

REPORT

OF THE

**SUBREGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BUILDING FORUM FOR
CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS: CONFRONTING LAND
DEGRADATION AND POVERTY THROUGH ENHANCED
UNCCD IMPLEMENTATION**

**Convened under the Aegis of the Strategic Partnership to Combat Desertification in Central
Asia (SPA)**

**Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan
30 June – 4 July 2003**

Table of Contents

I.	Executive Summary	1
	Box 1. Tashkent Joint Platform of Action for UNCCD Implementation	2
	Box 2. ToRs for a Working Group on Partnership Development for UNCCD Implementation	5
II.	Synthesis of the Presentations and Discussions	8
	A. Objectives of the Forum	8
	B. General Presentations	8
	C. Presentations of the Development Partners	10
	D. Presentations of the Central Asian Republics	17
III.	Outcomes of the Forum and Follow Up	22
	A. The Way Forward	22
	B. The Tashkent Joint Platform of Action for UNCCD implementation	23
	C. The Working Groups on Partnership Development for UNCCD Implementation.	23
	D. The Matrix of Opportunities	23
	Annex 1: Agenda of the SPBF for CARs	
	Annex 2: Matrix of Opportunities	
	Annex 3: List of Participants	

I. Executive Summary

1. The Subregional Partnership Building Forum for Central Asian Republics (SPBF-CARs¹) was convened by the Global Mechanism, under the aegis of the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) for Implementation of the U.N. Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in the Central Asian Republics (CARs). The SPA was constituted to enhance collaborative action for UNCCD implementation, and comprises the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD (GM), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) through its RETA- 5941, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the CCD Project of GTZ (Germany). Two other agencies, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) formally joined the SPA at the Forum.

2. The broad objective of the Forum was to bring together development cooperation agencies active in the subregion and relevant national partners for advancing the implementation of the UNCCD to discuss substantive issues and options that relate to UNCCD implementation and to provide Developed Country Parties, multilateral development cooperation agencies, international financial institutions and international NGOs, an opportunity to interact with Government and civil society stakeholders from the five CARs, to identify areas of common interest, and to develop coordinated responses to UNCCD implementation (see Annex 1 for the Agenda of the Forum).

3. A total of seventy-eight participants representing both national and international stakeholders were present at the Forum. Participants from the CARs included high-level representation from Ministries and agencies specialized in Environment, Finance, Agriculture, Water, Forests, Land Management, Hydrometeorology, Economy, Planning and Foreign Affairs, as well as, civil society organisations and NGOs. Twenty-four international partners were represented at the Forum, namely, the governments of Canada, Germany, Switzerland, Japan, USA and Turkey, and also the EC, ADB, IFAD, GEF, UNDP and the Dryland Development Centre, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), ICARDA, UNESCO, UNEP, WWF and the UNCCD Secretariat (see Annex 6 for the list of participants).

4. The participants were provided, as background documentation, copies of the draft reports prepared as outputs of the ADB RETA 5941², comprising five Country Reports on “Issues and Approaches to Combat Desertification” (IACDs) for the CARs, and an Overview providing “A Regional Synthesis Report On Issues and Approaches to Combat Desertification”. The other background paper, prepared by the GM, entitled “Confronting Land Degradation and Poverty through Enhanced UNCCD Implementation” provided a summary overview of the Central Asia Subregion.

5. The broad participation of key national stakeholders was useful in facilitating a broad-based exchange of views on the challenges and opportunities for UNCCD implementation and also, for raising awareness of the objectives of the Convention among ministries other than of the UNCCD Focal Point ministry. Involving the key Ministries engaged in the decision-making

¹ SPBF is hereafter referred to for short as “the Forum” in this Report.

² The Reports were prepared by the ADB Consultant, Mr. Shiv Saigal, under the Regional Technical Assistance (RETA) No. 5941, approved by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), with co-financing from the Global Mechanism (GM) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

processes related to resource mobilization and national budgetary allocations is also expected to engender a sense of ownership of the NAP process among these actors. The Forum also enabled the bilateral and multilateral partners to set out their main strategies, priorities and programmes in the Central Asian Countries from the perspective of advancing the implementation of the Convention.

6. The report focuses on a synthesis of the main themes, issues and suggestions emerging from the large number of presentations and ensuing discussions in the Forum, drawing mainly on the Rapporteurs' summaries. The text/slides of the various presentations are available on a CD Rom and can be obtained from the GM.

7. The Forum was successful in bringing out the main constraints and issues affecting the progress on addressing the problems of land degradation in the Central Asian countries as well as the potential opportunities which exist for constructive cooperation between the national stakeholders and the development partners to enhance the implementation of the UNCCD in the Central Asia Subregion. A major outcome of the Forum was a broad consensus emerging from the deliberations on setting in motion a process and framework to pursue a constructive dialogue at the national level between the concerned government agencies and the international development partners to focus on concrete next steps in building partnerships to improve the pace and quality of implementation of UNCCD in the Central Asian countries. This consensus is reflected in the Tashkent Joint Platform of Action for UNCCD Implementation (see Box 1) and the Terms of Reference for a Working Group on Partnership Development and UNCCD Implementation (see Box 2), adopted by the Forum. The working groups are expected to be constituted in each CAR as a result of further consultations at the country level in pursuance of the Joint Platform of Action. This follow-up process at the country level is conceived as a flexible and dynamic mechanism. A possible outcome of the proposed consultative process in each CAR would be the convening of national level Resource Mobilisation Forums. In this context, the SPA partners have indicated, through (an evolving) Matrix of Opportunities, their expected priority areas of operations supportive of UNCCD objectives at the country and subregional level (see Annex 2),

Box 1

Tashkent Joint Platform of Action for UNCCD Implementation

The *Sub-regional Partnership Building Forum for Central Asia: Confronting Land Degradation and Poverty through Enhanced UNCCD Implementation* was held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan from 30 June – 4 July with representatives from the Ministries and agencies dealing with Environment, Finance, Agriculture, Water, Forests, Land Management, Hydrometeorology, Economy, Planning, Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Central Asian Republics, members of research organizations, subregional bodies and civil society representatives as well as representatives of international development cooperation agencies.

The participants emphasised the linkages between poverty and desertification that emerged from the discussions, as well as the need for collaboration and partnership between national, subregional and international stakeholders in supporting the efforts of the Central Asian Republics in enhancing the implementation of the U.N. Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNCCD).

The participants also acknowledge the importance of the Strategic Partnership for Implementation of UNCCD in Central Asian Republics (SPA) as an effective framework for collaboration between its members³ in facilitating support to the Central Asian Republics (CARs) with relation to UNCCD related activities. The participants welcomed the broadening of this partnership to include Switzerland and the International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) and look forward to the joining of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and other interested partners.

In addition, the participants validated the draft *Issues and Approaches to Combat Desertification* papers prepared for each Central Asian Republic and the document titled *An Overview: A Regional Synthesis Report on Issues and Approaches to Combat Desertification*, as valuable inputs to this Forum, and recognized their importance in orienting discussions nationally as well as with international partners.

The participants recognized the extent of the problem of desertification/land degradation and the corresponding impact on living conditions of populations as well as the extreme vulnerability of the ecosystems of the region. The participants underlined the urgent need for coordinated responses and inter-sectoral harmonization and called for the fostering of an enabling policy, legislative and institutional environment, for the inclusion of local community and civil society needs and priorities, and for overall strengthening of participatory decision making. The participants agreed on the necessity for the efficient use of national resources and the mobilization of external support in the form of finances, technical expertise, transfer of clean technologies and private sector involvement.

Based on the above, the participants of the *Subregional Partnership Building Forum* emphasized their long-term commitment to pursuing the following:

- Initiate a high level policy dialogue on issues related to desertification/land degradation and facilitate the integration of socio-economic and ecological objectives of the UNCCD into the development policy agenda;
- Speed up the integration of UNCCD objectives into poverty reduction/improvement of living conditions strategies, as well as, into national development planning frameworks and any other strategies that may have implications on the management of natural resources, poverty eradication/living conditions strategies and development of rural communities. Likewise, development cooperation agencies commit to integrate the UNCCD into their respective cooperation frameworks and development strategies;
- Create an enabling programmatic, legislative and institutional environment that fosters local management over natural resources, mitigation and rehabilitation of degraded lands and for the promotion of an adequate allocation of national resources for these objectives;
- Facilitate inter-sectoral coordination for promoting joint solutions for addressing issues related to desertification/land degradation;

³ The Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, the Asian Development Bank through its RETA 5941, the CCD Project of GTZ, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation and the International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA)

- Collaborate with civil society organisations in implementing UNCCD objectives, with the aim to expand opportunities for these groups, and to use and share their expertise for delivery and implementation of local-level initiatives;
- Empower the UNCCD Focal Point so that he/she may effectively engage in national planning processes, collaborate with other Agenda 21 Conventions and other sectoral agencies for building synergies and for participation in negotiations with external partners;
- Launch immediately a process for taking advantage of new opportunities presented by the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) new Operational Programme on Sustainable Land Management (OP 15), both with relation to capacity building and investment projects;
- Enhance sub-regional cooperation in the field of sustainable natural resource management, as well as, issues of transboundary significance related to desertification/land degradation and use the UNCCD as a potential framework as appropriate;
- Integrate the UNCCD objectives with ongoing subregional initiatives on sustainable development in Central Asia; and
- The Forum urges the establishment in each Central Asian Republic a *Working Group on Partnership Development for UNCCD Implementation* including both national and international partners, to assist with realising the above objectives, and commit to work in accordance with the Terms of Reference attached in the Report of the Forum, outlining the roles and responsibilities of the respective members of this Working Group.

The participants validated the process of partnership building initiated at this Forum and welcomed the participation of a diverse group of country stakeholders. A rich and varied set of activities and opportunities was identified and agreed upon at the Forum, which will be described in the Report of the Forum. The participants also welcomed the acknowledgement by international partners of the challenges and opportunities of this subregion with relation to translating the objectives of the UNCCD into concrete actions. As a first step to strengthening activities at the country level and for designing country specific resource mobilisation strategies, the participants agreed to establish *Working Groups on Partnership Development for UNCCD Implementation* in each Central Asian Republic.

The participants call upon the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD to further support resource mobilization efforts in each country, and follow-up on the activities and opportunities which will be described in the Report of the Forum, prior to organizing country level partnership building forums for resource mobilization.

Box 2

Terms of Reference for a Working Group on Partnership Development and UNCCD Implementation

1 Rationale

Recognising the existing barriers in areas of inter-sectoral collaboration, capacity building, legislation and resource mobilisation;

In order to improve the institutional and legislative platform, develop partnerships and mobilise resources for short, medium and long-term objectives; and

Taking into account decisions and recommendations, which have emerged from previous meetings of the UNCCD and Agenda 21 processes, participants of the *Sub-regional Partnership Building Forum for Central Asia: Confronting Land Degradation and Poverty through Enhanced UNCCD Implementation* agreed to establish a Working Group on Partnership Development and UNCCD Implementation (heretofore referred to as the “Working Group”) as a tool for long-term and comprehensive dialogue between the CARs and external partners.

It is becoming increasingly evident that resource mobilisation for the UNCCD can neither be a one time nor a stand-alone activity but needs to be anchored in processes that seek to fulfill long term objectives. Therefore, it is imperative that donors as well as key national governmental partners, must be involved in a participatory framework at all stages of the UNCCD process, in order to ensure ownership and commitment to seeing identified priorities translated into concrete activities.

It was decided that the Working Group would meet as deemed appropriate and should facilitate dynamic exchange of pertinent information using all available means.

2 Goal

Enhancement of coordination mechanisms for UNCCD implementation in CARs.

