



European DesertNet Newsletter n. 3/2009

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1. DesertNet informs about the outcomes of the 1st scientific-style UNCCD Conference in Buenos Aires and its presentation at COP9

Outcomes of the first scientific-style UNCCD Conference

In support of the 10-year strategic plan and framework for the implementation of the Convention (2008-2018), a first 2.5 day UNCCD scientific-style conference titled *“Biophysical and socioeconomic monitoring and assessment of desertification and land degradation, to support decision-making in land and water management”* took place within the COP9 held in Buenos Aires (21 Sep – 2 Oct 2009).

The Dryland Science for Development Consortium (DSD) is made up of the five institutions: DesertNet, International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre – Institute for the Environment and Sustainability (JRC-IES) and the United Nations University’s International Network on Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH). This consortium has been selected through an open call by the UNCCD/CST in early 2008 to organise the contents and the structure of this first scientific-style conference (<http://www.unccd.int/cop/officialdocs/cop9/pdf/cst2add2eng.pdf>).

Following to the terms of reference of that call, members of DSD, and thus also DesertNet, did not only organise the scientific architecture of the conference, but also looked for the funds to support a transparent and broad global representation of the scientific community. This has been achieved first through the development process of drafting 3 white papers (one per working group) building the basis for discussions during the conference in Buenos Aires.

Scientists from all continents participated either in the working meetings or in the global online consultation process. Keynote talks on the results and recommendations of the 3 White Papers gave insight into the results of the three White Papers which discussed biophysical and socioeconomic monitoring and assessment from the following perspectives:

1. Integrated Methods for Monitoring and Assessment of Desertification/Land Degradation Processes and Drivers (DSD Working Group 1, led by JRC-IES/DesertNet).
2. Monitoring and Assessment of Sustainable Land Management (DSD Working Group 2, led by ICARDA/ICRISAT).
3. Monitoring and Assessment of Desertification and Land Degradation: Knowledge Management, and Economic and Social Drivers (DSD Working Group 3, led by DesertNet/UNU-INWEH).

The DSD Consortium also elicited some funds to invite scientists from developing countries to participate in the scientific conference in Buenos Aires. The outcomes of the DSD global scientific consultation process are officially documented and have been provided to the COP9 participants (See: <http://www.unccd.int/cop/officialdocs/cop9/pdf/cstinf2eng.pdf>).

More than 200 scientists, members of national delegations and CSOs attended this first scientific conference in Buenos Aires. After the opening (first afternoon), 3 half days sessions allowed to present the main findings of the 3 working groups. The last half day being dedicated to summarizing 11 “recommendations”. DSD also organised a scientific poster exhibition (with more than 45 from the global scientific community) at the conference site which flanked the conference and thus provided deep insight into ongoing research on dryland development in the global drylands.



UNCCD CST Chair Klaus Kellner opens the CST first scientific Conference



Opening of WG 3 session by Dr Martin Bwalya

Overall, this first scientific-conference was seen as an historic event, as underlined by Mr Luc Gnacadja (UNCCD Executive secretary) “This [success] shows that science is good for the UNCCD and the UNCCD is

good for science”¹. At various plenarian discussions of the Conference and the CST, the importance of science to combat desertification and promote sustainable land use (SLM) has been stressed repeatedly.

When considering the impact on the convention’s process, intense negotiations have led to several important **decisions** related to the scientific conference:

- The CST Bureau has been requested to review the outcomes of the 1st scientific conference together with parties and regional groups, and in the meanwhile the scientists involved are encouraged to publish their findings (decision ICCD/COP(9)/L.37)
- The following scientific conference will take place during the CST-SS3 meeting of 2012, then it will be decided if this intersessional regime is maintained (decision ICCD/COP(9)/L.27)
- The theme of that next conference, as proposed by the European group, will be “*Economic assessment of desertification, SLM and resilience....*”(decision ICCD/COP(9)/L.27)
- In line with the 1st scientific conference recommendations, the CST is requested to conduct an assessment on how to organise international, interdisciplinary advice and how to channel it in the convention’s process (decision ICCD/COP(9)/L.38)

With its over 300 members from 52 countries, DesertNet regularly briefed the global scientific community on the DSD process. This enabled rich and scientifically well-founded contributions of the members of DesertNet to the three draft white papers. Comments on the three white papers could still be provided online until 31. October 2009.

