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UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

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**REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND OF
ITS INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 22,
PARAGRAPH 2 (a) AND (b), AND ARTICLE 26 OF THE CONVENTION,
AS WELL AS DECISION 1/COP.5, PARAGRAPH 10**

**REVIEW OF THE REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF AFFECTED COUNTRY
PARTIES OF REGIONS OTHER THAN AFRICA, INCLUDING ON THE
PARTICIPATORY PROCESS, AND ON EXPERIENCE GAINED
AND RESULTS ACHIEVED IN THE PREPARATION AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION PROGRAMMES**

Compilation of summaries of reports submitted by developed country Parties

1. According to article 22, paragraph 2 (a) and (b), and article 26 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Conference of the Parties (COP) shall review the implementation of the Convention and its institutional arrangements. By its decision 1/COP.5, the COP decided to establish the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) as a subsidiary body of the COP to assist it in regularly reviewing the implementation of the Convention.
2. By its decision 11/COP.1, the COP requested the secretariat to compile the summaries of reports submitted by developed country Parties on measures taken to assist in the preparation and implementation of action programmes, including information on the financial resources they have provided, or are providing, under the Convention. The same decision also defined the format and content of reports and, in particular, required summaries of reports not to exceed six pages.
3. The present document contains the summaries of 12 reports submitted by 17 November 2006; these are reproduced without formal editing. All reports, including any which may be submitted after this date, will be made available in their entirety on the secretariat website <www.unccd.int>.

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BELGIUM

After having participated, from the very beginning, in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa (INCD), Belgium was able to accede as a Party to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) on June 30, 1997.

During this process and in the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) thereafter, Belgium has been represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Belgian Agency for Development Cooperation (BADC), now indicated as the Directorate General for Development Cooperation (DGDC), and a representative of the Belgian scientific society. At the national level, meetings have always been prepared through a close coordination of all these actors, including all interested non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Under the Belgian Presidency of the European Union (EU), the EU played an active role in the success of COP 5, held in Geneva in October 2001. Since then, Belgium has been elected as the Vice-president of both COP 6 and COP 7, acting as one of the Western Europe and Other Group Bureau members during the intersessional periods.

At the international level, Belgium was represented in the preparatory and coordination meetings of both the EU and the group of like-minded countries within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), where ideas are exchanged and, if possible, common positions defined.

Belgium has a long-standing record of activities in the combat of desertification, covering a wide range of application categories, depending on the criteria used for their classification. From an institutional viewpoint, Belgium, through DGDC, is active at the direct, bilateral level (government cooperation), the indirect, bilateral level (NGOs, universities and scientific institutions), the bilateral/multilateral level (actions implemented by multilateral institutions for earmarked contributions) and the multilateral level (core funding).

Policy plan for the Belgian international cooperation

In order to understand better the past and present initiatives for combating desertification, as well as future directions on this topic, a brief outline will be given of the general policy that has guided Belgian development cooperation in the past and that is still guiding ongoing interventions. However, the major part of this chapter will be dedicated to the current policy plan as it represents the framework within which all future actions regarding the combat of desertification will be conceived and implemented.

In the late 1990s, the Belgian Development Cooperation underwent a thorough reorganization. In 1997, a Parliamentary Review Committee examined extensively the functioning and impact of the Belgian Cooperation and noted a need to better define the objectives, to simplify procedures, to separate programming and identification tasks from project implementation, and to set up an independent evaluation department. The reform process was then launched through the adoption of the following laws:

- The Act of 21 December 1998, creating "the Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC)", a public corporation, separated programming and identification from implementation, integrated the Development Administration into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a Directorate General for Development Cooperation (DGDC), and created an independent evaluation department monitored by the Parliament. The relationship between the administration and BTC is laid down in a management contract.
- The Act of 25 May 1999 on international cooperation defined the objectives of the BTC. It limited the number of international organizations financed with Belgian official development assistance (ODA) to 20. It also defined the modalities of the partnerships with the NGOs, communities, regions, provinces, municipalities, the private sector and other groups.
- The Act of 9 February 1999 created the Belgian Survival Fund, which targets countries with chronic food shortages.
- The Act of 3 November 2001 created the Belgian Investment Public Corporation for investments in developing countries (BIO).
- The Act of 25 May 1999 has set the objectives and the overall framework for Belgium's international cooperation. The main objective of the Belgian cooperation is to achieve sustainable human development through the combat of poverty. The concept of "partnership" stays central to this approach. This Act also stipulates that the direct Belgian bilateral aid has to be focused on five sectors:
 - Basic health care;
 - Education and training;
 - Agriculture and food security;
 - Basic infrastructure;
 - Social development.

