable development and poverty elimination

The Department for International Development (DFID) is the UK government department responsible for development and the reduction of poverty, and is the lead department in the UK for the UNCCD. The UK has continued to strengthen its development aid during the period under report, through increased budgetary provision and support for international initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals.

The UK's development efforts are primarily concerned with improving the lives of the poor. With limited rights of access to land and other resources, poor people often find themselves managing the most fragile environments, including those most at risk of land degradation¹. Attempts to mitigate land degradation or reclaim degraded lands typically involve a level of resource commitment or access rights that are unrealistic for poor people. Thus, not only are disproportionately large numbers of poor people responsible for managing fragile environments but they are also least well equipped to develop and adopt sustainable management practices.

The UK Government welcomes the increasing emphasis on the link between poverty and land degradation (see Box 1), including recognition at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development of the need to implement integrated land management as vital for the reduction of poverty. This emphasis on integrated approaches to tackle poverty, sustainable development and environment imbues the current approach by the UK to its obligations under the UNCCD, and should form the basis for an evolving partnership between Convention parties in new initiatives to tackle desertification and land degradation.

¹ The 2003 Human Development Report highlighted that one third of the world's hungry people live on marginal lands where environmental degradation threatens agricultural production.

Box 1: Multilateral institutional statements related to measures to combat desertification to which the UK subscribes

- [we need to] “address the causes of desertification ...in order to restore land and to address poverty resulting from land degradation.” World Summit on Sustainable Development, September 2002
- “there can be no sustainable development without peace, without security and without stability” Launch of the African Union, 9 July 2002, by Chairperson, President Thabo Mbeki.
- “poor people care a lot about their environment” UNDP *Human Development Report 2003*.
- “addressing land degradation [will].... contribute significantly to the Millennium Development Goals of reducing by half the proportion of people in poverty by 2015 and ensuring environmental sustainability.” Operational Program 15, Global Environment Facility, December 2003.
- “land degradation is equally cause and effect of poverty and it bears long-term environmental externalities..... to which people in marginal lands are especially vulnerable” Klaus Topfer, Executive Director UNEP, 2004 [in Foreword to UNEP Policy Series No.4].
- “Desertification contributes to food insecurity, famine and poverty, and can give rise to social, economic and political tensions that can cause conflicts, further poverty and land degradation.” Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General, 17 June 2004.
- “Poverty and desertification are closely linked. Two-thirds of the world’s hungry people live in rural areas of developing countries.” UNCCD, 1 June 2004.

3 The UK approach to combating land degradation

The UK supports a wide range of activities that address the causes of desertification and the objectives of the UNCCD, by mainstreaming them into broader poverty reduction work. As is well known, there are many factors that contribute to desertification and there is no need to repeat lists and explanations here. We focus, in this report, on the work that DFID is undertaking to tackle the causes of desertification. This work is informed by a number of

key guiding principles outlined below that correspond, in part, to the thematic and sectoral areas identified in COPs 1, 4 and 6.

3.1 Guiding principles for DFID activities in support of the UNCCD

3.1.1 Mainstreaming

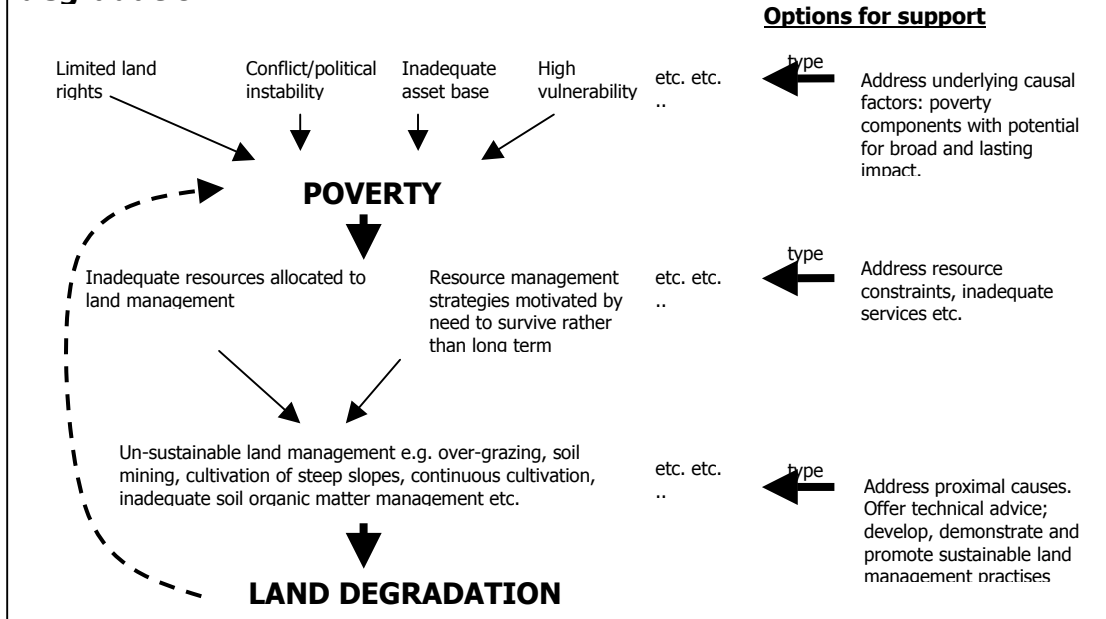
The UK is part of the international commitment to half global poverty by 2015 as set out in the Millennium Development Goals. In all UNCCD activities supported by the UK close regard is paid to the need to integrate the objectives of the Convention with other related objectives of development. The UK firmly believes that the means of addressing issues surrounding desertification and land degradation are best assimilated within the broader contexts of development plans and policies of affected country Parties, whose overall objectives are the eradication of poverty and sustainable development. Integration is also required at the disciplinary as the causes and solutions cut across traditional subject boundaries, requiring sustained interdisciplinary efforts for long term success.