Advance copies of the COP 9 decisions are available online at: <http://www.unccd.int/cop/cop9/change.php>

DesertNet goes global



On the first day of the scientific style conference (22 Sep 2009) delegates were informed about the move of European DesertNet to become the Association of DesertNet International (see photo on the left; for more information contact: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol04/enb04221e.html>).

This largest scientific network on desertification research has become a major global initiative. On 25 Sept 2009, in the immediate aftermath of the first scientific conference, DesertNet invited 80 representatives of country delegations, CSOs, and scientists to an evening reception at the Café Tortoni in Buenos Aires to officially launch DesertNet International. The Executive Secretary of the UNCCD Luc Gnacadja, the CST Chair Klaus Kellner, the COW chair Ismail Abdel Galil Hussein, Youssef Brahimi from the GM, the executive secretary of OSS Youba Sokona, the UNCCD KMST coordinator Elisabeth David, Richard Thomas representative of UNU-INWEH, Karen Foljanty from the German



¹ <http://www.unccd.int/cop/cop9/docs/cop9concludes.pdf>

Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, Anneke Trux from the GTZ, Uriel Safriel representing the GNDRI were also present. At the 2-hour reception which was kindly sponsored and organised by NRD (University of Sassari, Italy) the guests were presented with an overview on the aims, structure and evolution of DesertNet. Dr. Mary Seely (DRFN, Namibia and DesertNet member) then presented important aspects about what needs and options desertification-affected countries pose on DesertNet International (see her contribution on page 5 of this newsletter). DesertNet's evening reception was rounded up by an excellent Tango Show that gave the participants a taste of the unique and rich culture of Argentina.



Photos taken at the DNI launch event at Café Tortoni in Buenos Aires on 23 Sept. 2009

The way forward

Until the end of 2009, DesertNet's major work will still be carried out by the Steering Committee and Advisory Board to manage a smooth transformation from European DesertNet to the Association of DesertNet International. As members of European DesertNet you will be invited to join DesertNet International at the first General Assembly of DesertNet International which will be held in the first half of 2010.

By the end of November 2009, DesertNet as member of the DSD consortium will assist in finalising the 3 White Papers. As co-leader of the DSD Working Groups 1 and 3 the boards of DesertNet will be especially engaged with the finalisation of the White Papers 1 and 3. DesertNet will also be assisting in the compilation of the Conference Proceedings which should be ready by this year as well and will assist in the compilation of a policy brief for decision makers which should be provided to the 15th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (UNFCCC COP 15 AND KYOTO PROTOCOL COP/MOP 5), scheduled from 7-18 December 2009, in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Finally, in close cooperation, DesertNet and UNU-INWEH are discussing strategies to continue with global discussions on the needs and options of an international and independent scientific body on land degradation/desertification.

We will keep you informed about all processes.

By: Mariam Akhtar-Schuster, Giuseppe Enne, Richard Escadafal and Carlos San Juan Mesonada – Interim Board of DesertNet International.

Launch of DesertNet International: Response from the south

At the launch of DesertNet International, on 25 September 2009 in Buenos Aires, Dr Mary Seely from the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia was requested to present a brief 'response from the south'. The text of her brief response follows:



First, thank you to Dr Mariam Akhtar-Schuster and Prof Giuseppe Enne of DesertNet International and the Dryland Science for Development consortium, as well as the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of GEF, for making my presence here possible. What is the response from the south to the launching of an extensive non-governmental, non-profit scientific network and think tank of such august proportions?

