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The United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010–2020)

Report on activities supporting the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010–2020)

Note by the secretariat

Summary

By its decision 30/COP.9, the Conference of the Parties (COP) requested the Executive Secretary to report at its tenth session on the activities supporting the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (UNDDD) (2010–2020).

This document provides a synthesis of activities undertaken by the UNDDD Inter-agency Taskforce (IATF) and its partners through the global and regional launches of the UNDDD. Some topics are raised for consideration by the COP with the aim of further advancement of the UNDDD observance initiatives.

The annex to this document contains the UNDDD Strategy and Plan of Action developed by the IATF.

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List of abbreviations

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
DLDD	desertification/land degradation and drought
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IATF	Inter-agency Task Force
ICID	International Conference of Climate, Variability, Sustainability and Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
SLM	sustainable land management
SPA	Strategy and Plan of Action
UN-DPI	Department of Public Information of the United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDDD	United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-WCMC	UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

I. Introduction

1. By its decision 30/COP.9, the Conference of the Parties (COP) requested the Executive Secretary to report at its tenth session on activities supporting the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (UNDDD) (2010–2020). This document responds to that request by providing information on activities which have been undertaken since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 63/218.
2. The document contains as an annex the UNDDD Strategy and Plan of Action which was prepared by the UNDDD Inter-agency Taskforce (IATF).

II. Background

3. Acknowledging the persistence of desertification, despite past and ongoing global efforts, and a slow response to poverty eradication among drylands populations, the United Nations General Assembly, by its resolution 62/195, declared 2010 to 2020 the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification. By General Assembly resolution 64/201 of 21 December 2009, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) secretariat was designated as the focal point of the Decade, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and other relevant bodies of the United Nations, including the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat (UN-DPI).
4. During the Decade, all actors are called upon to raise awareness of desertification, land degradation and drought and their solutions. The Decade campaign is intended to reinforce implementation of the 10-year strategic plan and framework of the UNCCD (2008–2018). At the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Secretary-General will report on progress made in implementing the resolution.
5. Upon the adoption of General Assembly resolution 64/201, the secretariat established an IATF of the UNDDD, inviting all United Nations agencies mentioned in the resolution. The key roles of the IATF are to provide the leadership and supporting roles that will ensure that Decade events take place, momentum is maintained throughout the decade, the UNDDD brand is used appropriately and reports to the United Nations General Assembly are prepared.
6. In early 2011, the IATF decided to extend its taskforce membership by inviting United Nations agencies whose mandate is relevant to that of the UNDDD. As a result, the following organizations have agreed to become part of the IATF: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

III. Implementation status

7. To invigorate the first year of the UNDDD, one global launch and subsequently five regional launches were organized during 2010. All launch events were announced through the UNCCD website, the email lists of the UNCCD and IATF member organizations and major international and regional media outlets. Press kits were issued containing fact

sheets, background information and regional success stories, tailored to each regional launch.

8. Regional events draw much interest as they focus on regional concerns. The most successful events had supportive local hosts with essential resources, including media contacts, civil society participants, policy makers and finance. The following is a brief summary of each launch.

A. Global launch and Latin America and the Caribbean region launch, 16 August 2010, Fortaleza, Brazil

9. The global launch of the UNDDD was held in Fortaleza, Brazil, during the Second International Conference of Climate, Variability, Sustainability and Development (ICID 2010). Over 2,500 ICID participants from 100 countries joined the global launch which was held after the opening session of the conference. The dignitaries who signed the Decade's Record of the Launch included several ministers from Brazil, ministers from Niger, Senegal and Switzerland, and governors and high-ranking officials from various institutions.

10. In addition, the Ministers from Algeria, Argentina, Bhutan and Germany sent messages to the launch and in support of the Decade campaign, as did the United Nations Secretary-General and the heads of the CBD, the FAO, the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, IFAD, UNDP, UN-DPI, UNEP, the UNFCCC and WMO.

11. The Global and Latin America and the Caribbean launch report is available at <<http://unddd.unccd.int/fortaleza-launch.htm>>.

