

# National Action Programmes under UNCCD

- Rules and Reality -

commissioned by

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# **National Action Programmes under UNCCD**

## **- Rules and Reality -**

### **Executive summary**

The present technical paper undertakes to review and revise guidance for NAP elaboration in order to come to proposals on how to improve their overall effectiveness and performance.

Examining the existing guidance for NAP elaboration and implementation as laid down in the convention itself and as expressed later on by relevant COP and CRIC decisions, it results that there is a general lack of clear and binding guidance regarding the methods and the contents of NAPs.

As regards the quantitative relevance of NAP, out of 140 affected countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, 88 countries have submitted their NAPs until the end of 2006; 37 countries are in the course of elaboration of their NAPs.

NAPs in Africa and Latin America are studied by comparing them against the expectations as laid down in the convention. They are to have a minimum degree of legitimacy, they ought to employ participatory approaches in elaboration and implementation, they are to be inclusive and open for other strategies and they are supposed to attract investment for sustainable land management.

Given the lack of clear guidance, NAPs have enjoyed considerable freedom of interpretation in their response to these expectations. First generation NAPs therefore reflect the political country agenda at the time of elaboration rather than the objectives in terms of combating desertification as spelled out by the convention and its institutions.

Since it does not seem possible at present to establish a clear set of objectively verifiable criteria against which NAPs could be measured, proposals for improved NAP guidance cannot be derived exclusively from experiences with existing NAPs.

Proposals are made regarding NAP contents as well as methods and procedures to improve NAP quality in future.

NAPs had been expected to contribute to implementing the convention by significantly increasing the investment into sustainable land management and by improving the framework conditions for combating desertification. It results from the present report that NAPs have not fulfilled either of these expectations.

## 0. Introduction

The present technical paper was prepared to support the "Intersessional Intergovernmental Working Group" (IIWG) of the UNCCD requested to developing a ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the convention by COP7. It aims at reviewing and revising guidance for NAP elaboration in order to improve their overall effectiveness and performance. Pursuant to this the following items will be dealt with:

- Summary of main characteristics of the NAP process in the light of formal requirements by the convention and by relevant COP decisions
- Criteria and minimum requirements of NAP: empirical lessons
- Mainstreaming of NAP into other strategic frameworks of developing countries: positive and negative experiences and ways forward
- Future design and related capacity building needs

## 1. Formal Compliance of NAPs

This argument is developed in much more detail by another Technical Report of the IIWG.<sup>1</sup> The specific NAP guidance in the Convention and relevant COP and CRIC decisions provisions are dealt with in annexe 1 of the present paper (→ **Annexe 1**).

What really matters for further discussing how to improve NAP guidance, can be expressed in a few sentences. The convention does invite member countries to present action programmes; it does however not tie affected countries to produce documents entirely and exclusively related to UNCCD implementation. Furthermore the convention points out certain standards to comply with when addressing desertification and drought: These are meant to be regular updates based on experiences or lessons learnt, participation, legitimacy, mainstreaming into strategic frameworks and the strife for resource mobilization.

The parallel technical paper on compliance strategies indicates that the convention has failed to oblige country programmes to lay down clear indicators, responsibilities and time-lines. It also underlines that there is no clear guidance on how the overall objectives of the convention translate into concrete measures and activities at country levels.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Durwood Zaelke and Thomas Higdon, Compliance Strategies for Enhanced Implementation of the UNCCD, draft paper 16<sup>th</sup> January 2007

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, § 3.1

### **Box 1: Compliance with the Convention of Latin American NAPs**

Statistically 20 Latin American countries have officially submitted their NAPs. This corresponds to 60% of the region's signatory states which is slightly above the world average (roughly 50%). In addition, for some countries, such as the Dominican Republic, NAPs are expected to be submitted within 2007. Other countries, such as Haiti have begun their participatory elaboration processes.

Assessing the formal compliance in detail faces the problem of mainly soft requirements in the convention and the relevant COP and CRIC decision. An overall appreciation of the sample suggests that most of the countries are used to similar planning exercises and to processing large amount of data. The analyses of causes and effects of desertification are done thoroughly, especially with regard to the biological and bio-physical conditions. Although the large majority addresses socio-economic factors some are less precise in this respect and fall short in exploring the linkages between the different factors.

All NAPs suggest structures and mechanisms for effective participation of all stakeholders in "policy planning, decision-making, implementation and review of national action programmes" as required in Article 10 f. In many cases existing institutions, such as environmental councils, are built into these structures, and provisions for decentralized planning and action are made.