3.1.2 Addressing the causes of desertification

Whilst UNCCD efforts to date have been informed by an appreciation of the links between land degradation and poverty, DFID believes it is important to acknowledge more clearly that poverty is often a cause as well as a consequence of land degradation and there are a number of levels at which interventions can address the issue. Box 2 illustrates schematically that, whilst the development and promotion of technical conservation and remedial measures have a place (type 3 measures in Box 2), more effort is required to address the underlying factors contributing to desertification, in order to achieve broader and longer-lasting impacts.

There is increasing evidence that much of the failure of past efforts to tackle land degradation can be attributed to a misplaced emphasis on the most visible causes of the problem, i.e. poor management, lack of technically effective remedial measures etc. rather than the underlying factors such as poverty and associated constraints that are often the root causes of resource degradation by poor people in marginal areas.

Box 2. Addressing the underlying causes of land degradation



3.1.3 Sustainable land management must pay

If resource managers are to choose sustainable management options these practices must be within their reach and also deliver returns that compare favourably with those that have less desirable impacts on the resource. This is a fundamental principle, often overlooked in the past that should inform the development and promotion of resource management options.

3.1.4 The importance of assets

The asset profile of the land-user is known to influence strongly the ability of poor people, who lack assets, to engage with land management. Aside from finance, labour supply, land constraints and knowledge most often limit the ability of poor land managers to practice sustainable land management and remediation. Those practices recommended to farmers in the past have not always recognized the importance of land-user constraints and consequently, uptake rates, particularly by the rural poor, have generally been very low. Assets can help reduce vulnerability by carrying people through times of adversity (see 3.1.8 below). Recognizing the important role assets play, DFID has been supporting a regional project in southern Africa to improve access to natural capital for the rural poor and a number of other bilateral initiatives focussing on improving the ability of poor people to access and accumulate assets.

3.1.5 The importance of local support services

Interventions to tackle poverty and land degradation must strengthen local support services to ensure sustainable support. The UK places great importance on quality and capacity building in local public services (education, health, natural resource management etc.) and seeks to ensure that coverage, relevance and equitable access to these are all improved in rural areas. In Africa there is a particular challenge to ensure that poor people have timely

access to appropriate land management technology advice and assistance when they require it. The UK has supported related land policy initiatives in a series of African countries.

3.1.6 The importance of credit

Access to credit can make the difference to those whose asset platforms are inadequate to contemplate even small investments in improved land management or remediation. Problems of high administration costs and default rates, particularly with rural farmers, have made the private sector extremely wary of providing credit to the rural poor. The UK believes it is critical to explore and develop models for increasing the access of poor smallholders in rural areas have to credit. Until this happens there is the risk that many of the most promising options for improved land management will remain closed off to the majority of the rural poor in Africa. In Mozambique, improved access to credit is one component of a DFID-funded project aimed at strengthening the capacity of NGOs, CBOs and producer groups to contribute towards sustainable livelihoods.

3.1.7 The importance of markets

Understanding has increased over the last ten years of the role market access has in increasing the options rural people have for adopting more sustainable environmental management. Not only does the capital generated from successful cash-cropping increase the ability of farmers to fund improved land management but reliable and accessible markets increase the incentives for managing the land such that it yields sustainably in the medium and longer term. Currently the UK supports a number of initiatives in Africa aimed at improving market access and the ability, particularly of smallholders, to monitor and respond to market changes. For example help is being given to Kenyan smallholders with certifying and marketing their produce and in Nigeria DFID is currently promoting pro-poor opportunities through facilitating the development of commodity and service markets. The UK believes that improvements in the access of poor people to markets on reasonable terms should be recognised as an important element of future efforts to implement the UNCCD in Africa. The UK regards this as important if the incentives for poor people to conserve the productive capacity of the land are to be fully realised.

