



Ten years from the ratification of the UNCCD convention, and 30 years after the first international conference on desertification (UNCOD), there is the need for a comprehensive scientific review of what has been achieved so far towards combating desertification, and particularly on the contribution of science in achieving the original goals of the UNCCD.

A common misunderstanding is that desertification is linked to the presence of deserts. The truth is that the occurrence of desertification is not linked to the presence or absence of a desert nearby. Desertification is the combined result of human induced land degradation and climatic stresses such as drought, and can occur in very diverse biomes and climatic conditions. This high level scientific meeting will assemble an international panel of scientists working in the relevant fields to review the state of the art and issue recommendations for action.

Registration
Introduction and welcome: Michel Verstraete and Martin Beniston
Session 1: Desertification: The policy context
Address by Marie Anne Isler Béguin, Member of the European Parliament
Address by Ann Henderson-Sellers, Director, World Climate Research Programme
Address by Alexia Massacand, GEO Secretariat
Address by TBD, GMES Bureau
Address by Alan Belward, JRC/IES
Session 2: Desertification: The World's most desperate environmental problem?
Bob Scholes
David Thomas (TBC)
Session 3: Desertification: Complex interactions between people, climate and the land
Eric Lambin
Osvaldo Sala
Tuesday 11 September
Session 4: Climate drivers of change in dry lands
Malcolm Hughes
Henri Diaz
Session 5: Population drivers of change in dry lands
Hong Jiang (TBC)
Mary Seely
Wednesday 12 September
Session 6: Monitoring changes in dry lands
Chuck Hutchinson
Joachim Hill
Yves Govaerts
Nadine Gobron
Ulf Hellden
<i>Excursion to the Jungfraujoch</i>
Thursday 13 September
Session 7: Scenarios, mitigation, adaptation and best practices
Cheikh Mbow
Mohamed S. Abdel Razik
Rudy Schaldach
Session 8: Synthesis, conclusions, recommendations, outcome

Second announcement

Wengen Workshop on Global Change
Research: Edition 2007

Climate Change and Desertification: Monitoring, Modelling and Forecasting



Hotel Regina, Wengen, Switzerland
September 10-13, 2007

Organized by:



Co-sponsored by:



Climate Change and Desertification: Monitoring, Modelling and Forecasting

Thirty years after the UN Conference on Desertification (UNCOD), which took place in Nairobi in September 1977, and some ten years after the ratification of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in December 1996, it is appropriate to step back and review (1) where we were and what we have learned about desertification processes over the last three decades, (2) the current state of the art in this and related fields (monitoring, modelling, integration of natural and social sciences, historical background, etc), and (3) where we are heading, given the high likelihood of significant climate changes in the coming decades.

An international workshop will take place in Wengen, Switzerland, from **10 to 13 September 2007** to review the scientific issues involved, attempt a synthesis of the current state of the art in this field, and propose recommendations on priorities for further Research and Development (R&D) activities, as well as for a renewed and revived interaction between the scientific community and the wide range of policy makers, project managers and other actors concerned by these issues.

Particular attention will be given to the interaction between climatic, environmental and human factors, and the focus of the workshop will be on the scientific aspects of this issue, i.e., on the understanding of the processes at work, on the tools and techniques required to improve our knowledge, and on the best ways to communicate research findings to policy makers and other actors. This workshop is specifically organized for participants from academia and similar research organizations with an interest in developing and promoting state of the art scientific research activities in support of sustainable development policies in areas subject to desertification.

Desertification topics that will be covered include, inter alia:

- **Monitoring:** direct and indirect observables, in situ and space-based approaches, with particular attention to quantitative approaches and to assessing their accuracy and reliability
- **Modelling:** key processes, essential variables, tools and techniques to integrate formal knowledge and measurements
- **Thematic issues:** overgrazing, soil erosion by wind and water, drought and climate change, salinisation, relations with deforestation and loss of biodiversity, social and economic factors, integration of issues into a holistic view
- **Historical perspective and future projections:** lessons from paleo-climatic reconstructions, forecasting desertification risks in the context of expected climate changes

All presentations and group discussions will be plenary (no parallel sessions), and most contributed presentations will be expected to take the form of posters. Ample time will be available for one-on-one or small group discussions. Cultural events may also be organized, such as a visit to the climate research station on top of the Jungfrauoch High Alpine Research Station (<http://www.ifjungo.ch/>).

Practical details, logistics information (workshop venue, accommodation), a draft programme and registration information are available from the conference web-site at:

<http://www.unige.ch/climate/Workshops/wengen07.html>

For background information on previous Wengen workshops on global change see:

<http://www.unige.ch/climate/Workshops/wengen.html>

A Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) for the workshop has been established and currently includes:

- Mohamed Badraoui, Haut Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts et à la Lutte contre la Désertification, Rabat, Maroc
- Martin Beniston, University of Geneva, Switzerland
- Andreas Brink, EC Joint Research Centre, Ispra, Italy
- Filippo Giorgi, International Centre for Theoretical Physics, Trieste, Italy
- Joachim Hill, University of Trier, Trier, Germany
- Malcolm Hughes, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, USA
- Luca Montanarella, EC Joint Research Centre, Ispra, Italy
- Osvaldo Sala, Brown University, Providence, RI, USA
- Robert (Bob) Scholes, CSIR, Pretoria, South Africa
- Mary Seely, Desert Research Foundation of Namibia (DRFN), Windhoek, Namibia
- David S. G. Thomas, Oxford University, Oxford, United Kingdom
- Michel M. Verstraete, EC Joint Research Centre, Ispra, Italy



For scientific questions, please contact the Organizing Committee by sending an email to: [wengen at jrc.it](mailto:wengen@jrc.it)

For local organisational details, please contact: [martin.beniston at unige.ch](mailto:martin.beniston@unige.ch)