



CSD- 17

Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting

Panel on Desertification

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Addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in coping with today's Global Challenges and Crisis

1. Poverty eradication

- The map of poverty coincides with that of land degradation

2. Food crisis & Hunger

- Reclaim degraded and marginal land to produce more food for more people: another way to avoid deforestation or agriculture encroachment on humid ecosystems

3. Climate change

- UNCCD as a framework for adaptation, mitigation & resilience

4. Preservation of Biodiversity

- Biodiversity conservation through improvement of land ecosystem conditions: eight out of ten biodiversity hot spots are in drylands

5. Reforestation and Afforestation

- Ecosystem improvement, income generation, carbon sink

6. Renewable Energies

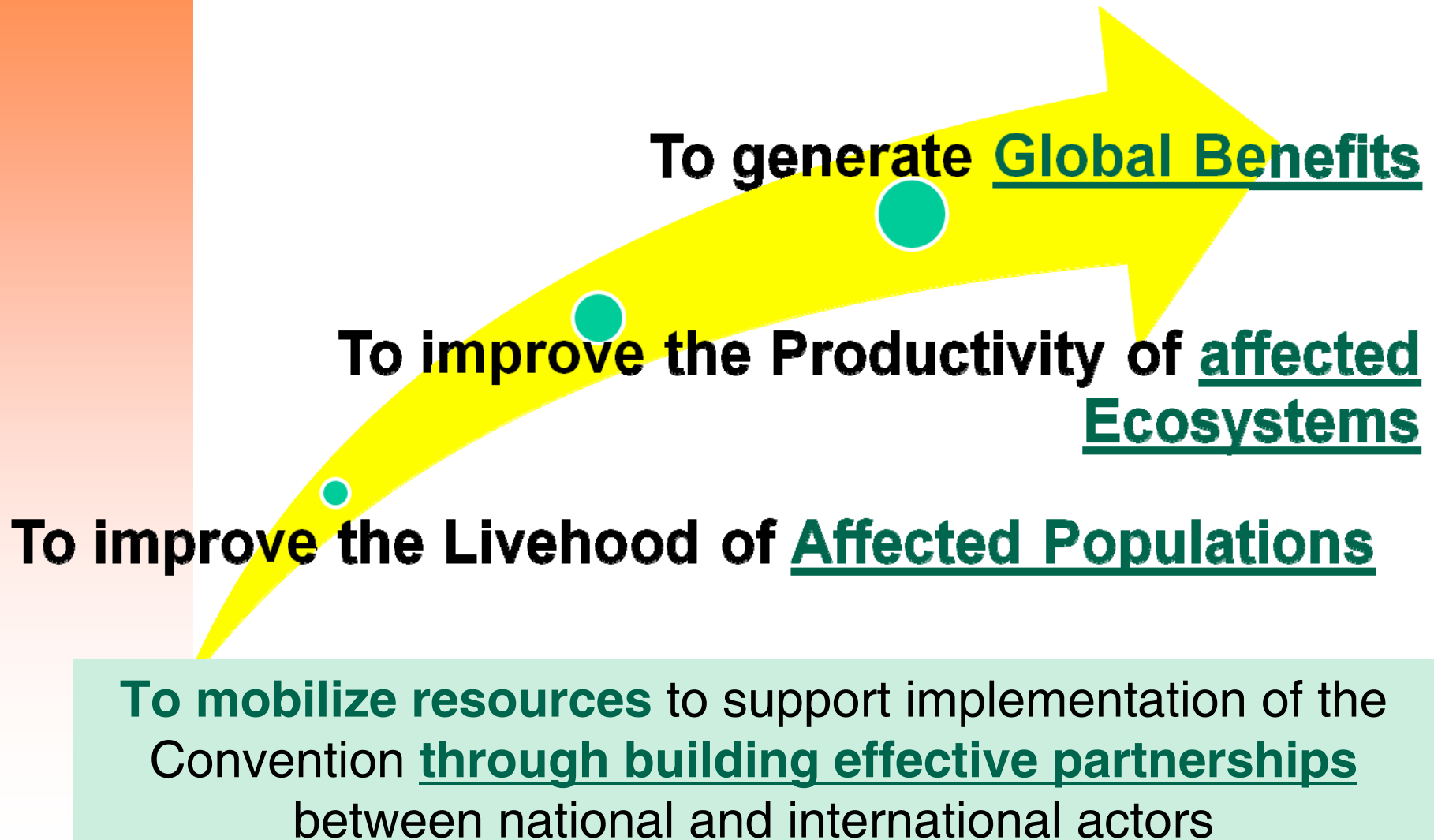
- Economic opportunities for dry and degraded land inhabitants

7. Environmental induced forced migrations

- Most of them are triggered by land degradation



The strategic Objectives of the UNCCD



Desertification ?