The first response is seeing DesertNet International as a potential threat in the sheer mass of this assemblage of dynamic scientists. But, with reflection, and the possibility of being members of this network, this reaction is set aside. One aspect of the expectations of DesertNet International is the statement that 'developing countries can serve as a study object'. This is something that we trust does not happen and that we are, instead, partners in envisaged scientific endeavours. Meanwhile, we look forward to having access to and participate in large scientific projects and also to the promised 'manual on desertification' that DesertNet International intends to compile.

Other positive aspects of DesertNet International that we in the south look forward to is the potential, for example, of our northern colleagues mentoring fellow, less experienced scientists when attending large, confusing gatherings such as this UNCCD COP9 and in other instances. We also look forward to our northern colleagues finding a mechanism for helping us identify key emerging, current and new publications and pointing out new paradigms which rapidly evolve amongst their large scientific institutions – components we might only slowly identify well after they are established. In short, we in the south hope that our fellow members of the network will contribute to our capacity building, perhaps through their proposed newsletter, to make meaningful and timely contributions to combating desertification.

In terms of research activities, we expect that as members of DesertNet International we will also have the opportunity to become full partners in development of research proposals and implementation of projects – and not only be contacted five days before a proposal is due when the need for a southern partner is belatedly recognised. We expect too that we, and our participating students, will be included in authorship of papers to which we contribute. We are fully aware that we have the capacity to make the connections and preparations for northern scientists with local communities, with research sites and with long-term data and observations that can be integrated into the joint research programmes that we undertake.

I am sure that there are many other potential interactions that will be of benefit for member scientists from north and south as DesertNet International goes from strength to strength as it fulfils its role to 'generate and enhance knowledge and understanding of the biophysical and socio-economic processes of desertification'.

By: Mary Seely, DesertNet member, Desert Research Foundation of Namibia

2. Information relevant to DesertNet members

OECD "Bioeconomy to 2030" programme : a relevant framework for some desertification issues ?



One of the major consequences of climate warming could be the desertification of new areas now cultivated with climate sensitive crops. So, a key mitigation measure could be to plan and prepare a conversion of cultural practices in these areas using climate resistant crops. "Bioeconomy" can be a relevant framework to build up such policies using an interdisciplinary approach. Harnessing its potential will require coordinated policy action by governments to reap the benefits of the biotechnology revolution. UNCCD could be a relevant framework in areas prone to desertification. The International Futures Programme (IFP) of the OECD undertook "The Bioeconomy to 2030" project.



A key publication about this programme ("*The Bioeconomy to 2030: Designing a Policy Agenda*") can be purchased or downloaded at <http://www.oecd.org/futures/bioeconomy/2030>

By: Gérard Begni, chairman, Science/policy WG.

Climate Change Mitigation and Agriculture in developing countries.

Desertification, soil conservation and sustainable agriculture in semi-arid developing countries is at the crossroads of the UNCCD and the UNFCCC, which will hold a key Conference in Copenhagen, December 2009.

Alexander Mueller, FAO Assistant Director-General of FAO recently declared: "If agriculture in developing countries becomes more sustainable, if it increases its productivity and becomes more resilient against the impact of climate change, this should help to reduce the number of currently around one billion hungry people and offer better income and job opportunities." FAO has three proposals for the Copenhagen UNFCCC Conference: Nationally appropriate mitigation action; financing for agricultural mitigation; and a comprehensive approach to land uses.

FAO's press release can be downloaded at <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/20243/icode/>

By: Gérard Begni, chairman, Science/policy WG.