The shortcomings can be identified basically in two fields: in providing the necessary strategic and operational clarity as demanded by article 10/2 (roles, resources needed, targets and indicators) and in providing the conceptual clarity to integrate sustainable land-management (SLM) into existing policies and strategies (article 10/2a).

In praxis the lack of strategic focus and operational details translate into serious governance and management problems of the NAPs in almost all the countries. In turn, the lack of clarity with regard to mainstreaming SLM into other policies has proven to be an obstacle to cooperation and coordination for the focal point institutions and other involved actors.

## 2. State of NAP elaboration in Africa, Asia and Latin America

Before further discussing strengths and weaknesses of NAP it may be worthwhile clarifying the quantitative aspects of NAP elaboration.

**Table 1: Evolution of NAP validation 1994 to 2006**

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
<b>Africa</b>	1	0	0	0	6	5	6	5	6	1	1	4	5	<b>40</b>
<b>Asia</b>	0	0	2	1	0	2	3	2	5	3	5	3	1	<b>27</b>
<b>Latin America</b>	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	3	0	3	5	3	2	<b>21</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>88</b>

**Table 2: Overall situation of NAPs at the end of 2006:<sup>3</sup>**

	Number of affected countries	NAPs validated and officially submitted	NAPs elaborated and validation under way	Review of first NAP planned or on its way	Validated NAPs as % of affected countries
<b>Africa</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Asia</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Latin America</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>63</b>

The tables show that there are 125 NAPs worldwide which have been elaborated between 1994 and 2006 and which required a certain amount of effort, inputs and political determination before coming into being. It underlines furthermore, that whatever the conclusion of the IIWG concerning the future role of NAPs and their guidance is, UNCCD will have to put up with quite some existing documents which have been responding to another set of rules. IIWG will have to pronounce itself on how to deal with the difference between "old" and "new" NAPs in order to avoid, that the countries disposing of "old" NAPs feel disadvantaged or even punished although they had been the quicker runners in terms of compliance with the obligation to elaborate NAPs in the first place.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unccd.int/actionprogrammes/menu.php> and <http://www.worldbank.org>; additional information was received from the secretariat of the convention in Bonn (→ Annexes 2 and 3); NAPs of affected countries in Europe are not considered in the table.

### 3. Rules and reality: patterns of the first generation NAPs <sup>4</sup>

#### 3.1 Legitimacy

Legitimacy has a formal aspect in the sense that a minimum of official recognition mostly by government agencies is required to make a NAP deserve its name. Compliance with this obligation leaves however considerable space for manoeuvre. According to the source, out of which legitimacy is obtained, NAPs can be differentiated according to four categories. It is obvious, that the intention on how to use the NAP after validation has some repercussions on how formal legitimacy for it is sought.

(1) NAPs as mere technical government documents receive their official recognition usually by a simple act of administrative nature like a circular note between ministries or similar forms. The NAP document is meant as a paper of interest above all for government agencies and to be presented to the UNCCD secretariat. E.g. most of the Central Asian NAPs fall into this category but also a few species from North Africa.

(2) There are other NAPs for the establishment of which broader administrative support is being sought and which as a consequence are being channelled through the government machinery as documents containing binding obligations for several ministries and agencies. NAPs of this nature usually go through the respective cabinet office, the office of the president or likewise in order to underscore its multisectoral character. The result is predominantly a document with more or less precise indications of what other segments of the public administration should do. <sup>5</sup>

(3) NAPs for which the adherence of non-governmental agencies, local authorities and target group organisations is deemed necessary. These NAP elaborations are usually organized through processes running outside the formal parliamentary structures. Quite often the processes are set-up specifically for the purpose of NAP elaboration. The validation of the NAP at the end of the process is then likewise a non-formal exercise giving the resulting document the role of an orientation. The document has a status clearly below the importance of a law or even a rule. <sup>6</sup>

(4) Yet other NAPs are sent all the way through existing parliamentary channels thus relying on checks and balances as provided for in the respective constitution. Through this procedure, the final NAP document acquires an importance close to a law or a similar institute of the respective juridical system and usually requires a formal act of decision making by parliament. For the time being, it is above all Latin American countries which have chosen this way of assuring legitimacy for their NAPs.

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<sup>4</sup> References to examples in this chapter are bound to be based on interpretable observations rather than on hard data. Applying given criteria to be able to judge on NAP quality faces some problems of methodological nature.