Gender, environment and social economy are the three crosscutting themes. The development pertinence will be measured using the following DAC-criteria:

- Strengthening of the institutional and management capacity;
- Economic and social impact;
- Technical and financial viability;
- Efficiency of the planned implementation procedures;
- Attention for the equality between men and women;
- Respect for the protection and the safeguarding of the environment

The geographic focus of the bilateral cooperation is nowadays concentrated on 18 partner countries. Most of these countries belong to the least developed countries (LDC) category. The priority has been given to the African continent, with 13 partner countries (Algeria, Benin, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, South Africa). In the Asian region, Belgium is active in Palestine and Viet Nam. Regarding Latin America and the Caribbean, its presence is limited to Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru. While development cooperation activities on the bilateral

level are limited to these partners, multilateral agreements and programmes, and also NGO activities, often cover a wider geographical setting.

Belgium's ODA has steadily increased from 0.3 % of Gross National Income (GNI) in 1999 to about 0.39 % in 2001. At the beginning of 2002, the Government has reaffirmed its will to increase ODA and has set up a time frame to reach the target of 0.7 % of GNI by 2010, which entails a 0.05 % yearly increase. So far, the ODA climbing curve is in accordance with this plan and reached 0.41 % in 2004 and 0.45 % in 2005, and is set at 0.50 % for 2006. The promotion to ministerial rank in 2003 of the member of the Federal Government responsible for development cooperation is indicative of the importance the latter has acquired in government policy.

In his policy note of October 2004, the Minister for Development Cooperation confirmed that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) remained the driving force behind the Belgian development cooperation and has identified the promotion of effectiveness and improved consistency as strategic priorities.

The DGDC has also drafted its environmental strategy plan. The close interrelations between environmental degradation and poverty lie at the basis of this strategy. The mainstreaming of environmental issues into all policies, programmes and projects, as well as into the political dialogue with partner countries, is its main objective. The sustainable management of water resources and the combat of land degradation and desertification are the main thematic priorities of this strategy.

From the above it is clear that the main principles of the UNCCD coincide with the broad policy outlook and specific strategies of the Belgian international cooperation. The UNCCD puts emphasis on the interrelations between poverty and land degradation, on the need for national action programmes (NAPs), the participatory approach and the action at grass root levels (bottom-up approach). All these have a direct bearing on the Belgian vision about international cooperation.

Belgium stands committed to provide support to initiatives aiming at combating land degradation and desertification, not as a separate agenda, but as part of integrated strategies to alleviate poverty, under the ownership of its partners in the South. It will continue to offer its support to initiatives in this field, through its traditional cooperation channels and, in particular, in its bilateral cooperation, in partnership with multilateral organizations, such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with Belgian universities, and with NGOs.

Communication of information

In accordance with article 26 of the Convention, which provides that each Party shall communicate to the COP at its ordinary sessions, through the Secretariat of the Convention, reports on measures which it has taken for the implementation of the Convention and that the COP shall determine the timetable for submission and the format of such reports, COP 1 took decision 11/COP.1 which defines the procedure to be followed in this matter.

Thus, developed country Parties shall report, at each session, on measures taken to assist action programmes of those affected developing country Parties reporting for the session, and submit this report at least six months prior to the session at which they are to be reviewed.

The report of developed country Parties should focus on:

- The consultative processes and partnership agreements in which they are involved;
- Measures taken to support the preparation and implementation of action programmes at all levels, including information on the financial resources they have provided, or are providing, both bilaterally and multilaterally.

As a result of the review of the 1999 reports, which were conducted in relation to COP 3, some additional recommendations for reporting by developed country Parties were issued. The reports should be organized geographically (Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, other affected country Parties) and subdivided into Part A and Part B.

Decision 1/COP.5 requested that the first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC), established by that same decision, shall review updates to reports already available and/or new reports from all Parties, to be submitted no later than 30 April 2002. Due to this exceptional case, developed country Parties had to report on measures taken under the Convention for all regions to assist in the preparation and implementation of action programmes, including information on the financial resources they had provided, or were providing.

As of CRIC 3 the reporting started alternating between geographical areas: 2004 was dedicated to desertification activities in the African region; and this time, preparing for CRIC 5 in 2006, it is the turn of the Asian region and the Latin American and Caribbean region, and other affected country Parties. In the present report, Belgium will cover only the Asian region and the Latin American and Caribbean region, each one in a different chapter, as it has no programmes elsewhere.

For each chapter the same format will be followed:

In Part A, Belgium is reporting the measures taken to implement the Convention at all levels, i.e. the Belgian national level, the regional level and the international level. Under (i) a short discussion of the activities reported under (ii) and (iii) will be provided, under (ii) the consultative processes at all relevant levels will be described and under (iii) a listing of activities, including financial information, will be presented.

In Part B, additional activities related to combating desertification, if any, will be reported.

Methodology

In order to obtain a precise overview of all Belgian projects in the field of combating desertification, a selection in the database of DGCD, which contains the complete information about the ODA-contributions of Belgium, has been executed. Therefore a selection with the Rio-marker for desertification has been compared with a selection with CRS (creditor reporting system) codes. Out of the comparison of these results, some adjustments have been done for the Rio-markers.