Towards a new strategy for water resources management in the Mediterranean

It is well known that water resources in the Mediterranean region are scarce, are to become scarcer and scarcer due to climate change, and that serious competitions do exist between more and more demanding users in a context of rapid demographic growth. Shortages in rainfall and/or irrigation resources can only result in desertification regional increase. So, water issues are one of the most challenging issues to be faced by the Union for the Mediterranean. The first meeting of the Water Expert Group (WEG) of the Union for the Mediterranean took place in Athens, Greece, on September 7-8, with the support of the European Union under the co-Presidency of Egypt and France and with Sweden as President of the EU. This first meeting of the WEG is the actual start of an important process which should lead regional countries to set up a new

strategy for water resources management in the Mediterranean to be endorsed during the forthcoming Ministerial Conference about water, on April 12-14, 2010 in Spain.

More on Conference: <http://www.ufm-water.net/meetings/first-meeting-water-expert-group-7-8-sept09/>

More on projects: http://www.ufm-water.net/projects/List_Projets-20090625.pdf/index_html

By: Gérard Begni, chairman, Science/Policy Interface WG.

EU increases its support to Agricultural Production in Poor Countries



Desertification causes crop shortages in affected countries, which need to import food at a time when the international market prices are still very high. This increases the vulnerability of all those who live in areas prone to soil degradation, which in turn dramatically increases the number of people suffering from malnutrition and hunger. Some land use conversions such as reduction and degradation of pastoral areas or growth of industrial biofuel cultivation areas also contribute to that dramatic situation.

The European Union has given a €125 million donation to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in June 2009. It just committed an additive €75 million donation to help poor countries in 13 countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Central America boost agricultural production. The EU has called for more investment in agriculture and the need to refocus the world's attention on farming.



Roberto Ridolfi, head of the EU Food Facility, declared: "For all developing countries, a healthy agricultural sector is vital to overcome poverty and hunger". On his side, José Maria Sumpsi, FAO's Assistant Director-General of the Technical Cooperation Department declared: "Europe's help comes at a critical moment. One out of six persons on this planet is undernourished - more than ever before. Poor countries

need all the assistance possible. We are grateful for Europe's unequivocal support." Source: <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/21645/icode/>

By: Gérard Begni, chairman, Science/Policy Interface WG.

The SUMAMAD-2 International workshop

The Sustainable Management of Marginal Drylands 2 (SUMAMAD-2) project will be holding its first international workshop in Jodhpur, India, 23-24 November 2009. The SUMAMAD-2 project is jointly managed by UNU-INWEH and UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme. This 5-year project was formally initiated in March 2009, and builds on the first 4-year phase of the project (2003-2007). The second phase pays specific attention to climate change and policy measures needed to effectively adapt to the changes in marginal drylands, and emphasizes training, capacity building and interaction with landowners and farmers.

The workshop will bring together the 11 national project coordinators from Bolivia, Burkina Faso, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Jordan, Pakistan, Syria, Tunisia, and Uzbekistan and the members of the project core management group. The workshop will focus on reviewing each project site's activities for 2009, discussing specific training needs, and providing training to SUMAMAD project participants on scenario building, ecosystem valuation and adaptation to climate change.

The workshop is being held back-to-back with the international conference on "Nurturing Arid Zones for People and the Environment: Issues and Agenda for the 21st Century", 24 – 28 November 2009.

By: *Harriet Bigas*, United Nations University-International Network on Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH)

Desertification in Iraq: Increase of severe dust storms harmful for human health.



According to information publicly released by the Environment Ministry of Iraq, the number and intensity of heavy dust storms severely increased these last years. Dust transportation is well known as a potential source of desertification propagation. This also causes worrying health trouble to exposed population, as proven by hospital surveys and reports. The various conflicts that the country had to face for some 20 years could be one of the origins of environmental degradation leading to that situation. The Ministry of Environment indicated that the number of palm-trees in key regions decreased from 36 to 12 millions. This lowers the natural protection against such harmful winds and the sand and dust particles that they may carry on long distances.