- NAPs tend to have come a long way. The span of time between the ratification of the convention, data analysis, planning, validation and implementation of NAPs covers easily ten years. That implies that actors have changed during the process and with them intentions, orientations and methods. It means also that development priorities of the countries concerned as well as the international development setting may have undergone changes which will have had repercussions on NAP processes. In rare cases, preparing the NAP was time-consuming to the extent that the document was outdated the moment it was presented for approval.
- Do we look at the NAP document or at NAP processes? Do we look at what was intended or at what has been achieved?
- Judging NAP quality by goal achievement will regularly meet a problem of accountability, i.e. which effect owes its existence to the NAP? The “with / without” condition of analysis is hard to comply with in the present case.

Examples should therefore be taken as an illustration of how countries have responded in reality to the conceptual challenges. They are not meant to categorize NAP into “good” and “bad”. Given the available data the statements refer each time to African and to Latin American countries. Furthermore, the respective country sample does not correspond to any requirement of statistical representativity. Countries in the African sample are Morocco, Tunisia, Namibia, Burkina Faso, Mali, South Africa, Ethiopia and Senegal; countries in the Latin America sample are Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Brazil, Peru, Honduras, Nicaragua and Cuba.

<sup>5</sup> Case of Tunisia

<sup>6</sup> Case of Morocco

It needs to be underlined that reality has produced a variety of mixtures between the four types of assuring formal legitimacy. There are quite a few cases where the process was aiming initially the category three type of procedure but was later topped by a formal act involving parliamentary mechanisms (Mali) or where the process was intended to be basically of administrative nature but ended up in an open political debate.<sup>7</sup>

## **Box 2: Legitimacy in NAPs from Latin America and Africa**

Most of Latin America's NAPs fit into the second category. NAP elaboration processes fell into the fertile period of democratic innovation of the 90ies when new forms of political participation and co-management of programs and projects were explored. In most of the cases ministerial resolutions created the National Coordination Bodies and mandated the focal point institutions to coordinate stakeholder consultations. These consultations included expert consultations, interministerial dialogue as well as participatory planning exercises with decentralized powers and NGO representations. In a few countries parliamentarians were actively involved in discussing the NAPs. The final documents were validated through approvals by existing constitutional Councils such as the Environmental Council CONAMA in Brazil, or governmental resolutions. Some countries have later adapted their NAPs in order to serve as legal bills for parliament.

The key problem with regard to legitimacy of NAPs in the region is probably not of formal nature but rather lies in the lack of commitment by certain key stakeholders which is again due to the limited convening power of the focal point institutions. Although considerable progress was achieved with regard to political visibility and even government ownership the NAP processes have failed to involve representatives of the driving forces of land degradation, namely the commercial agricultural, mining and other energy-intensive sectors but also public institutions with influence either on infrastructure or on directly productive investments in the affected areas. The non-adherence of these actors undermines the credibility of the NAP process in general and takes motivation off the NGO sector and other potentially committed actors.

In Mali the NAP elaboration was done in one exercise with the elaboration of the National Environmental Action Plan. The first year of the process concentrated on broad-based information campaigns. This was followed by local and regional workshops for which groups of coordinators had been formed and the members specifically trained for the job. The results were then merged into a national document containing an overall diagnosis, a policy document for the national level and actions programmes for each of the regions. Given the economic situation of the country, the formulation of priority projects and programmes to be presented to international donors received fairly high attention.

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<sup>7</sup> Cases of Brazil and Honduras; Zaelke and Higdon (Durwood Zaelke and Thomas Higdon, Compliance Strategies for Enhanced Implementation of the UNCCD, draft paper 16<sup>th</sup> January 2007, § 4.1) are certainly right when saying that the most radical solution to legitimacy is through legalization i.e. by increasing the formal weight of NAPs; while the authors are making this point to improve guidance by UNCCD institutions vis-à-vis NAPs, the same token would work in the sense that it gives civil society the right to plead for NAP implementation vis-à-vis the state.

## 3.2 Participation

In the present context the term “participation” is not dealt with as a constitutive element of a democratic culture, but rather from the view-point of social engineering following the bold question of what type of process is likely to produce which kind of outcome.

**What for?** Basically participation in NAP elaboration is undertaken for two reasons: First of all participation can provide a kind of non-formal legitimacy or support whereby people are given the chance to influence and to shape a document which is likely to have consequences for them after having been adopted. There is obviously overlap between this scope for participation and the model (3) of legitimizing a NAP. The logic is: make those who are concerned by a decision take part in its preparation. A second reason for organizing participation lies in the simple fact, that decisions have to be based on accurate information. One way of assuring that authentic information is being fed into the process is by inviting people (or institutions) to contribute during stock-taking, during the analysis of problems and solutions and / or during the identification of priorities for future action.