B. Africa regional launch, 16 August 2010, Nairobi, Kenya

12. On the same day as the global launch, the Africa regional launch was held in the UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi. As IATF members, UNDP and UNEP coordinated the regional launch, which took the form of a press conference at which a panel of experts spoke on the aims, targets and key themes of the decade. The panellists included Ms. Angela Cropper, Deputy Executive Director, UNEP, Mr. Aeneas Chuma, UNDP Resident Representative, Dr. Tony Simons, Deputy Director General, World Agroforestry Centre, Dr. Ayub Macharia, Director General, National Environment Management Authority and Ms. Lucy Mulenkei representing indigenous communities living in Kenya's drylands.

13. There was substantial media pick-up of the event, with UNEP experts in Nairobi and West Asia conducting several media interviews on desertification. African newswires and newspapers also ran news stories and features on the Decade launch.

14. The Africa launch report is available at <<http://unddd.unccd.int/nairobi-launch.htm>>.

C. Asia regional launch, 12 October 2010, Seoul, Republic of Korea

15. The Asia launch was held in Seoul, during the "International Symposium on Mitigation of Desertification/Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD) and the Role of the UNCCD." It was organized by Korea Forest Service. The launch was attended by over 200 participants, including scientists, policy makers and media organizations, Dr. Chung Kwang-Soo, Minister, Korea Forest Service and Mr Kim Doo-Kwan, Governor of Gyeongnam Province.

16. The Asia launch report is available at <<http://unddd.unccd.int/seoul-launch.htm>>.

D. North America launch, 11–12 November 2010, Fort Collins, Colorado, United States of America

17. The Northern America regional launch was held at Colorado State University in Fort Collins and the State Legislature, in Denver, Colorado, the United States of America. The event on 11 November consisted of a seminar and signing of the Decade's Record of the Launch followed by a press conference. On 12 November, a meet-and-greet event with Colorado's Governor Bill Ritter was organized in Denver.

18. Among the guest speakers were Dr Tony Frank, President, Colorado State University, Dr Thomas Reinsch, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Ms Shannon Horst, Chief Executive Officer, Savory Institute, and Mr Jurgen Hoth, World Wildlife Fund, Mexico. Focused on the North American Region, the presentations and discussion emphasized the role of science in efforts to combat desertification. Over 15 media outlets in the United States of America, including the *Denver Post*, the CBD and the *San Francisco Examiner* reported the regional launch.

19. The North America launch report is available at <http://unddd.unccd.int/northamerica-launch.htm>.

E. Europe regional launch, 16 December 2010, London, United Kingdom

20. The last regional launch took place in London, at which geographers, scientists, development experts and policymakers gathered to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing drylands under threat from climate change and land degradation. The event comprised a seminar followed by a press conference, and signing of the Record of the Launch. It was jointly co-hosted with the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

21. Panellists at the launch included Dr Matt Walpole of UNEP-WCMC, [http://unddd.unccd.int/images/Europe Launch/Johannes Kamp, RSPB.jpg](http://unddd.unccd.int/images/Europe%20Launch/Johannes%20Kamp,%20RSPB.jpg) Dr Johannes Kamp of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Dr José Luís Rubio of the European Society for Soil Conservation, Dr Camilla Toulmin of the IIED and [http://unddd.unccd.int/images/Europe Launch/Michale Mortimore, Drylands Research.jpg](http://unddd.unccd.int/images/Europe%20Launch/Michael%20Mortimore,%20Drylands%20Research.jpg) Dr Michael Mortimore of Drylands Research.

22. The regional launch was covered by major European newspapers and press agencies.

23. The Europe launch report is available at <http://unddd.unccd.int/europe-launch.htm>.

IV. Production of awareness-raising materials

24. For the launches and for information dissemination, the following materials were produced in financial and technical cooperation with the UNDDD IATF, the Global Mechanism, the ICID secretariat, Korea Forest Service, the United Nations News Centre, United Nations Television and Video and United Nations Radio. The cost of printing and production of all the awareness-raising materials was donated by private sector and partnering institutions.

- (a) UNDDD logo (UNCCD in-house production)

- (b) The launch of a website dedicated to the UNDDD, with a variety of resources: logos, background information on the Decade, reports, photo galleries, databases, toolkits for various actors, and so on. (UNCCD, IATF)
- (c) Comprehensive media kits (UNCCD, IATF)
- (d) Poster (UNCCD, Global Mechanism)
- (e) Brochure (UNCCD in-house production)
- (f) Stickers (UNCCD in-house production)
- (g) Exhibitions (UNCCD, Korea Forest Service)
- (h) Special Issue of the UNCCD News with high-level messages (UNCCD)
- (i) UN-TV short video clip (UN-DPI)
- (j) Three-minute television clip for the CNN World View programme (UN-DPI – under development)
- (k) 21st Century television news magazine (UN-DPI – under development).

