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Item 11 of the provisional agenda

Promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies

Options for enhanced cooperation among the Rio Conventions, and success stories of field activities on synergies

Submissions from Parties

1. Having taken note of the oral report by the secretariat on the outcome of the consideration by the Joint Liaison Group of the paper prepared jointly by the secretariats of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2004/INF.19, the Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 12/COP.7, invited Parties to review the document and submit comments to the secretariat prior to its eighth session.
2. By the same decision, the COP invited Parties and civil society, non-governmental organizations and research institutions to submit success stories of field activities on synergies to the secretariat, and requested the secretariat to prepare a compilation of the submissions received and to submit it to the COP at its eighth session.
3. The secretariat has received three submissions on options for enhanced cooperation among the Rio Conventions and five submissions on success stories of field activities on synergies. In accordance with the procedure for miscellaneous documents, these submissions are attached and reproduced* in the language in which they were received and without formal editing.

* These submissions have been electronically imported in order to make them available on electronic systems, including the Internet. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the texts as submitted.

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Submissions on options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions

PAPER NO. 1: SAUDI ARABIA

The kingdom of Saudi Arabia support the options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions, which included in the document FCCC/SBSTA/2004/INF.19 with taken in consideration the following:

- The cooperation should be between all the Subsidiary Bodies for the COPs to ensure the environmental integrity of the conventions and promoting synergies under the common objective of sustainable development, Johannesburg Plan and MDG.
- The synergy among the three Rio Conventions should help for avoiding duplication of efforts, strengthen joint efforts and use available resources more efficiently.
- It should be establish mechanism for enhanced collaboration, which already identified by the convention bodies

PAPER NO. 2: TURKEY

(excerpt from a letter received by Turkey)

Subject: Activities for the promotion and strengthening of relationship with other relevant conventions and relevant international organizations institutions and agencies.

- Three Turkish Ministers, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources and Minister of Environment and Forestry, gave a press declaration on Climate Change, Drought and action plan for combating drought and Climate Change, Drought and action plan for combating drought and climate change at February 7, 2007.
- Three of the main conventions (UNCCD, UNCBD, UNFCCC) should focus on soil conservation. A guideline should be prepared on importance of the soil conservation for the implementation of all the conventions.
- The matter in the second article in the decision 12/COP.7 is very appropriate and will result positively if implemented.
- Guidelines should be prepared according to the decision on the 8th article about financial and technical support for the joint initiatives.
- For the decision taken on the 11th article, there should be a proper system to bring together the relevant institutions and focal points from the conventions.
- Implementation agencies for each convention should give support to the other activities. For example UNEP have been organized “Billion Tree Campaign” and responsible agencies of UNCCD in Turkey, General Directorate of Afforestation and Erosion Control, pledged of 200 million trees towards this initiative.
- Synergy between the Conventions should be promoted at national and regional level and encouraged by COP.
- Countries may share their best practices with the other countries. Turkey shared its experiences on watershed rehabilitation with ECO Countries during May 21-25, 2007.
- National and Regional Communication Strategies to Share Information Between Conventions should be established. Terms of Reference for the Development of such strategies could be prepared by the secretariat.
- Turkey and UNCCD Secretariat may hold discussions to identify priorities for synergy at national and regional level.
- International research centers and international training centers as International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies, etc. should hold seminar, course, workshop, panels etc.

PAPER NO. 3: BURKINA FASO

MINISTERE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DU CADRE DE VIE

ETAT DE MISE EN ŒUVRE DE LA DECISION 12/COP.7

Activités visant à promouvoir et renforcer les liens avec les autres conventions pertinentes ainsi qu'avec les organisations, institutions et organismes internationaux compétents

Les différents développements sur ces documents et les résultats du CRIC 5 en Argentine sont assez pertinents et satisfaisants pour la synergie entre les conventions.