“Desertification means **land degradation** in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas resulting from various factors” (Cf. the UNCCD)

“Land degradation = Long-term loss of ecosystem function and productivity caused by disturbances **from which the land cannot recover unaided**”



A. Combating desertification, land degradation as local, national, regional and global priority.

So far, combating desertification, land degradation as local, national, regional and global priority has not yet materialized particularly at national level, both in developing and developed countries.

- Preparation of a national action plan to combat desertification in line with the national development priorities is an important step to address the challenges posed by desertification. Integrating these plans into national development frameworks such as poverty reduction strategies will ensure that their implementation is not affected due to lack of funding availability and other resources.



Successful implementation of these plans require strengthening technical and institutional capacities of different actors at various levels ranging from high level policy formulation to grass roots level implementation. In cases where public sector has limited capacities the civil society and other similar organization should be encouraged to bridge that gap.

- Governments should mainstream the Ten year Strategy of the UNCCD into their national and regional policy platforms with a view to improving the livelihoods of affected populations and improving affected ecosystems.
- Donors should also mainstream DLDD concerns in their development assistance policies and approaches.



B. The cross-sectoral nature of desertification/land degradation, and drought mitigation.

- Given the cross-sectoral nature of desertification/land degradation, and drought mitigation, all relevant United Nations agencies should cooperate under the aegis of the Convention to support an effective response to desertification and drought.





C. Water Management



Water management plays an important role in combating desertification. Therefore, water management policies need to encourage the use of water saving technologies, introducing demand management measures for water conservation in different uses, and promoting the cultivation of water resistant crops. Options to cope with the chronic water scarcity in dry areas may include using non-conventional water resources, including water recycling, reclamation and desalination, among others.



D. Synergies in the national and regional implementations of the Three Rio Conventions

In many developing countries the implementation of the Three Rio Conventions tends to be in a *de facto* synergy under the same institutional authority. Most of programmes and projects under climate change NAPAs are carried out under land degradation sector. As a policy this *de facto* situation should be formally adopted at national level when it comes to the implementation of UNCCD NAPs, UNFCCC NAPAs and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).



E. Role of Knowledge Management, Science and Technology

- Existing knowledge on measures to combat desertification should be circulated widely to promote broad assimilation. Strong coordination between scientific research institutions policy makers extension workers and practioners is needed.
- Scientific knowledge of the environmental services provided by drylands needs to be improved and the potential of payment for environmental services (PES) for sustainable land use in drylands that has worked in some countries needs further exploring. Outreach and advocacy efforts may be directed at promoting rural income incentives in the form of planting trees, demarcation of pastoral corridors, and rotational pasturing systems to rehabilitate degraded lands. Science should also serve to measure, assess and monitor progress made in a reclaiming degraded land.



F. Traditional knowledge and best practices at community level



- Traditional knowledge constitutes an important asset in dryland communities.



- Community-based natural resources management has yielded good results in many parts of the world. To further the protection of land resources through this approach, community based organizations such as farmers' associations and water management committees should be encouraged to play more active and effective roles in addressing land degradation, especially through the employment of traditional knowledge.
- Best practices need to be scaled up and disseminated for further use.



G. Finance

- Financing DLDD activities is tantamount to financing development.
- GEF is a financial mechanism of the UNCCD under sustainable land management area. Since DLDD constitutes a comprehensive sustainable development programme, it would be appropriate to ensure that the Global Environment Facility is adequately resourced during the next replenishment period in order to allow for the global environment facility to allocate sufficient and adequate resources to its six focal areas, in particular its land degradation focal area.