V. Way forward

25. The UNDDD Strategy and Plan of Action (SPA) was prepared by the IATF as attached as an annex to this document. The draft plan of action proposes a decentralized approach in the organization of events in order to foster participation at all levels through local-level multi-stakeholder networks. It also proposes the establishment of structures and mechanisms to mobilize the additional human and financial resources needed from both conventional and non-conventional United Nations sources to implement these activities.

26. It is expected that the SPA will be implemented mainly by the IATF member organizations in cooperation with their national and regional partners, either individually or collectively. The UNCCD secretariat will be the coordinating body throughout the Decade, but every year one IATF member organization will be identified to provide substantive support on the theme for that year. In this context it may be relevant to mention that the UNDDD will be observed in conjunction with the International Year on Forests (2011) and the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (2011–2020) among other events.

VI. Conclusion and recommendations

27. The successful cooperation among the IATF and other collaborating agencies throughout the launch activities proved the effectiveness of maximizing human and financial resources for collective action. However, as envisioned in General Assembly resolution 64/201, additional resources will be needed to cover gaps, shortfalls and the added responsibilities. In this regard, further network and partnership building is required. This would enhance information sharing, mobilize the human and financial resources of relevant organizations, match organizations with shared interests, promote the creation of drylands groups, coalitions and alliances for the campaign and establish required communication platforms.

28. Cooperation is imperative from government organizations for financial and technical support, especially from the bilateral and multilateral donors, international financial institutions and member States. In-kind resources can be sought through partnerships with non-United Nations institutions for activities such as public surveys

for appropriate messaging, sponsorship and organization of competitions, and awards and campaigns which involve the public and monitoring change on the ground.

29. In order to advance the implementation of UNDDD observance in a sustainable way throughout the Decade period, the COP at its tenth session may wish to consider the following:

(a) Promoting the implementation of the UNDDD SPA at national, regional and international levels;

(b) Encouraging countries, international organizations, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to use the UNDDD logo in their activities relevant to DLDD;

(c) Encouraging also IATF members to mobilize public resources, particularly ideas, in-kind contributions and voluntary work in addition to traditional resources, and to publicize the UNDDD during their planned activities relevant to the Decade;

(d) Encouraging further all relevant international organizations, developing and developed countries to support the observance events and activities worldwide;

(e) Requesting the Executive Secretary to mobilize resources for implementation of the UNDDD SPA.

Annex

United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification: Strategy and plan of action^a

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^a This document was prepared by the UNDDD Inter-agency Taskforce members: United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and other relevant United Nations bodies, including the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat (UN-DPI).

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations is concerned about the world's drylands. It is concerned that they have been overlooked, undervalued and prevented from living up to their potential, concerned that the massive potential they offer for mitigating and adapting to climate change remains untapped, concerned with protecting and conserving some of the most fragile and vulnerable, yet high-value, ecosystems of the world, and concerned that the majority of the one in three people living in the world's drylands is falling behind in the race to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Drylands are vast, and important for all societies' future well-being; a coordinated response is required.
2. The SPA highlights the approach and actions to be taken in observance of the UNDDD. It is a collaborative effort between the United Nations agencies mandated by the General Assembly to spearhead the initiative. The SPA provides a focused framework for strategic action and is a living document that can respond to changing times.
3. The first part of the document lays out the strategy. The plan of action, with details of the themes and activities for each year, is contained in chapter IV to provide flexibility and responsiveness to changing contexts.

The vision and mission

The UNDDD vision captures what we hope the world will look like in 2020 with respect to the desert and drylands ecosystems of the world, relative to where we are today. We envisage:

An international community that is sensitized and committed to preserving and improving drylands and desert ecosystems and addressing desertification and land degradation through sustainable land management for the eradication of poverty, improved local livelihoods and the attainment of environmental sustainability.

To achieve this, the activists and actors involved in UNDDD activities have two missions:

- (a) To transmit a clear, concise and powerful message on the value of drylands and desert ecosystems and the effects of DLDD, and
- (b) To create a global coalition of individuals, organizations and institutions at all levels that promotes SLM in the drylands and desert ecosystems.