Submissions on success stories of field activities on synergies

PAPER NO. 4: TURKEY

THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTRY General Directorate of Afforestation and Erosion Control

Success Stories:

- Erosion is one of the most important reasons for the land degradation in Turkey. It is affecting 75% of the total land surface in varying levels of severity. About 73% of the cultivated land and 68% of the prime agricultural land is prone to erosion. Stream bank erosion affects 57,1 million ha while wind erosion is severely affecting another 466,000 ha of land. Combating of soil erosion is strictly needed in Turkey. This is of the main pillars in challenges to mitigate the negative effects of desertification and drought in Turkey. 2.8 million hectares degraded land are rehabilitated with afforestation, erosion control activities by Ministry of Environment and Forestry, General Directorate of Afforestation and Erosion Control.
- Turkey has launched variety of financial and technical support to the more developing countries in Asia, Europe and Africa since late 1980. This support includes grants, in kind assistance, equipment and technical cooperation. It is realized that contributions should be effective, coordinated and provide maximum benefits for both sides. For this purpose, the Government of Turkey established the Turkish Development and Cooperation Agency (TIKA) in 1992. The Watershed Training Course for ECO Countries was supported by TIKA.
- There are very good relationships between the Ministry and NGOs in Turkey such as “Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion for Reforestation and Protection of Natural Habitats” (TEMA), “Regional Environmental Centre” (REC) etc.

Considering the linkages between climate change and desertification, TEMA started carrying out its activities which are in line with both conventions but it always focuses on UNCCD because of its mission. TEMA is accredited NGO to UN-ECOSOC, UNCCD and UNEP. Climate change has become one of the focal points of it. Its activities relation to UNCCD and UNFCCC can be summarized as follows:

- Carbon sequestration and awareness-raising through demonstration projects.
- Contribution to reducing emission and changing lifestyles and rules through education and awareness raising activities.

Regional Environmental Center Turkey, has been working on the field of climate change since 2005. Pursuant to Article 15 of the New Delhi Work Programme adapted at COP8 of UNFCCC, REC Turkey was designated as the national focal point on Article 6 (education, training and public awareness). Activities within this scope are carried out in collaboration with various stakeholders, specifically with government agencies. These activities contributed significantly in the raising the awareness and capacity building in both climate change and desertification.

PAPER NO. 5: BURKINA FASO

MINISTERE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DU CADRE DE VIE

ETAT DE MISE EN ŒUVRE DE LA DECISION 12/COP.7

Activités visant à promouvoir et renforcer les liens avec les autres conventions pertinentes ainsi qu'avec les organisations, institutions et organismes internationaux compétents

Alinéa de la décision 12/COP.7	Etat de mise en oeuvre
<p>5. <i>Encourage</i> les pays Parties à ne ménager aucun effort pour coordonner l'application des conventions considérées</p>	<p>En vue de l'application coordonnée entre autres de ces trois conventions, notre pays a développé plusieurs initiatives qui permettent de partager des informations sur le contenu et les décisions des conventions concernées et d'amorcer la synergie dans leur mise en œuvre.</p> <p>Il s'agit notamment de:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - la mise en place en 2006 d'un cadre fonctionnel rattaché au CONEDD (Conseil National pour l'Environnement et le Développement Durable), intitulé « Cadre Unique de Concertation des Conventions » et impliquant les points focaux des différentes conventions en matière d'environnement auxquelles notre pays est parties prenantes; - la création au sein du Secrétariat Permanent du CONEDD d'une division du Partenariat et des conventions en matière d'environnement dans laquelle division est logée les trois points focaux de CCCC, CDB, CCD ; - l'adoption depuis 2001 d'une STRATEGIE DE MISE EN ŒUVRE CONCERTEE DES TROIS CONVENTIONS DE RIO (CCD, CCCC, CDB). - L'élaboration en cours d'une stratégie et d'un plan d'action pour le renforcement des capacités de gestion de l'environnement national et mondial (avec l'appui du PNUD et du FEM)
<p>7. <i>Engage</i> les Parties touchées à intégrer la question de la gestion durable des terres dans les programmes d'action nationaux pour l'adaptation aux changements climatiques entrepris au titre de la Convention cadre des Nations Unies sur les changements climatiques</p>	<p>Le Burkina Faso a adopté en 2006 son Programme National d'Adaptation aux Changements Climatiques.</p> <p>Au regard des moyens d'accès limités et à l'échelle réduite des projets pilotes d'adaptation aux changements climatiques, notre pays a opté pour leur mise œuvre de les arrimer au Programme national de Partenariat pour la Gestion Durable des Terres (CPP) qui, lui bénéficie d'un financement et d'une couverture géographique plus substantiel.</p>