**With whom?** The term “participation” is applied somewhat invariably to different cases regarding the question, who is invited to participate. NAP elaborators – mostly members of one government department - ought to engage in horizontal coordination with other ministries and agencies on both grounds, for obtaining information and for mobilizing support for the final document. The vertical sense of the term aims at involving civil society and lower levels of administration or local authorities into the process of NAP elaboration.

**How?** The contents of participatory processes can be extremely different. The term is frequently used even for cases, where administrations announce publicly what they are planning to do in the future. The procedure receives the label “participatory”, because it is practised by bureaucracies who under normal conditions do not explain what they are doing and why they are doing it to those concerned by their activities. Participation in this context becomes a mere one-way exercise aiming at informing others about plans, intentions and activities. The extreme opposite case is the organisation of an open discussion process during which virtually everything – including the agenda of the meeting - is to be agreed upon by all participants. The least that can be said to characterize such a process is that it is clearly providing for a two-ways (more ways) communication.

Sometimes participatory features are employed differently during NAP elaboration as compared to NAP implementation.<sup>8</sup> Although one is related to the other, the difference is of relevance since a country can choose a fairly technical planning approach for the NAP elaboration and be strongly committed to participation of people in designing and executing local interventions during implementation.

Needless to say that there are millions of different forms of participation within this dichotomy; needless also to underline, that there is an extremely rich literature from various academic disciplines about what kind of participation is the most appropriate one for different types of problems.

This three-dimensional model of participation indicates the width of variation which any NAP process has at its disposal to choose its own procedure. Reality shows indeed how differently countries have responded to the postulate of engaging a participatory approach in drawing up their NAPs.

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. Richard Pearce, Decentralisation and Sustainable Resources Management in West Africa: A Line of Action for Revisiting National Action Programmes. In Pierre Marc Johnson et. al. Governing Global Desertification, Aldershot, 2006

Of course, other rather pragmatic orientations are equally important in choosing the kind of participation desired:

- Time: Engaging a process of broad popular participation requires sufficient time to bring it to a proper end without creating frustration on the side of those who are invited to participate. Inviting people to defend their cases without being able to make them participate in the final shaping of activities may not be acceptable and thus spoil the situation for any second-time occasion.
- Costs: Costs are likely to increase with the length of time deemed necessary for any kind of consultation or participation.
- Organizational culture and / or political tradition: Certain types of participation are easily ruled out from the beginning, because they are in contradiction with the political tradition of the country and / or the organizational culture of the agency which has the lead in NAP elaboration.
- Clearness of priorities: In case NAP priorities are clear even before engaging the process of elaboration, there might be little reason for organizing participatory processes through which an orientation about priorities is being sought.
- Awareness-raising: In case of low levels of awareness vis-à-vis Desertification and related problems, a broad consultation – horizontally and vertically – might be chosen as a means to create awareness and not to have support for decisions on priorities which might already be clear from the beginning.
- Resources: A poor state may rather stay away from inviting rural people to express their priorities because of fear to create expectations or even demands which the state is not able to satisfy afterwards.

### **Box 3: Participation in Latin American NAPs**

On the continuum between directive state interventions and full both-way participation Latin American countries are located fairly on the participation side. This holds for the vertical as well as for the horizontal sense of the term. It is partly due to the coincidence of maturing democratic innovations in the nineties and the beginning of CCD implementation which in itself features a participatory approach more than any other MEA.

Another important reason to engage in relatively wide participatory exercises involving many stakeholders was the need to create awareness on causes and effects of desertification, on UNCCD as international regime among policy makers and within the society in general.

This being said, one should however not imagine that NAPs were elaborated in classical bottom up processes, in which demand is analyzed in the villages and then aggregated over the administrative levels to indicate eventually total demand at the national level. The methodologies chosen were rather combinations of stakeholder consultations at different levels with representatives of grassroots organizations, social movements or NGOs, depending on the degree of civil society organization. The situation analysis through consultations at decentralized levels, involving provincial and municipal authorities, were used as inputs for expert consultations at the national level. Policy recommendations of experts were then again used as inputs for the different decentralized fora. Where full participatory appraisals were carried out at grassroots level, these were strategically done in desertification hot spots and the conclusions were generalized as far as possible.