II. Goals and objectives

4. The goals and objectives of the UNDDD aim to address the concerns raised in General Assembly resolution A/64/201, especially the deteriorating situation of desertification in all regions with far-reaching implications for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly eradicating poverty and ensuring environmental sustainability.

5. The overall goal of the UNDDD is “to achieve global recognition of the issue of land degradation by placing drylands and desert ecosystems management and productivity at the heart of the multilateral and national environmental policy agendas”.

6. Based on the General Assembly resolution and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention 2008–2018, the Decade’s three objectives are:

(a) to create a platform for demonstrating both the potential and the opportunities drylands and desert ecosystems to be productive, by showcasing achievements, best practices and success stories about improved livelihoods, ecosystems and investment flows;

(b) to contribute to improving long-term sustainability of the ecosystems by reducing poverty among affected populations and increasing vegetation cover in the drylands ecosystem;^b

III. Strategic approach

7. The strategic approach of the UNDDD has six dimensions:

- guiding principles
- campaign branding
- segmenting target groups by objective
- networking and partnership building
- progress monitoring, evaluating and reporting
- coordination
- resource mobilization

A. Guiding principles

8. The normative framework designed to build community among a diverse group of decentralized actors with a shared vision, mission, goals and objectives will have four principles. These are inclusiveness and accountability in action, and novelty and relevance in the selection of activities and campaigns of the framework.

9. Inclusiveness is geared to realizing the *broadest public reach* and *active engagement* of civil society. The commitment to *accountability* using the reporting guidelines provided online will enable the United Nations Secretary-General to prepare substantive reports to the General Assembly. Maintaining momentum and public interest over a decade calls, at a minimum, for attention to *relevance* and *novelty* in UNDDD initiatives.

B. Branding

10. The purpose of branding is to provide the Decade with a logo and slogan(s) by which it can be identified, and standard templates for the production of a wide range of materials that can be used by different constituents for different events. To minimize abuse

^b This will also ensure that the campaign gives something back to the people and to these ecosystems, and responds to the General Assembly resolution call for the UNDDD to reinforce the outcomes envisaged in the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018).

of the brand, given the decentralized approach, a policy and guidelines for the use of the UNDDD logo will be developed and posted on the UNDDD site, and a specific contact person designated to answer enquiries regarding brand use.

11. For maximum impact, the slogan for each year will be aligned with that of the World Day to Combat Desertification.

C. Segmenting the target actors

12. Given the time frame, the stringent economic climate, the need to sustain momentum over a decade, and the varying levels of understanding of the issues, developing an effective communication strategy will first require the categorizing of actors by affected and non-affected communities and then targeting them according to the following roles and functions and specific communication objectives:

- (a) *policy makers*: for policy-oriented messages
- (b) *celebrities/champions*: for communicating complex issues and attracting the interest of inattentive populations
- (c) *media*: for news hooks, mobilizing the public during events and drawing policy attention to the issues
- (d) *business and private sector*: as the targets for investment and corporate social responsibility initiatives
- (e) *researchers and research institutions*: to monitor change on the ground, and as issue experts
- (f) *children and young people*: as the future beneficiaries of the drylands and to maintain momentum and vibrancy in the UNDDD over a decade
- (g) *general public*: practical involvement of the attentive public and reaching the unconverted
- (h) *non-governmental organizations and civil society actors*: to advocate on the issue and mobilize action during planned events.

D. Networking and partnership building

13. Given its decentralized approach, the UNDDD will function through facilitating networking and partnership building among the actors for the following purposes:

- (a) solidarity building, by establishing communication platforms and sharing information about the volunteers and champions and reports on plans for and progress and achievements in the activities;
- (b) alliance building by mobilizing strategic organizations to join the process and matching organizations with shared interests, including donors and private sector organizations.

E. Coordination of Decade activities

14. As per resolution 64/201, which assigns the primary responsibility for implementation to the United Nations agencies whose work is relevant to the scope and mandate of the resolution, the Inter-agency Task Force (IATF) for the UNDDD includes: the UNCCD, UNEP, UNDP, IFAD, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Food and

Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), the International Organization of Migration, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Forum on Forests, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations University, UN Water and the World Meteorological Organization. At the recommendation of these agencies and a written request from the UNCCD Executive Secretary, each institution deemed relevant will identify an individual to serve as its focal point on the IATF.

