

## WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2014 Events around the world

The slogan for the 2014 World Day to Combat Desertification is "Land belongs to the future - let's climate proof it." See how different stakeholders celebrated the Day and what events and activities took place in different parts of the world.

### ARGENTINA

The Argentinean NGO Fundacion Agreste in collaboration with the University of Moròn and the Instituto de Estudios ambientales sociales y Resolución de conflictos will organize an event to celebrate June 17 and present the conclusions of the Environmental Management Indicators for the Republic of Argentina. The Ministry of Education of Argentina will show on its channel "Canal Encuentro" an environmental video focusing on climate change and desertification.

Learn more at <http://encuentro.gob.ar/programas/serie/8014/188>

### ARMENIA



A national information agency has organized a press conference with representatives of CSOs and scientists working in the field of DLDD as well as the UNCCD National Focal Point of Armenia. The interview with the National Focal Point was broadcasted in the Armenian Channel "A1+". An article about the World Day to Combat Desertification was published on the website of the Ministry of Nature Protection of the republic of Armenia.

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#### **BELARUS**



A 2-day seminar “Improving Legal Regulation to Combat Land Degradation and Desertification” took place in the Biaroza District, Brest region of Belarus. Governmental and local authorities, parliamentarians, representatives of local communities and NGOs, scientist and mass media exposed current challenges and risks Belarus is facing with respect to desertification and stressed the necessity to develop and test sustainable approaches and innovative mechanisms to address land degradation and combat desertification. Apart from the plenary presentations and discussions the participants, together with local schoolchildren, took part in an action dedicated to the WDCD where they sowed grass seeds on around 1.5 ha of degraded peatlands, formerly managed for intensive agriculture.

#### **BURUNDI**

The Government of Burundi has decided to observe the World Environment Day and the World Day to Combat Desertification together on 14 June this year. On that day the 2014-2015 campaign on forest will be launched by Director General of Forests and Environment.

#### **BRAZIL**

On June 16, 2014 the Ministry of Environment in Brasilia held an event to mark the World Day to Combat Desertification. The event honored those who had been recognized by the Drylands Champions Awards. Their projects were showcased through posters during the event. The Minister of Environment of Brazil attended the event and in her speech highlighted the practical actions taken for implementing the UNCCD in Brazil in the form of the projects being undertaken by the Dryland Champions as well as other organizations and individuals. Members of civil society organizations also recognized the efforts made by the government by putting DLDD on its agenda.

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### CGIAR'S DRYLAND SYSTEMS RESEARCH PROGRAM

CGIAR's Dryland Systems Research Program celebrates its cause and mission on World Day to Combat Desertification with greater call for partnerships and integrated solutions for dryland agro-ecosystems. Roughly 1.5 billion people -- a quarter of the world's population -- depend directly on land that is being degraded as we speak. In dry areas, desertification is on the rise leading to loss in productivity. Yet millions of families across Africa and Asia rely on farming for sustenance. What can research do to help these communities?

Join CGIAR's online campaign: How can research help improve livelihoods in marginal lands

Watch video "Last Wall against Desertification"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dH5PpRb2CwY>

Browse the photo gallery

at [https://www.flickr.com/photos/crp\\_drylands/sets/72157644789975097/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/crp_drylands/sets/72157644789975097/)

Why partnerships are important to address land degradation?

Op-ed by Director of CGIAR's Dryland Systems Research Program

<http://www.cgiar.org/consortium-news/a-focus-on-partnerships-to-move-from-degraded-drylands-to-productive-systems/>

Explore agro-ecosystems and research solutions spatially: <http://geoagro.icarda.org/>

Learn more about CGIAR's Dryland Systems Research Program

<http://drylandsystems.cgiar.org/>

<http://gu.icarda.org/en/cms/category/maps/12/regional>

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### CHILE



The Chilean Senate observed the World Day to Combat Desertification inter alia with a tree planting in the garden of the Chilean Senate in the City of Valparaiso. During the ceremony the senator Adriana Muñoz, in representation of the President of the Senate Ms. Isabel Allende, conducted the planting of a Toromiro (*Sophora toromiro*), one of the most symbolic species in Chile.