Fig. 1 – Dust storm in Iraq and surrounding region seen from space. © NASA

By: *Gérard Begni*, chairmen, Science/Policy Interface WG. (Source: News publicly released by the Iraqi Minister of Environment)

India is facing an unprecedented dryness

Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, held a crisis meeting with the heads of regional governments about the unprecedented dryness faced by the country. Rainfall is 29% under seasonal mean value. Over 626 districts, 177 are facing an unprecedented dryness. Poor agricultural workers cannot afford groundwater pumping. The Agriculture Ministry indicated that it could be subsidized by the Government in order to save as many crops as possible. He also asked States to undertake proper infrastructure works to face the situation.

Many analysts advocate for structural reforms, including fighting against corruption which limit the efficiency of programs to face dryness and combat desertification. More positive suggested measures could be adopting less water demanding and soil exhausting cultural practices and species, and building basins to

better collect rain water at villages' level. Corruption limits the efficiency of low price food distribution for those who need it most. The Prime Minister insured that fighting against that situation would be a priority for the Government.

By: *Gérard Begni, chairman, Science/Policy Interface WG.* (Source: Various public newspapers).

3. Opportunities for funding Projects and Researchers

FP7 Open calls

Publication Date	Programme	Call Identifier	Deadline
2009-10-06	Cooperation	2009/S 192- 275504	2009-11-04
2009-10-06	Cooperation	2009/S 192- 575503	2009-11-04
2009-09-08	People	FP7-PEOPLE-2010-ITN	2009-12-22
2009-07-30	Capacities	FP7-REGIONS-2010-1	2010-01-14
2008-10-09	People	FP7-PEOPLE-2009-RG	2009-12-31

ERC Starting Independent Researcher Grants

Publication Date	Call Identifier	Deadline
2009-07-30	ERC-2010-StG_20091209	2009-12-09
2009-07-30	ERC-2010-StG_20091118	2009-11-18
2009-07-30	ERC-2010-StG_20091028	2009-10-28

Open calls in Cooperation related to land degradation

Publication Date	Call Identifier	Deadline
2009-07-30	FP7-ENV-2010	2010-01-05
2009-07-30	FP7-AFRICA-2010	2010-01-14

More information at: <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/calls/> or
<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.FP7CallsPage&rs>

The following institutions are looking for partners in Environmental calls:

- **PNC Cyprus.** Dr. Costas Gregoriou. Agro Forum LTD (PYME). Agriculture, natural resources, water management, irrigation, horticulture, training, dissemination. agroforum@cytanet.cy . Tel.: +35 799618992.
- **PNC Jordan.** Dr. Khalid M A Magablih. Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, Yarmouk University. Kmagablih@yu.edu.jo/ Magablih@yahoo.com. Identification of desertification – prone areas in Northern Badia; assessing the natural and cultural resources in the area.

- **PNC Egypt.** Abdelhamid, Magdi (Dr). National Research Centre . Sustainable water resources management (WRM) and soil fertility conservation for food production in Africa. <http://www.nrc.sci.eg/>
- **PNC Jordan.** Yousef, Kefah. National Center of agriculture research and extension. Water management and irrigation with water salinity and treated waste water in arid areas
Tel.: +962-795-060403.
- **PNC Italy.** Simoniello, Tiziana. CONSORZIO NAZIONALE INTERUNIVERSITARIO PER LE SCIENZE FISICHE DELLA MATERIA (CNISM) [National Interuniversity consortium for the physical science of the matter]. Land Surface dynamics studies in the framework of land degradation and climate Tel.: +39-971-427256. Fax: +39-971-427271.
- **PNC Egypt.** Eldessouki, Ayman (Dr.) Natioanl Authority for Remote Sensing and Space Sciences_ Remote sensing and space sciences. <http://www.narss.sci.eg/about.htm> . Tel.: +20-2-26225801 Fax: +20-226225800.
- **PNC Italy.** Roth, Giorgio. CIMA : Environmental risk monitoring management. <http://www.cima.unige.it/>
Tel.: +39-01-9230271 Fax: +39-01-923027240