3 Objectives

3.1 Partnership building among concerned national and external stakeholders

3.2 Mainstreaming of UNCCD objectives into the national development policy and poverty reduction strategies/living conditions improvement, as well as into development cooperation agencies’ policies, programmatic frameworks and development strategies

3.3 Broadening of opportunities and financial mechanisms for resource mobilisation for combating desertification/land degradation and improving peoples’ living conditions

3.4 Improvement of existing mechanisms of coordination and implementation of UNCCD and NAP

3.5 Information sharing and awareness raising at all levels

4 Institutional Framework

The Working Group would consist of:

National Actors

Representatives of Parliament, and Ministries and agencies dealing with Environment, Finance, Economy, Agriculture, Hydrometeorology, Water, Forests and Land Resource Management, Planning, Foreign Affairs, Education and Science and other relevant governmental agencies, the National Focal Point for the UNCCD, as well as, representatives from local governance bodies, civil society and the private sector. The Focal Point Institution for the UNCCD and a relevant Ministry will function as coordinators to facilitate the functioning of the Working Group and for information sharing. Attempts should be made to include a representative from the Cabinet and/or from the Presidential Office.

International Actors

The Group should include both key bilateral and multilateral donors such as Germany, Canada, Switzerland, USA, Japan, ADB, World Bank, UNDP/DDC, EU, IsDB, ICARDA, GM, etc. A single, or group of donors should function as coordinator(s) to facilitate the functioning of the Working Group and for information sharing among partners.

Both the national and development cooperation members of the Working Group will meet jointly on a regular basis for identifying relevant actions and for promoting policy dialogue on various issues pertaining to land degradation.

The Global Mechanism of the UNCCD should be a standing member of the Working Group and will attend meetings of the Working Group when deemed necessary, and upon request, to provide facilitation support for the follow up activities related to partnership building and resource mobilization.

5 Terms of Reference

The Working Group will have the following functions:

- Promote coordination among relevant national actors and international development partners with a view to consolidating and speeding up the implementation of UNCCD processes and programmes using crosscutting approaches within the national development planning frameworks.
- Promote a platform for frank exchange of views and structured dialogue on mutual policy and institutional concerns, and search for common approaches to resolving such issues.
- The Working Group will facilitate the mobilisation of national and external resources for UNCCD implementation and monitoring of progress.
- Foster partnerships between the CARs and interested donors for enhancing financial, technical and material resources through:
 - a) Promoting policy and institutional reforms of relevance to promote UNCCD objectives and integration with ongoing initiatives on sustainable development;
 - b) Initiate investment projects and technical assistance programmes aimed at combating desertification/land degradation within the UNCCD framework at

- national and local levels, including cross-sectoral activities;
- c) Ensuring that project interventions reflect national priorities;
- d) Capacity-building and exchange of experiences, lessons learned and best practices from both the national and international context;
- e) Pilot projects aimed at:
 - Development of technical packages to combat desertification/land degradation using a participatory and integrated approach for promoting sustainable natural resource management;
 - Design models of broad participation in planning and implementation;
 - Establish institutional linkages for policy harmonization;
 - Explore innovative funding sources;
 - Provide services at the community level through private sector and other structures geared for improving the living conditions of local communities;
 - Improvement of desertification monitoring and assessment systems.
 - Collect and share information on desertification/land degradation related issues

- Develop a reporting mechanism to monitor resource flows
- Facilitate the synergistic implementation of Agenda 21 Conventions at the national level.
- Promote collaboration for achieving the goals of national, sub-regional and regional programmes related to combating desertification, with particular emphasis on development of GEF-able projects.
- Increase efficiency and responsibility of donors by strengthening collaboration between governments and donors, as well as, awareness-raising with other donor agencies concerning the added-value of the UNCCD as a framework for sustainable development and poverty alleviation/living conditions improvement in order to increase resource mobilisation for the UNCCD.
- Formulate a joint strategy for resource mobilisation in a concerted manner with national partners and donors for emphasising national priority projects and programmes as well as potential opportunities with a view to tap existing, new and additional financing opportunities
- Develop and submit proposals through appropriate channels for inclusion of financial resources for UNCCD implementation from the national budget
- Design proposals for establishing incentive frameworks for stimulating UNCCD implementation.

II. Synthesis of the Presentations and Discussions

A. Objectives of the Forum

8. The Inaugural Session was officially opened by Mr. Zokhidjon Nazirov, National Focal Point UNCCD on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, followed by brief welcoming statements by SPA members. After a brief signing ceremony marking the formal joining of the SPA by Switzerland and ICARDA, Mr. Per Ryden, Managing Director, of Global Mechanism provided an overview of the agenda and explained the objectives of the Forum. The broad objective of the Forum was to bring together development cooperation agencies active in the subregion and relevant national partners for advancing the implementation of the UNCCD to discuss substantive issues and options that relate to UNCCD implementation and to provide Developed Country Parties, multilateral development cooperation agencies, international financial institutions and international NGOs, an opportunity to interact with Government and civil society stakeholders from the five CARs, to identify areas of common interest, and to develop coordinated responses to UNCCD implementation. He emphasized the need for free and frank exchange of views with a focus on issues and a search for solutions through objective presentations and constructive deliberations at the Forum. Finally, he urged that the Forum should result in reaching a common understanding on a process and institutional framework for concrete follow up to forge partnerships between the national and international stakeholders to enhance the implementation of the UNCCD in the Subregion.

B. General Presentations

9. The main themes covered in the general presentations were:

- a) Land, Water and Poverty in Central Asia.
- b) Subregional Action Programme to Combat Desertification for Central Asia
- c) Global Environment Facility (GEF) - A Partner in Sustainable Land Management

10. Land, Water and Poverty in Central Asia: A Subregional Overview⁴. The presentation gave a quick overview of the main issues confronting the region in terms of geography/topography, land and water issues, land degradation and poverty, and future directions were outlined. Major land degradation problems in Central Asia (CA) include: wind erosion and toxic dust (near Aral Sea), waterlogging (e.g. Nukus), salinization of soil (due to high water tables, evaporation and inflow of increasingly salinized water) and deforestation. Drought plays an important part, but so does overgrazing of pastureland, inappropriate cultivation practices, wasteful use of water in irrigated agriculture and, to a lesser extent, improper toxic waste disposal and poor mineral extraction practices. Poverty and population pressures are at the heart of the issue. The two important water basins, severely affected by land degradation problems were: the Aral Sea and the east Kazakhstan basin. Of a total population of 56 million, 38 million live in the Aral basin. Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are the source of 90% of the water, while 10% flows from Afghanistan. Solutions can be found at both the national and local levels and it is argued that rural economic liberalization could accelerate improvements. (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and to some

⁴ By Mr. David McCauley, ADB Natural Resources Policy Consultant.

extent Tajikistan were cited as “progressive”, and Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan as “conservative” in their approach to policy reforms.) A particularly challenging policy issue confronting CA relates to making shifts in cropping patterns away from unsustainable and often uneconomic cropping choices.

11. The discussions on the presentation pointed out that it is difficult for the CA countries, in the current stage of development, to shift focus from cotton (a major foreign exchange earner) and wheat (crucial for food security). The discussion also highlighted the relative neglect of the development of mountain areas. Deforestation and overgrazing upstream have serious impacts downstream. In this context, it was important to encourage thinking in terms of the mountain/foothill/plains relationship and to consider lack of energy substitutes to fuel wood as one of the important causes of deforestation. Another priority concern was the state of poor maintenance of irrigation, drainage and water storage infrastructure which had implications for need for greater regional cooperation. The discussion generally pointed to the fact that, though the Soviet legacy is heavy and though much infrastructure remains to be replaced or rehabilitated, many corrections have been made or are being made. The problem is not lack of knowledge of the problems, but rather funds and organizational capacity to deal with them. Community based natural resource management, though still very much in a pilot phase, is making a positive difference. Clearly, a number of problems are cross-border or regional in scope.

12. Sub-regional Action Programme to Combat Desertification (SRAP-CD)⁵. The presentation gave the status of the preparation of the SRAP-CD for the Aral Sea Basin. There is a broad consensus on the main priority areas: monitoring and assessment of desertification processes; establishment of an early warning system for drought mitigation; improving the use of water in agriculture; combating erosion, salinization and swamp formation; agroforestry and forests’ resources management; watershed management; rangeland management; and nature and biodiversity conservation; ecotourism development. SRAP has a number of objectives, including: to provide additional impetus and create new mechanisms for NAP implementation; to coordinate sub-regional interests, solve problems of the mutual use of transboundary resources, and prevent possible conflicts; to involve the sub-region in international exchange of information and experience; to involve bilateral and multilateral donors in implementation of the UNCCD in the sub-region; and to develop and implement joint programmes. The presentation stressed, however, that the NAPs should be the primary focus; the regional/subregional Action Programmes are intended to support them with focus on promoting cooperation to promote coordinated action to tackle cross-boarder issues and common thematic areas. A list of sub-regional project proposals is included, but they need to be prioritized. It is expected that the text of the SRAP/CD will be finalised in August and the Ministers of Central Asian states will approve the SRAP-CD at COP-6 in Havana.

13. The discussions raised a number of issues. Some qualified the action program as “ambitious”, while appreciating the inclusion of trans-boundary projects, and noted important emphasis on building institutional capacity. Differing opinions were expressed on the value of the “pilot project” approach (isolated events vs. clear demonstrations of what can be done). It was generally agreed that pilot projects had a value for achieving concrete results and lessons for up-scaling. However, considerable emphasis was needed on policy and institutional development as being crucial to enhancing the implementation of UNCCD and promoting subregional cooperation.

⁵ By Dr. Rezaul Karim, Coordinator, Asia Regional Unit, UNCCD Secretariat.

14. Presentation on the Global Environment Facility (GEF)⁶. The presentation, besides providing a useful introduction on GEF, focused mainly on how GEF plans to address land degradation in context of the new Focal Area on Land Degradation and Deforestation. In addressing land degradation issues, the focus of GEF support would be on three main areas: creating appropriate enabling environment; institutional strengthening; and investments. The GEF has recently approved OP #15 on Sustainable Land Management. Its unique features include: improving institution and human resources capacity; strengthen policy, regulatory, and economic incentive frameworks; and improved economic productivity of land and conserving ecosystem stability, functions and services. In addition, two other GEF operational programmes, OP # 13, Agriculture and OP # 12, Integrated Ecosystems Management, also provide support for land degradation issues. As for overall GEF level of financial support for land degradation, GEF has provided \$250 million for OP 15 for 3.5 years and \$250 million in other focal areas for 3.5 years. GEF expects to leverage addition US\$500 million in co-financing.

15. The presentation explained clearly how developing countries could access this funding for environment-specific projects that have global environmental impacts. GEF's Operational Requirements include: country eligibility; proposed project should be consistent with GEF operational strategy and programs; proposal should be country-driven or have country ownership; and proposed project should have potential global environmental benefits. Two other crucial requirements are that GEF finances only incremental costs, and requires stakeholder participation in project development, financing and implementation. Different scales of GEF support are: (i) Enabling activities (US\$450,000); (ii) Small grants (up to US\$50,000); (iii) Medium-sized project (up to US\$ 1 million; typically \$750,000); and (iv) Full project (more than US\$1 million). CA countries were encouraged to take advantage of the new Focal Area on Land Degradation.