One of the activities for the observance of the [World Day to Combat Desertification](#) was held in the garden of the Chilean Senate in the City of Valparaiso. During the ceremony the senator Adriana Muñoz, in representation of the President of the Senate Ms. Isabel Allende, conducted the planting of a Toromiro (*Sophora toromiro*), one of the most symbolic species in Chile. The Toromiro is a native species of the Eastern Island which was extinct since 1960 when the last individual disappeared.

After hard work done by several botanists in the Botanic Garden in Valparaiso and in Sweden, the Toromiro has been rescued and reintroduced in the Eastern Island and disseminated in other parts of Chile. The Toromiro is a symbol of the fight against the extinction and for the survival of the Eastern Island. It is now a symbol of the fight against desertification in Chile. During the ceremony, Ms Adriana Muñoz and other authorities of the Senate and Chilean institutions, the UNCCD Focal Point, Mr. Wilfredo Alfaro, the UNDP coordinator of the desertification activities, Ms. Alejandra Alarcón, and the RCU Coordinator, Mr. Heitor Matallo jointly planted one individual of that species and distributed seedlings of plants to the participants.

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#### **CHINA**

China will observe and promote the day thru various channels and events. Since June 10, a TV Public Service Advertisement for awareness rising will be broadcasted in all 18 channels of CCTV with the theme of "Change Desert into Oasis". In the same vain, the Public Service Advertisement about the national hero of combating desertification will be broadcasted around June 17. The minister of SFA will get coverage by Xinhua News agency.

An article by Mr. Zhou Shucong will be released in People's daily and Green Times both Chinese newspapers. The Vice Minister of State Forestry Administration will appear on television (CCTV), scheduled on 17 June, and explain the present situation and future work on desertification. An online interactive dialogue among scientist and the public on desertification will be hosted by the Micro blog (Weibo) of the state Forestry Administration on June 17. Success stories and approaches on how to combat Desertification as well as on the progress made in China will be the main topic at the Micro blogs of Sina.com and People daily. In addition CCTV produced a short video clip highlighting the greening of the Kubuqi Desert.

Watch the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vpjjeTqwo&feature=youtu.be>

The seminar constitutes of a lecture series on national government policy and strategy, science and providing technological support to practices on the ground by experts in the relevant fields. The final week will be dedicated to field visits of GEF partnership projects and the national project area in GanSu province in China. The seminar is a part of the seminar series previously held from 2011 to 2013 for French and English speaking African countries.

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#### **ERITREA**

The government and people of the State of Eritrea recognize the need and importance of conserving and rehabilitating the land. The State of Eritrea has taken many concrete steps to achieve sustainable development. The goal is to climate-proof the land because the land belongs to the future, in keeping with the slogan for the World Day to Combat Desertification 2014.

Eritrea has transformed the nature of its land use through means of simple farming techniques which preserve soil fertility like conservation agriculture in which communities construct soil and stone bunds to prevent soil erosion, and crop rotation whereby different types of crops are planted in the same field to maintain nutritional balance of the soil. Agroforestry has become common, wherein farmers plant trees along their farm boundaries to serve as shelterbelts to reduce the effect of the wind on their crops and to serve as feed for livestock.

The Ministry of Agriculture provides a package for poor farmers in which they receive vaccinated chicks, feed, improved vegetable seeds, a cow, beehives, etc. Physical soil and water conservation structures have been constructed to prevent soil erosion and allow rainwater to seep into the soil. Coupled with tree-planting, such interventions help enriching biodiversity as well. Micro-dams, ponds and wells allow the judicious use of rainwater from the scarce rainfall that Eritrea receives. Farmers have switched back to using compost as manure rather than chemical fertilizers because they are environmentally friendly and cheaper. Innovations have also been made in traditional household items like stoves to make them more environment and human friendly. The government of Eritrea is now focusing on development of institutional resources to carry on its fight against desertification, land degradation and drought.