More information at: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/partners_en.html

By: *Maria José Marqués Pérez, vice-treasurer of the DesertNet Board, IMIDRA, Spain*

4. Important upcoming events

2009		
12-14 Nov	International Conference The Integration of Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in the Context of Climate Change, the Energy Crisis and Food Insecurity. http://2009-international-conference.synthasite.com/index.php	Agadir, Morocco
1-5 Nov	Footprints in the Landscape: Sustainability through Plant and Soil Sciences. https://www.acsmeetings.org/	Pittsburgh, PA. USA
23-24 Nov	Indigenous Technology, Livelihood Options and Habitat Utilization: Concepts and Perspectives of Development http://www.ignou.ac.in	Guwahati, Assam, India
22-28 Nov	5th International Conference of ASSS: Soils and New Challenges for Sustainable Development in Africa www.asssonline.org ; www.asssland.org	Yaoundé, Cameroon
30 Nov-11 Dec	UN Climate Change Conference 2009. COP15 http://www.cop15.dk/	Copenhagen, Denmark
9-11 Dec	Communication and Environment: Transformation for a Sustainable Tomorrow. http://www.usm.my/comn/icce09/	Penang, Malaysia
14-16 Dec	Water and Sustainable development in Africa. http://www.eau-afrique.org/libreville2009/en/index.html	Libreville, Gabon
15-16 Dec	Sustainable Land Development Conference. http://www.ldbreakthroughs.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=180	Asheville, NC, United States

More information on upcoming events at: www.european-desertnet.eu / Events

By: *Maria José Marqués Pérez, vice-treasurer of the DesertNet Board, IMIDRA, Spain*

5. Publications 2009

1. Arnous, M.O., Cheikh, M.A.S., Mongi, B.Z., Aliout, R., Hadj-Ali, R., Garouni, Y., Sid, S., Marini, A., Muntoni, F., 2009. Remote Sensing Technology Applications for Desertification Mapping: A Case Study, Oudia Area, Tunisia. *Desertification and Risk Analysis Using High and Medium Resolution Satellite Data*, 183-197.
2. Cayci, G., Heng, L.K., Ozturk, H.S., Suerek, D., Kutuk, C., Saglam, M., 2009. Crop yield and water use efficiency in semi-arid region of Turkey. *Soil & Tillage Research* 103, 65-72.
3. Clark, J., Campbell, J., Grizzle, H., Acosta-Martinez, V., Zak, J., 2009. Soil Microbial Community Response to Drought and Precipitation Variability in the Chihuahuan Desert. *Microbial Ecology* 57, 248-260.
4. Díaz, A.R., Serrato, F.B., Sarria, F.A., Bermúdez, F.L. (eds), 2009. *Advances in Studies on Desertification - Contributions to the International Conference on Desertification in Memory of Professor John B. Thornes (Murcia, 2009)*.
5. Geerts, S., Raes, D., 2009. Deficit irrigation as an on-farm strategy to maximize crop water productivity in dry areas. *Agricultural Water Management* 96, 1275-1284.
6. Lamei, A., van der Zaag, P., von Munch, E., 2009. Water resources management to satisfy high water demand in the arid Sharm El Sheikh, the Red Sea, Egypt. *Desalination and Water Treatment-Science and Engineering* 1, 299-306.
7. Malley, Z.J.U., Taeb, M., Matsumoto, T., Takeya, H., 2009. Environmental sustainability and water availability: Analyses of the scarcity and improvement opportunities in the Usangu plain, Tanzania. *Physics and Chemistry of the Earth* 34, 3-13.
8. Nicolaescu, M., Lupascu, N., Chirila, E., 2009. Land degradation and desertification risk in Dobrogea region. *Environmental Engineering and Management Journal* 8, 911-914.
9. Ravi, S., D'Odorico, P., Collins, S.L., Huxman, T.E., 2009. Can biological invasions induce desertification? *New Phytologist* 181, 512-515.
10. Safriel, U.N., 2009. Status of Desertification in the Mediterranean Region. *Water Scarcity, Land Degradation and Desertification in the Mediterranean Region*, 33-73.
11. Soerensen, L., Trux, A., Duchrow, A., Bodemeyer, R., 2009. Running dry? Climate change in drylands and how to cope with it [ed. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)] GmbH.
12. Wessels, K.J., Prince, S.D., Reshef, I., 2008. Mapping land degradation by comparison of vegetation production to spatially derived estimates of potential production. *Journal of Arid Environments* 72, 1940-1949.
13. Wichern, F., Joergensen, R.G., 2009. Soil Microbial Properties Along a Precipitation Transect in Southern Africa. *Arid Land Research and Management* 23, 115-126.
14. Xie, Y.W., Chen, F.H., Qi, J.G., 2009. Past desertification processes of Minqin Oasis in arid China. *International Journal of Sustainable Development and World Ecology* 16, 260-269.

