



PRESS RELEASE

UN launches campaign to invest in degraded lands to create jobs, boost incomes and food security

09/02/17 – Bonn. “Our land. Our home. Our Future,” is the rallying call for this year’s celebration of the World Day to Combat Desertification on 17 June 2017. The slogan draws global attention to the central role productive land can play in turning the growing tide of migrants abandoning unproductive land into communities and nations that are stable, secure and sustainable, into the future.

The UNCCD has also released the campaign logo for use by any group, organization, government or entity that will organize a celebratory event for the Day.

“Migration is high on the political agenda all over the world as some rural communities feel left behind and others flee their lands. The problem signals a growing sense of hopelessness due to the lack of choice or loss of livelihoods. And yet productive land is a timeless tool for creating wealth. This year, let us engage in a campaign to re-invest in rural lands and unleash their massive job-creating potential, from Burkina Faso, Chile and China, to Italy, Mexico, Ukraine and St. Lucia,” says Ms. Monique Barbut, the United Nations top advisor on combatting desertification and drought.

“The possibility for success today is greater than ever before. More than 100 of the 169 countries affected by desertification or drought are setting national targets to curb a run-away land degradation by the year 2030. Investing in the land will create local jobs and give households and communities a fighting chance to live, which will, in turn, strengthen national security and our future prospects for sustainability,” Ms. Barbut added.

Ms. Barbut also announced that Burkina Faso, in West Africa, will host the global observance of the World Day to showcase the political commitment and proactive steps the region is taking to tackle the migration and land degradation challenges.

“Since the early 1980s, we have been rehabilitating degraded land by building on our traditional techniques such as the Zaï or adopting new techniques that work, such as farmer managed natural regeneration. We intend to be land degradation neutral by 2030. We are hosting the global observance on 17 June because we want to show the world, what we have achieved and is possible in order to inspire everyone into action,” said Mr. Batio Bassiere, Minister of Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change of Burkina Faso.



Burkina Faso hosted the 2005 Heads of State Summit for the Sahel-Saharan countries where 11 countries reached an agreement to restore degraded land on an 8000 kilometer stretch of land cutting across the Sahel. The initiative is now popularly known as the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel.

The United Nations [designated](#) 17 June as the World Day to Combat Desertification to raise public awareness about the challenges of desertification, land degradation and drought and to promote the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa.

For more information on the World Day to Combat Desertification contact: YHori@unccd.int.

For all media inquiries, click [here](#).

Download the campaign materials [here](#): <http://www2.unccd.int/world-day-combat-desertification-17-june-2017>

About UNCCD

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the only legally binding international agreement on land issues. The Convention promotes good land stewardship. Its 195 Parties aim, through partnerships, to implement the Convention and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The end goal is to protect our land, from over-use and drought, so it can continue to provide us all with food, water and energy. By sustainably managing land and striving to achieve land degradation neutrality, now and in the future, we will reduce the impact of climate change, avoid conflict over natural resources and help communities to thrive.