16. Questions centred on clarifications about eligibility, the meaning of "incremental costs" and need for training for help with project submissions. One particular issue that was raised related to assistance for updating NAPs. It was clarified that since CARs already had NAPs in place, requests for assistance for their updating would need to be within a framework of proposals for institutional strengthening and capacity building. To qualify, a country must be a party to the relevant convention. Incremental costs can be in the form of co-financing or cost sharing where the responsible government pays approximately half of the total cost. GEF assistance for capacity building and training is available under a GEF/ UNDP capacity development initiative. There are 3 GEF implementing agencies (World Bank, UNDP, UNEP) and 7 GEF executing agencies (ADB, AfDB, UNIDO, FAO, IFAD, IADB and EBRD) to which interested parties can address their proposals/queries.

C. Presentations of the Development Partners

1) Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)⁷

17. CA is a focal region of the Swiss program, with a fourfold goal: poverty reduction based on sustainable growth; integrated, accountable and inclusive political systems leading to political stability; creating opportunities by regional cooperation and targeted integration in the world economy; and mitigation of the decay of social services. The five priority domains of SDC assistance are: (i) Governance, Security & Conflict Prevention (KYR, TAJ, UZB, Regional); (ii) Macro-economic Framework and Conditions (KYR, TAJ, UZB, Regional); (iii) Development of

⁶ By Mr. Walter Jami Lusigi, Senior Adviser Biodiversity, GEF.

⁷ By Ms. Iren Leibundgut, Deputy Country Director, Kyrgyz Republic/Uzbekistan, Swiss Cooperation Office, Bishkek.

the Private Sector (KYR, TAJ, UZB, KAZ, Regional); (iv) Management of Natural Resources & Infrastructure (KYR, TAJ, UZB, Regional); and (v) Health (KYR, TAJ). Within these domains up to 2001 around 150 million CHF have been spent. The foreseen amount for technical assistance (TA) for the coming years is around 20 million CHF (US\$15 million) per year.

18. The most obvious link to the CCD is through the projects under the domain Natural Resource Management – namely, *Integrated Forest Management, CAMP⁸ (Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions), regional Water Strategy (Projects on different levels: Rehabilitation of infrastructure as i.e. sluice gates and channels, projects tackling water distribution management including water forecasting on a regional level, water distribution on farm level, collaboration with water user associations.)*

2) CCD Project of GTZ⁹

19. CCD Project of GTZ has desertification as a focus, allotting 190 million Euros (US\$215 million) in 59 countries (most in Africa) for 250 projects in 2001-02. The CCD project of GTZ is acting on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for economic cooperation and development (BMZ), within its overall mandate and financial framework, and as part of the overall Strategy for cooperation with Central Asia, and complementary to the ongoing bilateral cooperation between Germany and Central Asian countries. On this behalf CCD project does also further cooperation with other projects (like Issykul project, Aral Sea project, research projects promoting private sector, project) support Germany. It emphasizes mainstreaming and networking. In Central Asia, the main priorities of German assistance are: 1) governance (adapting legislation), 2) support to economic reforms and poverty alleviation, and 3) promotion of sub-regional cooperation. Challenges are: sustainability, using NGOs and agents of change, engaging in a consultative process with stakeholders, and the role of government.

20. GTZ support at the subregional level involves: input and co financing for regional meetings and SRAP; training (through InWent or CCD project of GTZ); and commitment to the SPA for subregional exchange of experience between pilot projects in the framework of CCD.

21. CCD Project of GTZ support at country level, in all five CA countries, involves: continued support to pilot projects for participatory resources management at community level; training of experts and project partners in project management and issues related to the implementation of the pilot projects; capacity building for NGOs in cooperation with CAMP; support for the evaluation of pilot projects; national exchange of experience; support to focal point and activities of the national coordination bodies (NCBs) of the CCD for enhancing the implementation of the NAPs (training, meetings, participation in events with regard to pilot project).

⁸ A separate presentation was given on the CAMP Energy Saving Project for Mountain Villages in the Kyrgyz Republic. CAMP program works on 1) resource use, soil and water management, 2) product development and marketing, 3) village development and 4) policy dialogue. CAMP is now also extending its activities to Tajikistan, focused mainly on water resource management.

⁹ By Dr. Anneke Trux, Project Coordinator, GTZ CCD Project.

3) Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)¹⁰

22. Canada is currently planning a new CIDA program in Central Asia, which will focus on Tajikistan and support work in Agriculture, Rural Development and Water, all areas that are relevant to the UNCCD. It plans to support implementation of the Convention through an integrated program approach focusing on poverty reduction rather than through individual, UNCCD-specific projects.

4) United States Agency for International Development (USAID)¹¹

23. Focus is on management capacity in energy and water. Regional projects include work on transboundary water and energy issues, and regional data collection and data sharing mechanisms and systems. National projects include irrigation canal management at the sub-national and river basin level, improved on-farm and farmer-level water management, and local energy efficiency and management, including heating and electric power. Under the land reform project in Kyrgyzstan, there are a number of activities aimed at maximizing land reform and privatization, thereby lowering poverty. This project provides training to assists farmers to better understand and realize their legal rights. The USAID approach underpinning its operations includes significant levels of training, public awareness and capacity building, the demonstration of new technologies, technical assistance, and related inputs. Information on specific projects is found on the website www.nrmp.uz

5) Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)¹²

24. JICA implements the technical cooperation programs of the Japanese Government. It provides training and on-site technical cooperation, such as capacity building and advice for policy formulation. Its focus is on three target areas, i.e. water management, transformation of agriculture, and disaster management. Existing and planned work includes rural water supply, education, health and vocational training in Tajikistan, improvement of rice planting techniques, and efficient use of urban water by introducing tariff systems, and prevention of landslides in Uzbekistan. Emphasis is on self-help, working together, human resource development along with material support. Currently, JICA spends \$4 to 7 million annually. In reply to a query, it was confirmed that developing country NGOs still require a Japanese NGO partner in order to access JICA support. JICA plans to start a new project with the Rice Institute of Uzbekistan to introduce the Japanese method of rice transplantation instead of direct seeding. Japan has a lot of experience in water saving agriculture as well as use of water under water unions. JICA provides regional focused training either in Japan or in any third country. Another areas of assistance would be new projects on prevention of land slides, first in Uzbekistan and then involving other countries.

¹⁰ By Ms. Linda Cloutier, First Secretary (Development) Central Asia Region, Canadian Embassy, Almaty, Kazakhstan.

¹¹ By Robert M. Watts, Regional Environment, Science and Technology Officer for Central Asia & the Caspian Sea Basin, US Dept. of State – US Embassy, Tashkent.

¹² By Ms. Kae Yanagisawa, Resident Representative, JICA Uzbekistan Office.

6) Asian Development Bank (ADB)¹³

25. ADB has been closely involved with SPA through its Regional Technical Assistance (RETA-5941). It is hoped that its diagnostic studies would be useful in enhancing the understanding of the many dimensions of the issues and approaches involved in combating desertification. The main presentation focused on the role and approach of ADB to regional cooperation in Central Asia. Regional cooperation achieves progress by addressing two sets of regional issues: *regional public goods* (RPGs), which require joint efforts for solution; and common *issues*, where countries benefit from sharing experience and best practices. ADB has had a regional cooperation program in CA since 1997. It defines its role in sub-regional cooperation as an honest broker, provider of sectoral analysis and resource mobilizer. It uses a phased, results-oriented approach to regional cooperation. It has financed regional infrastructure projects (Almaty-Bishkek road, regional power grid) and regional trade/customs modernization. By request of the governments, regional water management may be an additional focus of the regional cooperation program. ADB RETAs have supported the REAP (Regional Environment Action Plan), Sustainable Mountain Development, Combating Desertification, and Environment Information Systems.

26. ADB addresses land degradation mainly at the national level through agriculture and rural development projects, water resource management, and related policy dialogue and technical assistance. New opportunities will be pursued through ADB/GEF collaboration to address land degradation, and in the context formulation of ADB's Regional Cooperation Strategy and Country Strategy and Programs.

7) International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)¹⁴

27. ICARDA has been active in CA since 1995, with a regional office since 1998, which hosts the Program Facilitation Unit (PFU), which is responsible for the CGIAR collaborative program for agricultural research in Central Asia and the Caucasus (CAC). ICARDA coordinates research and training in various technical areas including Plant Genetic Resources (PGR), mountain agriculture, soil & water, "new science" and ICTs. It also collaborates with the ICRISAT program in Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan. In Kazakhstan it also has programs involving land, integrated livestock, wheat and barley, plant genetic resources. An important challenge in the region is the strengthening of the institutional and human resource base of the national agricultural research systems (NARS) by building agricultural research partnerships between the NARS and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) system, based on the agriculture research priorities for CA set in a meeting in 2001

28. Another important initiative is the proposed challenge program of the CGIAR. The DDPA program (Desertification, Drought, Poverty and Agriculture), with several partners including IUCN, IDRC, IFAD, UNEP, is of particular relevance for CA. The DDPA is convened by ICRISAT and ICARDA. An "integrated ecosystem" perspective is followed, to "save lands and build livelihoods". ICARDA has new emphasis on policy and institutions, participatory involvement, the Agriculture/Environment partnership, and the measuring returns on combating desertification and drought. Research considers not just inputs but also markets.

¹³ By Mr. Nessim J. Ahmad, Principal Environment Specialist, Regional & Sustainable Development Department.

¹⁴ By Mr. Richard Thomas, Director, Natural Resource Management Program, ICARDA, Aleppo, Syria

29. In response to the discussions, it was explained that ICARDA used a bottom-up approach in research and training choices, depending much on community-level local facilitators. It wants to expand its range of partners in the areas of research and training, including to NGOs, through programs such as CAMP, and GTZ – more such cooperation is currently needed. ICARDA also seeks the advice of National Focal Points for government contacts to work on dryland farming research issues aligned to UNCCD. As for genetically modified products, it is not directly involved in such research which belongs primarily to the private sector domain. Turkmenistan brought up issues of marginal water (waste water) use, which needed more attention in current research priorities.

8) International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)¹⁵

30. The presentation focused on IFAD's central mandate of rural poverty alleviation and its emphasis on participatory and innovative approaches to enable the rural poor to overcome their poverty. IFAD focused its operations particularly on drylands, mountain ecosystems, forest fringes, and other marginal areas. Its main target groups include indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, women, and other disadvantaged rural communities. The IFAD mission is "enabling the rural Poor to overcome their poverty". To date it has provided loans and grants amounting to \$7.3 billion and \$419 million respectively, worldwide.

31. In the CA, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan are currently members of IFAD. So far, IFAD has financed only two projects in the region, both in Kyrgyzstan and co-funded with World Bank, involving sheep (completed) and agriculture services (ongoing). IFAD is currently involved in the process of preparing its Regional Strategy and Opportunities Paper (RESOP). This exercise would delineate the strategic framework, define target groups, based on poverty analysis, and propose priority areas of intervention to guide its future operations in its member countries in Central Asia. (In reply to a question, it was clarified, that so far IFAD has not provide any loan to Tajikistan). IFAD, as an executing agency for GEF, would like to cooperate with GM, which is hosted by IFAD, on projects and programs which meet the criteria of GEF OP #15 or other relevant GEF Operational Programs which address land degradation issues.

9) UNDP Dryland Development Center (DDC)¹⁶

32. The UNDP Drylands Development Center, based in Kenya, is a global program. Each UNDP office in CA has country funds for sectoral programs that are negotiated separately with each country. Center has experts in areas such as irrigation, disaster mitigation and drought. Emphasis is on capacity building and focus on mainstreaming (especially into poverty strategies), local level governance and vulnerability (e.g. to weather, drought); niche areas include drought, land tenure, water rights and markets. The Center intends to become more active in the CA region, and, in cooperation with interested donor agencies, assist CARs with identification and formulation of appropriate projects for potential GEF financing.