3.1.8 Addressing risk and vulnerability

Vulnerability can be defined as a high degree of exposure and sensitivity to risk, shocks, adverse trends and stress and a susceptibility to food insecurity. The livelihoods of many rural households suffer from multiple risks generated by the uncertainties of climate, health, market fluctuations etc. Consequently, such households are often unwilling to make changes in their resource management as a feature of any change is that it brings with it additional risk that adds to what is often already an unbearable burden.

3.2 Examples of DFID's activities in support of the UNCCD

The UK believes there are a number of ways in which the objectives of the UNCCD can be addressed by reducing the vulnerability and increasing the opportunities for the rural poor. A number of key areas are discussed in this section.

3.2.1 Safety nets

Some of the worst examples of land degradation have occurred in areas where communities have been pushed into a situation of extreme poverty and food insecurity. This situation may be chronic due to remote location and/or poverty of natural resources or caused by shocks, either natural such as drought or anthropogenic such as those associated with conflict. Since the early 1990s the UK has committed to the establishment of safety nets aimed at those unable to secure a minimally acceptable standard of living due to the circumstances they confront. In Zambia DFID has supported community recovery through food for work programmes and in Zimbabwe emergency agricultural support to vulnerable households has been funded in 2003 and 2004. The UK believes that through helping with the basics of household food security, safety nets not only allow the rural poor to consider more sustainable land management options but could help prevent some of the worst cases of future land degradation in Africa.

3.2.2 Risk management and livelihood diversification

Poor people are generally the least able to absorb and recover from livelihood shocks and they generally seek to avoid and spread their risks as far as they can. In a number of initiatives in Africa the UK is helping with risk management in the belief that, when their overall risk burden is decreased, land users will be better able to engage with more sustainable forms of resource management. It has become apparent that diversification on and off farm is a key risk management strategy followed by rural Africans that allows risks to be mitigated and smoothed across seasons and years. The UK believes that opening up new opportunities for diversification and removing (often institutional) blockages impeding the access of poor people to traditional diversification options can yield considerable dividends. At a regional level in Africa the UK is supporting the creation of sustainable smallholder farm businesses and is also helping with the development and implementation of policy for supporting diverse rural livelihoods. There are also a number of country specific initiatives supporting rural livelihood diversification as a means of enabling more sustainable resource management e.g. the Wildlife Intensification for Livelihood Diversification project in Namibia.

3.2.3 Voice, empowerment and local capacity building

Poor people need greater representation when it comes to decision-making and policy formulation. The UK is committed to supporting the empowerment of local communities over their natural resources and improving the capacity of local government to manage communal resources fairly and effectively. (e.g. box 3). The UK is supporting a number of regional and country projects in Africa working to build social capital, local level institutional capacity and the representation and accountability of local organizations to the rural poor. Included in this is the Nile Basin Shared Vision and Action programme in north Africa. In the Gambia support is being given to Community Based Organisations to help with capacity building. In Kenya, Lesotho, Mozambique, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Nigeria a variety of initiatives are supporting local governance and rights issues, participation and capacity building in rural areas.

3.2.4 Agriculture

The UK is committed to supporting agriculture as a means of reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. DFID is coming to the end of full review of its approach for which new guidelines will be produced by the end of 2004. As with land degradation, the UK places an increased emphasis on integrated cross-sectoral approaches in its future agricultural support. Our understanding of the role of agriculture in rural growth and poverty elimination has evolved over the last two decades and it has become clear that rural people are engaged in a diverse range of activities. Many of these are farming-related but it is typical for there also to be a significant non-farm contribution to the range of household activities in rural areas. Whilst direct support to the agricultural sector will continue, DFID believes there is much to be gained from a broader approach to agriculture support exploiting the synergies between the on-farm and off-farm components of rural livelihoods.

Box 3: Building Social Capital – example of DFID-funded research in Uganda

Farmers in Uganda's highlands face many land degradation problems, such as soil erosion and loss of soil fertility. There is no shortage of technical solutions. Local communities struggle with local government structures, byelaws and policies that do not favour the introduction of new and beneficial ideas that would control the degradation.

- Despite advice of the extension service, a Ugandan smallholder farmer wasn't using check ditches or grass strips to control land degradation in his banana field – **Why?**
- He had tried but water coming onto his land from upslope was too great and the ditches and strips were washed away – **Why?**
- Because steep upslope land in notionally "protected" forest areas had been recently opened up for cultivation – **How?**
- Because some farmers were able to open fields with impunity in these areas – **How?**
- Because these families were influential within the village and able to flout poorly enforced bylaws without penalty.

DFID-funded research under the Natural Resources Systems Programme in Uganda seeks to strengthen community social capital to enhance their ability to formulate and then enforce community bylaws concerned with watershed protection, controlling grazing and other factors contributing to land degradation.