A distinction has been made in the specific type of intervention: administration support, budgetary support, investment, sectoral help or technical assistance. Further distinction as to the type of financing can be distinguished: governmental support, indirect support (NGO-projects or programmes, collaboration from universities or other institutions) or multilateral support (obligatory contributions, core funding or earmarking).

For Asia, following countries have been classified:

- Asia Central and South: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iraq, Sri Lanka
- Asia Middle East: Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Administrated Areas
- Asia Far East: China, Indonesia, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republics, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam

For Latin America and the Caribbean the classification is the following:

- Central America: Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Trinidad and Tobago
- South America: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela

The sectors selected were Water, Forestry, Environment, Humanitarian Actions, Agriculture and Multisectoral Projects. These sectors have been subdivided in implementation (management, protection, development, production...), capacity building (training, formation) and research for development.

In order to estimate the real contribution to the combat on desertification, the following weighting factors have been chosen:

Type of project	Rio-marker = 1	Rio-marker = 2
Project	50%	100%
Multilateral – earmarked	50%	100%
Multilateral – core	25%	50%
Specific	12,5%	25%

Under “specific” is understand multisectoral projects or programmes with a minor component “desertification”. The total amount of the contribution has been multiplied with these weighting factors, in order to obtain a realistic amount of money that is used for the combat of desertification.

CANADA

Canada has been a strong supporter of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) since its inception in 1995. Canada plays a dual role in the implementation of the Convention – both as an affected country (with arid regions in Western Canada) and, more significantly, as a donor country assisting the developing world to meet UNCCD objectives.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), as the federal government's department responsible for administering overseas development assistance, leads Canada's collaborative efforts under the UNCCD. CIDA works with other government departments, in

particular Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Environment Canada, and Natural Resources Canada, as well as the International Development Research Centre (a Federal Government Crown Corporation), on a variety of international projects that promote sustainable development. CIDA's collaborative efforts in this field also extend to a number of Canadian partners from the private sector, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This broad range of experience has helped influence CIDA's strategic directions, including the approach taken to address sustainable land management.

This report summarizes the key Canadian initiatives that were undertaken to combat desertification from 2002 to 2006 in regions other than Africa, as required under the Convention. Canada produced an Africa-focused report in 2004, which can be found on the UNCCD website (<www.unccd.int>). In the implementation of the Convention, and as reflected in the aforementioned reports on activities, Canada has taken a holistic management approach because of the complex nature of desertification. In many instances, sustainable land management policies are not considered independently, but are integrated into broader poverty reduction strategies.

Over the reporting period, Canada has provided bilateral support for desertification related initiatives in a number of affected countries within Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East. It has also contributed to multilateral initiatives and institutions whose programming has a major impact on sustainable development. These include the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the International Land Coalition (ILC).

The integration of land-related programming, including desertification, has underscored the four interconnected dimensions of sustainable development: economic well-being, social development, environmental sustainability, and good governance. CIDA's approach to addressing desertification issues and other impacts of land degradation in partner countries is premised on sustainable development, and emphasizes poverty reduction, capacity development and participatory initiatives. These take place at all levels of intervention – involving people and institutions from the community to regional and international levels. Since Canada's ratification of the UNCCD, CIDA has worked with other Parties and with its partners towards ensuring that the Convention's guiding principles are encompassed into their collaborative work.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Since its accession to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD), on April 24, 2000, the Czech Republic has actively participated in activities connected to the implementation of the Convention and it also continually contributes to activities of the bodies of the Convention. The Czech Republic acceded to the Convention with the understanding that it does not belong to the countries affected by desertification in the sense of the Convention. The Czech Republic as a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and European Union ranges among so-called donor countries. The Czech Republic provides assistance to the affected developing countries through projects concerning such areas as soil degradation, hydrogeology, hydrology and forestry, particularly within its scope for official

development assistance (ODA). Research and scientific institutions, the academic sector, non-profit organizations and the private sector also contribute assistance to the affected countries.

In addition to financial means, which are limited, the Czech Republic can provide experts, suitable technologies, know-how and information.

The Czech Republic has at its disposal considerable experience particularly in the following areas, in which it is able to provide assistance to the affected countries:

- soil and water sustainable management
- development of maps and background materials employing satellite and aerial photographs
- geological, hydrogeological and pedological surveys
- monitoring of water erosion, floods and drought and preventive measures
- soil type mapping and definition of indicators for soil degradation
- forest inventory, typology and sustainable management
- sustainable forestry
- afforestation and re-forestation of affected areas
- scientific research
- landscape protection
- reclamation of lands devastated by mining.

The Czech Republic also participates in assistance to affected developing countries by means of its ODA projects. A number of these projects have been implemented with a direct impact on the issue connected to desertification and soil degradation. There are currently several ongoing projects closely related to such areas as desertification, development of water resources, hydrogeology, agriculture, and improvement of education of local experts. Private companies, universities, research institutions and non-governmental organizations are also involved in the implementation. The implemented projects are of great value for recipient countries and the Czech ODA is generally highly valued. The Czech Republic thus contributes to addressing of global environmental issues in the way to pursue sustainable development and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

FINLAND

The purpose of this report is to present a brief update to the previously submitted national reports pertaining to the support provided by Finland towards the implementation of the Convention.