15. Coordination is required in planning the year's activities, in order to agree on the thematic focus, the key messages to be communicated and proposals for public action, and to maximize information dissemination and prepare the annual progress reports on the activities. As far as possible, coordination will take the form of small self-organizing teams. The UNCCD secretariat will serve as the focal point of the UNDDD, in cooperation with at least one other IATF member designated to support the implementation of the theme for each year.

F. Monitoring and evaluation

16. Resolution 64/201 requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to report on the status of implementation of Decade events during the 69th session of the General Assembly. To facilitate the preparation of the Secretary-General's report, the IATF will prepare a two-page report on the outcomes of events each year. As far as possible, short complementary audio-visual reports of the events will be prepared. IATF members may use the reports to report their activities to their governing bodies.

17. The content of the reports may include:

- themes, objectives and activities undertaken each year
- outcomes and impacts of the activities, globally and by region
- global public outreach
- geographic distribution of the events
- human, financial and other resources mobilized
- best practices, including where progress is being made, lagging or retrogressing
- strategic recommendations.

G. Resource requirements

18. While the UNDDD will mobilize a significant proportion of its resources through agency collaboration, additional resources mobilization is as envisaged by resolution 64/201 to cover gaps, shortfalls and additional responsibilities. Fundraising initiatives for financial and technical resources will target governments, especially bilateral and multilateral donors, international financial institutions and member States. In-kind resources will be sought through partnerships with non-United Nations institutions for activities such as public surveys on appropriate messaging, sponsorship, the organization of competitions, awards and campaigns that involve the public, and monitoring change on the ground.

19. The IATF will conduct joint fund-raising drives for its activities, including options such as bilateral project-based fund-raising and the establishment of a trust fund for its activities in the focal point organization, the UNCCD. Under the rubric of corporate social

responsibility, private sector organizations with relevant expertise may be encouraged to second volunteers to work on UNDDD events. The potential areas of support may include event organization, market research, website development, training of journalists, or the design of campaign products.

IV. Plan of action

20. The plan of action presents approaches of a tactical nature, which are subject to modification depending on context. It is built on the lessons learned from a review of past Decades, in particular Decade themes, the nature, organization and location of observance events and the encouragement of public participation. It also highlights the essentials of an effective media strategy.

A. Participation

21. A decentralized but coordinated and participatory approach to planning and implementing the observance events and other activities will enhance ownership.^c This will be achieved through: (a) planning activities well in advance, (b) separating the planning and implementation teams, (c) involving non-United Nations actors in planning and implementation, and (d) developing a clear, annual project plan for the activities, with sufficient lead-time to facilitate the smooth running and management of the process. A dedicated Web page and appropriate tools to facilitate public input will be designed.

B. Observance events

22. For each planning cycle, decisions will be taken on the thematic focus and the type of event to be organized, especially its structure and location/venue and specific activities and UNDDD rituals. To avoid competition with other planned United Nations activities, the UNDDD will be built around and associated with other United Nations events such as the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and the broader issue of sustainable development. The table below provides the provisional *list* of the themes for the Decade based on the current United Nations calendar.

Table
Proposed themes and events for the Decade

<i>Year</i>	<i>Nature of event</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
2010	Global & regional	Regional	The launch of the UNDDD in each of the regions calls for a regional focus and topics of regional relevance
2011	Global	Forests	Deforestation of dry forests are a historical fact; afforestation could attract private sector involvement and global media attention in the context of the International Year of Forests and lead up to UNFCCC COP 17; could serve as a building block for the launch of the study on the economics of

^c United Nations General Assembly. Report of the Secretary General. Implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008–2017). Document A/63/190, p.5.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Nature of event</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
			DLDD at the High-Level summit on DLDD at the 66th session of the General Assembly
2012	National	Cooperative/ Rio+20	Cooperatives have played a key role in lifting drylands populations out of poverty; the sustainability of the drylands is critical to the survival of present and future generations
2013	Regional	Water	International Year of Water Cooperation; status of drought; a year after the anticipated Climate Change agreements (Kyoto Protocol) are concluded and before the end of the Water for Life Decade
2014	Global	Five-year review	General Assembly progress report; half-way mark of the Decade;
2015	National	Biodiversity	Half-way point in the biodiversity decade;
2016	Regional	Food security	
2017	Global	Migration	
2018	National	Poverty	Conclusion of the Decade on the eradication of poverty; drylands population among the poorest in the world;
2019	Regional	Climate change	Review of status of drylands 10 years after the Copenhagen Accords;
2020	Global	Decade in review	Concluding year of the Decade; regional events every two months with a final global event.