By: Maria José Marqués Pérez, vice-treasurer of the DesertNet Board, IMIDRA, Spain

6. Other Information

Upcoming book on " Water System Science and Policy Interfacing"

Recent discussions among scientists and policy-makers have highlighted that knowledge generated by many research and demonstration projects is not reaching policymakers in an efficient way. Conversely, the consideration of research results by the policy making community is not straightforward, and difficulties arise in integrating the latest research developments in legislation. An increasing number of experts consider that improvements could be achieved through the development of a "science-policy interface" so that R&D results are synthesised in a way to efficiently feed policy implementation.

This book examines the issue of integrating science into policy, with an emphasis on water system knowledge and related policies. An important feature of the book is the discussion of science-policy interfacing needs, illustrated by examples from authors from different countries in relation to water system management. This publication is timely in that the science-policy interfacing is now identified as a key challenge worldwide with regard to integrated water resource management, and therefore the book will be of great interest to scientists, water managers and stakeholders. Readers will also benefit from a better understanding of the needs, benefits and drawbacks of an established transfer mechanism of scientific outputs to policies.

More information on: <http://www.rsc.org/shop/books/2009/9781847558619.asp>

By: Alex T. Bielak, book co-author

Request for a PhD on socio-political and economical aspects of desertification

At the Università della Tuscia (Italy) a young graduated student would like to apply for a PhD on the socio-political and economical aspects of desertification. She has a University degree on agricultural sciences and a Master of Sciences in economic agriculture. She has also matured international experiences in Tunisia (OSS-Observatoire du Sahara et du Sahel), Germany (KMST Unit at the UNCCD Secretariat in Bonn) and The Netherlands (CAH University of Applied Sciences).

For more information, please contact Prof. Stefano Grego to the following address: grego@unitus.it

By: Stefano Grego, DesertNet member, Università della Tuscia, Italy

Communication to all members

If you would like to contribute to future EDN/DNI newsletters, please send your contributions to nrd@uniss.it. We will be pleased to insert any desertification-related information provided it is relevant to research on desertification and dryland development, concise (1000 characters and a link for more details) and sent within the deadline.

---- Editorial Staff ----

Mariam Akhtar-Schuster, Hamburg University, Germany; Gérard Begni, Environment & Sustainable Development, CNES, France; María José Marqués, IMIDRA. Com. Madrid, Spain; Alice Ferrero, University Carlos III of Madrid, Spain; Chiara Zanolla, NRD - Sassari University, Italy.

Secretariat European DesertNet

c/o Biozentre Klein Flottbek and Botanical Garden, University of Hamburg
Ohnhorststr. 18
22609 Hamburg, Germany
Tel. 040/42816-260
Fax. 040/42816-261

Email: makhtar-schuster@botanik.uni-hamburg.de