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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  
Seventh session  
Nairobi, 7-18 August 1995  
Agenda item 2

IMPLEMENTATION OF URGENT ACTION FOR AFRICA  
AND ACTION IN OTHER REGIONS:  
COMPILATION OF INFORMATION

Contribution from the Government of the United Kingdom  
(received on 19 May 1995)

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## **MEASURES TAKEN OR PLANNED BY THE UNITED KINGDOM IN AFRICA AND OTHER REGIONS**

In response to the Secretariat's request of 18 April for information in respect of measures taken or planned for the implementation of urgent action for Africa and action in other regions, the following is a list of new activities undertaken by the UK since the Convention to Combat Desertification opened for signature.

These activities are additional to those detailed in the extensive document circulated by us at the signing ceremony. Those were largely development projects and other activities being funded through our bilateral programme. Many of these are of course continuing. This letter does not include new projects and programmes agreed by us since October 1994. To collect this information would require a major exercise to identify those projects with elements relevant to desertification. The following information is confined to activities concerned with promoting the objectives of the Convention. The details are as follows:

- i) We have commissioned the International Institute for Environment and Development to produce a Users' Guide to the Convention aimed primarily at the NGO community in Africa (although available and relevant to all interested NGOs), providing a short summary of the main commitments of the Parties, what such commitments mean in practice, and an outline of the roles which NGOs might play in supporting the approach adopted by the Convention and its Africa Annex for contributing towards more effective drylands management. The Guide is now completed and is available in English, French and Spanish.
- ii) We have agreed to provide, through the International Institute for Environment and Development, 100 copies of the Users' Guide for distribution at awareness-raising days being arranged in up to twenty African countries over the next few months for officials of African governments and NGOs involved in activities to combat desertification in Africa.
- iii) We have funded the production of two studies jointly undertaken by the Natural Resources Institute and UNDP, to examine desertification indicators particularly applicable to local community levels, and to look at participatory approaches in tackling desertification issues. The first of these studies has been completed. It also involved support to a workshop on indicators convened by UNSO.

iv) We are providing a grant of £25,000 to Earth Action to assist this NGO to carry out a public-awareness campaign on desertification in Africa. This will focus on raising awareness among NGOs and others in affected countries on the Convention and especially the new opportunities for participation in the development of desertification action programmes, with the aim of stimulating greater NGO involvement in desertification action programmes within affected African countries and to encourage bottom-up initiatives to stimulate the development of effective programmes.

v) We are providing a grant of £25,000 to the Environment Liaison Centre International to assist this NGO in operating the RIOD (Reseau International d'ONG sur la Desertification) network's coordination and communication activities. RIOD is an initiative by a number of NGOs to actively participate in the implementation of the Convention, for which ELCI is acting as global focal point. The UK's contribution will fund the production of short descriptive brochures and posters that draw attention to the need for action through visual images depicting causes of desertification and possible solutions, and the production of a guide for fostering and maintaining national consultative processes.

vi) We have offered a contribution of £10,000 towards a conference of regional NGOs in Asia being organized by the Society for Conservation and Protection of Environment (SCOPE), the Asian Regional Focal Point of RIOD. The UK is considering a similar proposal submitted by Consejo Andino de Manejo Ecologico for a regional conference for RIOD-affiliated NGOs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

vii) We have offered assistance to the Government of Botswana in carrying out the consultation process for development of action plans to tackle desertification problems in Botswana. The UK is already providing assistance to the natural resources sector for projects to strengthen Botswana's capacity to sustainably manage its natural resources, particularly at community level.