23. For 2016 and 2017 when there are no designated events, the UNDDD task force will consider the most appropriate themes in the light of the outcome of the Secretary-General's Report to the 69th session of the General Assembly in 2014. The final decision on the theme will be taken by the IATF during the planning cycle for each year to ensure continued relevance.

C. Nature of the event

24. The organization of national, regional and international-level observance events will take place sequentially from one year to the next. This provides variation, time to plan, a reduction in the organizational demands on the IATF and inclusiveness through local-level organization. Column 2 of Table 1 above shows the proposed level of the events, and is designed to ensure a coincidence of the international events with the 69th session of the General Assembly, when the Secretary-General will submit a progress report, and with the year 2020, the last year of the Decade.

D. Activities

25. Given the relatively low level of interest in, and awareness and visibility of, drylands and desert ecosystem issues and the added competition from parallel decade activities, the campaign will aim for events that are at once innovative, participatory, educative and entertaining. A list of proposed activities that could be included as part of the campaign is

provided in the table below. To be a leader not follower in the campaign, the UNDDD will also seek the support of a public relations or marketing company to run specific campaigns at global level, and volunteers to work on the project, depending on the availability of funds.

26. In addition, successful cooperation within the IATF as well as other collaborating agencies could maximize the visibility and effective use of resources. Experience shows that participatory events and activities which lead to a tangible output generate high public and media interest. To enhance participation, find innovative ideas and maintain public visibility through the year, there will be extensive use of online tools for:

- (a) searching for innovative ideas for the observance events;
- (b) voting for particular causes, such as winners of competitions after short-listing by experts and identification of drylands' heroes – individuals who have made a significant contribution to changing the situation in the drylands;
- (c) incorporating UNDDD observance events into existing activities of the IATF and other collaborative agencies;
- (d) seeking opportunities to observe the UNDDD jointly with other decade activities such as the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity and the United Nations Decade for Education and Sustainable Development.

E. UNDDD rituals

27. The UNDDD will define its rituals – the repetitive, time-bound events which take place in the calendar year – aimed at building community and anticipation, maintaining the visibility of the issues/Decade all year round, and enforcing timely project implementation. The date and duration of the observance event is the ultimate UNDDD ritual, which for the UNDDD will be held in conjunction with the World Day to Combat Desertification observed on 17 June. The other proposed UNDDD rituals are:

- (a) a fixed timeline to announce recurrent activities that will take place every year, such as competitions, the UNDDD theme, a campaign period and its kick-off and closing activities;
- (b) a surprise gift dedicated to the drylands people, to be released every year as part of the campaign materials. Examples include a game, song or poem, or video messages from the Secretary-General and the UNCCD Executive Secretary, and awards to honour the drylands heroes.
- (c) The appointment of new drylands guardians and drylands heroes.

F. The launch and conclusion of the Decade

28. In 2010 the UNDDD was launched. In 2020, the UNDDD observance event will involve a range of activities running throughout the year to mark the conclusion of the Decade. Drawing on the experience of the 2010 launches, each of these events will be unique and will lead towards a global event to be held, preferably, at the end of the year. A total of six events is envisaged – five regional events and a global event; therefore planning for an activity every two months is proposed. Events coinciding with the weather can provide useful news hooks as the public and media will be more attentive to the UNDDD message.

V. Media strategy

29. The UNDDD needs the media to facilitate the implementation of its strategy, and so a good starting point is to be aware of the constraints that may hinder their involvement. These are: (a) media fatigue with decades; therefore novelty is essential, (b) DLDD/SLM are complex issues and hard to sell, and therefore attention will be given to messaging and the messengers, and (c) poor understanding and misconceptions about desertification exist, and there is thus a need to address both issues. To encourage journalists to write about the UNDDD, major international broadcasting corporations and journalists' associations will be approached as partners to establish an annual award in honour of the journalist who writes best on deserts and drylands ecosystem issues.