<p>9. <i>Invite</i> les Parties, la société civile, les ONG et les établissements de recherche à faire connaître au secrétariat les activités locales visant à promouvoir les synergies qui donnent de bons résultats, et <i>prie</i> le secrétariat d'établir une synthèse des communications reçues et de la lui soumettre à sa huitième session, en tant que document d'information</p>	<p>Quelques activités locales visant à promouvoir des synergies pertinentes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aménagement durable des forêts naturelles ou mis en défens - Aménagement agro-sylvo-pastoraux des espaces de production des terroirs villageois - Aménagement de récupération des terres dégradées pour les productions agricoles ou pastorales - Aménagement des espaces fauniques - Aménagement durable des espaces pastoraux - Arboriculture - Aménagement paysager - Education environnementale (éco-citoyenneté) - Elaboration et mise en œuvre des schémas d'aménagement du territoire - Elaboration et mise en œuvre des plans de développement communal (intégrant les préoccupations environnementales) - Mise en place de fonds de lutte contre la désertification ou de gestion des ressources naturelles ou de développement local (rendant éligible les actions et projets de gestion des ressources naturelles)
<p>11. <i>Encourage également</i> les Parties et les institutions compétentes à étudier les possibilités de promouvoir la gestion durable des forêts, leur conservation et leur utilisation viable, en tant que moyens supplémentaires d'atteindre les objectifs pertinents des trois conventions</p>	<p>Notre pays a adopté depuis les années 90 un programme national d'aménagement des forêts, et mis au point des outils pertinents d'aménagement durable des forêts naturelles adaptés à notre contexte socio-écologique pour la satisfaction des différents besoins des produits forestiers et l'amélioration socio-économiques (en revenus) notamment des populations riveraines. L'évaluation de ces unités d'aménagement de forêts relève entre autres des impacts significatifs de conservation de diversité biologique, et de maintien de la fonction de séquestration de carbone desdites forêts.</p>

PAPER NO. 6: BULGARIA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND WATER

I N F O R M A T I O N

Re : In enclosed I am sending information in regard to Decision 12/COP.7, concerning activities for promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and relevant international institutions and organizations.

Activities for promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and relevant internal organization, institutions and agencies

In this document is presented information on successful experiences/ practices in Bulgaria in regard to carrying out national and local activities for promotion and strengthening relationships with other relevant environmental conventions and relevant internal organizations and institutions.

Opportunities and restrictions at capacity building and necessities of building of cross-sectored capacity were defined at systematically, institutional and individual level and in regard to obligations of Bulgaria under three UN conventions from Rio`92 and at accomplishment of Project "Project "Bulgarian National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) for Improved Global Environmental Management (2003-2004). The Project gave opportunity of different stakeholders to evaluate and to prioritize necessities of capacity building for improved management of global environment in scope of climate changes, biodiversity and land degradation. Activities under the Project included analyses, personal interviews, discussions among working groups, meeting for verifications, workshops and consultations. In order to enable further implementation of outlined measures for capacity building, identified through national self-assessment process was provided the best possible wider participation of stakeholders. This process of national self-assessment is catalyst of national activities and internal cooperation for improved global environment management at country level. The prepared Strategic Action Plan under national self-assessment set up basis of integrated long-term approach for global environment management and will give opportunity to prioritize measures for capacity building in conditions of limited financial resources.

To highlight the problem, a UNDP/GEF project on capacity building for sustainable land management is realizing in Bulgaria (2005-2008). Its results will serve as a good example of application of an integrated approach to land degradation and rehabilitation. The project long-term **development objective** is to enhance the enabling environment and capacity for arresting land degradation and establishing sustainable land management practices, so as to contribute to enhancing ecosystem health, integrity, functions and services while promoting sustainable livelihoods in Bulgaria. As **immediate objective** the project will build capacity for sustainable land management and development and implementation of a coherent land policy. It will focus on mainstreaming, institutional and technical capacity building, and establishment of financial mechanisms and resource mobilisation for sustainable land management. This project includes a strong component on building capacities for the implementation of the NSAP. The design of this capacity building component has been done in close collaboration with the local team in charge

of the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) process, which included the active participation of the UNCCD focal point. The project falls under the Strategic Priority 1 of the OP 15/GEF (targeted capacity building). It is expected to establish the enabling environment and requisite capacities for long-term investments in mitigating land degradation and promoting sustainable land management. As a targeted capacity building project, the global benefits are expected to be indirect. The project will build capacities with a long-term view to achieving global and local benefits. The global benefits comprise the conservation of topsoil fragile mountain areas that are being affected by erosion, and provide habitats for species of global significance. Global benefits also include reduce pollution of water bodies that discharge into the Black Sea, preservation of important landscapes important for biodiversity, and diminished emission of greenhouse gases from deforestation and desertification processes. Local benefits comprise mainly sustained productivity of land in the agricultural, forestry and livestock sectors, and reduction of poverty.

The Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Programme (SGP) started in Bulgaria in 2006 and encourages activities which engage local communities and contribute to coping with global environmental problems in GEF Focal Areas as: biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, protection of international waters, prevention of land degradation (primarily desertification and deforestation), and elimination of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) through community-based approaches.. National priorities of Small Grants Programme in Bulgaria are in thematic areas as development of ecotourism, contributing directly to capitalization, sustainable use and preservation of globally significant biodiversity in priorities` ecosystems in the country, sustainable farming in priorities` ecosystems and territories with globally significant biodiversity and/ or problems/ risks of land degradation, including preservation of rare domestic breeds and cultivated crops, bio-farming , agroforestry , traditional sustainable agricultural practices , good agricultural practices and food producing, integration of issues on preservation of global environment in local development processes and territory structure in areas with globally significant biodiversity and/ or problems/ risks of land degradation, elaboration of sustainable products, which engages existing or newly started enterprises in new approach to technical elaboration on its products or marketing, aiming to achieve sustainable material use, POPs elimination and minimizing of wastes and energy consumption.. SGP will expend 75% of its resources on projects under these thematic areas and the rest 25% will be allocate to proposal, which are not relevant to GEF focal areas, but point some potential to significant contribution to GEF` scopes directing mostly to collecting and distributing of information/ training/ education or are enable to mobilize financial resources and to establish strategic partnerships.

Long term objective of Project «Integration of Global Environment Problems in Regional Development Process in Bulgaria» (2006-2010) is to promote active integration of issues connected with global environment in regional and local development process, as well as territory structure in Bulgaria. This should be achieved through strengthening of opportunities of Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW) and Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works (MRDPW) i. e. capacity building for integration of environment protection objectives in policies and practices for regional development and territory arrangement. The Project supports integration of three Rio conventions – The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), The UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), in regional development and territory planning processes. In regard to integration of global environmental issues in regional development and territory planning processes is elaborated credential training programme. Key participants in

decision making process are trained to integrate objectives connected with biodiversity preservation and combat to climate changes and land degradation in their work on planning, implementation and assessment of regional development. It is envisaged specifying a common set of indicators and directions of measuring contribution to policies of regional development and territory planning to implementations of global environmental goals. The construction of working internet portal, devoted to integration of environmental issues as biodiversity, climate changes and land degradation is supported and also revised Regional Development Plan for one pilot region and revised Territory Structure Plan in one municipality or group of municipality through implementation of already built capacity.

PAPER NO. 7: LESOTHO

COP 7 decisions follow-up

COP 7 decision	Quick reference	Actors	Tasks assigned by the COP	Time frame	Actions taken by countries (please fill this column)
1, para 1	Implementation in Africa	African country Parties	To decentralize and devolve rights and management responsibilities in respect of natural resources to appropriate local levels through institutional arrangements, technical and enterprise support and adequate financing mechanisms	Continued	The local government act in Lesotho has established different local community structures and mechanisms in managing the natural resources. The local communities in Lesotho are empowered with the Local Community Sub-Community which is responsible for managing natural resources. This committee is task to also generate income from the sale of thatching grass <i>Hyperhenia hirta</i> or sand. The Ministry of Forestry & Land Reclamation has facilitated the formation of Range Resources Management committees which comprise natural resource users that include Livestock Owners, Traditional Healers, Grass Weaving Groups in addressing the sustainable use natural biological resources and biodiversity conservation. Livestock Owners are further organized into grazing associations which also have management committees that participate on decision making on the use of natural resources. Ministerial staff provides these management committees with technical support and capacity building so that they can make an informed decision on use of natural resources.
1, para 2	Implementation in Africa	African country Parties	To strengthen national coordinating bodies through budgetary and human resource support and by integrating them into the administrative structure at an appropriate level of authority with a view to effectively influencing policy-making processes in order to deliver coordination and mainstreaming functions	Continued	The country is still working on strengthening the coordination of UNCCD, CBD, CITES, RAMSAR and UNFCCC in order to administratively have appropriate level of authority on same wave length in influencing the policy making processes. A joint national committee has been put in place by multi-stake holder representatives and it is chaired by an NGO.