33. Key themes in the discussion were the importance of access to markets (Kyrgyzstan), mountain areas affected by drought (Tajikistan). RIOD (NGO group) was interested in the micro grant program for grants up to US\$1000, and told that it still exists and is run through the country UNDP offices.

¹⁵ By Mr. Anshuman Saikia, Associate Country Portfolio Manager, Asia and the Pacific Division, PMD, IFAD, Rome.

¹⁶ By Mr. Phillip Dobie, Director, Drylands Development Center, UNDP, Nairobi (Philip.dobie@undp.org)

10) UN Environment Program (UNEP)¹⁷

34. UNEP would support CA countries in the implementation of REAP. It would work through the Focal Points in the Ministry of Environment in each country. UNEP's regional program has five priorities: air pollution, water pollution, waste management, land degradation, mountain ecosystems. UNEP encourages NGO involvement in REAP and is working in cooperation with ADB and UNDP. (Nuclear waste and Aral Sea problems are covered under other programs). The REAP activities would avoid duplication with activities under CCD NAPs.

11) Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)¹⁸

35. ISDB was established in 1975, with headquarters in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It has 54 member countries, covered by three regional offices: Rabat, Kuala Lumpur, Almaty (the latter covering 5 CA countries plus Azerbaijan). It supports projects and trade financing, and provides technical assistance. It finances projects, not programs. Projects are mainly in the area of infrastructure, utilities and now also in agriculture. It is concerned with the problem of soil salinity in the Aral Sea, which affects agriculture and thus food supply. From this perspective, IsDB would like to collaborate with other development partners in the area of agricultural projects which address land degradation issues. Such collaboration could take the form of joint loans. The IsDB provides financing in the form of:

- grants up to \$250,000 for technical assistance and capacity building (for example in Kazakhstan, through an MOU with the Academy of Science, it will finance a seminar planned for May 2004);
- project financing in the form of concessional loans, including micro credit for NGOs.

36. In the ensuing discussion, ICARDA inquired whether IsDB's activities with the International Center of Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) concerning soil salinity would include an emphasis on people and livelihoods. (They were advised to take it up directly with ICBA). Uzbekistan requested information about plans for CA and Uzbekistan in particular. Uzbekistan is soon to become a member, and infrastructure projects will be the priority (hospitals, schools, roads, irrigation systems). Kazakhstan also wondered about potential projects, as an IsDB mission had come to the Aral Sea area some time earlier but no concrete plans have been made. GM asked for clarification of IsDB's involvement with environment issues. IsDB is very concerned with environment issues in its projects, but does not do specific "environment" projects.

12) World Wildlife Fund (WWF Moscow)¹⁹

37. WWF is one of the largest NGOs active in the former Soviet Union countries. Its main focus is on community-based biodiversity conservation, which is related to desertification control. It uses local NGOs, local experts, and all applicable Government agencies. Project examples: eco-med, ecological corridors, freshwater projects, forestry.

¹⁷ Mr. Sergey Samoilov, Head of Department of Economics & Management of Natural Resources, State Committee for Nature Protection, REAP Focal Point in Uzbekistan, UNEP

¹⁸ Mr. Rashid Kadyrov, Country Officer, Regional Office in Almaty, IsDB.

¹⁹ By Dr. Olga Pereladova, WWF International (c/o RPO WWF), Moscow.

13) Global Mechanism (GM)²⁰

38. GM's presentation touched upon what the agency does as the financial mechanism of the UNCCD. Established in 1998, GM is hosted by IFAD, Rome, and seeks to facilitate the raising of financing through multiple channels, including GEF, to combat desertification. It acts as an "honest broker", with emphasis on mainstreaming, partnership-building, and catalytic and multiplier effect. The SPA for Central Asia is a good illustration of its approach to promoting "Strategic Partnership" of Development Partners to facilitate implementation of CCD by developing countries. The presentation stressed the importance of concrete follow up on the outcomes of the deliberations in the Forum. For this purpose it put forward a proposal for a Joint Platform for Action and forming a Core Group of key domestic and external stakeholders in each country to facilitate dialogue leading to concrete partnerships between interested donor agencies and concerned Government agencies to support specific policy and program initiatives.

Conclusions

39. The presentation of the development partners focused on their strategies, priorities, operations and likely future possibilities of involvement in the CA countries with particular reference to the UNCCD related areas. The main conclusions emerging from the presentations are highlighted below:

- Mainstreaming is the key
- As regards raising the profile of the CCD, at national level there is now much broader participation in CCD implementation, and this has come about specifically through the inclusion of the ministries of Finance, International Cooperation and Planning.
- Capacity Development needs to be seen as a priority
- Financial and technical resources are needed
- UNDP and UNEP have resources, as well as IFAD, which focus on rural development.
- ICARDA can help with research needs
- WWF experience can help link agricultural production and ecosystems
- Swiss, apart from the CAMP, would focus on cross-border rural water projects
- CIDA is currently planning a new, increased CIDA program in Central Asia with focus on agriculture, rural development and water
- CCD Project of GTZ would continue support pilot projects, strengthening capacity development of local communities and NGOs, and follow up to the Forum at the country level
- JICA provides training and on-site technical cooperation, such as for capacity building and plans projects addressing water saving methods and disaster management
- IsDB would like to collaborate with other donors on agriculture and food supply
- USAID focus is on management capacity in energy and water

40. GEF, with the designation of land degradation as a distinct focal area, offers an enhanced window of opportunity. Investment needs can be met through their integration with the projects and programs proposed to the international financial institutions (IFIs). GM has an important catalytic role in facilitating resource mobilization efforts.

²⁰ By Ms. Khalida Bouzar, Program Manager for Asia and North Africa, GM, c/o IFAD, Rome.

D. Presentations of the Central Asian Republics

41. The representatives of the CARs focused their presentations on giving an objective assessment of the nature of the desertification/land degradation problems in their countries, the progress of their efforts to combat desertification, and more importantly, the constraints and issues encountered and the priorities and plans to speed up the implementation of the National Action Programmes (NAPs) to combat desertification. The presentations also mentioned some priority areas where support of the development partners would be most useful in accelerating their efforts through strengthening institutional and implementation capacity of the National Focal Points and other concerned agencies involved in the implementation of the UNCCD within the larger framework of the development and poverty reduction strategies of their respective governments. A presentation was also given by *Réseau International des ONGs pour la Lutte Contre la Désertification* (RIOD) from the perspective of the Civil Society and NGOs. This report focuses on the main issues and suggestions emerging from the presentations and discussions.

1) Uzbekistan²¹

42. More than 85 percent of Uzbekistan's territory is drylands. Uzbekistan has a long experience in irrigation techniques and an excellent scientific know how in the field of water management and desertification control. 80 percent of the cultivated land is irrigated, but 90 percent of the water resources come from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The main problems are: irrigation infrastructure is deteriorating (only 30% of irrigation structures can be maintained by the government); majority of population suffers from low quality water mainly due to salinization; many environmental laws exist but lack coherence. The presentation mentioned a number of constraints for the implementation of CCD in Uzbekistan, in particular:

- insufficient coordination between sectoral ministries and the implementation of other environmental conventions
- focal point is not sufficiently informed about ongoing projects related to other Agenda 21 Conventions that have bearing on the UNCCD. He feels that focal points should be more involved in the implementation and the monitoring of projects under the NAP in order to make sure that projects are in line with national priorities and the NAP

43. The presenter underlined the importance of

- improving use of space-based technologies for monitoring water resources and drought early warning. Early warning of drought and monitoring of desertification are of key importance to Uzbekistan
- improving monitoring of desertification for better risk management
- linking ecological and economical aspects
- improving participation and mainstreaming
- synergies between the focal points of the Rio conventions (by constituting a "club" of concerned NFPs to identify joint "work programs" and avoid duplication)

44. During the discussion the participants were informed by other members of the delegation that:

- new regulation are about to be implemented in order to move towards a market oriented agricultural sector: shirkats [could you include also the English term] are to be liquidated

²¹ By Mr. Zokhidjon Nazirov, Deputy Director SANIGMI and NFP-CD, Uzbekistan

- and farmers association will be in charge of managing technical devices and water resources (according to hydrological units)
- facilities for water provision (pumping: 60 percent of the costs) and maintenance will have to be paid for
- need for support through pilot demonstration sites and training
- support to water use associations

45. Main Conclusions from the chair:

- Water resources management at national as well as at regional level must be improved since this is at the centre of land degradation in Uzbekistan
- There is ample scope for increased coordination between ministries, administration at all levels, technical services and different Conventions in the country.
- CCD implementation has to be mainstreamed into important national development and investments programs
- Difficulties concerning legal issues ask for more harmonization of existing laws.

2) Turkmenistan²²

46. Turkmenistan faces severe desertification problems with annual direct and indirect economic damage estimated (in the NAP) at USD 347 million. The presentation underscored Turkmenistan's commitment to implement CCD, having been the first CA to have ratified the Convention (1996) and prepared a comprehensive NAP-CD immediately thereafter. The main constraining factors in the realization of NAP were identified as: insufficiency of the state priorities for realization of NAP; absence or insignificance of allocation from the budget of the ministries and departments responsible for restoration of degraded natural landscapes; weak activity of non governmental and public organizations caused by their low technical and financial opportunities; insufficient knowledge of the population about desertification problems, resulting in a low level of activity and participation in actions spent stemming from the NAP; and insufficient activity of international organizations and donor countries.

47. The presentation made a number of proposals to improve the CCD implementation in Turkmenistan. 1) There is a necessity for developing a renewed version of NAP-CD reflecting the current situation, policies and priorities, and building upon lessons learned to date. 2) Effective implementation would involve provision of appropriate technical means and financial support, especially with professional training and material resources, such as equipment and research means. Originally such help is necessary from external sources, but gradually position of internal resources would improve with further development of the economy. 3) The agricultural techniques and practices used for development of degraded lands are obsolete and require to be modernized/upgraded - water saving technologies (system of drip irrigation), alternative energy sources (Helio and wind power installations), equipment for provision of potable water, improved techniques for processing of wool etc.). 4) It is necessary to pay more attention to a system of ecological education of children, youth and adults. 5) To implement the NAP, recourse needs to be taken for undertaking pilot projects, involving participation of the rural population and the private sector.

48. The Institute of Deserts, Fauna and Flora of Turkmenistan (the Focal Institution for CCD) has a long experience of research on desertification control issues since the sixties. In the past,

²² By Mr. Paltamed Esenov, Director, National Institute of Deserts, Flora and Fauna, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

the Institute of Deserts used to provide international training courses on desertification problems, and publish in English as well as in Russian a research journal “The Problems of Deserts’ Development”, with wide international circulation among research institutions abroad. Lack of funds has adversely affected the research programs and constrained the Institute to discontinue the publication of the Journal. The presenter (Dr. Esenov, Director of the Institute) called upon the international organizations to support the Institute in strengthening its research and training capability and facilities and revival of the publication of its journal.

49. Responding to the discussions, it was clarified that Turkmenistan allocated 33% of the environmental budget to land degradation. Rangelands and livestock development was a national priority, since it is an important source of livelihood of the rural population. GEF’s “Enabling Grants” would be useful for capacity and institutional strengthening (including NAP revision). Environmental impact study of the golden lake is being undertaken by the Government prior to initiating work. Utilisation of waste water subsequent to treatment/purification is an important water conservation technique that can be applied in situations of water scarcity.