#### **GEORGIA**

In Tbilisi the workshop under the project “Alignment of National Action Programme and Reporting Process under UNCCD Process” was organized. About 40 stakeholders came together to discuss an importance of a national strategy to combat desertification and soil degradation. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Protection Ms. Khatuna Gogaladze in her speech emphasized the importance of development of such strategy to combat desertification in Georgia. The photo exhibition was organized to show the land degradation and desertification particularly in East Georgia.

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### GERMANY



To mark World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD), 2014, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification held an observance event in the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany.

The opening remarks by Dr. Mohamadou-Mansour N'Diaye, the Chief de Cabinet of the UNCCD Secretariat, highlighted the importance of efforts to protect land from the effects of climate change. In line with the theme of the WDCD 2014, Dr. N'Diaye drew the attention of participants at the event towards land-based climate change adaptation techniques. He proposed four simple steps. 1) To avoid new land degradation; 2) to act together to make land a part of the global climate change agenda; 3) to set common measures of success to motivate us and; 4) to set up mechanisms to help the most vulnerable populations withstand the effects of climate change.

“As climate change brings more extreme weather, recurrent droughts, water shortages and food insecurity; community-based adaptation and national mitigation policy will be more important than ever,” said Mr N'Diaye, focusing on the local and community based initiatives.

Mr. Stefan Schmitz, Head of Unit, Rural Development Agriculture and Food Security, Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany then drew the correlation between development and food security. He said “the goal of a world free from land degradation is innately intertwined with the goal of a world free from hunger”. As a celebration of the land, the UNCCD also launched an exhibition of artwork at the UN building. The exhibition, inspired by the myriad colors of the soil is entitled ‘Colours of the Earth’.

After the launch of the exhibition, Dr. Michael Veerhoff, a geologist explained the reasons for the various hues. Revealing that iron and iron compounds are responsible for giving different shades of colors to the soil, he explained how the color of the soil could be an indicator of the conditions of the soil, including moisture content, oxygen conditions etc.

The artist, Ms. Verena Reinmann, a former teacher and guide at the Museum of Natural History, spent years collecting soil samples from hundreds of countries. Inspired by the unique characteristics and beauty of the different types of soil, Ms. Reinmann decided to use soil in her

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art. In a work of astounding creativity, Ms. Reinmann created a piece using soil from 123 member countries of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Her work will be on display at the UN Campus from 17 June to 31 July, 2014.

What could highlight human-and-earth relationship better than picturesque ground? Colours and nature of land do vary, but all are essential for the existence of one healthy earth. On the occasion of 2014 World Day to Combat Desertification, Mrs. Verena Reinmann will present her artworks at the UNCCD headquarters in Bonn, Germany. Mrs. Reinmann creates “Colours of the Earth”, artistic expressions using natural sands and soils, all fixed on canvasses, without having added any other material or colour.

Verena Reinmann was born in Leipzig, Germany and studied at the University of Hamburg, Germany and at the “Universidad de Granada” in Spain. She taught in primary and secondary schools in Hamburg, later in Mainz. She also worked as a teacher and guide at the “Museum of Natural History” in Mainz. In 2000 she started to collect sand and soil on journeys around the world. Since 2005 she creates artwork made exclusively with sand and soil.

For many, many years, Verena has been fascinated by natural landscapes and by rock- and sand-formations which have arisen in billions of years. She began to collect these eroded materials like limestone, sandstone and volcanic ejecta on seacoasts and river banks, near lakes, on plains, on hills and mountains during journeys in Germany, Europe, Africa, Asia, America and Australia. You can find some of these kinds of sand and soil everywhere; others, e.g. greenish or violet hues, are so rare that she had to “harvest” them with a teaspoon. The same material found in the very same place can have different colour variations. Sometimes the fine particles are more colourful, sometimes the coarse one are – depending on the existing minerals in the sample taken. With those earthen materials she composes small and big “tableaus” which represent the immense variety in texture and colour of the original and natural sand and soil. Verena do not add anything but (acryl) glue and water. It is necessary to put several layers of the sample on cardboard, canvas or wood so that the surface remains stable and the colour nuances are natural. She also never mixes different types of coloured sand and soil to achieve a special coloured sample! Her artwork consists of documentary tableaus and freely designed pictures. Additionally, she writes adocumentation for the artwork. If a person contemplates the picture and wants to know the country and the exact location of the sample, he or she will be able to find that out.