Especially for Brazil and Argentina the organized civil society has been decisive for designing the NAP elaboration methodology and for validating the results. Although not always free of conflicts, the NGO representatives mobilized important segments of society in their respective technical or regional constituencies. They are part of the national coordinating bodies and efficiently advocate their interests and political visions. In Argentina the NGOs were even given the responsibility to carry out a comprehensive NAP evaluation. In Chile it was only after NAP completion that the importance of civil society and particularly organizations of ethnic minorities was fully recognized. In other countries, civil society involvement depended on fewer organizations and individuals. RIOD as a national network is strong mainly in Argentina and Chile. In Brazil there is a huge network called ASA, also associated to RIOD. The regional exchange of the RIOD network as well as regional or international initiatives are very limited.

Given the diversity of situations and changing framework conditions for participation even within one country during the last decade, it is difficult to make a final judgment on the quality of these participative processes. The general impression is that civil society involvement is quite strong if not unique for MEA-processes. On the other side participation in the NAP processes are by no means comparable to the intensity of civil society participation and the use of new decision making mechanisms one can observe in the context of land reform, minority rights or other political struggles in the respective countries. Although the CCD is relevant to many of these burning issues strong stakeholder groups do not seem to believe in the potential of the NAP-Instrument to solve them. Neither do large social movements commit themselves to the NAP Process, nor does the private sector or governmental institutions with more bargaining power than the focal point institution. In consequence, NAP-Processes tend to stay at the margin of the real problems. They debate natural resource management, without touching on the commercial agriculture, land reform and other politically sensitive issues. They generate compensatory projects rather than policies negotiated between stakeholders.

### 3.3 Inclusiveness, openness for other strategies

#### Box 4: Openness for other strategies in Latin American NAPs

The majority of Latin American NAPs clearly chose an inclusive approach in order to mainstream desertification combat into sectoral and cross-sectoral policies. From our sample, only Cuba, Chile and Honduras combine this approach with a number of strategic sectoral programs with defined results, activities and indicators.

NAPs have also tended to be rather open to other strategic frameworks or have tried to become strategic frameworks themselves. In the latter case (e.g. Argentina) it was the process of elaboration which mattered and not so much the NAP as its outcome. Generally the more recent NAPs have been more open to embrace other processes or to integrate themselves into them.

The specific objectives of most NAPs focus on coordinating efforts and creating favorable framework conditions for combating desertification. The responsibility for actual interventions, including the design and implementation of concrete measures, is perceived as being the job of sectoral actors. Only Peru and Nicaragua have opted for rather sectoral approaches.

The priorities of mainstreaming in Latin American NAPs are given in **annexe 5**.

The intention to organize the NAP elaboration as a transsectoral planning process is notable in almost all cases within the sample. Rarely however did this intention translate into broad recognition of the NAP as a reference by other strategies after completing the process.

It becomes obvious therefore, that participation of other sectoral ministries pays off later through the recognition of the NAP document by the same ministries. In other words, openness has had to be an intentional feature right from the beginning in order to ease multisectoral alignment during NAP implementation. In the majority of cases however, the NAP did not develop the desired effect of being a reference for other strategic processes – be they sectoral of nature (like national forestry development plans) or multisectoral (like PRSPs, disaster management plans or others) after completion of the process. Sometimes NAPs are being mentioned in other plans, but no alignment of actions or criteria takes place. Or else, the need to coordinate with other strategies is clearly spelled out but does not translate into the definition of practical relationships.

The poor recognition of NAPs within the own country is partly due to the fact that in most cases it did not succeed to obtain the allocation of funds proper for NAP implementation. This hampers obviously any endeavor of attracting allies from other sectors or other planning contexts to set-up partnerships or other forms of coordinated activity, which could then lead to a mutual recognition of priorities at a later stage.

Other reasons for poor recognition relate to the lack of coherence of the suggested strategies as well as the lack of clarity with regard to several definitions and concepts. What is meant by combating desertification – is it the sustainable development of drylands as such or just a contribution to it? What is exactly the value added sought by the NAP? To make clear statements on this question, one would need a thorough analysis of existing policies and the incentives for natural resource management resulting from existing policy instruments which often is not provided. Last, as already mentioned, the lack of operational details also hampered the task of mainstreaming: how, in what timeframe, with what instruments and division of roles and responsibilities the mainstreaming should be pursued. Related to this, none of the NAPs specify the incentives and services to be provided by the focal point institution to those actors willing to adapt their programs and policies. Nor are measures defined to control or even enforce the desired integration process. None of the NAPs suggest a system of standards or certification for policy adaptation.

For the sake of fairness it has to be underscored that most of the processes are still fairly young of age so that the “owners” of NAPs might yield better results when giving them a bit more time to get organized with their fellow-planners.

