

**Expert Workshop on Forest Landscape Restoration
in the Mediterranean EU Countries**

**Supporting Implementation
of International Forest Objectives
in the Mediterranean**

Background Paper

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Introduction

Agricultural intensification, fires, over-grazing, and climate change are some of the major threats to Mediterranean forests and have helped lead to unprecedented forest loss and degradation over the past several decades. Action is needed to conserve, sustainably manage and restore forests in the region for the maintenance of watersheds and local climate and to protect against desertification, erosion and flood damage.

It is widely acknowledged that governments, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, companies and other relevant actors need to change the way they do business on the implementation of international commitments on forests in order to move from dialogue to action.

A dynamic approach to implementation is needed that builds a culture of success. This should involve linking inter-governmental initiatives with concrete actions at the local and regional level – explicitly linking policy with practice - and bringing key actors together to share constructive insights and identify opportunities. It should also involve identifying those synergies in commitments relating to the key agreements on forests and focusing a concerted effort on those. It is this approach that is being encouraged in the Mediterranean workshop project.

The purpose of this paper is to identify specific actions required at the ground level by international commitments on forests, to highlight areas of potential synergy, and to provide a basis for assessing progress in implementation. An in-depth analysis and assessment is beyond the scope of this project. Nevertheless, this paper will review some key issues surrounding implementation and propose factors connecting work on-the-ground in this region to implementation of international forest-related commitments. This should create a more solid understanding of how international commitments and work programmes can support local action.

While special attention will be given to commitments made under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), this paper will also identify relevant commitments under the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC). (Please refer to Annex 1 for a full list of agreements and organisations and their acronyms.)

Summary

The main potential areas of synergy between the UNFF programme of work and the conventions on biological diversity, climate change and desertification are:

- ✍ Restoration, rehabilitation, reforestation
- ✍ Participation in decision-making and implementation
- ✍ Ecosystem-related considerations.

Together, the relevant commitments provide a solid foundation for restoration and rehabilitation of ecosystems and landscapes with the participation of all relevant stakeholders in decision-making and implementation. (In this context, “implementation” means the integration of relevant international commitments into the national forest-related policy frameworks that provide a basis for action.) This is consistent with the forest landscape restoration approach which brings people together to identify and put in place a mix of land use practices that will help restore the functions of forests across a whole landscape, such as a water catchment.

The UNFF, CBD, FCCC, and CCD are each still at early stages of development. The UNFF began substantive consideration of its programme elements in 2002. The expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity under the CBD was only adopted in April 2002. The Kyoto Protocol of the FCCC is still not yet in force. The CCD was concluded in 1994, but only initiated its first review of implementation in November 2002.

Some broad trends that influence prospects for the implementation of these international instruments are: (1) the preoccupation of the international community with the objective of eradicating poverty; (2) the domination of environmental and sustainable development issues by the trade agenda; (3) the shift toward placing responsibility for implementation on the private sector, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and others, away from and in addition to the responsibility of governments; and (4) growing regionalism and unilateralism, aggravated by security concerns, possibly leading to a need for new governance structures.

The nature of the agreements themselves influences the extent to and way in which countries implement the agreements and meet their commitments. Some aspects of this are: (1) stringency of obligations; (2) existence of targets and timetables; (3) national reporting requirements and timetables; (4) participation of NGOs, community groups, the private sector, etc., in negotiation and implementation; and (5) existence of mechanisms for monitoring, reporting and assessment. Relevant factors at the national level include (1) administrative and bureaucratic capacity, (2) access to the policy process by and influence of stakeholders, (3) transparency and availability of information, (4) political environment, and (5) public opinion.

Identification of the main factors contributing to implementation, or lack thereof, is challenging because each country will, by virtue of its legal and administrative arrangements, require different types of steps to be taken to translate and put into effect international agreements. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify some questions that could help provide a 'snapshot' of the extent to which international commitments are being translated into national and local action.

In the context of this project, some possible indicators of implementation are:

- ✍ Has a specific focal point or responsible government agency been appointed to coordinate implementation efforts on international commitments related to restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems (especially UNFF and CBD)?
- ✍ Have stakeholders been provided with information about the benefits of restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems and the relevant international commitments?
- ✍ Is the country compiling information, databases, case studies, etc., on the status of degraded forests, deforested and restored lands?
- ✍ Has a consultation process been initiated regarding implementation of the international commitments relevant to restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems with adequate representation from different sectors?
- ✍ Has the country sought to achieve consensus on priorities among stakeholders?
- ✍ Has the country undertaken an objective gap analysis (with stakeholder participation) comparing existing domestic policies against the relevant international commitments to determine the level of alignment and to prioritise areas where existing efforts are deficient?
- ✍ Is restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems a national priority? (e.g. as evidenced by statements from high level officials, or the adoption of national targets and timetables)
- ✍ Have programmes, systems, practices, measures or other arrangements been put in place for restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems? Do they include consideration of social issues?
- ✍ Have practical methods, guidelines, indicators or strategies been developed to apply the ecosystem approach to restoration, rehabilitation or reforestation efforts?
- ✍ Was information about progress in implementation of forest landscape restoration included in reports to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in the lead-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and/or in regional reports to the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)?

Common Elements and Synergies

The programme of work of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) for 2001-2005 is organised around the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), which met during the period of 1995 to 1997, and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), which met during

the period of 1997 to 2000. Both bodies were established under the auspices of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). The UNFF, which has been established at the same level in the UN system as the CSD, is charged with facilitating implementation of those proposals for action.

Forest biological diversity is a key programme area under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Convention itself contains relevant obligations and the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP) adopted an expanded work programme on forest biological diversity in April 2002.

There is a great deal of synergy between the UNFF and CBD programmes of work. A number of common elements are found in both, including:

- ✍ Community-based management
- ✍ Ecosystem-related considerations
- ✍ Equitable sharing of costs and benefits
- ✍ Forest fire prevention
- ✍ Public participation in decision-making and implementation
- ✍ Protected areas management
- ✍ Restoration and rehabilitation
- ✍ Traditional forest related knowledge
- ✍ Valuation of forest goods and services.