[Visit Verena Reinmann's web page](#)

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#### **GHANA**

On the occasion of the World Day to Combat Desertification, the All Africa Students Union (AASU), an NGO based in Ghana has called upon the African youth, especially students, to imbibe a sense of voluntarism and participate in the efforts to combat desertification and drought. Recognizing the special status of Africa as with regard to the issue of land degradation, and the need to adapt, AASU urged African governments to implement national and regional strategies to combat desertification.

#### **GRENADA**

Grenada is organizing several events on 17 June. The national radio station will do a quiz around land and soil. A photo contest with the theme "Love the land you live on" and a tree planting will also be organized.

#### **HUNGARY**

In Hungary every year an expert meeting is organized on the occasion of the World Day to Combat Desertification. This year the General Directorate for Water Management will host the event on 17th June 2014. Hungarian experts, stakeholders and decision makers in the field of drought management, climate change adaptation, agriculture, meteorology are invited to the meeting. About 50 participants from the government, STIs and CSOs are expected to attend the consultation and representatives from the media will also be invited to inform the larger audience. At the expert meeting the following topics will be discussed:

1. Increase the attention given to land and soil within climate change adaptation
2. Mobilize support for sustainable land management
3. Call for the inclusion of land and soil and their significance in food security into national climate change adaptation policies.

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### INDIA

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change celebrated the WDCD at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The occasion was used by MoEF&CC to organize a workshop which was chaired by the Union Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Mr. Shri Prakash Javalekar. The Secretary, Mr. Rajgopalan and Dr. Susheel Kumar the Additional Secretary also chaired some of the sessions. GEF/UNDP Small Grants Programme was involved and presented success stories, and best practices. They also displayed the products produced by SGP partners to link up with the occasion. Learn more at [www.sgpindia.org](http://www.sgpindia.org) and [www.ceeindia.org](http://www.ceeindia.org)



The NGO UDYAMA organized a local event in the state of Odisha in India to observe the World Day to Combat Desertification 2014. The event was held in Bolangir, which is severely affected by drought. With the help of local communities, the event brought together local Sarpanches and PRI members, representatives from NGOs and CSOs, labour collectives, health workers, women leaders, students and the youth to take a pledge to prevent land degradation and plant more trees to bring change that would start from the individual level.

The Indian organization Grameena Vikas Samithi organized an awareness Generation Camp together with the Sastry Dryland farmer Friends Group.

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#### INDONESIA

Indonesia marked the World Day to Combat Desertification on June 17 2014 with a ceremony inaugurated by the Forestry Minister of Indonesia who reiterated the UN Secretary General Ban-ki Moon's message of adapting to climate change through recovering degraded land. A MoU was signed by the Ministry of Forestry with a mineral water company and a cement company to achieve forest and land rehabilitation. Furthermore, local governments which enacted regulations on Integrated Watershed Management were given certificates of achievement. An exhibition was set up to raise awareness about green economy and a workshop was held on combating land degradation to enhance watershed carrying capacity.

#### IRAN

On the occasion of the WDCD 2014 Iran will organize a meeting and a field trip to a desertified area. A special newsletter for WDCD will be also prepared.

#### ITALY

The [Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\) held an observance event "Land for Life – How Sustainable Land Management can Improve People's Livelihoods and Resilience" on the World Day to Combat Desertification 2014.](#) The FAO's Deputy-Director General for Natural Resources highlighted the importance of addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in order to end hunger and poverty and ensure the sustainable management natural resources. The event was aimed at the inclusion of land and soil into national climate change policies.

The University of Basilicata celebrated the 2014 World Day to Combat Desertification. Giovanni Quaranta, professor of Natural Resources Economics at the University of Basilicata, Potenza, Italy organized a seminar focused on the close relationship between the management of natural resources and adaptation to climate change. In order to stress this year's slogan, "Land belongs to the future, let's climate proof it!" and to highlight the benefits of mainstreaming sustainable land management policies and practices into our collective response to climate change, the seminar linked the discussion on desertification and climate change to the transition town movement. A high level course on transition movement will start at the University of Basilicata, involving regional civil servants and policy makers. The seminar was attended by almost 100 people (students, researchers and policy makers).