1, para 3	Implementa- tion in Africa	Parties	To enhance approaches for civil society participation and to strengthen organizational, technical and financial mechanisms and structures at field level for addressing jointly environmental management and poverty eradication	Continued	The civil societies in Lesotho have different sites in which they are implementing the programs addressing land degradation examples are PELUM Lesotho, World Vision Lesotho, Care Lesotho, RSDA, Lesotho Red Cross, Katleho-‘Moho, Grow, and Bishop-Allard.
1, para 4	Implementa- tion in Africa	African country Parties, with the support of international organizations	To strengthen the capacities of Government and civil society, and to support agencies in the delivery of services for the formulation, execution and evaluation of participatory local area development programmes under the NAP, including community/private/public partnerships	Continued	The country has adopted the Integrated Catchment Management as the approach at which combined efforts from the Government and Community Based Organizations are coordinated to execute development programs which addresses land degradation under the NAPs. The program involves capacity building of local communities of interests groups that are utilizing the natural resource base e.g. Herders, Livestock Owners, Traditional Healers, and all CBOs. Above all the program is intended to address poverty within the rural communities at which it is implemented. The country also have some private business who utilize the vegetation for extracting sap for manufacturing of ointments e.g, Aloe Ointments Manufacturers
1, para 5	Implementa- tion in Africa	African country Parties	To enhance and improve their national reports, including their country profiles, as a tool to access and utilize data and information on the implementation of the Convention	Continued	The data and information is collected from various role players in compiling the reports and country profile with regard to the implementation of the convention and the functions they perform. These ultimately give us room to develop action plans on the information provided by different stakeholders.
1, para 6	Implementa- tion in Africa	African country Parties	To synergistically implement the three Rio conventions and other relevant instruments	Continued	The country is working on strengthening the coordination of three RIO conventions as their effects are inter-twined. The impacts of climate change has an effects on Biodiversity and the end results is Desertification because of vegetation deterioration due to drought is been experienced in Southern Africa especially Lesotho, Botswana, South Africa and Swaziland

1, para 7	Implementati on in Africa	Parties and interna- tional organi- zations	To increase, with a view to developing an enabling environment, cross- sectoral coordination and partnership development for pro-poor investments in the drylands, and to support capacity- building in a predictable and sustainable manner in all areas relevant to the implementation of the NAPs by African country Parties, including: (a) Policy, programme and project planning and development, as well as negotiations skills; (b) Adaptive natural resource management; (c) Socio-economic analysis and development; (d) Research, monitoring and information management; (e) Analysis, documentation and dissemination of best practices; and (f) Enterprise development and community/private partnerships	Continued	Lesotho has been accepted by GEF to access Small Grant Program which will facilitate the country in strengthening partnership with civil societies in project planning and development. In the process they will be improving their negotiation skills and adaptive natural resource management. The program is administered by Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture. In the process of accessing the grant Community Based Organizations and Civil Society will have to conduct the socio- economic analysis and development in order to evaluate whether the project proposed will be viable and sustainable, then in process information management and monitoring which will be exploited in order to achieve best practice of information dissemination. There will be a mechanism that will be developed to regulate and control community/private partnership and enterprise development in order to promote and protect business ventures on natural resources.
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1, para 8	Implementati on in Africa	African country Parties	To reflect national budgetary allocations for rural development and related initiatives that contribute to UNCCD activities and to indicate national shortfalls	Continued	The country through the ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation has committed itself to allocate US \$1 million each financial year to address the Land Degradation problems, although these funds are limited given the area at which land degradation has occurred. The shortfalls can be addressed by the projects financed by international organizations such as GEF, World Bank, UNDP, GTZ etc when the country have accessed such interventions or projects.
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Follow up to decision 12/COP 7**Italian activities for the promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant Conventions and relevant international organizations, institutions and agencies**

An ecosystem approach to environmental protection have been a key element of the Italian strategy to promote sustainable development.

The mutual interaction among parallel processes in the environmental and sustainable development arena, among different International Organizations and among MEAs, in particular the three Rio Conventions is one of the key issue of the Italian strategy against desertification. In the period between COP 7 and COP 8 we have been focussing on 3 main subjects:

- 1) fight against desertification and right to water;
- 2) the role of traditional knowledge in SLM, synergies between the UNCCD and UNESCO;
- 3) climate change, desertification and forests.

1. Human Right to Water and fight against desertification

Background: The Italian Government has been recently involved in a political-diplomatic process aimed to recognize the human right to water. The idea is start with a diplomatic campaign at COP 8 and continue with a global UN Conference devoted to this issue to be hosted in Italy on 2008.