Source: *DFID-NRSP 2002-2003 Research Highlights*, 'Building social capital', Project R7856, led by the African Highlands Eco-regional Programme, Kampala

Improving the ability of poor farmers to engage effectively with markets has been highlighted above as a crucial component of DFID's support to the sector. The UK firmly believes that the best way of incentivising sustainable land management is through cross-sectoral approaches such as these that improve the productivity and reliability of farming as a livelihood activity for the rural poor. DFID funds a number of initiatives in Africa directly

supporting the agricultural sector, for example a regional project improving capacity in the areas of community animal health and participatory epidemiology. In Ethiopia an initiative supporting the development of policy relating to pastoralists in the horn of Africa is being supported and in Kenya, Mozambique and Zambia a variety of farming systems and integrated agricultural development projects are being supported.

3.2.5 Land tenure/administration

Effective land policies are key factors in the fight against desertification. Secure land rights provide the basis for investment in better livelihoods. More equitable land tenure systems and transparent land administration can enable broad-based economic growth as a result of greater agricultural productivity. Improved land governance and administration leads to improved access for poor people and is capable of taking account of the complexity of land rights on the ground. DFID recognises that land policy reform is a long-term process and encourages the integration of land policy reform into poverty reduction strategies as a key element in the combating desertification. Kenya, Uganda and S. Africa are three of the countries in Africa currently receiving support from DFID for their land reform processes.

3.2.7 Water resources and drought preparedness

The UK is taking forward its commitments in water and their contribution to the Millennium Development Goals as outlined in DFID's recently published Water Action Plan¹. Water resources are under stress and management of these resources is a key to environmental sustainability. Irrigated agriculture comprises over 70% of overall water use and there are naturally competing demands for safe drinking water and sanitation. There have already been successes in building effective systems for managing and maintaining well-designed water infrastructures. Nevertheless there is a need for commitment from developing country governments to give water the appropriate priority and allocate long-term funding to sustain better water management. Effective and appropriate irrigation of agriculture is a key element in preventing land degradation and the UK will ensure that water issues figure prominently in policy discussions with our main partner countries.

DFID is supporting the Global Water Partnership in Southern Africa and a number of bilateral projects such as the Water Sector Improvement Project in Ghana and the improvement of community access and management of water resources in Kenya. In Tanzania the UK is helping with work aiming to achieve the sustainable management of the Usangu Wetland and its catchment and in Zimbabwe, a UK funded project is supporting the development of small dams and community resources management activities.

4 The UNCCD, the next 10 years

It is now ten years since the adoption of the UNCCD and its role is necessarily evolving in light of the wider development situation. The recent 10th anniversary publication of the

¹ Water Action Plan. A DFID policy paper March 2004

UNCCD, "Preserving our common ground," notes that the international community has a "role in bringing the Convention down to earth through the partnership-based implementation process." The UK is fully supportive of the process of the UNCCD moving its focus onto implementation activities. It believes that this presents the UNCCD with the opportunity and also the challenge of identifying activities that deliver broad and lasting impact to those areas and people that suffer as a consequence of land degradation. The task in Africa is particularly challenging. The UK believes that the guiding principles, as set out in section 3 of this report, are essential successful development. We believe the UNCCD could help accelerate this progress by focusing on additional actions that are also key to the success of future UNCCD initiatives. These are set out in the following sub-sections for the agenda of the UNCCD over the next ten years:

4.1 Integration and mainstreaming

The linkages between land degradation and poverty are recognized by the UNCCD. However, these linkages require greater integration and mainstreaming of the objectives of the Convention into other key development initiatives. It is crucial that measures to support sustainable land management and prevent degradation are integrated into national strategies such as PRSPs. The UK Government believes that insufficient attention has been paid to mainstreaming land degradation in development initiatives, and that this should assume prominence in the agenda for the next ten years.

An area for special attention is the improved integration of NAPs (National Action Plans) with national development plans and international assistance. The EU initiative, "Fighting Poverty Through Sustainable Land Use", supported by the UK, highlights the need for including a clear perspective on the development aspects of addressing and controlling land degradation within NAPs. The UK looks forward to a broader, mainstreamed, approach to land degradation fostered by the UNCCD.

The UK is also supportive of the GEF proposals for a move from project to programme level support in countries affected by desertification. The objective of these programmatic partnerships, which has pilots in Africa, is to mainstream land management issues into country development priorities (e.g. through PRSPs or programmes to address the MDGs). These moves towards improved integration of the convention with other initiatives are most timely as they correspond with the broader trend in African macro policy towards a more coordinated and cross-sectoral approach to poverty reduction.

4.2 Highlight externalities

A distinction is often made between desertification and other global environmental problems such as climate change and biodiversity loss. It is argued that the former is essentially a local problem: a threat to the local environment and food security but of little consequence to global ecosystems or the business community. This assumption is being increasingly questioned. For example, some recent calculations published in the international journal *Science* demonstrate the significant contribution land degradation makes to atmospheric carbon dioxide levels (Box 4). Land degradation can also be a major trigger for migration, resulting in conflicts with widespread impacts across countries and regions. This appreciation of the sometimes high external costs of land degradation and the

synergies between the UNCCD and other conventions suggest a need for increasing both the urgency of UNCCD implementation and the integration of UNCCD activities with those of other conventions. An increased effort to understand these externalities and their significance is also required.