In general, Finland has not received new proposals or requests for support by affected country Parties with regard to implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

GENERAL POLICY SUPPORT

In 2006, Finland continues to support the UNCCD process by making voluntary contributions to the order of EUR 250 000 (with carry-overs from 2005) to support the following:

- Work of the Intergovernmental Intersessional Working Group for the preparation of a new 10-year strategic plan and framework for the UNCCD

- Regional cooperation
- International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD): Youth Congress, Bamako, Mali, September 2006
- Global Mechanism: facilitation of mainstreaming, partnership building and contribution towards the work of the Intergovernmental Intersessional Working Group (IIWG).

FRANCE

La France a fait une priorité de la lutte contre la désertification, contre la dégradation des terres et contre la pauvreté. Sa stratégie est une stratégie à long terme destinée à renforcer les capacités des pays touchés Parties. Elle encourage la gestion durable des espaces endommagés et menacés en favorisant leur réhabilitation et leur exploitation économique.

La France conduit de nombreuses opérations visant à la décentralisation et au renforcement de la société civile ; elle finance des projets de développement rural, de gestion des ressources naturelles et de protection de l'environnement. La recherche scientifique sur la désertification est une priorité, ainsi que les systèmes d'alerte précoce et les synergies entre les trois grandes Conventions sur l'environnement.

L'action générale de la coopération s'exerce dans les pays appartenant à la Zone Prioritaire de Solidarité (ZSP) définie par les autorités politiques françaises. Ces pays se situent majoritairement en Afrique.

Les acteurs français sont le Ministère des affaires étrangères, l'Agence française de développement, opérateur pivot de l'APD, le Fond français pour l'environnement mondial, le Ministère de l'écologie et du développement durable, les collectivités territoriales, les organismes de recherche et les organisations non gouvernementales (ONG).

En Asie, la coopération française concerne essentiellement des projets de recherche scientifique sur l'érosion et les changements d'usage des terres ainsi que les techniques de semis sous couvert végétal, principalement au Laos, Thaïlande et Viet Nam ; le montant total est de 3,6 M€an.

En Amérique latine, une coopération régionale importante traite des questions environnementales relatives aux trois Conventions ; une action scientifique très forte sur l'érosion et le couvert végétal, les agricultures familiales et les systèmes durables de culture se déroule avec les partenaires du Brésil d'abord, puis du Chili, de l'Argentine, du Mexique et des Caraïbes. Le montant total est de 6,78 M€an.

Dans la région de la Méditerranée la France soutient les efforts d'observations écologiques à long terme et les actions de formations réalisées dans le cadre de l'Institut agronomique méditerranéen. Elle est également associée au projet MEDRAP de l'annexe IV de la Convention, par ailleurs soutenu par l'Union européenne. Le montant total est de 1,11 M€an.

Le montant total des actions de lutte contre la désertification engagées par la France dans le bassin méditerranéen, en Asie et en Amérique latine est de 11,48 M€an pour la période 2001-2004.

GERMANY

Ten years after signing the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Germany continues to view it as a key reference point and strategic instrument of development cooperation. In particular, the Convention underscores the links between poverty and resource degradation and thus has great political import for implementation of the Millennium Development Goals – the leitmotif of German Development Cooperation. The German contribution to implementing the UNCCD, moreover, is intimately bound up with processes of reform at international level seeking to enhance the effectiveness of Development Cooperation. In particular, the European Development Consensus and the guidelines established by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Paris, Declaration on Aid Effectiveness are pivotal elements of a new international development architecture. These agreements seek to coordinate and integrate the development programmes undertaken by the various partners, to align activities more closely with the priorities and programmes of recipient countries, and to improve management by means of impact-oriented steering mechanisms. New opportunities arise in this changed development policy setting to boost the efficiency of German initiatives for UNCCD implementation at all levels.

Germany views its support for implementing the UNCCD as a cross-institutional task that combines bilateral and multilateral approaches. To help the countries of Asia and Latin America draw up their national action programmes (NAPs) the German Federal Government has established special assistance instruments; these include regional projects in Central America, the Caribbean and Central Asia, as well as the CCD Project. The latter supports UNCCD-related measures worldwide. Nonetheless, support for combating desertification in these regions continues to mainly take the form of numerous bilateral technical and financial cooperation projects.

Among the 679 projects under way worldwide that are supported by German governmental and non-governmental implementing organizations and contribute to combating desertification, 141 are in Asia and 192 in Latin America. Compared to the last reporting period (2002-2004), the total volume of assistance pledged for all measures has remained stable, although the regional significance of assistance for sustainable land management and poverty reduction has changed on a case-by-case basis.