A first step in this direction is the Conference on “Human right to water and fight against desertification”, to be held in Rome, 27 June 2007. The objective of the Conference is to analyse the strong interlinkages between the public policies against desertification and the policies for the promotion of the human right to water. The recognition of the human right to water will eventually have positive effects on the implementation of the Convention. The pane of the Conference is composed by the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs responsible for Development Cooperation, the Under-Secretary for the Environment, the Italian UNCCD Focal Point, the President of Puglia Region and the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD. The seminar will be attended by national public officers, NGO’s, international officers, researchers and journalists.

2. Traditional knowledge for sustainable land management

Traditional Knowledge constitutes the ancient knowledge of humanity, and local solutions that have allowed the creation and management of ecosystems and cultural landscapes on the entire surface of the planet. It enables the development of solutions with a low energy and resource use, that are able to adapt to environmental variability and to react to emergencies and catastrophes in flexible and multifunctional ways. Today, while entire planet systems risk ecological collapse, Traditional Knowledge shows how to interact with the environment enhancing its resource potential without exhausting it. It also constitutes a still widely adopted system of strong and brilliant devices for energy production and resource recycling, microclimate control and for the management of the earth’s soil. The interest in Traditional Knowledge has been expressed by the

United Nations and by other International Organisms during all the main conferences on sustainable development.

Background

The first two initiatives regarding the role of traditional knowledge in combating desertification have been the 1st and the 2nd “*International Forum on European Policies to combat desertification in the Mediterranean Basin*” held in Matera (Italy) on July 1997 and October 1998.

In December 1999 a Centre on Traditional and Local Knowledge to Combat Desertification (art. 4 of the Italian law n. 426) was established in Matera.

UNCCD organized two ad Hoc Panels on traditional knowledge to combat desertification on July 15- 18,1999 and May 8- 12, 2000.

The Conference Of the Parties have always paid substantial attention to the traditional knowledge issue. Further discussions will take place also in future COPs

State of the art

Some important aspects of the Italian project idea are being implemented within activities carried on in different contexts by several institutions and organisms (IPOGEA, UNESCO, European Commission, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ENEA, APAT and NATO) and by two scientific INCO MED projects **Foggara** and **Chadouf**.

The principal activities carried out in collaboration with different organizations are:

Analysis of systems of specific techniques.

Activity specifically concerns:

- techniques of restoration of traditional centres and the building of a sustainable town
- agricultural techniques and landscape
- drainage tunnel systems and other water harvesting and management techniques
- terracing systems
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Inventory of Traditional Knowledge and Assessment of ecosystems

A prototype expert system realized with the contribution of UNESCO has entered the web (www.tkwb.org). It allows consulting a dynamic questionnaire based on the iconographic system SITTI which guides to the recognition and notification of new knowledge. Textual, graphical and photographic data are automatically inserted in a Geographic Worldwide Maps System through a method of georeference. Through this system data are constantly integrated and enlarged with further information: bibliographies, texts, maps, photos and projects. The 3D-worldwide maps allow blowing up more and more precise details. SITTI is used to make an inventory of traditional techniques, their qualities and possibilities of evolution all over Mediterranean countries. The application of this methodology could contribute to progress the research and each sites might be included in a continuously updated the traditional knowledge list. The system should become integral part of a local strategy of conservation, restoration and innovative

enhancement based on the archaeological and historical memory. The sites should get acknowledgement for adopting protocols of good practices.

Innovative use of traditional techniques.

The Province and the Municipality of Florence and the Tuscany Region are candidates to host a centre of excellence as a point of reference for the 800 UNESCO MAB sites all over the world. Federparchi and Legambiente launched an initiative for involving in this activity a network of 751 protected areas in Italy (3 million-hectares).

International Conference.

In October 2005, in Viterbo, the conference “Toward an integration of traditional knowledge and new technologies for combating drought and desertification.”, assessed existing experiences at national and international level. The main topics addressed by the Conference are:

- Traditional methods and techniques
- Innovative methods and techniques
- Best Practices and Case studies: comparison of experiences for a better integration
- Technology Assessment for an integrated evaluation

Ongoing activities

The results herein achieved can be shared with scientists and policy makers of all countries interested to work on traditional knowledge and its application to combating desertification aiming at

- Integrating and increasing knowledge,
- Reducing digital-divide both among countries and over rural and urban areas,
- Creating a traditional knowledge worldwide network, in particular, by integrating those areas which are still excluded from the information society,
- Sharing a structured model of local knowledge on a GIS platform,
- Protecting, promoting and enhancing local knowledge heritage threatened by the increase of poverty and negative globalization path.