Again, the lightest form of horizontal coordination, i.e. mutual information and the provision of transparency, has become a standard feature in Latin American NAPs. The strongest form, i.e. the mutual recognition of priorities and objectives and the agreement on shared responsibilities to achieve them, is yet to be accomplished.

The foundation for later mainstreaming of NAPs into other sectoral or cross-sectoral strategies is mostly laid already in the NAP. That again gives opportunity to reflect on some kind of typical situations. Complying with the convention normally requires NAPs to deal with two types of problems. One is desertification in the sense of a natural resource (soil) which is under threat. The other one is poverty and in itself a fairly complex socio-economic problem.

Nevertheless the countries parties to the convention have enjoyed considerable freedom in defining the entry point for NAP elaboration in accordance to their own situation and priorities on the political agenda. Again, the (fiction of) two extremely opposite cases may be useful to indicate the range of choice any NAP could have in defining its own and most appropriate way of addressing natural resource management and poverty through one strategy.

- **Case one: extreme exclusiveness:**

The problem of desertification could potentially be defined as consisting predominantly of deforestation taking place on state land (because forests are by definition state property). The poverty problem comes in by analyzing the role of local villagers living close to the forests and making legal or illegal use of it. However, as the case may be, the entire area concerned by the problems described above amounts to only 10% of the national territory. A NAP limiting itself to addressing these problems is likely to be very similar to a national forestry plan, i.e. a predominantly sectoral strategy. In such a case the complexity of the planning process will tend to be limited as will be the requirements for involving other agencies, ministries and / or the local population, local government structures etc. The convenience of this kind of NAPs lies obviously in the fact, that they are fairly easy to implement and very accessible to be monitored. In other words, countries parties to the convention are free to determine, what kind of specific problem they are going to address through their NAP and how they are going to address it. Compliance with NAP rules as laid down in the Convention does not exclude the emergence of NAPs which – by their very nature – do not correspond to the spirit of the convention and which end up declaring a purely sectoral strategy the National Action Programme to Combat Desertification.

- **Case two: extreme inclusiveness:**

The extreme opposite case would be a NAP which analyses in detail the mutual dependency between poverty and natural resources management and which looks for other strategies or programmes addressing the two topics or both of them. Such a NAP might end up by saying, that potentially all aspects are covered already by existing strategies and that the NAP can therefore restrict itself to providing horizontal and vertical clearance between actors which are already busy working on the problems at field level or elsewhere. This type of NAP tends to be of virtual character. It will have low visibility at all administrative and political levels and too little convening power to exercise the predominant role to which it has restricted itself, i.e. providing coordination and clearance between other actors. By the same token a NAP of this kind will have difficulties to mobilize financial resources and might even get stuck when trying to assure its proper running costs. (→ **“And if there was no NAP” in chapter 4**).

It appears that defining the desired cruising-level of a NAP between exclusiveness and inclusiveness is in itself a game with numerous variables, the most important of which seem to be

- Coherence
- Visibility
- Convening power
- Capacity to mobilize and to absorb financial resources
- Proven and accountable success

### Box 5: Sectoral inclusiveness in the hierarchy of sustainability

Sustainable Development	Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs <sup>9</sup>
Sustainable Resources Management	Includes all resources
Sustainable Land Management	<p>The aim of SLM is the integration of socio-economic principles with environmental concerns in order to maintain simultaneously</p> <p><b>Productivity:</b> maintain or enhance production/services</p> <p><b>Security:</b> reduce the level of production risk</p> <p><b>Protection:</b> protect the potential of natural resources and prevent degradation of soil and water quality</p> <p><b>Viability:</b> be economically viable</p> <p><b>Acceptability:</b> be socially acceptable</p> <p>The concept goes beyond sustainable agriculture as it includes all land resources regardless whether they serve for agriculture or other purposes</p>
Sustainable Agriculture	The concept of SA goes beyond sustainable soil management as it includes maintenance of all factors relating to agriculture
Sustainable Soil Management	Relates to maintaining or enhancing soil productivity and services

Sector wise the UNCCD clearly places desertification control and drought management at the level of „sustainable land management“in drylands and thus in the middle between the extremes “exclusiveness” and” inclusiveness”. An exact definition of drylands is provided in the preamble of the convention.

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<sup>9</sup> Brundtland Report 1987, p.57

### 3.4 Attractiveness for investment

The capacity to attract investment or to mobilize financial resources is frequently taken as a would-be independent indicator to measure the effectiveness and the quality of a NAP. While it does have some bearings on how successfully NAP implementation is managed, some more consideration has to be employed before relying on clear figures to label a given NAP as being successful or not.