Fostering consultation processes and forging strategic partnerships are further priorities of German Development Cooperation in Latin America and Asia. Within the context of efforts to coordinate donor inputs, the German Government and its implementing organizations are working in a range of countries and country groups to improve the alignment of official development assistance (ODA) with national programmes and policies. This work has been highly successful in mobilising national and international financial resources. The progress made within the context of the Central Asian Countries Initiative on Land Management (CACILM) is particularly noteworthy. Germany played a major role in bringing about significant joint investments together with several multilateral organizations within the CACILM process.

Such innovative forms of partnership and financing in Central Asia and Latin America are first steps towards building a new international development architecture and point a way forward for the future UNCCD implementation strategy. Germany will feed this positive experience actively into the UNCCD Intergovernmental Intersessional Working Group (IIWG) established to

improve implementation of the convention, which commenced in May 2006. The German Government is confident that the working group holds out great potential to develop an effective long-term strategy for the UNCCD and thus to bolster its standing in the development policy arena.

ITALY

The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), by its decision 7/COP.7, decided to renew the mandate of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) as its subsidiary body up to and including COP.8. CRIC.5 focuses on the submissions of national reports from affected country Parties of regions other than Africa. Reports from developed country Parties should focus on activities in support of those regions.

Italy compiled two reports: the National Report as an affected country Party member of Annex IV; and the National Report as a developed country Party analysing the development cooperation activities to combat drought and desertification implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Environment and Territory in accordance with their respective mandates.

With the intent to reflect the indications provided by decisions 11/COP.1, 8/COP.4, 10/COP.4, 1/COP.5, 1/COP.6, 4/COP.6, 5/COP.7 as asked by the explanatory note prepared by the UNCCD Secretariat (ICCD/CRIC(5)/INF.4), the report provides all the relevant information (the seven key areas) using a chart. Each chart contains a project relevant to the fight against desertification also in the light of eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development.

According to decision 8/COP.4, projects have been listed into *seven strategic areas*:

- Sustainable land use management, including water, soil and vegetation in affected areas
- Sustainable use and management of rangelands
- Development of sustainable agricultural and ranching production systems
- Development of new and renewable energy sources
- Launching of reforestation programmes and intensification of soil conservation programmes
- Development of early warning systems for food security and drought forecasting
- Desertification monitoring and assessment.

Also taking into account the *four thematic areas*:

- Promotion of traditional knowledge
- Promotion of appropriate environmental education
- Enhancement of cooperation with institutions and organization dealing with development policies and programmes to eradicate illiteracy and the development of capacity building in affected areas.

The report has given particular attention also to the activities undertaken by Italy to support the 2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification.

JAPAN

1. Efforts by both the international community and Japan regarding desertification

The international community has carried out a variety of activities for environmental conservation including holding the United Nations Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm in June 1972, which adopted the 'Declaration of the UN Conference on Human Environment'. In recent years, along with the expansion in the scope, scale, and types of human activities, various global environment issues have emerged, which are recognized as potential threats to human beings. International cooperation is essential in this regard, because the issue of desertification is related to the sustainable development of various developing countries. Since deterioration of the global environment will substantially affect the world's population, this problem cannot be effectively dealt with by a single nation. Japan regards global environmental issues, including combating desertification, as one of the most important areas in which the country should make an international contribution.

The United Nations Conference on Environmental Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, was the consummation gathering for related international efforts made up to that time. The outcome of the UNCED, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and "Agenda 21" detailed the comprehensive efforts related to global environmental issues. Chapter 12 of "Agenda 21" entitled "Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Combating Desertification and Drought" sets forth a specific action program to tackle desertification. At UNCED, basic agreement was reached on the establishment of an intergovernmental negotiating committee to draw up a convention to combat desertification. Japan positively participated in the drafting process and made efforts to formulate a consensus.

This convention was adopted at the fifth session of the negotiating committee in June 1994 and was signed by 86 countries, including Japan, in October of the same year. The Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) entered into force in December 1996, and Japan became a party in December 1998. At COP2 in December 1998, Japan expressed its determination to continue its cooperation in the field of combating desertification as the second largest donor country to the UNCCD.

At the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), Japan announced the policy for environmental cooperation mainly through its Official Development Assistance (ODA), entitled the "Environmental Conservation Initiative for Sustainable Development (EcoISD), as a revision of former Initiative, the "Initiatives for Sustainable Development toward the 21st Century (ISD)". The philosophy of EcoISD consists of "Human Security", "Ownership & Partnership", and "Pursuit of Environmental Conservation & Development". Environmental problems threaten the survival of human beings, so it is important to tackle them from the viewpoint of "Human Security". It is vitally important that developing countries assume primary responsibility and role for tackling such problems through their own "Ownership" and that the various stakeholders in the international community work together in a spirit of "Partnership". In order to facilitate the "Pursuit of Environmental Conservation & Development" in developing countries, it is extremely important that developed countries provide support for the necessary environmental considerations in development, and extend cooperation for environmental protection, taking into account the differing economic and social conditions of each country concerned.