When the net is broadened to include consideration of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) and the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), the potential areas of synergy are narrower. The four agreements (UNFF, CBD, FCCC, and CCD) intersect to a large degree around the issues of:

- ✍ Restoration, rehabilitation, reforestation
- ✍ Public participation in decision-making and implementation
- ✍ Ecosystem-related considerations

The UNFF and CBD work programmes are outlined in Annex 2 of this background paper. The relevant commitments and proposals for action will be reviewed in the sections that follow and are set out in detail in Annex 3 of this background paper.

Restoration, rehabilitation and reforestation

This cluster of issues features prominently in the work programmes of the UNFF and CBD. The UNFF programme of work contains a number of elements related to this, including:

- ✍ Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover
- ✍ Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands and promotion of natural and planned forests
- ✍ Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs
- ✍ Social and cultural aspects of forests.

As noted above, the UNFF is charged with facilitating implementation of the IPF and IFF proposals for action. A number of these are relevant, including those pertaining to:

- ✍ Dealing with broader aspects of forest ecosystem management, including social and economic issues, and not focusing restoration of arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid zones narrowly on afforestation
- ✍ Promoting regeneration and restoration of degraded forest areas, including the involvement of indigenous peoples, local communities, forest dwellers and others
- ✍ Placing rehabilitation and sustainable management of forests and trees in environmentally critical areas as a high national priority.

The CBD provides that "each contracting party shall ... rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems." Parties are therefore expected to include restoration in national strategies and action plans. Restoration will be one of the main themes of the CBD's 8th COP in 2006. The

CBD's expanded work programme on forest biodiversity includes forest restoration as an important objective and, in this regard, calls on parties to:

- ? Restore forest biological diversity in degraded secondary forests and in forests established on former forestlands and other landscapes, including in plantations
- ? Develop systems and practices for restoration in accordance with the ecosystem approach
- ? Restore forest biodiversity to restore ecosystem services
- ? Create and improve international, regional and national databases and case studies on the status of degraded forests, deforested, restored and afforested lands.

The Kyoto Protocol to the FCCC provides that Annex I parties to the FCCC may promote sustainable forest management, afforestation, and reforestation in achieving quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments. Specifically, the Protocol provides that afforestation, reforestation, and deforestation since 1990 may be used to meet Annex I Party commitments. Forest-related activities under the Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), for investing in climate change mitigation activities in developing countries, are restricted to afforestation and reforestation activities. The interpretation of these terms is a controversial issue as it could encourage everything from planting of serried ranks of monocultures to restoration of forest landscapes and livelihoods. A process has been initiated by the FCCC Secretariat to determine how forest-based sequestration projects may be implemented on the ground. It should be noted that the Kyoto Protocol is not yet in force, but is expected to be before the end of 2003.

The provisions in the CCD focus on rehabilitation of land, conservation, and sustainable management of land and water resources. Parties are to establish national action programmes to ascertain the causes of desertification and to identify practical measures to combat it and mitigate the effects of drought. In the context of implementation of this Convention, a number of countries have initiated actions or adopted policies related to forests. The role of forests and forest ecosystems in combating desertification is clearly recognised in documentation prepared by the CCD Secretariat and by parties to the Convention. As stated in a Note by the CCD Secretariat on collaboration and synergies among the Rio Conventions, forests are instrumental in forestalling desertification, both directly through their effects on soil and water, and indirectly through their role in mitigating climate change and supporting biodiversity. The Secretariat's Note further states that dryland deforestation contributes to desertification, and reforestation of desertified land is a means to combat desertification.

The interlinkages among the conventions are another important factor. In this context, an example of the recognition of the synergy relating to restoration, rehabilitation and reforestation is found in the report of the second session of the UNFF, which concludes that actions taken under various conventions, particularly the FCCC, CCD, and CBD, are useful in facilitating the integration of policies to support rehabilitation strategies.

Review of the discussion surrounding these issues in the different arenas suggests that there is scope for a wide range of strategies to fit within a comprehensive approach to 'restoration'. For more on this approach, please see the section below on Forest Landscape Restoration.

Public participation in decision-making and implementation

Another area of synergy involves the application of a participatory approach to decision-making and implementation. Promoting public participation is one of the programme elements of the UNFF which is to be taken up each year. It relates to proposals for action of the IPF/IFF calling for:

- ✍ Promoting opportunities for the participation, *inter alia*, of indigenous people, forest-dependent people who possess traditional forest-related knowledge (TFRK) and forest owners in the planning, development and implementation of national forest policies and programmes
- ✍ Supporting direct participation of all interested parties in forest policy discussions and planning

- ✍ Creating appropriate procedures in order to promote effective participation of all interested parties in decision-making about forest management.

The CBD expanded work programme on forest biodiversity invites parties, governments, international and regional organisations and processes, civil society organisations and other relevant bodies and all relevant implementers to:

- ✍ Take into account the need to facilitate adequate participation of indigenous and local communities and the need to respect their rights and interests
- ✍ Develop and implement appropriate mechanisms for the participation of all stakeholders in ecosystem-level planning and management
- ✍ Increase public education, participation, and awareness.

The FCCC requires its parties to:

- ✍ Promote and cooperate in education, training and public awareness related to climate change and encourage the widest participation in this process, including that of non-governmental organisations
- ✍ Promote and facilitate public participation in addressing climate change and its effects and developing adequate responses at the national and, as appropriate, subregional and regional levels, in accordance with national laws and regulations, and within their respective capacities.

The CCD is particularly strong on the participatory approach to decision-making. The Convention recognises that in order to achieve its objectives and to implement its provisions, the parties should ensure that decisions on the design and implementation of programmes to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought are taken with the participation of populations and local communities and that an enabling environment is created at higher levels to facilitate action at national and local levels. In addition, the Convention calls for the establishment of a consultative and participatory process involving appropriate levels of government, local populations, communities and non-governmental organisations to provide guidance on a strategy with flexible planning to allow maximum participation from local populations and communities. The Convention urges "the full participation at all levels of local people" and its COP's Rules of Procedure states that any "qualified" body or agency may participate in the proceedings of any session in matters of direct concern.

