

D. 15 Haziran 2012 - BİLDİRGE

DECLARATION OF Civil Society Organizations TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION ANKARA TURKEY, JUNE 13-18 2012

We highly appreciate the Turkish government's efforts for the fight against land degradation in the framework of the National Mobilization Programme for Afforestation and Erosion Control. Turkey has become one of the leading countries on the soil conservation and forestation activities.

Participation of the civil society organizations (CSOs) that have gathered in Ankara and Konya for the meeting on the role of the CSO in combating desertification would like to thank the Turkish Government, Ministry of Forest and Water Affairs, General Directorate Combating Desertification and Erosion, Turkish International Cooperation and Coordination Agencies (TIKA), UNCCD Secretariat and authorities responsible for the coordination of this training course and meeting for their effort and support.

Desertification, as shown in the Convention to Combat Desertification and in Chapter 12 of Agenda 21, is one of the World's most serious environmental problems, threatening the Earth's fertility and the food security of its population. Desertification is spreading due to climatic causes and human activities, both of those performed in a single area and those performed all over the World (climate change). Some measures can only be taken at a global level, but others have to be taken at the regional, national or local level. Combating desertification and mitigating the effects of droughts require an integrated approach in which the geographical, physical, biological, socio-economic and ethno-cultural aspects are taken into consideration. Desertification is an increasingly severe problem all over the World that has to be fought with concrete and feasible recommendations, adapted to the environmental, economic, social, cultural, scientific, technological and political peculiarities of each country.

We, the undersigned representatives of CSOs, agreed on this declaration as follows;

1. We would like to draw your attention to the concept of "zero-net land degradation" and the importance of pursuing an approach to off-set the land lost by desertification and erosion and also believe that the time is ripe to agree on a Sustainable Development Goal at Rio+20 on "Zero Net Land Degradation" to secure the continuing availability of productive land for present and future generations.
2. We urge governments, international organizations, CSOs, the UNCCD to agree on a legal instrument for "zero net land degradation".
3. We call upon an intergovernmental panel for combating desertification, similar to the pattern followed by the UNFCCC and the UNCBD, to provide the World with a clearer scientific view on the current state of knowledge in land degradation and its potential environmental and socio-economic impacts.
4. We stress on the fact that desertification knows no boundaries and effects all countries across the Globe whether directly or indirectly. Given the importance of cross border

cooperation, CSO Networking, information and experience sharing in combating desertification, international CSO networks should be provided with financial and political support.

5. We urge international and national donor agencies as well as governments of developed countries to carry on actions for combating desertification before it is too late for future generations and to help to increase the level and diversity of available financial and technical resources and also improve the efficiency of its distribution, especially in developing and least developed countries.
6. We strongly support the integration of measures to combat desertification into our respective national development priorities, processes and frameworks such as MDGs, national development plans, country strategy papers and poverty reduction strategy papers and trade related frameworks.
7. Civil Society Organizations play an effective role in the process of combating desertification by creating public awareness and identifying, documenting and validating existing local knowledge and traditions and underline the importance of rural capacity building and the involvement of this local know-how in sustainable land management processes.
8. In the process of combating desertification, CSOs share the responsibility of dissemination of the knowledge and experience gained from activities and implementations.
9. CSOs active participation should be foreseen in organizing and implementing national programs for combating desertification and related plans and projects. Inclusion of more CSO representatives in Combating Desertification National Coordination Committee should be ensured, related CSOs should be informed about the developments and their contribution should be increased.
10. Integrated (multi-sector) approach, effective participation at all levels, cooperation of states, CSOs, and science should be promoted in implementation of policies for combating desertification.