30. Given the variation in the United Nations themes during the Decade, each year the IATF will develop a sharp and targeted media tool kit containing some of the following:

- (a) The uplift speech (a short message on the essence of the UNDDD)
- (b) A concise message (maximum three points) concerning the year's theme
- (c) Clever sound bites to go with the year's message
- (d) Fact-sheets providing regional and global dimensions
- (e) Interactive maps, figures, tables and visual illustrations relating to the fact-sheets
- (f) Success stories relevant to the theme
- (g) Raw materials, preferably visual, for media use: video footage, radio clips, human interest stories, photographs and illustrations
- (h) A special issue newsletter to educate the public on the year's theme
- (i) A list of experts to be interviewed from each of the regions.

VI. Resources

31. The observance events require the production of intellectual and physical materials for use in the campaigns. In addition to the traditional fund-raising approaches outlined above, the IATF will mobilize public resources, particularly ideas, in-kind contributions and voluntary work. It is particularly encouraged that the IATF and other collaborative agencies will consider publicizing the UNDDD when their planned activities are relevant to it.

32. The support resources could be solicited from the UNDDD website: <<http://unccd.unddd.int>> The resources for the campaigns will also be shared through this site. These include databases, campaign materials, printed and electronic publications and general information and announcements.

VII. Activity proposals

33. The proposed activities below could be implemented independently as unique events of the UNDDD or in tandem with existing activities being implemented by the IATF members or other collaborative agencies:

PROPOSED ACTIONS DURING THE DECADE

1. Activities

- i) Publish DLDD best practices: “Stories from the Drylands”
- ii) Organize road shows
- iii) Organize travelling theatre
- iv) Produce puppetry
- v) Organize festivals – books, music, film, photography, art, heritage sites, etc,
- vi) Host friendly competitive sporting events
 - a) Running for a cause – “Running for the Drylands”
 - b) Europe versus United Africa football match, etc
- vii) Compose a UNDDD anthem
- viii) Organize drylands youth camps
- ix) Markets/stands selling drylands products
- x) Design of computer games derived from games that are played uniquely in the drylands or which involve drylands ecosystems and cultures
- xi) Organize exhibitions in museums, libraries and niche forums (e.g. the World Economic Forums, G-20 summits)
- xii) School tree-planting programmes, with nurseries set aside for the preparation of seedbeds and watering facilities
- xiii) Promote upscaling of best practices which have been documented by various agencies
- xiv) Disseminate alternative sources of livelihoods programmes, particularly those promoting enterprise development
- xv) Organize study tours and exchange visits as part of South-South cooperation
- xvi) Set up accounts in Facebook and other social networking platforms for the UNDDD, feeding these regularly with stories such as best practices as well as emerging issues
- xvii) Organize competitions
 - a) A journalism/media award to whet the appetite for stories on desertification
 - b) An international photographic contest

2. Build a global coalition – Institutional relationships

- i) Encourage the creation of regional networks, mainly of civil society organizations and preferably at the grassroots level, to stimulate local action against desertification
 - ii) Create a “Drylands Alliance”
 - iii) Identify leading countries which could support UNDDD activities
 - iv) Establish environment clubs in schools or join with the existing “club UNESCO” for joint awareness activities such as tree planting or tree nurseries
 - v) Collaborate with research and academic institutions to identify resilient tree species which thrive in different climatic conditions
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PROPOSED ACTIONS DURING THE DECADE

- vi) Work with natural history museums and libraries
 - vii) Associate with other DLDD relevant projects such as the Great Green Wall Initiative and work closely with its proponents (countries and leaders)
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3. Showcasing

- i) From year 2011–2014, focus on generating materials, pictures, photographs, human interest stories and so on about “life before” (the Decade campaigns) and then in year 2015–2019 produce similar material under the theme “life after” to demonstrate the differences
 - ii) Produce materials illustrating how communities which have better land management strategies are more successful than those that don’t
 - iii) Prepare messages that focus on both the problem and the solutions, the opportunities and the investment potentials of the drylands
 - iv) Organize campaigns for children on how to use the land
 - v) Produce a Status of the Drylands Report with quantitative analysis on the productivity and values of the drylands and desert ecosystems
 - vi) Produce a video documentary series on selected “Drylands Villages” where significant progress has been achieved in recent years
 - vii) Produce “rules of thumb” on desertification topics from useful scientific knowledge, such as “cut-one-tree-thenplant-two” for forests campaigns
 - viii) Publish an inter-agency booklet on land, building on the UNEP-Environment Management Group report
 - ix) Cover both successes and failures at the policy and programme levels should be covered in order to establish the sources of change.
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