Ecosystem-related considerations

Integration of ecosystem-related considerations into decision-making is another area of possible synergy. The ecosystem approach is fundamental to the CBD. It was adopted as the primary framework for action under the Convention and is described by the CBD Secretariat as: "a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way." The approach recognises that human beings, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of ecosystems. The CBD's expanded work programme on forest biological diversity includes a section on applying the ecosystem approach to the management of all types of forests and outlines a number of areas for action, such as:

- ✍ Develop practical methods, guidelines, indicators and strategies to apply the ecosystem approach to forests both inside and outside protected forest areas as well as in managed and unmanaged forests
- ✍ Develop and implement guidance to facilitate the selection of suitable forest management practices for specific forest ecosystems
- ✍ Develop and implement appropriate mechanisms for the participation of all stakeholders in ecosystem-level planning and management.

The IPF proposals for action encourage countries to take the ecosystem approach fully into consideration. The IFF recognised that the ecosystem approach is important and underlines forest conservation and protection as an integral component of sustainable forest management.

The ecosystem approach is also inherent in how the proposals for action of the IPF and IFF deal with fragile and mountain ecosystems. This will likely be reflected in the implementation of the UNFF's programme of work.

Ecosystem-related considerations are also relevant to the implementation of the FCCC and Kyoto Protocol, particularly in regard to forest-based Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) activities. The stated objective of the FCCC is to achieve "stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner." Submissions to FCCC COPs from several parties have stressed the need for ecosystem-based measures for adaptation, mitigation (through LULUCF), and integration activities.

Similarly, while application of an "ecosystem approach" is not explicitly required by the CCD, it is relevant to it. There is strong recognition in the CCD of the impacts of desertification and drought on ecosystems and the need for action to rehabilitate them. The CCD Secretariat has identified the ecosystem approach as a particular area of possible synergy to be explored with other relevant agreements.

Ecosystem-related synergies are reflected in supporting documentation from the UNFF, CBD, FCCC and CCD. For example, the FCCC's Least Developed Countries (LDCs) Expert Group on the Improvement of the Guidelines for the Preparation of National Adaptation Programmes of Action concluded that each of the FCCC, CCD and CBD aims to increase the robustness and resilience of ecosystems, which in turn promotes a reduction in the economic and social vulnerability of a country and its people. The Group further concluded that the inter-connectedness of ecosystems means that actions taken in support of one multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) may affect the ability of a country to achieve its objectives under another.

The IFF recognised that protected areas should be established within a 'landscape continuum' where the conservation of biological diversity, environmental services and landscape values are accorded priority in the wider context of other forest management and land-use practices in surrounding areas. This "landscape approach" is a practical tool for applying ecosystem-based considerations in the implementation of international obligations arising from the UNFF, CBD, FCCC, and CCD.

Other potential areas of synergy

There are other potential areas of synergy among the UNFF, CBD, FCCC, and CCD; however, their development is still ongoing. For instance, there are strong parallels between the UNFF (IPF/IFF), FCCC and CCD around the issues of desertification and drought, and countries with low forest cover, but these synergies do not yet extend firmly to the CBD. While the CBD's expanded work programme on forest biodiversity welcomes the establishment of a liaison group of the Secretariats of the CBD, FCCC and CCD and encourages the activities of the liaison group in promoting complementarity and synergies in their activities on forests and forest ecosystems, the CBD's expanded work programme on forest biodiversity itself does not feature these issues. The CBD programme of work on dry and sub-humid lands also makes no reference to forests. There may, however, be greater scope for developing this synergy through the tripartite CBD/CCD/FCCC process, which is expected to consider forests later this year.

Other agreements relevant to forests, but which are outside the scope of this paper, include:

- ✍ Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
- ✍ Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
- ✍ International Tropical Timber Agreement
- ✍ International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention Nos. 107 and 169

- ✍ Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat
- ✍ Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

Forest Landscape Restoration

The cluster of issues related to restoration, rehabilitation and reforestation is a very strong substantive area of synergy between the four agreements considered in this background paper. It is also potentially one of the major forest issues in the Mediterranean, particularly in relation to the concept of forest landscape restoration.

Forest landscape restoration is a key element of IUCN's forest programme as well as that of IUCN's partners in the Mediterranean workshop: WWF and the International Centre for Cultural Landscapes of the Mediterranean (ICMCL). Forest landscape restoration provides a bridge between the different international commitments on restoration, rehabilitation, reforestation, participation and the ecosystem approach. Forest landscape restoration – that is, restoration of forests within a broader landscape framework – requires that tangible benefits accrue to local people at the same time that ecological integrity is enhanced. This approach, as developed by WWF, IUCN and various governmental and non-governmental partners, builds on a number of existing rural development, conservation and natural resource management principles and approaches. It brings these together with the goal of restoring multiple functions in degraded or deforested landscapes. Forest landscape restoration takes note of historical forest characteristics, but does not aim to return forest landscapes to their original pristine forest state. Rather it is a forward-looking approach aimed at putting in place forest-based assets for both people and biodiversity.

Forest landscape restoration expands the emphasis from purely re-establishing tree cover on a particular site and to developing effective partnerships that ensure that forest landscapes have the necessary mix of goods and services to enhance livelihood options, meet society's needs for timber and wood products, build prospects for sustainable development and secure conservation of forest ecosystems and resources. In the Mediterranean region, forest landscape restoration contributes to soil and water conservation and to climate regulation and therefore strengthens economic prospects and the well-being of local peoples. This approach creates a platform above the site and community level for addressing competing interests and negotiating equitable trade-offs. It requires informed and genuine consensus and strategic alliances among key stakeholders.