Box 4 Desertification and climate change – the role of carbon

The soil carbon (C) pool is 3.5 times the atmospheric C pool and 4.5 times the size of the biotic C pool. C emissions from soil between 1850 and 1998 are estimated at 136 gigatonnes (Gt), equivalent to half the emissions associated with fossil fuel combustion (270 Gt). Fully one-third of the soil-related emissions are attributed to land degradation and soil erosion. Just as land degradation can make a significant contribution to global carbon emissions, land protection can prevent these emissions and a number of rehabilitation practices can exploit the potential of soil to act as a carbon sink, sequestering carbon much as forests can, though in greater quantities.

from: Lal, R. (2004) Soil carbon sequestration impacts on global climate change and food security. **Science** 11 June 2004, vol 304, pp 1623-1627

4.3 Increased concentration on the causes of desertification

A more sophisticated understanding of the relationships between population pressure, poverty, deforestation and land degradation is now emerging - see Box 5. Causal linkages vary according to the spatial and temporal scales of analysis, as well as subsidiary factors such as access to markets and services. In some circumstances, increase of population can have positive effects on land degradation as it may also do in decreasing poverty. The better understanding of the web of linkages affecting land degradation, positively and negatively, must be an essential component of future UNCCD activities. It may mean that land degradation is not directly addressed.

The UK notes and supports the work of the Convention in conflict prevention and HIV/AIDS education. As UNCCD² itself notes, activities can instead tackle the “social strains that often lead to.....land degradation.” The Convention should drive forward in ensuring these causal factors are mainstreamed into wider development policies. There is now a valuable opportunity for the UNCCD to focus more on the components of poverty as causal agents of land degradation. As illustrated in the previous section, the UK believes that using our improved understanding of the *causal linkages* between poverty and land degradation must drive implementation activities.

² UNCCD (2004) Preserving our Common Ground. UNCCD 10 years on.

Box 5 'Induced-innovation' versus 'downward-spiral' explanations of land degradation and poverty

Ester Boserup proposed the concept that increasing populations may stimulate increasing demand for agricultural products. This, in turn, would alter the balance of demand and value for labour and land, leading in some instances to startling reversals of land degradation. The most famous of these 'induced-innovation' explanations of change is the Machakos (Kenya) Story.

The more common explanation of change is the 'downward-spiral' concept. This hypothesises that poverty, overpopulation and land degradation create a self-reinforcing downward spiral leading to ever-greater misery and land degradation. Farmers may be 'mining' their soils of nutrients and vegetative cover without replacing them, triggering soil erosion and productivity decline.

Comparing the downward-spiral vs. induced-innovation evidence, it appears that outcomes largely depend on how well societies adapt to rapid population growth, globalization, market development, technological change, climate change, and agro-ecological conditions.

References:

'Downward-spiral': Cleaver, K. M. and Schreiber, G. A. 1994. *Reversing the Spiral: The Population, Agriculture and Environment Nexus in Sub-Saharan Africa*. The World Bank, Washington, D.C.

'Induced-innovation': Tiffen, M., Mortimore, M., and Gichuki, F. 1994. *More People, Less Erosion: Environmental Recovery in Kenya*. London: John Wiley and Sons.

Source: Poverty and Desertification: <http://www.ddpa.net/povertycause.htm>

4.4 Challenge and standards function

The Convention is able to draw on considerable expertise locally, nationally, regionally and internationally. The challenge today and over the next ten years is to harness the available expertise more widely to ensure the setting of an agenda for land degradation control in dryland areas. The UK believes that UNCCD activities need to be better informed by improvements in our understanding of the causes of desertification and of the value of more integrated approaches in its control.

There is also the opportunity to be more active in setting targets and defining frameworks for planning and implementing preventative or restoration work. The Convention should also be able to set out informal standards for efforts to realise the objectives of the UNCCD and identify guidelines and indicators appropriate for evaluating impact and success. This would make possible far more comprehensive and consistent audits of UNCCD efforts than has been possible to date. The vision is for a tighter, more dynamic and informed approach

to global efforts combating desertification where lessons are learned from good and bad practice and the UNCCD uses its leading position to drive this evolving agenda.

4.5 Monitoring and assessment

As a response to COP5, the UNCCD has emphasised the need for adequate monitoring of land degradation and the development of 'early warning systems' to prepare for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. Monitoring of land degradation and desertification remains an essential element of the preparedness of Parties to address their NAPs and to build robust systems to counteract problems closely related to land degradation such as drought, disasters and food insecurity.

The UK believes that UNCCD should engage closely with parallel efforts of UN agencies and bilateral programmes to address the skills deficit in both understanding the causal linkages and impacts of land degradation and to develop the capacity to assess and continuously monitor the changes in land degradation status. DFID is contributing to this process through capacity building (see box 6).

Box 6: Capacity-building in land degradation assessment

Through its centrally-funded research programme, DFID has supported the building of institutional and human resource capacity in the assessment of land degradation. This has involved training of local professionals in developing countries in field techniques and approaches to land degradation assessment and its impact.