Japan promotes actions in the four areas in the EcoISD, which are "Efforts to Address Global Warming", "Pollution Control", "Fresh Water Issues", and "Conservation of Natural Environment". "Conservation of Natural Environment" includes 'management of nature reserves, forest-related issues, prevention of desertification, and natural resources management'.

In addition to such bilateral ODA projects, Japan has been making financial contributions to relevant international organizations to support the fight against desertification. Furthermore, various study and research activities on desertification are being conducted by Japanese institutions. Activities of many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) both in Japan and overseas have been supported by a variety of sources.

2. Japan's efforts under the UNCCD process

Summary of Japan's implementations of the UNCCD is as follows:

2.1 Consultative processes and partnership agreements

Japan had been actively making contributions to the UNCCD even before it officially became a party to the Convention in December 1998. During the intergovernmental negotiations for the UNCCD, Japan served as a bureau member and chaired the Second Working Group, positively participating in the drafting process.

2.2 Measures taken to support the preparation and implementation of action programmes at all levels

A. Support through Official Development Assistance (ODA)

Japan has been implementing ODA projects that contribute to combating desertification, in areas such as conservation of water resources, reforestation and forest conservation, and agricultural development. There are various ODA schemes through which these projects have been implemented, such as Technical Cooperation (including Development Studies, Dispatch of Experts, Acceptance of Trainees), Grant Aid for General Projects and Yen Loans.

B. Support through financial contribution for the UNCCD Secretariat

Japan is the second largest contributor to the UNCCD activities. Japan's contributions to the core budget of the UNCCD for the years 2003 and 2004 are as follows: US\$1,439 thousand (2003) and US\$1,478 thousand (2004).

Japan also supports various UNCCD activities through its voluntary contribution. In 2003 and 2004, activities supported by Japan include: Thematic Programme Network from 6 (TPN 6) Launching Meetings; Support to the Asian regional consultations preparatory to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC3); Support for participation of affected developing country parties at the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP6) and CRIC3; CST Ad Hoc Panel on Early Warning Systems; Support to the National Action Plan/ Policy Instrument Formulation.

C. Other Supports

Japan had been making substantial contributions to the implementation of the Convention with financial and technological support, organizing meetings, etc. even before officially becoming a party in December 1998. Through its contributions, Japan has been supporting, for example, various regional meetings in Asia such as ministerial meetings, focal point meetings, experts meetings and workshops; national awareness-raising seminars and regional activities in Latin America and the Caribbean; and national report preparation by African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean country parties.

Since 1998, Japan has been promoting the implementation of the UNCCD in various ways through voluntary contributions. In particular, recognizing the importance of promoting the exchange of information and cooperation between Parties, Japan has provided support for all Asian National Focal Points Meetings. Japan has also provided support for three Asia-Africa Forums on UNCCD to promote information sharing and the strengthening of relationships.

Japan has been positively supporting the formulation of a national action programme by various countries. In particular, Japan supported 7 Parties to formulate their own national action programmes. Considering it important to enhance recognition of the UNCCD, Japan provided support for a workshop in the Philippines and PNG to raise awareness of the people there. Not only to promote cooperation within regions or between regions, but also to support sub-regional activities, Japan supported the organization of sub-regional workshops in the South Pacific.

Japan has been involved in the development of Asia's regional action program for UNCCD. In 2003 and 2004, Japan provided financial supports for the launching meeting of the Thematic Programme Networks (TPNs) such as the launching meeting of the Thematic Programme Network 6 (TPN6) (Pakistan, June 2004). In addition, Japan participates in Thematic Programme Network 1 (TPN1) on desertification monitoring and assessment, and Thematic Programme Network 5 (TPN5) on strengthening capacities for drought impact mitigation and desertification control.

2.3 Study and research on desertification

A. Contribution to the Committee on Science and Technology

Regarding the activities of the Committee on Science and Technology, Japan, with the Secretariat of the UNCCD, hosted an Ad Hoc Panel on Early Warning Systems, which was reestablished at COP4, in June 2001 in Fujiyoshida, Yamanashi Prefecture. The outcome of the Ad Hoc Panel was reported at COP5.

B. Domestic research processes

A variety of study and research activities are being conducted by Japanese institutions. For example, the Ministry of the Environment conducts research on measures to combat desertification and also provides a Global Environment Research Fund to promote research on desertification. Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Japan Green Resources Corporation are conducting a study on combating desertification in Asia

and a study on preventing soil erosion in Latin America. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Association for International Cooperation of Agriculture and Forestry are conducting research on the prospect of utilizing desert areas in Mongolia for agriculture. Study and research activities are also being carried out at the Arid Land Research Center, Tottori University.

2.4 Support for NGO activities

In Japan, financial assistance has been provided to NGOs in and outside of Japan through various schemes including the Japan Fund for Global Environment (Environmental Restoration and Conservation Agency of Japan).