There is a solid basis for action to be found in existing international commitments to promote forest landscape restoration. There is also political interest in restoration of landscapes and ecosystems. Some evidence of this was seen during the Ministerial segment of the second session of the UNFF where statements were made by Ministers, the Executive Secretaries of the FCCC and CCD, and the Directors of the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) and Center for International Forest Research (CIFOR), which were consistent with such an approach. Other evidence was the high level of governmental interest in the International Expert Meeting on Forest Landscape Restoration in Costa Rica in February 2002 and the Consultative Meeting on a Global Initiative on Forest Landscape Restoration in Edinburgh in September 2002. Forest landscape restoration is also supported by the promotion and testing of restoration guidelines under the ITTO; and restoration and rehabilitation are elements of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and Asia Forest Partnership.

Defining Implementation

The international forest regime is comprised of a number of agreements, some of which are legally binding, like the Kyoto Protocol, while others are "only" politically binding, such as the proposals for action of the IPF/IFF. The ground is further muddled by the fact that work programmes under legally-binding agreements may be voluntary, for example, the one on forest biological diversity adopted under the CBD. Another complicating factor is that the FCCC and

CCD are broad framework agreements; and the CBD is viewed as such by many people. As such they do not provide detailed standards, but are instead viewed as offering goals, principles and objectives.

Amidst these regimes of varying legal stringency, the tests for assessing the worth of these different mechanisms revolve around how their results are interpreted. The interpretation of terms such as "implementation", "effectiveness", and "compliance", therefore, becomes crucial to understanding the efficacy of the tools. The terminology surrounding these issues can be confusing. As defined by experts, *implementation* is not the action on-the-ground; rather it is the integration of relevant international commitments into the national policy frameworks that provide a basis for the action. *Effectiveness* of international agreements is a measure of whether the agreements have achieved their objectives, for example, whether the behaviour of target groups has changed or whether the state of the natural environment has improved. *Compliance* refers to fulfilling clearly defined obligations under a legally binding agreement, such as establishing protected areas by a target date, or complying with the spirit of the convention.

In the cases of the UNFF, CBD, FCCC, and CCD, it can be said that the agreements are still at early stages of development. It is still too early to pass judgment on the outcomes of these instruments or to assess them in terms of implementation, effectiveness or compliance. The UNFF began substantive consideration of its programme elements in 2002, though the IPF and IFF proposals for action have been around for a longer time. The expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity under the CBD was only adopted in April 2002. The Kyoto Protocol to the FCCC is still not yet in force and the CCD has only recently initiated a first review of its implementation.

Global Context for Implementation

There are some broad trends, which may affect prospects for implementation of international commitments on forests including, poverty eradication, dominance of the trade agenda, and the growth in importance of partnerships between governments and non-governmental entities, including the private sector, to take responsibility for environment-related obligations.

Currently, there is a significant emphasis being placed by the international community on poverty eradication. The case for the relevance of forests to this objective has not yet been fully made. For example, while general statements are often made in poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) about the importance of forests to the poor people of the world, specific action on forests is not often included. This is unfortunate as the United Nation's Millennium Assembly's 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which focus on poverty eradication, are expected to receive increasing international attention. One of the MDGs addresses environmental sustainability and outlines indicators including change in land area covered by forest, and land area protected to maintain forest biodiversity; however, the main thrust of their focus is on other development-related priorities. To avoid the marginalisation of forest issues, it will be important to place forests and forest landscape restoration specifically within this poverty eradication/MDG agenda, not just at the level of rhetoric but in terms of an action agenda.

Another current international trend is toward the domination of a short-term World Trade Organisation (WTO)-focused trade agenda over environmental and sustainable development issues. Rather than encouraging a push toward keeping the trade and environment agendas in balance as called for by the Earth Summit in 1992, there continues to be considerable ambiguity regarding the degree of mutual supportiveness, hierarchy, and deference between the environment and trade regimes. This tension was evident throughout the deliberations of the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and will continue to counterbalance the strength of multilateral environmental agreements as long as this ambiguity persists.

The WSSD process also stimulated a trend toward placing responsibility for implementation action in the hands of a range of actors, rather than just governments. The role of the private sector, communities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and others, in managing natural

resources and ecosystems has increased. Strong emphasis is being placed on partnerships involving these actors. This has led to some positive prospects for forests in the future, including through the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration (initiated by IUCN, WWF and the Forestry Commission of Great Britain), which was given impetus by the WSSD. On the other hand, there is a concern that this partnership approach can only work within a sound legal and policy framework and where adequate provision is made for credible monitoring, assessment and reporting. There is also a danger that governments may delegate their international obligations leading to difficulties in monitoring and enforcing compliance. While the WSSD lauded partnerships, governments could not agree to any criteria for assessing their usefulness.

Other global trends which may affect implementation of forest-related commitments include unilateralism and regionalism, with some countries and regions growing increasingly isolationist and assertive. Stronger regionalism can be a positive trend. However, rising security concerns will likely aggravate these negative aspects of these trends and may create a need for new governance structures.

Specific Factors Affecting Implementation

A number of attempts have been made to assess progress in implementation. These include the work and report of the *Six-Country Initiative in Support of the UN Ad-Hoc Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF)* and also the work of non-governmental and indigenous peoples' organisations, which led to the publication - *Keeping the Promise: A Review by NGOs and IPOs of the Implementation of the UN Inter-Governmental Panel on Forests 'Proposals for Action' in Select Countries*.

A wide range of factors influence the extent to and way in which countries fulfil their commitments. Some of these are related to the commitments themselves:

- ✍ Nature of the obligations – e.g., are they demanding and stringent or general and hortatory?
- ✍ Targets and timetables – e.g., do the commitments have to be fulfilled by a certain date?
- ✍ Costs and benefits of implementation – e.g., how costly would it be to change patterns of behaviour?
- ✍ Funding mechanisms – e.g., does the agreement include a specific mechanism for funding implementation action?
- ✍ Participation – e.g., did major groups (NGOs, community groups, etc.) participate in negotiation and implementation?
- ✍ Monitoring, assessment and reporting – e.g., are reports required regularly on the basis of which progress can be assessed and is there provision for independent verification of reports?