Special features of the approach are:

- Engagement with the concerns of land users
- A focus on poverty and livelihoods, using the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Framework
- Using local knowledge and land users' perceptions
- Relating land degradation to its impact on farming, the household and local economy
- Using assessment as an entry point to control of land degradation

In 2004, the Fifth Land Degradation Assessment Short Professional Training Course was held in the UK and Spain. Previous courses have been in Bolivia and Sri Lanka. The approach has now been taken up by the UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa, based in Ghana, where a further course was held in July 2004, funded by FAO Regional Office for Africa. Altogether some 60 professionals have been trained. This is a case of a DFID initiative which is having a major capacity-building role, now being mainstreamed into developing country institutions.

Reference: STOCKING, M.A. & MURNAGHAN, N. 2001. *Handbook for the Field Assessment of Land Degradation*. Earthscan Publications, London. xvi + 169 pp. ISBN 1-85383-831-4; 2003. *Manual para la Evaluación de Campo de la Degradación de la Tierra*. Mundi-Prensa Libros, Madrid. ISBN 84-8476-114-2. These two publications were financed by DFID, Project R6515 and PD097/PD113, NRSP. Now in translation to Chinese and Arabic.

5 UK activities in support of the convention in Africa

5.1 General Africa policy

In sub-Saharan Africa about 50% of the population have an income of less than \$1 a day. In real terms aid per capita to Africa has fallen over the last decade. The UK is responding to this: 48% of DFID's bilateral assistance was spent in sub-Saharan Africa in 2002/3 and by 2007/8 this will have increased to £1.25 billion. DFID is concentrating its efforts on improving development effectiveness in partnership with African Governments, key African organizations such as NEPAD, civil society and other donors in order to accelerate progress to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Whilst one of these goals, ensuring environmental sustainability, has direct relevance to the UNCCD, those addressing poverty, education and health are targeting the most significant underlying causes and effects of desertification in dryland Africa. Increasingly DFID is moving towards budget support for those partner governments committed to poverty reduction and the millennium development goals.

5.2 Commission for Africa

The UK Prime Minister launched the Commission for Africa in 2004 to generate action for a strong and prosperous Africa. As part of their work, the 17 Commissioners are considering a range of key development themes. These include a range of issues connected with the sustainable use and management of natural resources. The Commission will produce recommendations for action in early 2005. For more information about the Commission for Africa see <http://213.225.140.43/commission/Commission.htm>

5.3 NAPs/projects

As outlined in section 3, the UK aims to integrate its work in implementing the UNCCD in mainstream development programmes. Accordingly the UK does not currently support the development of NAPS or UNCCD specific consultative processes or partnership agreements.

The commitments during the current financial year to regions, in particular Africa, which address desertification issues, are given in Tables 1-4, classified under multilateral, bi-lateral or research-related expenditure.

5.3.1 Multilateral commitments

Approximately half of DFID's resources are spent through multilateral agencies, mostly through the EC, WB, regional development banks and the UN. DFID contributes approximately £380 million each year to the development activities of the UN. The UK believes the UN has a crucial contribution to make to peace, development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Approximately 26% of DFID's budget is allocated through the European Community. It is a priority of DFID to push for increasing the proportion of EC external assistance that is directed to low-income countries (only 42% in 2002).

The UK is the fourth largest donor to the International Development Association (IDA) – the arm of the World Bank that provides concessional loans to developing countries. We committed £900 million to the IDA 13 replenishment between July 2002 and June 2005. DFID funded the first Strategic Plan of the African Development Bank, which was approved by the Bank's Executive Board in December 2002. The Plan is designed to provide the strategic direction and a coherent framework to guide the Bank Group's operations and support activities over the period 2003-2007 so as to maximise its contribution to enhancing development results and reducing poverty in its regional member countries. In the key area of agriculture and sustainable rural development, the Bank will focus on the adoption of modern agricultural technologies, diversification of crop and animal production systems, efficient management of natural resources, and the improvement of land and labour productivity for farm and non-farm activities. The Bank will also support the development of rural financial services, and give special attention to facilitating the access of women to land and to improving gender equity in all aspects of rural development. The Bank will complement these actions by activities supporting the strengthening of rural infrastructure and through initiatives to improve the provision in its regional member countries of potable water, adequate sanitation, and secure water for agriculture use. The figures for the African Development Bank and African Development Fund below are the UK's contributions to these institutions in 2003/2004. Only a fraction of these resources will have been used on land degradation issues.

Additionally, the UK directly supports the objectives of the Convention through its contributions to the GEF as set out below.