3) Kazakhstan²³

50. The incidence of poverty is falling in Kazakhstan, and it should be eliminated by 2015. Sixty six percent of the country’s territory is affected by some form of desertification. The annual economic cost of desertification in the country is approximately \$2 billion. In response, a set of short-term, medium-term and long-term measures have been identified, with implementation having begun for some (see list in presentation). There is a further set of investment proposals under discussion within the government and with the donor community that are placed within UNCCD context (see list in presentation). Currently, several important donor-assisted projects are central to the country’s CCD efforts, such as (a) Dryland Management Project (DMP) in Karaganda (World Bank/GEF); (b) Regulation of Syr Darya River and Northern Aral Sea (World Bank); (c) Potable Water Program (EU); (d) Irrigation and Drainage System (World Bank); (d) Ili-Balkash Livelihoods Development Project (GTZ); and (e) Caspian Sea Program (to include zoning of areas/reserves where oil/gas exploration is prohibited).

51. A number of issues were raised: (i) coordinating CCD work among sectors and multilateral environmental agreements; (ii) insufficient involvement of local communities in environmental management efforts—with a need to enhance human capacities, develop regional programs, and expand public awareness; (iii) mainstreaming CCD into policies/programs for development and poverty alleviation within the framework of Kazakhstan’s “Strategic Indicative Budgetary Planning” approach based on a 3-year rolling plan, covering both national and local programs based upon and linked to various national and sub-national development policies and strategies; (iv) linking CCD efforts to economic reforms, especially to support rural development; and (v) links between CCD efforts and improved water resources management. In this context one potential area of concern was mentioned, as a result of recent restructuring of the Ministry of Environmental Protection, which is now left with only regulatory rather than development functions. Therefore, it now must coordinate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on meeting commitments under Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

52. A number of ideas for institutional strengthening and mainstreaming were stressed. CCD must be better incorporated into the broad-based decentralization policy now being implemented in the country, and it also should be considered in the planning and implementation of state

²³ By Mr. Bulat Bekniyazov, Head of International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Environment Protection, Astana, Kazakhstan.

infrastructure investments. CCD is furthered but not explicitly covered by most national legislation. Opportunities for incorporation of CCD concerns into development programs exist - e.g. concept of Ecological Stability and Security, program on poverty alleviation that is equivalent of the PRSP process, and program for Rural Area Development. Opportunities also exist for collaboration with GEF. The country has just begun the World Bank/GEF Dryland Management Project in Karaganda and other areas, which will improve the productivity (for rangeland use) of degraded areas formerly cultivated under the "virgin lands" scheme. This can serve as a useful source of information for the region on the formulation and implementation of GEF-supported CCD projects.

53. It was noted during discussion that there is a continuing need for regional cooperation to improve transboundary water management as illustrated by the problem of water disposal to the Ardesai Depression in Uzbekistan from the Syr Darya River and overflows diverted to Ardesai as the result of Kyrgyzstan's need to release water in wintertime to generate hydropower instead of storing it for summer irrigation (see Rapporteur's summary for specific details and possible solutions under consideration). Kazakhstan's suggestion for the Central Asian Republics to develop a summary presentation on their CCD projects that would demonstrate experience gained in UNCCD implementation and could be reported at the Havana COP was considered useful and worth pursuing.

4. Kyrgyz Republic²⁴

54. Kyrgyzstan is a mountainous country affected by desertification problems in the form of water erosion and salinization and swamping. Land slides and mudflows on the slopes caused from irrigation and precipitation, affect an area of about 5.5 million hectares, while salinization and swamping in lowlands affect an area of about 1.5 million hectares. The causes of erosion are inadequate methods of irrigation on sloping irrigated lands, overgrazing of the pastures located near to inhabited localities, fires on mountain wood pastures, and illegal cutting down of trees by the population for fuel and construction materials. The causes of the salinization and swamping are in inadequate norms and methods of irrigation. In order to address these problems, it is necessary to include actively the institutions of local government and village committees in the actions for combating desertification.

55. The main issues emerging from the presentation were: (a) Coordination mechanisms at national level need to include more partners, such as NGOs. There is also need to better integrate donors, and improve coordination with other programs and the PRSP process. (b) A major challenge is how to mobilize financial and technical resources, such as GEF financing, needed for human capacity building of the institutions involved in CCD implementation, training, education, awareness building, and for research to upgrade technologies. (c) Regional cooperation is crucial in areas, such as transboundary water resource management, experience sharing, publications and scientific cooperation. (d) There is also need for linking economic and ecological data in order to raise awareness of policy makers to the importance of integrating environmental concerns in development policies and programs.

56. The top-priority activities on combating desertification in the Republic should include: (i) increasing of the forest lands in the Republic as a guarantee for conservation of water resources and prevention of slope erosion and landslide; (ii) rehabilitation of irrigation systems and strengthening of the water resources control system for prevention of erosion, salinization and

²⁴ By Mr. Kubanychbek Kulov, Director, Kyrgyz Scientific Research Irrigation Institute, Ministry of Agriculture and Water Economy, Bishkek, and NFP-CD, Kyrgyz Republic.

swamping of fertile lands; (iii) creation of field-protecting forest plantations and anti-erosion strips for the prevention of wind and water erosion; and (iv) regulation of use of water scoop territories, pastures, mining industry and other industrial and construction activities contributing to land degradation. In the ultimate analysis, however, the key to combating land degradation lies in sustainable rural and agricultural development which would increase the living standard of the rural areas through the opening of access to the agricultural products, marketing outlets, development of village tourism, and agri-businesses.

57. The discussions raised a number of issues: need of special attention to the problems of mountainous areas; shifting of livestock to lowland pastures, causing grass and weeds in the abandoned rangelands in higher altitudes posing a fire hazard, while overgrazing in the pastures close to inhabited villages; need for cooperation on water resources management between neighbouring states; and debt swaps for nature. On the last point, it was clarified that current debt swap arrangements were already linked to development of social sectors. As for overgrazing, new rules on grazing around villages on a tender basis were being introduced.

5) Tajikistan²⁵

58. Tajikistan faces a severe problem of land degradation, with 97.9% of the total territory of republic categorized as eroded and deflated – 45.1% - badly or very badly. The nature of degradation problems varies according to the topography and altitude of different zones. The most densely populated zone - valley-foothill zone of irrigated agriculture (up to 1000 m) – is affected by gully and sheet erosion, landslides, secondary salinization, and rising of the level of ground water. These problems are aggravated by inefficient irrigation practices, fuel and energy shortages and rise in industrial activities. The other two zones - middle-mountain and high-mountain- suffer from pasture erosion, irrigated agriculture on slopes and deforestation in the middle zone and cutting of bushes (teresken on the East Pamirs), and year-round use of summer pastures in the high mountain zone.

59. The presentation gave a comprehensive overview of the strategies of action included in the CCD NAP, listed short-term, medium-term and longer term priorities and a number of areas suitable for pilot projects. The key priority areas of some urgency are: (i) capacity development – up-gradation of professional skills of experts of the relevant organizations; (ii) providing of trainings for local population; Strengthening of technical base of the CCD national coordinator (NFP) office; (iii) active partnership between concerned Government agencies and donors and the international organizations in realization of NAP within the framework of the PRSP; and (iv) implementation of two or three priority pilot projects. The listed pilot projects relate to improvement of ecological conditions in irrigation areas, preservation and conservation of the forests, conservation of biodiversity in high mountain conditions of Tajikistan, creation of year-round pastures in a zone of desertification, and anti-erosion forest melioration actions. On the positive side, Tajikistan has in place the final PRSP, and made progress on policy reforms. For instance, land reforms have transferred about 60% of irrigated land in the possession of individual farmers. As far as NAP is concerned, its implementation is constrained by tight resource position. However, the Government has provided some budgetary support for NAP activities.

60. The key points emerging from the discussions were similar to those raised in the context of other country presentations – problems of weak coordination, need for ending NAP's isolation from national development strategy through mainstreaming, lack of active participation of civil

²⁵ By Mr. Khukmatullo Akmatov, Director, Tajik Research and Development Institute, Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

society, weak implementation and management capacity, and inefficient use of water resources. Tajikistan, like Kyrgyzstan, is a mountainous country, requiring particular attention to sustainable development of mountain areas, however, balancing such efforts with the demands of the other zones.

6) Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organization Perspectives²⁶

61. RIOD has been an active CCD partner in the region supporting the following:

- Establishment of 2 websites: regional and Kazakhstan.
- Development of materials such as leaflets and other written information on CCD.
- Holding of workshops, conferences and training on CCD.
- Active support to NAP development, especially in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.
- Participating in preparation of SRAP/CD.
- Took part in the CARs Task Force on Regional Environmental Action Plan.
- Development and implementation of various projects at the local/community levels.

62. The “Small Grants Program” of UNDP/GEF has supported NGOs, especially in Kazakhstan. SDC and GTZ also have been significant supporters of NGOs involved in CCD in the CARs.

63. Despite these gains, there remain areas for improvement and further NGO participation:

- Assistance with facilitating public participation in planning and implementing CCD.
- Engaging local communities and linking national policy and local interests.
- Improving public awareness of CCD and UNCCD.
- NGOs remain grant-dependent because CARs legislation inhibits their money-making activities.
- There is a bias toward NGOs based in national capitals with good communication skills and links.
- External assistance to CAR RIOD members is very low relative to elsewhere in the world.
- Follow-up support is needed to take advantage of NGO skills developed in training.
- NGOs should be seen as equal partners in UNCCD implementation.

III. Outcomes of the Forum and Follow Up

A. The Way Forward

64. The Forum was successful in reinvigorating the interest in CCD implementation generated by the SPA joint mission fielded to the region under the GM’s leadership in April 2002, the ADB/GM RETA-5941 regarding diagnostic country studies on issues and approaches to combat desertification, and the enthusiastic response of the development partners as well as the Central Asian Governments to the proposal to convene the Forum under the aegis of the SPA. The fact that the CARs participated in the Forum with delegations composed of senior officers from the key ministries and agencies concerned with CCD, environment, agriculture, water resources, as well as planning and finance is bound to have a qualitatively positive impact on enhancing the implementation of the UNCCD in the CA sub-region. The deliberations in the Forum focused on issues constraining effective implementation of CCD and ideas and suggestions for

²⁶ By Mr. Oleg Tsaruk, Chairman of the Central Asia Coordinating Committee, Member of the Global Coordinating Committee, RIOD- International NGO Network to Combat Desertification, Tashkent.

countervailing actions to overcome such constraints through an integrated and holistic approach to address land degradation and land management problems. There was also a broad consensus that the outcome of the Forum should be some form of concrete follow up mechanism based on business like and dynamic partnership between all concerned stakeholders – domestic and external.

B. The Tashkent Joint Platform for Action for UNCCD Implementation

65. The Forum adopted by consensus the “Tashkent Joint Platform for Action for UNCCD Implementation” (see Box 1 at the outset of this Report). It underscores a long term commitment of the participants to pursuing follow up actions, such as initiating a high level policy dialogue on issues related to desertification/land degradation and facilitate the integration of the socio-economic and ecological objectives into the development policy agenda²⁷. The institutional framework for this purpose would comprise constituting country level working groups of national and external stakeholders to set in motion an inclusive, participatory and flexible process leading to development of concrete and result-oriented partnerships. It is expected that national Resource Mobilization Forums will be convened. GM would assist with catalyzing this consultative process which may take different forms keeping in view the particular national context. *GTZ would contribute to country working groups recommended in the framework of the joint platform for cooperation as outcome of the Tashkent meeting.* Thus, a major outcome of the Forum was a broad consensus emerging from the deliberations on setting in motion a process and framework to pursue a constructive dialogue at the national level between the concerned government agencies and the international development partners to focus on concrete next steps in building partnerships to improve the pace and quality of implementation of UNCCD in the Central Asian countries.