#### **Box 6: Investment in NAPs in Africa and Latin America**

In most of the analyzed countries of Latin America domestic investment are by far larger than those financed by international funds. In order to attract public investments the first condition is to establish the NAPs as budget line in the national budget framework. As most of the NAPs do not give specific information about its implementation costs, this has proven to be difficult. Only three of the eight countries studied for the present paper have had their NAP financed by a specific budget line. However, even in these cases the attributed funds are usually very limited or fail to be disbursed. Appropriate spending mechanisms are mostly not in place. Almost all investments related to natural resource management and conservation is still channelled through separate large-scale sectoral projects with little influence of the NAP actors.

The sectors in which mainstreaming efforts lead to the explicit integration of SLM including specific resource allocations are in the sector of small scale agriculture (most countries), watershed management (Peru), appropriate hydrological infra-structure (Brazil, Chile), social programmes (Argentina with revolving funds) as well as education and research (Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Cuba).

In many cases larger amounts of national co-financing are dedicated to support the formulation of full-size GEF projects. Few data is however available on how much funding and what resources are finally at hand to carry out implementation. Although proposed in a number of NAPs, *National Funds for Desertification and Drought* have not yet been established, and other environmental funds (protected areas, forestry, etc.) are only accessible to a limited degree for financing NAP activities.

Donors have shown little interest in supporting the NAPs beyond their elaboration and beyond providing selected support for initial pilot activities. Again, single and sectoral NAP-related programmes receive far greater donor attention and keep capturing most available funding. Although nearly all NAPs promote regular donor forums, they are either not implemented or achieve little results. Most international funding for the CCD is still channelled through GEF projects, which also receives more attention as potential financing source.

In Northern Africa, based on its NAP and following discussions among government departments over its implementation Tunisia introduced a special budget line into its 10 national five-years-plan for social and economic development. Morocco had the same ambition but failed to succeed. However, having a special budget line in the five-year plan turned out to be just a necessary condition which by itself is not sufficient to generate or to attract investment. The budget-line is a mere reference which has to be complemented by concrete programming of (departmental) financial resources in order to translate into investment. In Tunisia it turned out to be easier, so introduce NAP conformity into regional investment planning rather than having regionalized NAPs adopted by the respective region.

Experiences at field level have provided evidence that there is hardly any project, programme or activity targeting directly and exclusively sustainable land management.<sup>10</sup> As a logical consequence, there

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Reinhard Bodemeyer, Economic and Political Settings for Natural Resources Management – Core Conditions in West Africa, Maghreb and Central Asia, Paper presented during the Conference «Les coûts de l'inaction et les opportunités d'investissement dans les zones arides, semi arides et sub humides seches », Rome: FAO 6<sup>th</sup> December 2006.

might be much more money which is spent on sustainable land-management as is accounted for in statistical data as investment labelled for this purpose. Equally, investment labelled for sustainable land management may in fact create other direct benefits and have only inter alia effects for sustainable land-management too.

As far as quality is concerned, the Convention is quite demanding by its insistence on the double-edged problem of natural resources management and poverty and by its postulates in terms of legitimacy, participation and inclusiveness. A large programme on dune-stabilization for instance may fit perfectly the concerns of natural resources management and still not have any measurable effects on reducing poverty. It may as well have effects for both problems and still run counter the Convention's vision, because the programme is planned, implemented and evaluated on a purely technocratic basis and lacking sustainability.

It results that a minimum of quality check ought to be carried out before judging the NAP quality along the lines of financial resources which it had been capable to mobilize for implementation.

Another aspect of attractiveness of NAP lies in its ability to take on board neighbouring initiatives and strategies. This is a point quite apart from what has been said under "inclusiveness" aiming rather at the strategic level and the level of objectives and policy statements. In this context we mean that NAPs can identify concrete points where NAP interest meets the interest of others and invites for common understanding of situations and for common planning at activity level.

The emergence of National Adaptation Strategies (NAPA) under UNFCCC is becoming increasingly interesting in this respect. The process is focussing for the time being on Least Developed Countries receiving support from the Global Environmental Facility for the elaboration of NAPA. A few of them are about to be finalized. When it comes to field-level priorities, activities are being identified which correspond by their scope and process to UNCCD criteria as well (→ **Annexe 4**).<sup>11</sup>

Options and requirements for mobilizing resources for NAP implementation varies obviously with the level of development of the respective country. The international community tends to oblige countries with access to international financial markets to tackle poverty reduction by redirecting internal budgetary resources, while poorer countries can usually count on ODA to support poverty reduction strategies. Depending on the respective financial status, mobilization strategies have to build on a skilful mix between internal and external financial resources and the best available combination of loans and grants.