At the regional and international levels, some factors are which may influence implementation, include:

- ✍ Whether key countries and negotiating blocks of countries (e.g., EU or G77) have shown leadership
- ✍ Whether there is or is not international momentum behind the activity
- ✍ Interlinkages with other international instruments.

There are also several relevant factors at the national level, including:

- ✍ Administrative and bureaucratic capacity
- ✍ Access to the policy process by and influence of stakeholders
- ✍ Transparency and availability of information
- ✍ Political environment, including stability, lack of corruption and commitment
- ✍ Level of national income/development in relation to the cost of compliance; also who bears the cost – e.g., industry or taxpayers
- ✍ Public opinion and political will.

The identification of factors contributing to implementation or lack thereof is challenging because each country will, by virtue of its legal and administrative arrangements, require different types of steps to be taken to translate and put into effect international agreements. Also, key factors cannot be considered in isolation. They are interrelated and impact each other to varying degrees depending on the country and the agreement at issue.

Pointers for implementation of Forest Landscape Restoration in the Mediterranean

How could one go about getting a better picture of the status of implementation in different countries and in the Mediterranean region generally? The focus of this project is to get a 'snapshot' of implementation and linkages, and not a comprehensive analysis, which would require extensive human and financial resources. Given this context, and the wide range of inter-related factors affecting implementation and the status of the relevant agreements, the following are some proposed indicators of progress in implementation of international commitments related to forest landscape restoration in the Mediterranean region:

Coordination and accountability

- ✍ Has a specific focal point or responsible agency within the government been appointed to coordinate implementation efforts on international commitments related to restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems (especially UNFF and CBD)?

Information for decision-making

- ✍ Have stakeholders been provided with information about the benefits of restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems and the relevant international commitments?
- ✍ Is the country compiling information, databases, case studies, etc. on the status of degraded forests, deforested and restored lands?

Participatory mechanisms for decision-making

- ✍ Has a consultation process been initiated regarding implementation of the international commitments relevant to restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems with adequate representation from different sectors?
- ✍ Has the country sought to achieve consensus on priorities among stakeholders?

Assessment of gaps

- ✍ Has the country undertaken an objective gap analysis (with stakeholders) comparing existing domestic policies against the relevant international commitments to determine the level of alignment and to prioritise areas where existing efforts are deficient?

Prioritisation and integration

- ✍ Is restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems a national priority? (e.g. as evidenced by statements from high level officials, or the adoption of national targets and timetables)
- ✍ Have programmes, systems, practices, measures or other arrangements been put in place on restoration of forest landscapes and ecosystems? Do they include consideration of social issues?
- ✍ Have practical methods, guidelines, indicators or strategies been developed to apply the ecosystem approach to restoration, rehabilitation or reforestation efforts?

Monitoring, reporting and assessment

- ✍ Was information about progress in implementation of forest landscape restoration included in reports to CSD in the lead-up to the WSSD and/or in regional reports to the CCD?

These indicators could be complemented by other locally specific gauges of the effectiveness of international agreements, which assess whether target groups have changed their behaviour or whether the status of the natural environment has changed and how.

Conclusion

As forests in the Mediterranean region continue to face threats from disparate sources ranging from over-grazing to climate change, there is a need to identify strategies and tools to support the implementation of international forest objectives in the region.

There are several synergies among the leading forest-related international conventions, which can facilitate effective implementation. These include synergies among the UNFF, CBD, FCCC and CCD regarding: restoration, rehabilitation and reforestation; public participation in decision-making and implementation; and ecosystem-related considerations. Along with strategies, such as "forest landscape restoration," these synergies can be harnessed to successfully conserve, sustainably manage and restore forests in the region.

Implementation of international forest objectives must also be assessed within the global context. Trends such as the recent international focus on poverty eradication, the dominance of the trade agenda over environment and sustainable development concerns, the growth in popularity of partnerships between governments and non-governmental entities to undertake international obligations, and increasing and more assertive unilateralism and regionalism are important factors to consider in formulating effective implementation strategies.

The international instruments focusing on forest objectives have not yet matured and time will be required before a full and balanced assessment of their worth can be determined. Specific factors at the national, regional and international levels and procedural aspects of the international instruments in question may play critical roles in determining success or failure. To strengthen the implementation process, several areas must be addressed and monitored, not only by governments and NGOs, but by all stakeholders. These important areas include coordination and accountability tools, information for decision-making, participatory mechanisms for decision-making, assessment of gaps, prioritisation and integration, and monitoring, reporting and assessment.

In the meantime, it is clear that there is a solid basis for taking action without delay, with strong areas of potential synergy, and a range of possible factors to assist in undertaking assessments of progress in implementation. At this important time in the implementation of international forest objectives, these elements will help implementers to commence down a path that will encourage the conservation, sustainable management and restoration of forests in the Mediterranean region.

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Annex 1

Acronyms

CBD – Convention on Biological Diversity
CBOs – Community-based Organisations
CCD – United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
CIFOR – Center for International Forestry Research
CITES – Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna
CMS – Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
COP – Conference of the Parties
CSD – United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development
ECOSOC – United Nations Economic and Social Council
EU – European Union
FCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
G77 – Group of 77 and China
ICMCL - International Centre for Cultural Landscapes of the Mediterranean
IFF – Intergovernmental Forum on Forests
ILO – International Labour Organisation
IPF – Intergovernmental Panel on Forests
IPOs – Indigenous Peoples’ Organisations
ITTO – International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN – World Conservation Union
LDCs – Least Developed Countries
LFCCs - Low Forest Cover Countries
LULUCF – Land Use, Land -use Change, and Forestry
MDGs – Millennium Development Goals
MEAs - Multilateral Environmental Agreements
NGOs – Non-Governmental Organisations
TFRK - Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge
UN – United Nations
UNFF – United Nations Forum on Forests
WWF – the conservation organisation
WSSD – World Summit on Sustainable Development

Annex 2

UNFF and CBD Work Programmes

The sessions of the **UNFF** are organised around the following programme elements:

- ✍ combating deforestation and forest degradation
- ✍ forest conservation and protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems
- ✍ rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover
- ✍ rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands
- ✍ promotion of natural and planted forests
- ✍ concepts, terminology and definitions
- ✍ economic aspects of forests
- ✍ forest health and productivity
- ✍ maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs
- ✍ traditional forest-related knowledge
- ✍ forest-related scientific knowledge
- ✍ social and cultural aspects of forests
- ✍ monitoring, assessment and reporting
- ✍ concepts and terminology and definitions
- ✍ criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management

In addition, each session will address the following common items:

- ✍ means of implementation: finance, technology transfer and capacity-building
- ✍ multistakeholder dialogues
- ✍ enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination
- ✍ country experiences and lessons learned
- ✍ emerging issues relevant to country implementation
- ✍ inter-sessional work; monitoring, assessment and reporting
- ✍ implementation of the plan of action; promoting public participation
- ✍ national forest programmes; trade; enabling environment

The **CBD** expanded work programme on forest biological diversity includes the following elements:

- ✍ Apply the ecosystem approach to the management of all types of forests
- ✍ Reduce the threats and mitigate the impacts of processes threatening forest biological diversity (climate change, fires and fire suppression, natural disturbances, fragmentation and conversion to other land uses)
- ✍ Restore forest biological diversity in degraded secondary forests and in forests established on former forestlands and other landscapes, including in plantations.
- ✍ Promote forest management practices that further the conservation of endemic and threatened species
- ✍ Ensure adequate and effective protected forest area networks
- ✍ Promote sustainable use of forest resources to enhance the conservation of forest biological diversity
- ✍ Prevent losses caused by unsustainable harvesting of timber and non-timber forest resources
- ✍ Enable indigenous and local communities to develop and implement adaptive community-management systems to conserve and sustainably use forest biological diversity
- ✍ Promote the fair and equitable sharing of benefits resulting from the utilisation of forest genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge
- ✍ Improve the understanding of the various causes of forest biological diversity losses
- ✍ Parties and Governments to develop good governance practices, review and revise and implement forest and forest-related laws, and tenure and planning systems, and to provide a sound basis for conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity.
- ✍ Promote forest law enforcement and address related trade issues
- ✍ Address socio-economic failures and distortions that lead to decisions that result in loss of forest biological diversity
- ✍ Increase public education, participation, and awareness.

Annex 3

Relevant International Commitments

I. RESTORATION AND REHABILITATION

A. UN Forum on Forests (UNFF)

UNFF Programme Elements (UNFF-1)

- Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover (Resolution 1/2, Annex, Paragraph 15(k))
- Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands, and the promotion of natural and planted forests (Resolution 1/2, Annex, Paragraph 15(l))

Intergovernmental Panel on Forests – Report of the Fourth Session (IPF-4)

- ✍ Concluded that restoration of arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid zones should not focus narrowly on afforestation but deal with broader aspects of forest ecosystem management, including social and economic issues (Paragraph 43)
- ✍ Urged Low Forest Cover Countries (LFCCs) to promote regeneration and restoration of degraded forest areas, including the involvement of indigenous peoples, local communities, forest dwellers and others (Paragraph 58 (iii))
- ✍ Urged Low Forest Cover Countries (LFCCs) to plan and manage forest plantations, where appropriate, to enhance production and provision of goods and services, paying due attention to relevant social, cultural, economic and environmental considerations in the selection of species, areas and silviculture systems, preferring native species, where appropriate, and taking all practicable steps to avoid replacing natural ecosystems of high ecological and cultural values with forest plantations, particularly monocultures (Paragraph 58(b)(ii))

Intergovernmental Forum on Forests – Report of the Fourth Session (IFF-4)

- ✍ Urged countries to promote the creation of new forest resources through planted forests and the rehabilitation of degraded forests, taking into consideration their social, cultural and environmental impacts, and economic costs and benefits (Paragraph 64(g))
- ✍ Urged countries to place rehabilitation and sustainable management of forests and trees in environmentally critical areas as a higher national priority (Paragraph 129(b))
- ✍ Concluded that protected areas should form part of a landscape continuum, where the conservation of biodiversity, environmental services and other values are also accorded priority in the wider context of other forest management and land-use practices in surrounding areas (Paragraph 78)

B. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Convention

- Each contracting party shall rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems (Article 8(f))
- As such, restoration should be included as part of national strategies and action plans for biodiversity

COP6 expanded work programme on forest biological diversity

- Parties should aim to restore forest biological diversity in degraded secondary forests and in forests established on former forestlands and other landscapes, including in plantations (Annex, Goal 3, Objective 1)

Activities listed under Goal 3, Objective 1, include:

- Systems and practices for restoration in accordance with the ecosystem approach
- Restoration of forest biodiversity to restore ecosystem services

- Create and improve, where appropriate, international, regional and national databases and case studies on the status of degraded forests, deforested, restored and afforested lands.

Multi-year programme of work for the Conference of the Parties up to 2010

The seventh session of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) recommended a number of topics as potential themes for in-depth discussion at the eighth and subsequent meetings of the Conference of the Parties, including restoration and rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems and recovery of rare and threatened species. To support this work, an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Restoration will be established.

C. UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC)

Convention

- ⚡ All parties, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, shall promote sustainable management, and promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, including forests (Article 4(1)(d))

Kyoto Protocol

- In achieving quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments, Annex I Parties shall promote sustainable forest management, afforestation and reforestation (Article 2(1)(a)(ii))
- Afforestation, reforestation and deforestation since 1990 shall be used to meet the commitments under this Article of each Party included in Annex I (Article 3(3))

Bonn Agreement

- That afforestation and reforestation projects shall be the only eligible land-use, land-use change and forestry projects under the clean development mechanism during the first commitment period. (Annex, Part VI, Article 3(8))

Marrakesh Accords

- ⚡ That the eligibility of land use, land-use change and forestry project activities under the clean development mechanism is limited to afforestation and reforestation (Paragraph 7(a))

D. UN Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)

Convention

- Combating desertification includes activities aimed at rehabilitation and reclamation (Article 1(b))
- Long term strategies should focus on rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources (Article 2(2))

II. PARTICIPATION

A. UNFF

UNFF Programme Element (UNFF-1)

- ⚡ Promoting public participation (Resolution 1/2, Annex, Paragraph 15(b))

IPF-4

- ✍ Called on countries, in the context of their national legal systems, to promote and provide opportunities for the participation, *inter alia*, of indigenous people, forest-dependent people who possess Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge (TFRK) and forest owners in the planning, development and implementation of national forest policies and programmes, taking into account principles 2 (d) and 5 (a) of the Forest Principles (Paragraph 40(e))
- ✍ Invited Governments, within their respective legal frameworks, and international organisations, in consultation with countries, to consider supporting indigenous people, local communities, other inhabitants of forests, small-scale forest owners and forest-dependent communities by funding sustainable forest management projects, capacity-building and information dissemination, and by supporting direct participation of all interested parties in forest policy discussions and planning (Paragraph 40(f))
- ✍ Urged that forest-related activities should be made more transparent, effective and flexible, and should provide for effective participation of and collaboration among all interested parties and major groups. (Paragraph 139)

IFF-4

- ✍ Agreed that the implementation of IPF proposals for action is of particular importance. This includes the implementation by countries of the IPF proposals for action in the context of their national forest programmes/national policy framework in a coordinated manner and with the participation of all interested parties (Paragraph 9(e))
- ✍ Encouraged countries, with the assistance of international organisations, donor countries and financial institutions, to implement the following additional proposals through partnerships involving, where appropriate, the participation of government institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), indigenous and local communities, forest owners and the private sector to create appropriate procedures in order to promote effective participation of all interested parties in decision-making about forest management (Paragraph 64(b))
- ✍ Encouraged countries to: develop and implement appropriate strategies for the protection of the full range of forest values, including cultural, social, spiritual, environmental and economic aspects; recognise the multiple functions and sustainable uses of all types of forests, with particular regard to biological diversity; facilitate participation of communities and other interested parties; integrate the livelihood needs of indigenous and local communities; and plan and manage forests on an ecosystem basis, in which special emphasis should be put on the continued integrity of genetic diversity. (Paragraph 85(b))

B. CBD

- ✍ In undertaking the CBD's expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity, Parties, governments, international and regional organisations and processes, civil society organisations and other relevant bodies and all relevant implementers are invited to take into account the need to facilitate adequate participation of indigenous and local communities and the need to respect their rights and interests (Preamble)
- ✍ Develop and implement appropriate mechanisms for the participation of all stakeholders in ecosystem-level planning and management (Article 1(1)(e))
- ✍ Increase public education, participation, and awareness. (Article 3)

C. FCCC

Convention

- ✍ Promote and cooperate in education, training and public awareness related to climate change and encourage the widest participation in this process, including that of non-governmental organisations (Article 4(1)(i))
- ✍ In carrying out their commitments under Article 4, paragraph 1(i), the Parties shall promote and facilitate public participation in addressing climate change and its effects

and developing adequate responses at the national and, as appropriate, subregional and regional levels, and in accordance with national laws and regulations, and within their respective capacities. (Article 6(a))

Kyoto Protocol

- ✍ All Parties, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, without introducing any new commitments for Parties not included in Annex I, but reaffirming existing commitments under Article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, and continuing to advance the implementation of these commitments in order to achieve sustainable development, taking into account Article 4, paragraphs 3, 5 and 7, of the Convention, shall cooperate in and promote at the international level, and, where appropriate, using existing bodies, the development and implementation of education and training programmes, including the strengthening of national capacity building, in particular human and institutional capacities and the exchange or secondment of personnel to train experts in this field, in particular for developing countries, and facilitate at the national level public awareness of, and public access to information on, climate change. Suitable modalities should be developed to implement these activities through the relevant bodies of the Convention, taking into account Article 6 of the Convention (Article 10(e))

D. CCD

Convention

- ✍ In order to achieve the objective of the CCD and to implement its provisions, the Parties shall be guided, *inter alia*, by the following: the Parties should ensure that decisions on the design and implementation of programmes to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought are taken with the participation of populations and local communities and that an enabling environment is created at higher levels to facilitate action at national and local levels (Article 3(a))
- ✍ In addition to their obligations pursuant to article 4, affected country Parties undertake to promote awareness and facilitate the participation of local populations, particularly women and youth, with the support of nongovernmental organisations, in efforts to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought (Article 5(d))
- ✍ A consultative and participatory process involving appropriate levels of government, local populations, communities and non-governmental organisations shall be undertaken to provide guidance on a strategy with flexible planning to allow maximum participation from local populations and communities. As appropriate, bilateral and multilateral assistance agencies may be involved in this process at the request of an affected African country Party (Article 6.2)
- ✍ Parties are to promote, as appropriate, capacity building through the full participation at all levels of local people, particularly at the local level, especially women and youth, with the cooperation of non-governmental and local organisations (Article 19(1)(a))

CCD Rules of Procedure

- ✍ Any body or agency, whether national or international, governmental or non-governmental, which is qualified in matters covered by the Convention and which has informed the permanent Secretariat of its wish to be represented at a session of the Conference of the Parties as an observer may be so admitted unless at least one third of the Parties present at the session object (ICCD/COP(1)/11/Add.1, Rule 7(1))
- ✍ Such observers may, upon invitation of the President, participate without the right to vote in the proceedings of any session in matters of direct concern to the body or agency they represent, unless at least one third of the Parties present at the session object (ICCD/COP(1)/11/Add.1, Rule 7(2))

III. ECOSYSTEM-RELATED CONSIDERATIONS: ECOSYSTEM APPROACH/LANDSCAPE APPROACH

A. UNFF

IPF-4

- ⌘ Encouraged countries to begin a consultation process with all interested parties at the national, subnational and local levels to identify the full range of benefits that a given society derives from forests, taking the ecosystem approach fully into consideration. (Paragraph 89(h))