C. The Working Groups on Partnership Development for UNCCD Implementation

66. The Terms of Reference of the Working Groups, agreed at the Forum, were presented in the Box-2 after the Executive Summary. The central goal is the “enhancement of coordination mechanisms for UNCCD implementation in CARs”. The TOR sets out the objectives, institutional framework and functions of the working groups to be set up in each CAR through consultations to be held between the concerned government agencies and the development partners at the country level to be facilitated by one or more development cooperation agency in collaboration with the CCD NFP. The process as to the next steps will be further refined in respect to each CAR through consultations at the forthcoming COP at Havana.

D. The Matrix of Opportunities

67. The GM has been consulting with the SPA partners to map out the potential areas of their involvement in supporting the UNCCD objectives in the CARs, both at country and subregional levels. This evolving exercise has taken shape in the form of a Matrix of Opportunities set out in Annex 2. The Matrix of Opportunities will serve as a useful tool for the Working Groups to identify donor/country initiatives on concrete cross-sectoral or thematic issues. This would also serve as a basis for the CA Governments to prepare a platform of policy, technical assistance and investment proposals which could better target resource mobilization possibilities.

²⁷ In this context, the country reports on Issues and Approaches to combat desertification, and the regional overview report prepared by the ADB RETA consultant may be useful in aiding an informed basis for policy dialogue,

Overall Conclusions

- Since the inception of the SPA, a series of key preparatory steps have been taken towards creating a solid foundation for resource mobilisation. Many donors that previously had only marginal interest in land degradation activities have now begun to accept that sustainable natural resource management is one of the critical areas in which they can intervene to alleviate poverty.
- New international partners have been brought on-board in support of the Convention in Central Asia, specifically Switzerland, ICARDA, Japan and IsDB.
- The SPA has begun to develop a matrix of opportunities aimed at meeting the priorities of both CARs and donors and it is anticipated that this will attract increased investment for the CARs. Already the SPA has been able to obtain financial resources from a variety of sources.
- Collaborative partnerships are being formed with other Agenda 21 conventions such as with Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- The decision to set up multi-stakeholder Working Groups in support of CCD implementation is an innovative response, which will help facilitate initiatives across a broad spectrum of organisations, raise awareness among senior decision-makers and promote policies for improved natural resource management and sustainable agriculture.
- The SPA has generated other positive outcomes that will facilitate more effective future implementation of the CCD. It has provided a platform for civil society organisations and NGOs to present their views and participate in decision making. It is helping to promote a common vision of rural development among national and international partners. It also provides a neutral forum for the discussion of wide-ranging subregional issues.
- The SPA has helped to introduce and prioritise issues of desertification and land degradation for inclusion into national development plans, PRSPs and donor cooperation programmes.
- Finally, to consolidate the outcomes from the Subregional Forum, the SPA will convene country level resource mobilisation forums, where it is expected that concrete agreements will be entered into between the respective CAR and development cooperation agencies for pursuing collaborative actions for CCD implementation.

AGENDA

**SUBREGIONAL PARTNERSHIP BUILDING FORUM FOR CENTRAL ASIAN
REPUBLICS: CONFRONTING LAND DEGRADATION AND POVERTY THROUGH
ENHANCED UNCCD IMPLEMENTATION**

**Convened under the Aegis of the Strategic Partnership to Combat Desertification in Central
Asia (SPA)**

**InterContinental Hotel, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
30 June – 4 July 2003**

Day 0 - Sunday 29 June 2003

All day Arrival and Hotel Check-in
19:00 – 21:00 Early Registration

<p>Inaugural Session <i>Day 1 – Monday 30 June 2003</i></p>

08:00 – 08:50 Late Registration (mezzanine level – outside the Amir Temur conference
hall)

Chair: Uzbekistan
Rapporteur: GM

09:00 – 09:40 Inaugural Session
Official opening by Host Country (Mr. Zokhid Nazirov, Deputy
Director, Hydrometeorology Research Institute, Main Administration of
Hydrometeorology [Glavgidromet])

- Welcoming statements by SPA Members : GM, ADB, CCD
Project of GTZ and CIDA (5 minutes each)
- ***Signing ceremony for Switzerland and ICARDA joining the
SPA***
Statements by Switzerland and ICARDA

9:40 – 10:00 Overview of the agenda and presentation of the objectives of the Forum
(Mr. Per Rydén – GM Managing Director)

10:00 – 10:15 COFFEE BREAK

Discussion of Subregional Issues & Options
Day 1 – Monday 30 June 2003

Chair: GM
Rapporteur: CIDA

- 10:15 - 10:45 Land, Water and Poverty in Central Asia: A Subregional Overview (Mr. David McCauley, ADB Natural Resources Policy Consultant)
- 10:45 - 11:15 Discussion
- 11:15 - 11:35 Presentation of Subregional Action Programme to Combat Desertification [SRAP-CD] (Mr. Karim Rezaul, Coordinator, Asia Regional Unit, UNCCD Secretariat)
- 11:35 – 12:00 Discussion
- 12:00 - 01:30 LUNCH BREAK
- 01:30 - 03:30 Presentation of substantive papers prepared by each SPA Member and other partners: their respective roles, country/subregional strategies, opportunities and way forward (10 min. presentation and 10 min. discussion)
- Switzerland, ICARDA, CCD Project of GTZ, CIDA, ADB and Japan
- 03:30 –03:45 COFFEE BREAK
- 03:45 –05:30 IFAD, UNDP/DDC, USAID, UNEP, WWF and GM

Discussion of Country Issues and Options
Day 2 – Tuesday 01 July 2003

Chair: GM
Rapporteur: CIDA

- 09:00 – 09:05 Opening remarks by Chair
- 09:05 – 09:20 Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility [GEF/Sec] (Mr. Walter Lusigi, Senior Advisor)
- 09:20 – 09:40 General discussion

UZBEKISTAN

Chair: ADB
Rapporteur: CCD Project of GTZ

- 09:40 – 10:00 Uzbekistan: Presentation of issues and options by the National Focal Point for the UNCCD (Mr. Zokhid Nazirov, Deputy Director,

10:00 – 10:20	Hydrometeorology Research Institute, Main Administration of Hydrometeorology [Glavgidromet] General discussion
10:20 – 10:35	COFFEE BREAK
10:35 – 11:00	Comments/inputs by countries, development partners and other stakeholders to discuss opportunities and linkages (confirmed interveners: ICARDA)

TURKMENISTAN

Chair: ICARDA

Rapporteur: IFAD

11:00 – 11:20	Turkmenistan: Presentation of issues and options by the National Focal Point for the UNCCD (Mr. Paltamed Esenov, Director, National Institute of Deserts, Flora and Fauna, Ministry of Nature Protection)
11:20 – 12:00	General discussion
12:00 – 12:45	Comments/inputs by countries, development partners and other stakeholders to discuss opportunities and linkages (confirmed interveners: UNDP/DDC)
12:45 – 02:15	LUNCH BREAK

KAZAKHSTAN

Chair: CIDA

Rapporteur: ADB

02:15 – 02:25	Opening remarks by Chair
02:25 – 02:45	Kazakhstan: Presentation of issues and options by the National Focal Point for the UNCCD (Mr. Bulat Bekniyazov, Head of International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Environment Protection)
02:45 – 03:15	General discussion
03:15 – 03:30	COFFEE BREAK
03:30 – 04:15	Comments/inputs by countries, development partners and other stakeholders to discuss opportunities and linkages (confirmed interveners)

CIVIL SOCIETY

04:15 – 04:35	Presentation of issues and options relevant to Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organisations (Mr. Oleg Tsaruk, Subregional Focal Point for RIOD network)
04:35 – 05:00	General discussion

Discussion of Country Issues and Options (continued)
Day 3 – Wednesday 02 July 2003

Chair: CCD Project of GTZ

Rapporteur: ICARDA

- 08:45 – 09:00 Opening remarks by Chair
- 09:00 – 09:10 Presentation by Islamic Development Bank [IsDB] (Mr. Rashid Kadyrov, Country Officer, Regional Office, Almaty, Kazakhstan)
- 09:10 – 10:00 Rapporteurs' Summary of identified opportunities and linkages for Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan from Tuesday's sessions (respectively Ms. Anneke Trux, Project Coordinator, CCD Project of GTZ, Mr. Anshuman Saikia, Associate Country Portfolio Manager, IFAD, and Ms. Linda Cloutier, First Secretary, Development, CIDA, Canadian Embassy Kazakhstan)
- 10:00 – 10:45 General discussion
- 10:45 – 11:00 COFFEE BREAK

KYRGYZSTAN

- 11:00 – 11:20 Kyrgyzstan: Presentation of issues and options by the National Focal Point for the UNCCD (Mr. Kubanychbek Kulov, Director, Kyrgyz Scientific and Research Institute of Irrigation, Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources)
- 11:20 – 12:00 General discussion
- 12:00 – 12:45 Comments/inputs by countries, development partners and other stakeholders to discuss opportunities and linkages (confirmed interveners: Swiss CAMP Project)
- 12:45 – 02:15 LUNCH BREAK
(Rapporteur will consolidate points from the Kyrgyzstan session)

TAJIKISTAN

Chair: ADB


Rapporteur: Switzerland

- 02:15 – 02:25 Opening remarks by Chair
- 02:25 – 02:45 Tajikistan: Presentation of issues and options on behalf of the National Focal Point for the UNCCD (Mr. Khukmatullo Akhmadov, Director, Tajik Forestry Institute)
- 02:45 – 03:30 General discussion
- 03:30 – 04:15 Comments/inputs by countries, development partners and other stakeholders to discuss opportunities and linkages (confirmed interveners: CIDA)

- 04:15 – 05:00 COFFEE BREAK (Rapporteur will consolidate points from the Tajikistan session)
- 05:00 – 05:30 Rapporteurs' Summary of identified opportunities and linkages for Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (respectively Mr. Richard Thomas, Director, Natural Resources Program, ICARDA and Ms. Vera Haag, MSc Sociologist, CAMP Consultant)
- 05:30 – 06:00 General discussion

<p>Conclusions and Summary <i>Day 4 – Thursday 03 July 2003</i></p>

Chair: Uzbekistan
Rapporteur: ADB

- 09:00 – 10:00 Opening remarks by Chair and presentation of summary of the Forum and conclusions (Mr. Zokhid Nazirov, Deputy Director, Hydrometeorology Research Institute, Main Administration of Hydrometeorology [Glavgidromet])
 General discussion and adoption of Forum conclusions
- 10:00 – 10:15 Official closing remarks by GM (Ms. Khalida Bouzar, Programme Manger for Asia, Pacific and North Africa, GM of the UNCCD)
- 
- 10:15 – 12:00 Preparation for field trip
- 12:00 – 01:30 LUNCH BREAK
- 02:00 Depart on Field Trip (overnight stop-over in Samarkand)

<p>Field Trip <i>Day 5 – Friday 04 July 2003</i></p>
--

- 08:00 – 11:00 Field Trip to ICARDA's field site (return to Tashkent by 2:00 p.m.)