2.5 Linkage and synergy with other environmental conventions

Based on the preamble of the UNCCD, which refers to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity, Japan recognizes the importance of enhancing the synergies of environment-related conventions. Japan supported the National Forum on Combating Desertification and Promoting the Synergistic Implementation of Inter-Linked Multilateral Environmental Conventions in June 2001.

NETHERLANDS

This report concerns the contribution of the Netherlands to the objectives and implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) over 2005 in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe.

In the Netherlands bilateral cooperation six embassies of the Netherlands in Asia and seven embassies in Latin America report activities which contribute to the objectives of the Convention. The Netherlands embassies do not play the role of chefs de file for the UNCCD although some, such as the one in Ecuador, support the development of national policies on UNCCD issues. In general, specific support by the Netherlands to the CCD national action programmes (NAPs) is very limited. Of course, embassies mainstream issues of land degradation and desertification in programmes and activities are linked to the frameworks of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) that have been elaborated by the various countries. Therefore, most reported development activities in dry areas are related to issues of natural resources management and bear relevance to UNCCD objectives; however, they are usually not directly linked to UNCCD NAPs.

Five departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs support regional and worldwide activities related to UNCCD implementation activities. The Environment and Water Department (DMW) is the Focal Point for the UNCCD in the Netherlands and participates in the international policy discussions. DMW advises the minister for development cooperation on desertification issues and is responsible for the translation of international policy in national development policy. It supports the embassies with the integration of UNCCD issues in bilateral programmes. DMW facilitates an activity implemented by the Dutch non-governmental organization (NGO) Both ENDS (Environment and Development Services) which raises awareness in the Netherlands about the UNCCD and is to enhance NGO involvement in the UNCCD process. It aims at capacity building of civil society actors to become involved in the implementation of the

UNCCD. DMW cooperated with the UNCCD secretariat to support affected countries in developing a synergistic approach towards the three Rio conventions and to promote the effectiveness of the NAPs.

As for the NGOs based in the Netherlands, and their partners in developing countries, their activities are often relevant to the objectives of the Convention, in most cases in indirect ways. Many partner organizations of Netherlands NGOs are located in countries affected by land degradation and desertification. Although their support usually is not directly focused on UNCCD implementation, partners are often involved in programmes and projects aiming at combating land degradation and sustainable livelihood. The Dutch NGOs all strongly support empowerment of civil society and as such contribute strongly to the UNCCD strategy and implementation.

The resources mobilised by the Netherlands for UNCCD related activities in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe do not show large fluctuations over the years. The figures for 2005 may – within reason – be considered representative.

Funds made available through Netherlands embassies

The decentralised units (Netherlands embassies in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe) account for a financial volume of €10,4 million during 2005 of which €6,0 million accounts for Asia and €4,4 million for Latin America and the Caribbean. These expenses are corrected with UNCCD-related percentages as described in the methodology in the introductory Chapter of the report. For the Central and Eastern Europe region no financial volume related to UNCCD implementation could be established.

Funds made directly available by departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands

Projects that fall under the responsibility of units in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs located in the Netherlands excluding those through the major NGOs (also called Co-Financing Organisations – MFOs) account for €24,6 million during 2005. Also in this case the expenses are corrected with UNCCD-related.

Funds made available through major NGOs (MFOs)

Approximately €500 million was disbursed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2005 to Netherlands-based NGOs (MFOs). The NGO/MFOs SNV (Netherlands Development Organisation), ICCO (Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation), HIVOS (International Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries), CORDAID (Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid), PLAN Netherlands and OXFAM/Novib contribute in their programmes and partnerships to UNCCD objectives but it could not be established in detail to what extent and in which continent. Quantification and geographical distribution of resource mobilisation for UNCCD therefore proved to be impossible.

Funds made available through Netherlands Ministries (other than Foreign Affairs) and other stakeholders

The Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV), the Ministry of Economic Affairs, and Netherlands NGO stakeholders such as IUCN The World Conservation Union in the Netherlands (IUCN-NL) and Both Ends contribute with resources to UNCCD implementation. The resources have not been quantified since specific information on financial volumes were lacking. Also some of the UNCCD-related stakeholder programmes (NGOs or research institutes) are funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Including them in the calculation would be double counting. Also many times specific information on resources or geographical coverage was not made available. Some activities relevant for the UNCCD and funded through the OXFAM/Novib channel are also listed in this section

Total resource mobilisation for CCD implementation

Of the total number of 105 activities that have been funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe during 2005 a total of € 35 million can be regarded as directly related towards achieving UNCCD objectives. More resources have been made available over 2005 through NGOs/MFOs, research and development (R&D) institutes and Netherlands Ministries other than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but these resources could neither be quantified sufficiently nor assessed on geographical distribution.

Policy framework

Sustainable poverty reduction has been the main objective of Dutch development cooperation for many years. To reach this objective, priority has been given to the poorest countries in the three regions under review. Poverty in dry marginal areas often has direct links to the processes of land degradation and desertification. Therefore, Netherlands' official development assistance (ODA) policy of mainstreaming environmental issues in PRSP programmes is in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals 1 and 7, and is also an important strategy to promote the UNCCD implementation goals.