IFF-4

- ⌘ Recognised the importance of an ecosystem approach which underlines forest conservation and protection as an integral component of sustainable forest management. The establishment and management of protected forest areas within an ecosystem approach can contribute significantly to local economies and non-market benefits to society in the form of flood control, soil and watershed protection, and other ecological services essential to human well-being (Paragraph 77)
- ⌘ Agreed that, where possible, protected areas should form part of a landscape continuum, where the conservation of biological diversity, environmental services and values are also accorded priority in the wider context of other forest management and land-use practices in surrounding areas (Paragraph 78)
- ⌘ Encouraged countries to develop and implement appropriate strategies for the protection of the full range of forest values, including cultural, social, spiritual, environmental and economic aspects; recognition of the multiple functions and sustainable use of all types of forests, with particular regard to biological diversity; participation of communities and other interested parties; integration of the livelihood needs of indigenous and local communities; and planning and management on an ecosystem basis, in which special emphasis should be put on the continued integrity of genetic diversity (Paragraph 85(b))
- ⌘ Encouraged countries to develop and apply consistently, as needed, criteria based on the adequacy, consistency and effectiveness of protected areas, following an ecosystem approach and incorporating reserve design principles that identify the need for new protected areas critical to the protection and maintenance of environmental services (Paragraph 85(e))

B. CBD

Convention

As described by the Conference of the Parties, the ecosystem approach is the primary framework for action under the Convention. It was adopted as such in 1995. The Conference of the Parties, at its 5th meeting in 2000, endorsed the description of the ecosystem approach and operational guidance, and recommended the application of the principles and other guidance on the ecosystem approach (Decision V/6).

The CBD web site (see: <<http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/cross-cutting/ecosystem/>>) describes the ecosystem approach as:

- ⌘ A strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way
- ⌘ Application of the ecosystem approach will help to reach a balance of the three objectives of the Convention
- ⌘ It is based on the application of appropriate scientific methodologies focused on levels of biological organisation which encompass the essential processes, functions and interactions among organisms and their environment
- ⌘ It recognises that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of ecosystems

2002 expanded work programme on forest biological diversity

- ✍ To apply the ecosystem approach to the management of all types of forests (Annex, Goal 1)
- ✍ Develop practical methods, guidelines, indicators and strategies to apply the ecosystem approach adapted to regional differences to forests both inside and outside protected forest areas as well as both in managed and unmanaged forests (Annex, Goal 1, Objective 1)
- ✍ Clarify the conceptual basis of the ecosystem approach in relation to sustainable forest management (Annex, Goal 1, Objective 1(a))
- ✍ Develop guidance for applying the ecosystem approach in forest ecosystems (Annex, Goal 1, Objective 1(b))
- ✍ Develop and implement guidance to help the selection of suitable forest management practices for specific forest ecosystems (Annex, Goal 1, Objective 1(d))
- ✍ Develop and implement appropriate mechanisms for the participation of all stakeholders in ecosystem-level planning and management (Annex, Goal 1, Objective 1(e))

C. FCCC

Convention

- ✍ "Adverse effects of climate change" is defined as "changes in the physical environment or biota resulting from climate change which have significant deleterious effects on the composition, resilience or productivity of natural and managed ecosystems or on the operation of socio-economic systems or on human health and welfare" (Article 1)
- ✍ The ultimate objective of this Convention and any related legal instruments that the Conference of the Parties may adopt is to achieve, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention, stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner (Article 2)
- ✍ All Parties, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, shall promote sustainable management, and promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, including biomass, forests and oceans as well as other terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems (Article 4(1)(d))

FCCC Least Developed Countries Expert Group on the Improvement of the Guidelines for the Preparation of National Adaptation Programmes of Action

- ✍ The FCCC, CCD and CBD share a common focus on promoting sustainability – either through the achievement of sustainable development in drought affected areas, the sustainable use of biological diversity or the assurance of sustainable economic development through the mitigation of climate change. As well, each convention aims to increase the robustness and resilience of ecosystems, which in turn promotes a reduction in the economic and social vulnerability of a country and its people (Page 16)
- ✍ The common environmental focus, application to shared landscapes and similar underlying objectives of the FCCC, CCD and CBD enables NAPA preparation teams to seek synergies in two different areas: through ecological linkages; and, through relationships between different ecosystems and their functions (Page 17)
- ✍ The inter-connectedness of ecosystems means that actions taken in support of one multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) may affect the ability of a country to achieve its objectives under another MEA (Page 17)

D. CCD

Convention

- ✍ The objective of the CCD is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, through effective action at all levels, supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements, in the framework of an integrated approach which is consistent with Agenda 21, with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in affected areas (Article 2(1))
- ✍ Achieving this objective will involve long-term integrated strategies that focus simultaneously, in affected areas, on improved productivity of land, and the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources, leading to improved living conditions, in particular at the community level (Article 2(2))
- ✍ Subregional and/or regional action programmes may include conducting of research and development activities concerning selected ecosystems in affected areas (Article 7(1))

Review of activities for the promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and relevant international organisations, institutions and agencies, Note by the CCD Secretariat

- ✍ Forest ecosystems perform hydrological, climate and soil stabilising functions in drylands. Deforestation reduces the water retention capacity of the soil, and increases soil erosion and run-off. Widespread deforestation may dry up local climates and increase evapotranspiration. Since water scarcity and loss of soil induce desertification, dryland deforestation contributes to desertification, and reforestation of desertified land is a means of combating desertification. Furthermore, afforestation may be an option for combating desertification, provided that it is not carried out at the expense of local biodiversity (Paragraph 47)
- ✍ Another cross-cutting concept developed by the CBD which relates to the proposed action plan for synergies is that of the "ecosystem approach", which recognises that the greatest threat to biological diversity is the replacement by alternate systems of land use" and proposes a series of incentives to those " *who control the resource*". The ecosystem approach should be explored as a tool for synergizing the CCD (Paragraph 107)

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