MATRIX OF OPPORTUNITIES

CARs Partners	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan	Subregional
ADB	ADB/GEF will pursue investment and capacity building opportunities for rural and agricultural development projects					
CCD Project of GTZ			- Support NAP implementation	- Training tools & workshops		- Support SRAP implementation - Technical and financial input for SPA activities - Technical training for central Asian experts in cooperation with InWent - Training for focal points and members of NCB for ex. monitoring of action programs, management tools and others. - Subregional exchange of experience between pilot projects in the framework of CCD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue and extend support to pilot projects for participatory resources management at community level (within the limits of available finances) - Continue and extend training for experts, project partners in project management and issues related to the implementation of the pilot projects - Continue capacity building for NGOs in cooperation with the GM and CAMP - Support the evaluation of pilot projects, drawing experiences from pilot projects and using them as basis for further investment programs - National exchange of experience - Support to focal point and NCB activities for enhancing the implementation of the NAP's, through training, meetings and participation in events regarding pilot projects - Contribute to country Working Groups recommended in the framework of the Tashkent Joint Platform for Action 					
CIDA			- Integrate NAP into crosscutting programming			
Switzerland	-	- Irrigation & Water supply - Water management - Sustainable mountain development	- Irrigation & Water supply - Water management - Sustainable mountain development		- Irrigation & Water supply - Water management	- Irrigation & Water supply - Water management - Sustainable mountain development
ICARDA		- Mountain agriculture (GM can	- Mountain agriculture (GM		- Mountain agriculture (GM can provide	- Policy dialogue on sustainable agri practices

		provide support for GEF project concept development)	can provide support for GEF project concept development)		support for GEF project concept development)	
IFAD			- Projects in Tajikistan			- Regional Strategies and Opportunities Paper (RESOP) - Environmental services : Countries to be determined
EU/EC					- Develop project proposal for submission by September for FYI 2005-06	- Need to draw on annual €50 mil for work on land degradation

Japan (JICA)			- Project proposal on landslides management with regional perspective		- Rural water supply project	- Capacity building on environmental administration: 2 per country - Disaster management training
GEF	Pursue OP 15	Pursue OP 15	Pursue OP 15	Pursue OP 15	Pursue OP 15	Pursue OP 15
World Bank						- Replicate GEF DMP Kazakhstan activities in other CARs
UNDP	- Rationalizing & improving environmental legislature		- Demonstration project			- GEF SGP & GM CETP integrating participatory approaches into NFP institutions
IsDB	Interested in developing environmental oriented projects and would like to become a member of the SPA					

ANNEX 3

PARTICIPANTS LIST

#	NAME	POSITION & ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	TEL/FAX
Kazakhstan				
1	Mr. Bulat Bekniyazov	Head of International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Environment Protection	31, Pobeda Avenue, Astana, Kazakhstan	Tel: 3172 591974 Fax: 3172 591973 E-mail: bekniyazov@mail.kz
2	Mr. Dauletbek Kussainov	3rd Secretary, Department for Multilateral Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	10, Bibitshilik Str., Astana	Tel: 31 72 321370 Fax: 31 72 327548 E-mail: dmc@mid.kz
3	Mr. Turganbay Tazhmagambet	Chief of Department, Land Cadastre and Monitoring, State Agency on Land Management	41, Zheltoksan, Astana	Tel: (+31 72) 32 62 80 Fax: (+31 72) 32 19 67/32 17 68 E-mail: azr_astana@mail.ru
4	Mr. Alexandr Nikolayenko	Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia, CAREC	40, Orbita-1, 480043 Almaty, Kazakhstan	Tel: (3272) 785110/785022/292619 Fax: (3272) 705337 E-mail: Anikolayenko@carec.kz
5	Mr. Syrym Nurgaliyev	Project Assistant, Climate Change Coordination Center	30, Bibitshilik Str., Astana 473000, Kazakhstan	Tel: 3172 322696/580153/52 Fax:3172 32 26 96 E-mail: snurgaliyev@climate.kz
6	Mr. Serik Akhmetov	Head of Department, Committee for Water Resources of the Ministry of Agriculture	31, Pobeda Str., Astana	Tel: 3172 591925 Fax:3172 591922 E-mail:info_water@minagri.kz
7	Ms. Nesipbala Yermekova	1st Deputy Director of Dept., Planning of Sectoral Bodies Dept., Ministry of Economy and Budgetary Planning	38, Pobeda Str., Astana	Tel: 3172 71 71 88/232644 Fax:3172 718115 E-mail:r_urazgulov@minfin.kz; n-ermekova@nursat.kz
8	Mrs. Tatyana Bragina	NGO "Naurzum", NFP-RIOD-Kazakhstan	165-12, Taran Str., Kostanay, 458003, Kazakhstan	Tel: (314-2) 548532 E-mail: naurzum@mail.kz

Kyrgyzstan				
9	Mrs. Djyparkul Bekkulova	Chief, Department of Ecology Strategy and Policy , Ministry of Ecology and Emergency	2/1, Toktonaliev str., Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	Tel: (+996 312) 54 79 51 Fax: (+996 312) 54 79 51 E-mail: demos@intranet.kg
10	Mr. Rysbek Apasov	Head of Department of External Economic Relations & Investments, Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry	96"A", Kiyevskaya Str., Bishkek 720300, Kyrgyzstan	Tel: (+996 312) 623716 Fax: (+996 312) 623236/543036 E-mail: fao.kg@elcat.kg
11	Ms. Aida Umanova	Chairperson, NGO "SOS-Land"	29, Manas Avenue, 720044 Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	Tel: (+996 312) 541165 Fax: (+996 312) 540975 E-mail: sos-land@yandex.ru
12	Mr. Kubanychbek Kulov	National Focal Point for UNCCD in Kyrgyzstan, Director, Kyrgyz Scientific Research Irrigation Institute, Ministry of Agriculture & Water Economy	4a, Toktonaliyeva Str., 720055 Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	Tel: (+996 312) 541168 Fax: (+996 312) 540975 E-mail: kulov@elcat.kg
13	Mr. Birjan Chukin	Head of Debt Department, Ministry of Finance	58, Erkindik Str., Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	Tel: (+996 312) 625816 Mobile: (996 512) 771810 Fax: (+996 312) 664207 E-mail: btc@netmail.kg
14	Mr. Chingiz Igemberdiyev	1st Secretary, CIS Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	54, Razzakova Str., Bishkek	Tel: 996 312 620367 Fax: 996 312 660501 E-mail: chingiz_x@yahoo.com
15	Mr. Dolotbek Berikbaev	Deputy Director, State Agency on Registration of Rights to Immovable Property	44, Orozbekova str. Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	Tel: (996-312) 665011, 664752 Fax: (996312) 664951 E-mail: ppu_rrip@infotel.kg
16	Mr. Aytkul Burkhanov	Deputy Chairman, State Forestry Service	228, Toktogul Str., Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	Tel: (+996 312) 611398/610016 Fax: (+996 312) 610016 E-mail: forest@gov.kg

Tajikistan				
17	Mr. Nazullo Abibulloyev	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Finance	3, Radjabov Str., Dushanbe	Tel: (+992 372) 215706 Fax: (+992 372) 216237 E-mail: min-fin-k@tajnet.com
18	Ms. Muazama Burkhanova	Chair, NGO "Foundation to Support Civil Initiatives", NFP-RIOD	73a-19, Shotemura str., Dushanbe 734002	Tel: (+992 372) 215857 Fax: (+992 372) 215857 E-mail: muazama@yahoo.com / burkhanova@irex-tj.org
19	Mr. Mirali Safarov	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Agriculture	148/2, Yakachinor Str., Dushanbe	Tel: (+992 372) 358689 Fax: (+992 372) 217377
20	Mr. Rakhmon Umarov	1st Deputy of Chairman, State Committee for Land Management	15, Giprozemgorodok, Dushanbe, Tajikistan	Tel: (+992 372) 217321/213843 Fax: (+992 372) 311487/217002 E-mail: comzem@tajik.net
21	Mr. Khukmatullo Akhmadov	Director, Tajik Forestry Institute	6-2, Muhamadiev Str., Dushanbe, Tajikistan	Tel: (992 372) 326746 Fax: (992 372) 311487 E-mail: ahmadov@cada.tajik.net
22	Mr. Nusratullo Nozaninov	Head of Department, State Committee for Land Management	15, Giprozemgorodok, Dushanbe, Tajikistan	Tel: (+992 372) 217321/213848 Fax: (+992 372) 217002/311487 E-mail: comzem@tajik.net
Turkmenistan				
23	Mr. Paltamed Esenov	Director, National Institute of Deserts, Flora & Fauna	15, Bitarap Turkmenistan Str., Ashgabat	Tel: (+993 12) 395427/393856 Fax: (+993 12) 353716 E-mail: desert@online.tm
24	Mr. Gurbandurdy Atagarriyev	Deputy Minister, Ministry of Agriculture of Turkmenistan	63, Azady Str., 744000, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan	Tel: (993 12) 353954 Fax: (993 12) 353977

Uzbekistan				
25	Mr. Zokhidjon Nazirov	Deputy Director, Central Asian Research Hydrometeorological Institute (SANIGMI), National Focal Point for UNCCD in Uzbekistan	72, K.Makhsumov str, Tashkent, 700052, Uzbekistan	Tel: (998 71) 1331150/1334349 Fax: (998 71) 1332025 E-mail:Sanigmi@albatros.uz
26	Mr. Toolkin Mirzayev	Deputy Director of the Main Department of Financial Regulation in Agricultural & Industrial Sector, Ministry of Finance	5, Mustakillic sq., Tashkent 700008	Tel: 139 13 30 Fax:139 16 23, 139 10 69 E-mail: tmirzaev@mf.uz
27	Mr. Oleg Tsaruk	Chairman of the Central Asia Coordinating Committee, Member of the Global Coordinating Committee, RIOD-International NGO Network to Combat Desertification	31-10, Yangizamon St., Tashkent 700105, Uzbekistan	Tel: 998-71 1913935/2234 Fax:998-71 1913935 E-mail: ots@physic.uzsci.net
28	Mr. Bakhretdin Muradov	Head Specialist for Environment Protection, Ministry of Economics	45A, Uzbekistanskaya Str., Tashkent 700003	Tel: 998-71 1326374 Fax:998-71 1326427 E-mail:bmuradov@gov.uz
29	Mr. Khodjimurat Gaparov	Head of Main Department of Water Use, Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources	4, Navoi Str., Tashkent	Tel: 998-71 412790 Fax: 998-71 1322158
30	Mr. Saidazim Mirzaev	Chairman, State Committee for Nature Protection		Tel: 99871 1391171 Fax: 99871 351181
31	Mr. Amanbay Khalillaev	Main Expert, Main Dept. of Control Use & Protection of Water & Land Resources, State Committee for Nature Protection	99. Amir Temur Str., Tashkent 700084, Uzbekistan	Tel: 998712 351979/351665 Fax: 998712 350761/357920
32	Mr. Bakhtiyar Kurbanov	Deputy Director, Uzbek National Center of Geoinformatic and Cadastre	56, Chilanzar "C", Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Tel: 99871 1730384/2 765977 Fax: 998712 767724 E-mail: NCGC7@online.ru NCGC7@mail.tps.uz
33	Mr. Sergey Samoilov	Head of Department of Economics & Management of Natural Resources, State Committee for Nature Protection, REAP Focal Point in Uzbekistan, UNEP	99. Amir Temur Str., Tashkent 700084, Uzbekistan	Fax: 998 71 1391796/2350578 Fax: 998 712357920/350761 E-mail: ssam@albatros.uz