SWITZERLAND

Faisant suite aux deux derniers rapports présentés par la Suisse sur ses activités de soutien à la mise en oeuvre de la CCD, soit le rapport global mis à jour fin 2001 suite à la décision 1/COP.5 et celui consacré à l'Afrique pour la période 2000 à 2004 qui fut élaboré en vue de la 3^e réunion du Comité chargé du suivi de la mise en œuvre de la CCD (CRIC 3), le présent rapport fait l'état des engagements de la Suisse dans les régions autres que l'Afrique dans la période 2002-2006. L'examen de la mise en œuvre de la CCD dans ces régions fera l'objet de la 5^e session du Comité chargé du suivi de la mise en œuvre de la CCD (CRIC 5) qui complètera ainsi le cycle de revue des rapports nationaux entrepris en 1999 lors de la COP 3.

La présentation de ce rapport tient compte des prescriptions relatives au contenu des rapports formulées par le CRIC 1 (7 questions thématiques principales¹) qui s'ajoutent aux prescriptions générales énoncées dans la décision 11/COP1. Par ailleurs, ce rapport tient aussi compte des modifications de fond au processus d'établissement des rapports qui font l'objet de la décision 8/COP4, à savoir que les activités qui sont présentées sont examinées selon les 7 domaines thématiques et sectoriels spécifiques² définis dans la Déclaration sur les engagements visant à renforcer l'exécution des obligations énoncées dans la Convention.

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland presented its fourth formal report on measures taken to support the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in October 2004. This supplementary report covers United Kingdom activities in support of the convention in regions other than Africa in preparation for the fifth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC).

The supplementary report provides an overview of how the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) engages with, and provides assistance to, the Latin America and Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe and Asia regions.

As outlined in section 3 of the United Kingdom's fourth report, the United Kingdom aims to integrate its work in implementing the UNCCD in mainstream development programmes. Accordingly, the United Kingdom does not currently support the development of national action programmes (NAPs) or UNCCD specific consultative processes or partnership agreements. The supplementary report outlines the wide range of DFID's multilateral, bilateral and research commitments, which address desertification issues and the objectives of the Convention in the regions other than Africa.

¹ a) Processus participatifs impliquant la société civile, les organisations non gouvernementales et les organisations communautaires;
b) Cadres ou arrangements législatifs et institutionnels;
c) Mobilisation et coordination des ressources, tant internes qu'internationales, et, notamment, conclusion d'accords de partenariat;
d) Liens et synergies avec d'autres conventions relatives à l'environnement et, le cas échéant, avec des stratégies de développement nationales;
e) Mesures de remise en état des terres dégradées et la mise en place de systèmes d'alerte précoce afin d'atténuer les effets de la sécheresse;
f) Surveillance et évaluation de la sécheresse et de la désertification;
g) Accès des pays parties touchés, en particulier des pays en développement parties touchés, aux technologies, connaissances et savoir-faire appropriés.

² a) Gestion durable de l'utilisation des terres, y compris l'eau, les sols et la végétation dans les zones touchées;
b) Exploitation et gestion durables des terrains de parcours;
c) Mise au point de modes de production agricole et d'élevage viables;
d) Mise en valeur de sources d'énergies nouvelles et renouvelables;
e) Lancement de programmes de reboisement/boisement et intensification des programmes de conservation des sols;
f) Mise au point de systèmes d'alerte précoce pour la sécurité alimentaire et la prévision des sécheresses;
g) Surveillance et évaluation de la désertification.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States of America ratified the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) on November 17, 2000, and it entered into force on February 15, 2001. The Congressional Resolution of Advice and Consent for the UNCCD set forth, *inter alia*, the following understandings, included in the United States instrument of ratification: (1) As a developed country Party, the United States is not obligated to satisfy specific funding requirements or other specific requirements regarding the provision of any resource, including technology, to affected country parties; (2) The Convention does not impose mandatory obligations to provide funding for the Global Environmental Facility (GEF); and (3) No changes to existing United States land management practices and programmes will be required to meet obligations incurred under the Convention.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is the lead United States Government agency implementing the UNCCD overseas. USAID addresses the goals of UNCCD through programmes that address sustainable agriculture, improved agricultural practices, natural resource management, conservation of natural resources and integrated water management in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid habitats, that the process of combating desertification is addressed. USAID programmes generally support and encourage community-based natural resource management approaches, and strategies that address the root causes of desertification.

During the two-year period of Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005 (October 1 2003 – September 30 2005), USAID provided bilateral grant assistance totalling approximately \$56.3 million for activities to combat desertification in fifteen developing countries and countries with economies in transition outside of Africa.¹ During that same period, USAID provided \$50 million to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), \$5.6 million of which can be attributed to activities to combat desertification in countries other than those in Africa.

¹ Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Georgia, Honduras, India, Lebanon, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Ukraine.