The Italian Ministry of the Environment, Land and Sea has signed a protocol with the UNCCD for the creation of the Centre on Traditional Knowledge in Italy.

The aims of the Centre are the following:

- To identify, study, evaluate, disseminate, promote and protect Traditional Knowledge at an International level.
- To guarantee a participatory and sustainable approach to soil and natural resource management and the involvement of local communities.
- To develop an international cooperation in the field of Traditional Knowledge with the perspective of strengthening and implementing the multilateral environmental agreements.
- To make sure that Traditional Knowledge becomes an operational factor in the strategic local policies and in the development of the global political processes.

The Region of Tuscany has offered to host the Centre in Florence. The UNCCD, the Ministry of the Environment and the Region of Tuscany have chosen IPOGEA, Research Centre on Local and Traditional Knowledge, to be the executive Agency for the Centre's creation.

UNESCO and IPOGEA created an expert prototypal system available on the Internet (www.tkwb.org) presenting a dynamic questionnaire based on an Iconographic classification system for Traditional Knowledge (SITTI), elaborated by IPOGEA, that guides the identification and classification processes of new knowledge.

IPOGEA is carrying out two network projects: one with the European Commission (RESOURCENET), on the use of Traditional Knowledge for a correct exploitation of Natural Resources and the other with NATO, on the use of Traditional Knowledge for security in the Mediterranean area.

An important Conference linking traditional knowledge, climate change and desertification, titled "**climate change, desertification, environmental conflicts and migrations** - An international Network of experts on Traditional Knowledge for a common strategy " will take place from the 27th to the 29th of June in Florence. The Conference will involve the Secretary-General of the UNCCD Hama Arba Diallo, the Director of UNESCO BRESCE Engelbert Ruoss, the President of the Region of Tuscany, Claudio Martini, 30 international experts representing all the UNCCD regions, Italian experts from the Italian Panel on Traditional Knowledge, International organizations and the most important Research Centres on Traditional Knowledge. The Objectives of the Conference is to organize and consolidate an international network of experts on Traditional Knowledge, to collect proposal of operational and institutional strategy for the creation of the Centre, to continue with the implementation of Traditional Knowledge classification structure and expert system together with the dissemination and sharing of it with other Countries. Recommendations and conclusions will be transmitted to the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), and to the Conference of the Parties (COP) CST/COP 8 that will take place in Madrid from the 3rd to the 12th of September 2007.

3. Climate change, desertification and forests

Desertification contributes to both regional and global climate change. Reduced vegetation cover and soil quality can affect local climate by raising temperatures and reducing moisture levels. These effects may extend beyond the desertified area, resulting in regional changes in climate and atmospheric circulation, which in turn may accelerate the process of drylands degradation. Desertification (and efforts to combat it) may also influence global climate change by altering the emission and absorption of greenhouse gases. Declining vegetation and soil quality can result in the release of carbon, while re-vegetation can lead to more carbon being absorbed from the air and stored in biomass. Cattle fed on poor-quality desert scrub may produce more methane, while dry soils can absorb methane from the atmosphere, acting as "sinks". Nitrous oxide emissions may rise if more fertiliser is used to reclaim lands. These effects are small compared with the impact of global energy use, although at the national level they may be the most important source of greenhouse gas emissions for certain states. **Global climate change may contribute to desertification.** Scientists cannot yet predict how rising greenhouse gas levels will affect the rate of desertification. What they can predict is that changes in temperature, evaporation, and rainfall will vary from region to region. As a result, desertification is likely to be aggravated in some areas and eased in others. These in short are the reason for our

strong involvement in any policies aimed to strengthen the synergies between UNCCD and UNFCCC. Some examples:

1. In the framework of the side-initiatives in preparation for the National Conference on Climate Change, the Ministry for Environment, Land and Sea and Territory had promoted a workshop on “Climate change and desertification: monitoring strategies and vulnerability reduction strategies” to be held in Alghero, 21-22 June 2007. Furthermore a Seminar on “Climate change and desertification, biodiversity in the Mediterranean” will be held on 23th June at the University of Sassari.
2. Two important projects using native species for afforestation/reforestation activities. The projects have several main objectives: sequestering carbon dioxide and mitigating climate change, restore degraded lands, creating job opportunities, improving socio-economic conditions within the area of influence of the forest and increasing environmental awareness, particularly among the youth and women.