Table 1 Multilateral expenditure 2003/2004

	<i>Value (£000)</i>	<i>Value (US\$000)</i>
European Community		
European Development Fund	230,883	422515
European Commission National Experts	1,419	2596
European Investment Bank	3,034	5552
EC Attribution [add footnote saying that data is provisional subject to the Court of Auditors]	814,940 ¹	1491340
UN institutions		
UNDP	42,791	78636
FAO	6,547	11981
IFAD	5,299	9697
International Financial Institutions		
African Development Fund	£32,033	58620
African Development Bank	£1,051	1923
GEF replenishment [ok]	29,500 ²	53985

¹ Data is provisional subject to the Court of Auditors

² £118m agreed for four-year period from 2002 includes a voluntary contribution of £15 million.

5.3.2 Bilateral commitments

In 2002/3 the UK spent over £145 million on bilateral support to rural livelihoods, including agriculture, forestry and land policy. Of the twenty countries receiving the most aid, thirteen are African.

Table 2 Current DFID bilateral support in Africa (individual projects above £100K included). NB An exchange rate of approx \$1.83: £1 was used in the tables.

Country	Project title	value (£)	value (US\$)
Regional:			
Africa Regional	R 7554 CA - Policies For Supporting Diverse Rural Livelihoods	357,000	652,000
Central Africa Regional	Water Export Support to Global Water Partnership in Southern Africa	371,000	679,000
Southern Africa	R 7553 CA – Improving Access To Natural Capital For The Rural Poor	370,000	676,000
National:			
Botswana	Botswana Range Inventory and Monitoring Project Phase II	133,000	244,000
Botswana	Ngamiland West Participatory Development Initiative	466,000	851,000
Kenya	Farming Systems Kenya (FSK) - Integrated Rural Agricultural Project	170,000	311,000
Kenya	Association for Better Land Husbandry - Smallholder Marketing and Certification Project	388,000	709,000
Zimbabwe	Emergency Agricultural Recovery for Vulnerable Households (2003 to 2004)	2,096,000	3,831,000
Egypt, Arab Republic	To improve the capacity of TCOE/EEAA to implement environmental law 4/94 and to strengthen the environmental management skills of TCOE staff	112,000	205,000
Egypt, Arab Republic	Support for Environmental Assessment and Management Project 2	2,470,000	4,515,000
Ethiopia	Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) - Support to the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO)	185,000	339,000

Ethiopia	Initiative on Pastoralists and Policy in the Horn of Africa	667,000	1,220,000
Ghana	Ghana Rural Livelihoods/RNR Sector Coordination and Programme Implementation	859,000	1,570,000
Kenya	Kenya: Support to Environmental Governance	198,000	362,000
Kenya	Sabatia Food Security Project	201,000	367,000
Lesotho	CARE: Training for Environmental and Agricultural Management: TEAM	338,000	618,000
Lesotho	Livelihoods Recovery Through Agriculture Programme	508,000	928,000
Lesotho	Agricultural Policy and Capacity Building Project	881,000	1,610,000
Malawi	DEDZA Sustainable Livelihoods	1,300,000	2,377,000
Malawi	Targeted Inputs Programme 03/04 Increase food production	6,268,000	11,459,000
Mozambique	Support to the agricultural sector public expenditure programme (PROAGRI)	381,000	696,000
Mozambique	Seed and Agriculture input to mitigate the impact of drought in Mozambique	603,000	1,102,000
Mozambique	Zambezia Agricultural Development Project (ZADP) Phase II	2,171,000	3,968,000
Mozambique	ACORD: Participation and Sustainable Development Programme, Niassa Province Mozambique CSCF 55	114,000	208,000
Namibia	Wildlife Intensification for Livelihood Diversification	497,000	908,000
Nigeria	Intermediary agencies (non-government organisations) Capacity Building	370,000	676,000
Nigeria	Using radio programming to explore governance issues and rights in relation to rural livelihoods in Nigeria	1,218,000	2,227,000
South Africa, Republic of	Capacity Building In Community Natural Resource Management In Northern Cape Province	224,000	409,000
Tanzania	Environment Advisor to support the integration of Environment into the poverty reduction strategy in Tanzania	135,000	247,000
Tanzania	Environment adviser to Tanzania	145,000	264,000

Tanzania	Concern Mtwara community development support programme	160,000	292,000
Uganda	Kampala Environmental Education Project	129,000	236,000
Uganda	Securing sustainable livelihoods through land tenure reform	198,000	362,000
Zimbabwe	Small Dams and Community Resources Management	145,000	265,000
Zimbabwe	Food Security - Emergency Agricultural Recovery for vulnerable households	4,797,000	8,770,000
Total		29,621,000	54,151,000
Other¹		2,316,000	4,234,004
Civil society fund			
Tanzania	Community Livelihood Improvement	120,000	219,000
Mozambique	Livelihood and Institutional Strengthening Programme	103,000	188,000
Nigeria	Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods in Balyelse State	119,000	218,000
Ethiopia	Power Sharing for Local Resource Management	110,000	201,000
Ghana	Community Participation in Advocacy and Sustainable Livelihoods	43,000	79,000

¹Combined value of projects under £100,000

5.3.3 Global commitments

The projects below outline DFID support to inter-regional specific desertification related projects, many of which will have relevance to Africa. (individual projects above £100K included).