The day was closed by the Basilicata Cancellor for the Environment, Land and Policies of Sustainability, Prof. Aldo Berlinguer. There have been also two video-conferences by Prof. Rob Hopkins (founder of the Transition Town Network) and Dr. Ben Brangwyn (Of the Transition Town Network).

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#### **KENYA**

Kenya will mark the World day to Combat Desertification in Mwea Kirinyaga County, a Semi-Arid ecosystem that is depended on water from the slopes of Mount Kenya, a montane ecosystem, critical in supporting livelihoods downstream. Some of the efforts to climate proof have been through irrigation initiatives to produce rice to boost national food security. Kirinyaga County is therefore relevant in showcasing sustainable land management in Kenya. UNDP equator initiative organized the award ceremony for the 2014 Equator Prize for Sustainable Land Management in Sub-Saharan in Nairobi on June 17. The ceremony had the representation of the Environment Secretary in the State Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Dr. Alice Kaudia and she enjoyed the performance of UNDP Goodwill Ambassador Achieng Abura.

Learn more about the Equator Prize for Sustainable Land Management in Sub-Saharan Africa at [http://www.equatorinitiative.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=811&Itemid=1028&lang=en](http://www.equatorinitiative.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=811&Itemid=1028&lang=en)

#### **KUWAIT**

For the World Day to Combat Desertification, Kuwait provided a brief overview of the current afforestation campaign implemented throughout the State of Kuwait. Thanks to the afforestation projects, new trees and new varieties of trees have been introduced for the first time into the country. The construction of modern irrigation systems has also marked another significant development in the process of combating desertification in Kuwait.

[Watch a video of the development of the agriculture in Kuwait from 1991 to 2014.](#)

#### **MALI**

Mali holds several observance activities starting from 5 June, World Environment Day and end with 17 June, the World Day to Combat Desertification. The series of events will be launched in the event of the World Environment Day in the 4th Administrative Region of Mali, Segou. This event will be coupled with the launch of the national reforestation campaign from 2014 to 2015 under the initiative of the Prime Minister. During the period, the issues that will be addressed, among others, are: sustainable land management (SLM) / Climate Change, Sustainable Development, Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), waste management, access drinking water, Public-Private Partnership in the management of natural resources and forest. On 17 June, the Minister of the Environment will deliver a speech on the occasion of the World Day to Combat Desertification and film screenings are scheduled in addition to other activities.

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#### **MAURITIUS**

The Forestry Service of the Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security marked the World Day to Combat Desertification 2014 by organizing various activities. An Open Day was organized at three visitor centers at Mon Vert, Powder Mills and Plaine Sophie. Pamphlets and posters were distributed and guided tours were provided to the public by forest officers. Between 17 and 20 June, decorative and indigenous plants were sold to the public at half the market prices. Further, on 17 June, an awareness raising campaign was held targeting school students, who were given talks by forest officers on the topic "Land Belongs to the Future, Let's Climate-proof it."

#### **MEXICO**

The National Forest Commission (CONAFOR) will celebrate the WDCD organizing a conference with representatives of FAO Mexico, Parliamentarians and representatives from the Water National Commission and the National Institute for climate change. The CONAFOR is also organizing an exhibition with information posters from environmental and academic institutions from Mexico and other Latin American countries.

#### **MOLDOVA**

The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Moldova has organized the Conference dedicated to the WDCD in the capital city of Chisinau. The Conference was attended by the land degradation experts to address the issues of land degradation monitoring in Moldova. The national report of Moldova was presented and discussed among the participants of the Conference.

#### **MOROCCO**

The Réseau Associatif de Développement Durable des Oasis (RADDO) will organize in Tinjda, Errachidia the conference entitled "collective oasis lands: what's their future?" with participants from Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunis. A field trip will also be organized.

#### **NIGERIA**

The Nigerian NGO "Nigeria goes green" is marking this year's WDCD with an Award dinner to honor those who contributed in the fight against Desertification in Nigeria. A three-week seminar on Combating Desertification for English speaking African countries was inaugurated on June 17, 2014 to mark the World Day to Combat Desertification. The participants include managerial officials and technicians from ten participating countries.