2.1. In China, a project named **“Youth Participation in Plantation Establishment for Combating Desertification, Mitigating Climate Change and Protecting Biodiversity in China”** is implemented. Together with the Secretariat of China National Committee for Implementing Programmes for Combating Desertification (CCICCD) and other important Chinese partners, including the Aohan youth league and the County Women Association, the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea and the Viterbo University of La Tuscia are conducting a carbon sequestration project aiming at restoring degraded land using native species.

The Aohan County is located in Inner Mongolia province of China where there are thousands of hectares of eroded and desertified land that need urgent treatment. The project is taking place on agricultural and grazing areas with low productivity and highly prone to wind erosion. Therefore ecological rehabilitation task is still huge and pressing. The implementation of afforestation for the purpose of combating desertification will be the central task in the effort to rehabilitate the ecology over a long period of time. The project covers nine state forest farms, with a total population of 2,311, of which the agricultural population accounts for 95.24% of the total.

2.2. In Argentina, the project named **“Afforestation for the purpose of combating desertification, mitigating climate change and protecting biodiversity in Argentina – Environmental Youth Groups in Santiago del Estero, Argentina”** represents a second attempt to implement synergies, an ecosystem approach and match environment with development. Together with the National University of Santiago del Estero and two NGOs, Fundación del Sur (FS) and Grupo Ambiental para el Desarrollo (GADE), the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea and the Viterbo University of La Tuscia are conducting a project similar to the one carried out in China. The project is implemented in the Province of Santiago del Estero located in the North of Argentina, one of the poorest areas in the country.

In that area, land degradation is a consequence of intensive agricultural exploitation, overgrazing, and land clearing: the unsustainable exploitation of the natural forest destroyed million of hectares since the beginning of the last century. The increase in farming entails -in a context of poor territorial planning- soil degradation and loss of native forests as a result of uncontrolled clearing. Once farming becomes not viable, lands are set aside or abandoned.

Native forests - heavy wood products sources - are degraded by the lack of sustainable management policies since they are not perceived as valuable options to carbon and/or firewood production.. While this status causes massive loss of biodiversity in species protected by CITES, the potential for non-wood forest production is very high.

The sites the Ministry and its partners are working on, is located on abandoned agricultural land affected by salinization processes due to poor water management and lack of maintenance of irrigation and drainage systems. Besides, the inadequate water disposal during overflows lack worsens the overall situation, accelerating the degradation processes occurring in those lands. The project is benefiting a total of 200 youth and 40 farmers and/or landowners (and their families).

These are only two meaningful example of a wide array of successful projects which address simultaneously climate change, forest protection and sustainable land management. For the complete list please refer to the Italian Report on *“Measures taken to assist the implementation of the UNCCD for the Fifth Session of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of the UNCCD, presented in Buenos Aires, on March 2007 (pages 11-64 window “linkage and synergies with other environmental conventions)”*

3. The International Year on Desert and Desertification (IYDD)

The IYDD has also provided the opportunity to engage in exploring other crucial cross-cutting issues which need to be dealt with trough an horizontal approach encompassing the entire UN system. These issues are education of youth and the empowerment of women. In this context the International Conference on Women and Desertification held in Beijing and the Bamako International Conference on Youth and Desertification represent concrete step forwards and a source of inspiration for further action.

The Beijing Statement recommends to take actions in many different areas linked to the establishment of adequate institutional arrangements, identification of key priorities areas and monitoring systems in order to promote the role of women in combating desertification. In this context, Italy has reaffirmed the key role of women on the sustainable management of natural resources in arid and degraded zones and has confirmed its continuous support for measures that improve women living conditions in drylands thanks to the utilization of clean technologies, renewable energies and integrated water resources management systems. Furthermore, Italy has recognized the importance to promote land ownership for women though micro-credit, promote higher education in science and technology and empower women in theirs legal and institutional capacity in decision making.

The Bamako Declaration on Youth and Desertification gave inputs to take concrete action in favour of young people. The Declaration invites Governments, the UN system and civil society to act in the fields of environmental and sustainable development education, awareness rising, participation and empowerment of young people, migration and security and economic opportunities.

Italy will finance the establishment of a Centre for Youth Education to sustainable land management in Bamako.