Project Title	Value (£)	Value (US\$)
Developing Markets for Watershed Protection and Improved Livelihoods	307,502	562,727
Poverty and Environment Initiative Phase II	179,689	328,831
The Law, Legal Institutions and the Protection of Land Rights in Ghana	116,518	213,227
Second Order Water Scarcity In Southern Africa	96,208	176,060
Secure water: building sustainable livelihoods for the poor into demand responsive approaches-inception phase	143,835	263,218

Improving Community Spate Irrigation Systems	296,333	542,289
Improving Support For Enhancing Livelihoods Of The Rural Poor.	1,207,764	2,210,208
International Fund For Agricultural Development (IFAD): Sustainable Livelihoods Diagnostic Trust Fund.	1,215,000	2,223,450
Irrigation Charging water saving and rural livelihoods	189,510	346,803
Natural Resources Information System (NARSIS) and RLD Communications Programme	197,542	361,502
R. 7981 Making The Link Between Micro and Meso - Learning From Experience On Community - Based Planning And Mgmt.	239,238	437,805
Sustainable Livelihoods Learning Platform, Livelihoods Connect	312,289	571,488
Sustainable Rural Livelihoods enabling Agreement with Overseas Development Institute	110,233	201,726
Illegal Logging & Associated Trade: Tackling the underlying Governance Policy & Market Failure	980,233	1,793,826
Programme on Forests	1,000,000	1,830,000
Support to the National Forest Programme Facility: GCP/INT/812/MUL (Multidonor trustfund) provided by DFID through GCP/INT/909/UK.	500,000	915,000
Developing markets for watersheds protection services and improved livelihoods	150,195	274,856
Strengthening Participatory Approaches In Forest Management In Uganda, Ghana And Guyana.	808,273	1,479,139
Crop Protection Research Programme	11,226,012	20,543,601
Forestry Research Programme	5,460,427	9,992,581
Livestock Production Research Programme	3,251,865	5,950,912
Management of the Natural Resources Systems Programme	4,468,213	8,176,829
Rural Enterprise Technology Facility	431,731	790,067
Applying Benchmarking as a Tool for Irrigation Management Reform	196,516	359,624
Augmenting Groundwater Resources by Artificial Recharge	242,743	444,219

Building Capacity for a Strategic Approach to Water Resources Development and Management	156,316	286,058
Business Partnerships for Development in Water and Sanitation (Phase 2)	191,743	350,890
Core support for all Global Water Partnership Activities	1,050,000	1,921,500
Derivation and testing of the water poverty index phase 1	151,903	277,982
Director for the World Bank/Global Water Partnership - Groundwater Management Advisory Team	163,117	298,504
Global Water Partnership - Core Funding 2003	1,050,000	1,921,500
R8023 Guidelines for good governance: sustainable management of large scale water users associations	419,578	767,827
R8039-Transboundary Water Resources Management: Using Law To Develop Effective National Water Policy For	199,150	364,444
Support to Global Water Partnership Follow up to Framework for Action	925,000	1,692,750
Support to International Programme for Technology and Research in Irrigation and Drainage (IPTRID)	288,500	527,955
Water Thematic Budget Project Management Costs 2001/2003	353,320	646,575
Wateraid Programme Partnership Agreement	1,900,000	3,477,000
World Commission on Dams - Dams for Development Unit	487,533	892,185
Total	41,972,893	76,810,394
Other¹	1,405,071	2,571,279

¹ Combined value of projects under £100,000

5.3.4 Research

In addition to bilateral programmes in Africa, DFID has continued to fund a substantial portfolio of research on a number of fronts linked to desertification prevention and mitigation. Funding to CGIAR centres is set to double to £20 million in 2004 and direct funding of research, currently under review, has been at the level of £20 million per year in 2002 and 2003. Much of this research addresses those factors and constraints underlying land degradation such as weak or counter-productive policies, ineffective institutions and legislation as well as work aiming to improve the capacity to develop and promote more sustainable resource management options for land users. One example of the relevance of CGIAR support to the UNCCD is the support it gives to the Desert Margins Centre situated

in Africa with a mandate to address “global aspirations to solve the difficult problems of poverty and social instability which are intertwined with environmental degradation”

Research spending accounts for 4% of DFID’s annual budget. From 2005 about two-thirds of DFID research funding (currently £80m per year rising to £100m by 2006/7) will be focussed on four big research themes: agricultural productivity in Africa, killer diseases, states that work in the interests of poor people, and climate change. A substantial part of the research effort in dry land Africa will target the direct and underlying causes of desertification.

Annex 1 Abbreviations and acronyms

CBO	Community Based Organizations
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
COP	Conference of Parties
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GEF	Global Environment Facility
G8	Group of Eight
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NAP	National Action Plan
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PRBS	Poverty Reduction Budget Support
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Fund
UNU	United Nations University

Annex 2 Acknowledgement

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