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### PAKISTAN

The Society for Environmental Actions, Reconstruction & Humanitarian Response (SEARCH), along with the Sindh Community Foundation, Sindh Hari Porhiyat Council and We-Journalist observed the World Day to Combat Desertification on 16-17 June by arranging a visit for the youth to the Gorkh Hill Station Dadu in the Kachho area, one of the dry regions of Sindh. The visit focused on the benefits of making sustainable land management policies and practices part of the agenda to respond to climate change.

### PERU

As part of the celebrations of the 2014 WDCD, Piura Regional Government and AIDER are organizing a workshop about REDD+ as a financial alternative for dry forests. This event will take place from 11 to 13 June in the city of Piura, with financial support of the Environment Ministry and the Sustainable Forest Management Program of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).



Learn more at <http://www.minam.gob.pe/notas-de-prensa/cambio-climatico-podria-agravar-los-problemas-de-desertificacion-y-sequia/>

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#### **PHILIPPINES**

The Bureau of Soils and Water Management, the UNCCD's National Focal Agency conducted the 5th NAP Consultation Workshop on the occasion of the World Day to Combat Desertification 2014. The Philippine National Action Plan and the 2014 National Report were presented and discussed at the Workshop. The participants, who included representatives from the Land and Water sub-committees of the Committee on the Conservation and Management of Resources for Development, were also introduced to the Capacity Building Marketplace of the UNCCD.

The World Day to Combat Desertification 2014 was observed with the conduct of the 5th NAP Consultation Workshop as initiated by the Bureau of Soils and Water Management being the UNCCD National Focal Agency. During the workshop, the second draft of the Philippine National Action Plan and the first draft of the 2014 National Report were presented and discussed. The UNCCD Capacity Building Marketplace was also introduced to the participants consist mostly of representatives from member- agencies of the Land and Water Subcommittees of the Committee on the Conservation and Management of Resources for Development (CCMRD). Everybody was encouraged to visit it at the UNCCD website. National government agencies (including the Department of Agriculture (DA) bureaus and attached agencies and 16 DA-Regional Field Offices located nationwide) and partner CSOs were invited by the UNCCD National Focal Point to show their support to this year celebration by displaying streamers bearing this year's theme "Land Belongs to the Future, Let's Climate Proof it" and to undertake relevant activities. Figures 1-2 show some of the pictures during the consultations while Figures 3-7 show some of the displayed WDCD streamers of national agencies around the government center in Quezon City. A news article citing the importance and objective of this year WDCD celebration was also prepared and published in morning newspapers.

#### **PORTUGAL**



Portugal will celebrate the WDCD 2014 in Palacios a village in the North East of Portugal near the Spanish border. At this occasion Portugal will announce its new national Action Programme and the 2014 Dryland Champion's.

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#### **RUSSIA**



Institute of Geography of the Russian Academy of Science has organized a seminar devoted to the World Day to Combat Desertification. During the seminar attendees discussed the UNCCD national report of the Russian Federation.

#### **REPUBLIC OF KOREA**

On 10 June, 2014, the International Symposium on Combating Desertification was held by the Korea Forest Service (KFS) in Seoul. The importance of the land was highlighted by presentations on actions taken by the UNCCD, the Korean and Chinese governments, academia and civil society organizations to rehabilitate the land. Emphasis was also laid on Korea's Official Development Assistance (ODA) projects in the forestry sector that aim at combating desertification, land degradation and drought, and the action taken by the KFS to implement the UNCCD and the Changwon Initiative. Following the Symposium, a tree-plantation ceremony was held in the dry area of Bayankhangai, one of the Korea-Mongolia Greenbelt Plantation Project on 13 June 2014 with 100 participants.

#### **SINGAPORE**

The Green consultancy company Ecogreen Marché will be hosting the "1st World Day to Combat Desertification (Singapore) 2014" event on 27 June, 2014. Ecogreen Marché will be showcasing their solutions to combat desertification on a global scale.

