



REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE  
AND FORESTRY



## Progress Report

### WORKING GROUP 6

## DESERTIFICATION AND RESTORATION IN MEDITERRANEAN DRYLANDS

### COORDINATION:

GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF COMBATING DESERTIFICATION AND EROSION,  
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March 2019



## **Background**

Working Group on “Desertification and Restoration of Mediterranean Drylands” was established in 2012 at the 21st session of the Committee, in Antalya, Turkey with aim of promoting and sharing best practices and lessons learned at the regional and international level through projects, programs and other initiatives on combating desertification, drought and restoration of forest and landscapes in Mediterranean Region. The WG has been leading by the Ministry of Forestry and Agriculture of Turkey (abrogated Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs), Ms. Özlem YAVUZ, the Deputy Director General of General Directorate of Combating Desertification and Erosion has been acting as coordinator so far. The Status Update Note provides a brief overview of activities of the WG

## **Projects and National Activities**

- Technical guideline on Afforestation and Restoration of Arid and Semi-arid Landscapes was prepared and disseminated in Turkey in 2013-2014.
- In line with UNCCD Strategy, the National Strategy on Combating Desertification (2015-2023) was updated and approved by the Council of Ministers and published in 2015 and entered into force.
- A side event titled on s "Mediterranean Drylands Desertification and Restoration” was organized in 2015, on the occasion of the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 12) to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) held in Ankara, Turkey. 25 experts from seven different Mediterranean countries (Portugal, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, Spain, France and Lebanon) were participated.
- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2016 between the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Pan-Africa Great Green Wall Agency on capacity building and combating desertification.
- The GEF Project on Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Friendly Agricultural Practices, 2016-2020, has been implemented in Turkey to enhance sustainable land management including capacity building and monitoring, rehabilitation of degraded forest and pasture lands, climate-friendly agricultural practices.
- Decision Support for Mainstreaming and Scaling out Sustainable Land Management<sup>1</sup> (DS-SLM) that aims at to increase the provision of ecosystem goods and services and enhance food security in countries and regions affected by DLDD through the promotion of SLM and integrated management and efficiency in the use of natural resources is being implemented in 15 countries including Turkey, Morocco and Tunisia.
- In order to contribute Agadir Commitment and Regional Mediterranean Initiative on Forest and Land Restoration a political pledges was provided by contributing to the studies for 500.000 hectares of land from 2017 to 2021.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wocat.net/en/projects-and-countries/projects/ds-slm>

## **Global Products and Initiatives**

- Under Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management<sup>2</sup> (CACILM) technical expertise being shared with Central Asian Countries in integrated natural resources management in drought prone and salt affected agricultural production landscapes in the Central Asian countries and Turkey.
- The subject of the WG was included in Tlemcen Declaration adopted during the III. Mediterranean Forest Week (MFW) as “*Convinced that combatting the already on going desertification in our Mediterranean landscapes should be a priority in our forest and environmental policies.*”
- “Global Guidelines for the Restoration of Degraded Forests and Landscapes in Drylands<sup>3</sup>” (was prepared and published with technical support of two international workshops organized in Konya/ Turkey and Dakar/Senegal.
- On October 16, 2015, on the occasion of the 12th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 12) to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) held in Ankara, Turkey. The Ankara Initiative is launched to strengthen implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in the period 2016 to 2019. It will support the global sustainable development agenda, leverage the lessons learned from Turkey’s past experience and approaches to land management as well as contribute to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality. In relation to the Ankara Initiative;
  - The UNCCD Northern Mediterranean Regional Coordination Unit office covers 12 countries was inaugurated in 2015 in İstanbul, Turkey,
  - Land Degradation Neutrality Workshops were held in Turkey in 2016 for the whole African Countries, Central Asia and Eastern Europe.
  - Turkey is a one of the pioneer country participated Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Program (LDN TSP) and technically and financially supporting other participating countries (120) in the definition of national baselines, voluntary targets and associated measures to achieve LDN by 2030,
  - Land Degradation Neutrality National Report of Turkey for the period of 2016-2030 was prepared,
  - A transformative project financed by GEF, “Contributing to LDN TSP by Demonstrating the LDN Approach in Upper Sakarya Basin for Scaling up at National Level” will be implemented in Turkey, in 2019-2023, to transform political LDN commitments into actions.
  - The publication of the Global Land Outlook<sup>4</sup> and The (3S) "Sustainability, Stability and Security" Initiative which şs an inter-governmental action to address the root causes of instability in Africa were contributed.
- Great number of International Workshop on Sand and Dust Storm (SDS) for Middle East and North Africa was organized in Turkey so as to produce a feasible draft policy to; solve sand and

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fao.org/in-action/cacilm-2/en/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5036e.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unccd.int/actions/global-land-outlook-glo>



dust storms (SDS) problems, exchange of information/knowledge and experience among countries, and increase capacity building on SDS.

- Turkey organized more than 15 international trainings/workshops on combating desertification and related topics in last decade. Approximately 700 experts from 79 countries from Africa, East Europe and Central Asia participated those training and shared know how and expertise on respective topics.

### **Follow up**

- The 2019 World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD), marked the 25th anniversary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) will take place in Ankara Turkey. The Day aims to raise awareness that LDN is achievable through problem solving, strong community involvement and co-operation at all levels. It will be hosted by Turkey's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Ankara in conjunction with the International Soil Congress 2019.
- A side event is planned to organize during UNCCD COP 14 for WG 6,
- Regional Action Plan on Combating Desertification/ Drought Management to be discussed.
- Another International Training on Combating Desertification to be organized in last Quarter of 2019.
- Any other recommendation to be raised.