II. International Organizations

#	Name	POSITION & ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	TEL/FAX
34	Dr. Richard James Thomas	Director, Natural Resources Management Program, ICARDA	P.O. Box 5466, Aleppo, Syria	Tel: 963-21-2213433/2642886 Fax:963-21-2213490 E-mail: r.thomas@cgiar.org
35	Dr. Mekhlis Suleimenov	Assistant Regional Coordinator	6, Murtazaeva Street, Tashkent 700 000	Tel: (+998 71) 1372130 Fax: (+998 71) 1207125 E-mail: m.suleimenov@icarda.org.uz
36	Dr. Akmal Karimov	NPO, S&W Project	6, Murtazaeva Street, Tashkent 700 000	Tel: (+998 71) 1372130 Fax: (+998 71) 1207125 E-mail: a.karimov@icarda.org.uz
37	Ms. Linda Cloutier	First Secretary, Development, CIDA, Canadian Embassy	34 Karasai Batyr, Almaty 480100, Kazakhstan	Tel: (3272) 50 11 51 Fax: (3272) 58 24 93 E-mail: Linda.Cloutier@dfait-maeci.gc.ca
38	Mr. Robert M. Watts	Regional Environment, Science & Technology Officer for Central Asia & the Caspian Sea Basin, US Dept. of State-US Embassy Tashkent	82, Chilanzarskaya, 700115 Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Tel: (998 71) 1205450 Fax: (998 71) 1206335 E-mail: wattsrn@state.gov
39	Mrs. Vera Haag	MSc Sociologist, CAMP Consultant	338, Frunze Str., Bishkek, 720011, Kyrgyzstan	Tel: (+996 312) 680594 Fax: (+996 312) 680928 E-mail: verahaag@swissonline.ch
40	Ms. Janyl Kozhomuratova	Project Coordinator, CAMP Central Asian Mountain Partnership	338, Frunze Str., Bishkek, 720011, Kyrgyzstan	Tel: (+996 312) 680875/680520 Fax: (+996 312) 680928 Mobile: (996 502 583305) E-mail: janyl@camp.elcat.kg

41	Mr. Mustafa Parlak	Forest Engineer, The General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works	DSI Genel Mud. Etut Plan Dairesi 06100 Yucetepe/Ankara/ Turkey	Tel: +90 312 417 8300/2951 Fax: +90 312 417 1378 e-mail: mustafapar@hotmail.com/ mustafap@dsi.gov.tr
42	Mr. Walter Lusigi	Senior Advisor, Global Environment Facility (GEF)	1818 H Str. NW, Washington DC 20433	Tel: 202 473 4798 Fax: 202 522 3240 E-mail: wlusigi@thegef.org
43	Dr. Svetlana Nikulina	National GEF Projects Adviser, ATROF-MUHIT Environment Programme of the Government of Uzbekistan supported by UNDP	13A, Usmon Nosir St., Tashkent 700060 Uzbekistan	Tel: (998-71) 152 7487/54 9307 Fax:(998-71) 152 7487 E-mail: Svetlana.nikulina@envp.uzsci.net
44	Dr. Ajiniyaz Reimov	Programme Manager, ATROF-MUHIT Environment Programme of the Government of Uzbekistan supported by UNDP	13A, Usmon Nosir St., Tashkent 700060 Uzbekistan	Tel: (998-71) 152-7487, 54-9307 Fax: (998-71) 152-7487 E-mail: Ajiniyaz.Reimov@envp.uzsci.net
45	Dr. Gulbahor Salimova	UNDP Programme Analyst, UNDP CO	4 a, T. Shevchenko Str., Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Tel: (998 71) 152 35 61/48 Fax: (998 71) 133 69 65 E-mail: gulbahor.salimova@undp.org
46	Mr. Philip Dobie	Director, Drylands Development Center, UNDP	P.O. Box 30442, Nairobi, Kenya	Tel: 254 (2) 622057 Fax: 254 (2) 624648 E-mail: philip.dobie@undp.org
47	Mr. Elie Kodsi	Regional Programme Manager, UNDP-Drylands Development Centre	The U.N House, Riad El Solh, P.O. Box 11-3216, Beirut, Lebanon	Tel: 961-1-981301 ext. 1733 Fax: 961-1-981521 E-mail: elie.kodsi@undp.org

48	Mr. Bakhadur Paluaniyazov	National Advisor on Disaster Management (Drought Issues), Drought Component of the Development Support Services Programme of the Government of Uzbekistan supported by UNDP	4, Taras Shevchenko Str., Tashkent 700029, Uzbekistan	Tel: (998-71) 132 65 73/ 169 05 32 Fax:(998-71) 169 05 31 E-mail: dc_dssp@dostlink.net, bakhadur@yahoo.co.uk
49	Mr. Stefan Michel	Technical Adviser, Project "Establishment of Nuratau-Kyzylykum Biosphere Reserve", UNDP Uzbekistan	4, Taras Shevchenko Str., Tashkent 700029, Uzbekistan	Tel: (998-71) 1206911 (office) (998-71) 1697192 (home) E-mail: st-michel@gmx.de
50	Dr. Anneke Trux	Project Coordinator, CCD-Project, GTZ	Tulpenfeld 2, 53113 Bonn, Germany	Tel: 49 228-98371-0 Fax: 49 228-98371-25 E-mail: trux@gtzccd.de
51	Mr. Gunter Winckler	Project Consultant, CCD-Project, GTZ	Tulpenfeld 2, 53113 Bonn, Germany	Tel: 49 228-98371-33 Fax: 49 228-98371-25 E-mail: winckler@gtzccd.de
52	Ms. Eva Kleinn	Regional Coordinator for Central Asia, CCD-Project, GTZ	40, Orbita-1 Str., Almaty 480043	Tel: 3272-705337 Fax: 3272-705337 E-mail: kleinn@gtzccd.de
53	Mr. Craig Anderson	Director, Office of Energy and Water, USAID/Central Asia Republics	US Embassy, Park Palace Building, 41, Kazybek Bl., Almaty 480100, Kazakhstan	Tel: 73272 507612 Fax: 73272 507635 e-mail: canderson@usaid.gov
54	Ms. Gulmira Kuanzhanova	Project Management Specialist, Enterprise & Finance Office, USAID/CAR/Almaty	41, Kazibek Bl., Almaty 480100, Kazakhstan	Tel: 3272 507612 ext.363 Fax:3272 507635 E-mail: gkuanzhanova@usaid.gov
55	Mr. Alexander Kalashnikov	Project Management Specialist, USAID/CAR	41 Buyuk Turon St., Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Tel: +998-71-120-63-09 Fax: +998-71-133-76-56 E-mail: akalashnikov@usaid.gov

56	Dr. John Lamers	ZEF/UNESCO	14, Khamid Alimjan Street, 740000 Khorezm	Tel: 8-362-2262119 Fax:8-362-2262119 E-mail: j.lamers@zef.uzpak.uz and zef@unesco.org.uz
57	Mr. Shiv Nath Saigal	International Consultant, (RETA-5941), ADB	7009 Capitol View Drive, McLean, VA-22101, Manila	Tel: 91 11 683 4378/693 4300 E-mail: snsaiagal@hotmail.com/ shivsaigal@aol.com
58	Mr. Nessim Ahmad	Policy Coordinator, Office of Environment & Social Development, ADB	6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Philippines	Tel: 632 6326789 fax: 632 6362191/95 E-mail: njahmad@adb.org
59	Dr. David McCauley	Staff Consultant, ADB	1239 Alewa Drive, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817 USA	Tel: +1808-387-2922 Fax: +1808-595-7310 E-mail: dmccauley@adb.org
60	Mr. Emile Gozali	Project Economist, ADB	Manila	E-mail: egozali@adb.org
61	Mr. Victor Gillespie	Environmental Consultant, ADB	P.O. Box 5752, Vientiane 01000, LaoPDR	E-mail: gillespi@laopdr.com
62	Mr. Mandar Jayawant	Economist, Programs Specialist, ADB	1, Khodjaeva Str., Tashkent 700027	Tel: 998 71 120 79 21/22 Fax: 998 71 120 79 23 E-mail: mjayawant@adb.org
63	Mr. Aziz Nurbekov	ADB	1, Khodjaeva Str., Tashkent 700028	Tel: 998 71 120 79 21/107 65 91 E- mail: nurbekov2002@yahoo.com
64	Mr. Nik Zainal Abidin	Director Regional Office in Almaty, IsDB	67 Aiteke-bi str. Almaty 480091, Kazakhstan	Tel: 3272 727000/01 Fax: 3272 501303 E-mail: nzabidin@idb.netel.kz / idb@netel.kz
65	Mr. Rashid Kadyrov	Country Officer in Almaty, IsDB	68 Aiteke-bi str. Almaty 480091, Kazakhstan	Tel: 3272 727000/01 Fax: 3272 501303 E-mail: rashid@idb.netel.kz
66	Mr. Preetipal Singh	ACTED-Central Asia	16 Radjabov Str., Dushanbe, Tajikistan 10, Ilyor Fazylov Str., Tashkent (998 71 1376226)	Tel: 992372 219289/246583 Fax: 992372 510112 E- mail: Preetipal@hotmail.com

67	Ms. Kae Yanagisawa	Resident Representative, JICA Uzbekistan Office	5th floor, International Business Center, 107-B, Amir Temur Str., Tashkent 700084, Uzbekistan	Tel: (998 71) 1207966/67; 1370915/16/17/18 Mobile: (998 71) 1307663 Fax: (998 71) 1207968 E-mail: yanagisawa@jica.uz
68	Mr. Aziz Khasanov	In-House Consultant, JICA	6th floor, International Business Center, 107-B, Amir Temur Str., Tashkent 700084, Uzbekistan	Tel: (998 71) 1385916/17/18 Fax: (998 71) 1207968 E-mail: akhasanov@jica.uz
69	Dr. Olga Pereladova	WWF International (c/o RPO WWF)	19, bd.3, Nykolojamskaja, Mosccow 109240, Russia	Tel: (095) 7380939 Fax: (095) 7380938 E-mail: opereladova@wwf.ru
70	Mr. Peter Reddish	Coordinator, Europa House	International Business Center, 11th Floor, 107A, Amir Temur Str., 700084 Tashkent	Tel: 998 71 1391270/1701/1264 Fax: 998 71 1391868 E-mail: peter@europahouse.uz
71	Ms. Iren Leibundgut	Deputy Country Director Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, 144 Panfilova Str., 720040, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	Tel: +996 312 66 64 80 Fax: +996 312 66 64 89 E-mail: iren.leibundgut@swisscoop.kg
72	Mr. Yerken Azhigaliyev	Regional Environmental Management Officer, GM, c/o ICARDA	c/o ICARDA-CAC, 6, Murtazaeva Street, Tashkent 700 000	Tel: (+998 71) 1372130 Fax: (+998 71) 1207125 E-mail: azhigaliyev@cgiar.org.uz
73	Ms. Nodira Adilova	Assistant to Regional Officer, GM c/o ICARDA	c/o ICARDA-CAC, 6, Murtazaeva Street, Tashkent 700 001	Tel: (+998 71) 1372130 Fax: (+998 71) 1207125 E-mail: pfu-nodira@rambler.ru
74	Mr. Per Ryden	Managing Director, GM, c/o IFAD	IFAD, Via del Serafico, 107, 00142 Rome, Italy	Tel: +3906 54592146 Fax: +3906 5043463 e-mail: p.ryden@ifad.org
75	Ms. Khalida Bouzar	Program Manager for Asia & North Africa, GM, c/o IFAD	IFAD, Via del Serafico, 107, 00142 Rome, Italy	Tel: +3906 54592151 Fax: +3906 54592135 e-mail: k.bouzar@ifad.org

76	Mr. Roshan Cooke	Associate Program Manager for Asia & North Africa, GM, c/o IFAD	IFAD, Via del Serafico, 107, 00142 Rome, Italy	Tel: +3906 54592156 Fax: +3906 54592135 e-mail: ro.cooke@ifad.org
77	Mr. Anshuman Saikia	Associate Professional Officer, IFAD	IFAD, Via del Serafico, 107, 00142 Rome, Italy	Tel: +3906 5459 2272 Fax: +3906 5443463 e-mail: a.saikia@ifad.org
78	Mr. Rezaul Karim	Coordinator, Asia Unit, UNCCD	8, Martin Luther King Str., 53175 Bonn, Germany	Tel: +49 (228) 815 2833 Fax: +49 (228) 815 2896 e-mail: rkarim@unccd.int