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#### **SRI LANKA**

The Saviya Development Foundation in Sri Lanka organized events in Galle to mark the World Day to Combat Desertification 2014 sponsored by the Department of Forest Conservation (UN-REDD Program). With the aim of raising awareness on issues of DLDD among school children, teachers and adults, national level art and poster making competitions were held. Awareness building programs were also conducted which focused on environmental concerns such as forest and biodiversity conservation, global warming, etc. An exhibition was held featuring the artwork of the winners of the national competitions and 100 valuable plants were distributed among members of the community.

1. National level art and poster competition at senior and junior level and to distribute valuable prizes for the winners in order to create awareness and sensitivity among community on forest conservation, land degradation, protection of bio diversity and minimizing of global warming.
2. Awareness among school children, teachers and 450 community activists by conducting awareness building programme on environmental problems such as forest conservation, bio diversity , protection and reduction global temperature.
3. An exhibition of winners' arts and poster.
4. Distribution of 100 valuable plants among community.
5. Publish articles on The World Day Combat Desertification in National News Papers.

#### **SWITZERLAND**

On June 17th 2014, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Initiatives of Change International are organizing a public event to celebrate the World Day to Combat Desertification 2014 in collaboration with UNCCD, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE)/WOCAT. The objective of the event is to raise awareness on the issue of desertification and to introduce the concept of ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change.

Watch the [conference video](#)

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#### **THAILAND**

On June 17th, 2014, the National Focal Point agency to the UNCCD, Land Development Department of Royal Thai Government, organized the National Seminar on Mitigation of desertification, land degradation and drought for commemorating the WDCD. The seminar was attended by about 150 officers/planners from governmental offices, educators, scientists and representatives from CSOs and UNCCD, UNDP and other agencies. Presentations were made on the issues of desertification, land degradation and drought worldwide and also in particular on soil deterioration in Thailand. After the technical session, a panel was conducted and representatives from Ministry of Interior, the Soil and Water Conservation Society of Thailand and UNDP Country Office shared their best practices in sustainable development and land management. It was also stressed that international exchange of best practice and technology transfer should be actively encouraged between countries at regional and sub-regional levels.

#### **TURKMENISTAN**

On 16-17 June, 2014 Turkmenistan will host the inter-regional Conference on issues of desertification in Central Asia. The government of Turkmenistan invites public officials, academic and community and non-governmental organizations from five Central Asian countries as well as reputed experts and representatives of international organizations, to discuss issues of desertification in Central Asia.

The meeting is sponsored and organized by the Government of Turkmenistan with the support of the Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. The participants will get familiar with international experience in the area of assessment of ecosystems services and ecosystems based adaptation. The issue of the regional cooperation among five affected Central Asian countries will be broadly discussed to provide impetus for further actions. The study tour to learn the experience on afforestation in Turkmenistan will also complement the meeting.

#### **UKRAINE**

National Academy of Agrarian Sciences of Ukraine (NAASU) has organized the following events of 17 June: 5th International Conference "Combination of Research, Education, and Practice Production and Fair Selling High-quality Organic Products", workshop "Combating DLDD in the context of climate change", round table "Combating DLDD for Sustainable Development of Agriculture of the Region".

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#### **USA**

The UNCCD secretariat is organizing the global observance of the World Day to Combat Desertification in Washington DC this year, which will be hosted at the World Bank in partnership with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), TerrAfrica and Connect4Climate. The event is open to public.

#### **UZBEKISTAN**

Uzbekistan marked the day organizing a Round Table discussion on mainstreaming SLM to achieve resilience to the adverse impact of desertification, land degradation, drought in a changing climate. The event was organized by the UNCCD Focal point and Uzhydromet in cooperation with the State Committee for Nature Protection with support of the regional EU/GIZ project.



The World Day to Combat Desertification was celebrated with a conference organized by the Ministry for Environment. Lectures were delivered by eminent scholars to raise awareness among private and public organizations about dry forests and the impact of climate change. At culmination of the event, the organizations which had been honored as Drylands Champions by the UNCCD were recognized for their efforts to improve ecosystems and populations affected by desertification and drought.