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<sup>11</sup> Balgis Osman-Elasha and Thomas E. Downing, Lessons learned in preparing National Adaptation Programmes of Action in Eastern and Southern Africa, Stockholm: Stockholm Environment Institute 2007

### 3.5 NAP under the New Aid Architecture: chance and challenges

Since the convention was laid open for signature, the international community agreed on two major arrangements shaping the future of development cooperation.

In September 2000 the **Millennium Development Goals** were adopted as a system of both, objectives and indicators to shape and to measure progress on the way to global development around four key objectives and eight goals<sup>12</sup> known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The main goal is to halve world poverty by 2015.

With the **Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Harmonization** developing countries, donors and multilateral organisations agreed in March 2005 to set standards for effective implementation of the MDGs. Commitments from the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness include:

- Developing countries will exercise effective leadership over their development policies, strategies, and coordinate development actions;
- Donor countries will base their overall support on receiving countries' national development strategies, institutions, and procedures;
- Donor countries will work so that their actions are more harmonized, transparent, and collectively effective;
- All countries will manage resources and improve decision-making for results;
- Donor and developing countries pledge that they will be mutually accountable for development results.

This does justice to the call by the UNCCD to improve donor coordination and engage in partnership-based approaches, but it has practical challenges for committing to UNCCD in the framework of NAP planning and implementation.

The Paris Declaration and its preparatory processes have resulted in countries developing their harmonization programs or specific harmonized transactions. They generated a number of memoranda of understanding and other harmonization agreements like sector-wide approaches (SWA) and budget support programmes. The major part of ODA might still be allocated on the basis of bi- or multilateral agreements and the way to alignment might be hard. Nevertheless in LDCs there is a clear shift to move funds from individual projects with one donor to an approach of larger programmes taking several donors on board to finance these programmes along the lines of countries' policies out of one budget or else through a general budget support. Most of these harmonization agreements either refer to the national poverty reduction strategies (in case of budget support) or to sector wide approaches. Except those six African countries, which have already been mentioned, hardly any NAP promoter succeeded in getting NAP issues articulated in PRSPs or in sector wide strategies.<sup>13</sup> Consequently NAP issues remain more or less unrecognized under the new aid architecture and at the same time chances to pledge for project support in sector-like "NAP round tables" are vanishing.

The reasons for this are quite simple. MDGs 2 – 6 relating to health and education depend in the first line on the provision of specific infrastructures and services. They can be translated into sectoral pro-

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<sup>12</sup> The eight MDGs:

1. Halving the proportion of people in the world who suffer from extreme poverty and hunger.
2. Enabling all children to receive primary education.
3. Promoting gender equality and women's involvement in political, economic and social life, particularly in the field of education.
4. Reducing child mortality, by at least two thirds for under-fives.
5. Improving maternal health and reducing by three quarters the ratio of women dying in childbirth.
6. Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other infectious diseases, halting and beginning to reverse their spread.
7. Ensuring environmental sustainability by integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reversing the loss of environmental resources, reducing the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.
8. Developing a global partnership for development.

<sup>13</sup> Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Tanzania

grammes and policies and dealt with by central government institutions in a classical top-down planning and programming approach along the lines of optimization and maximization. Thus, recent literature reports on rather successful SWA and budget support programs in the sectors of health and education.

By contrast MDGs 1 and 7 - which correspond to UNCCD targets - are addressing complex, multi-sectoral issues like rural development, agriculture and sustainable management of natural resources. They require both, policy elaboration at central level as well as awareness creation and adherence to policies among the institutions at subnational level. Planning and implementation is rather a process of learning from what is feasible and acceptable at field level and scaling-up successful and viable examples.

Strategies addressing MDG 1 and 7 compare unfavourably to sector planning and classical investment projects in terms of lower internal rates of return, more time required for implementation, higher insecurity for goal achievement and a higher proportion for capacity building and other non directly productive items in the investment budget.

Up to now only few harmonization agreements or initiatives like the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development address cross-sectoral issues. Few countries like Honduras strive for translating and breaking down NAP issues into sectoral targets for a multitude of sector round tables.

#### **Box 7: Global Donor Platform for Rural Development**

The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development is an initiative of leading development and donor agencies to improve harmonization of procedures and practices in rural development in line with the Paris Declaration and in cooperation with partner-countries. Main objective is to reduce poverty in the rural areas of the developing world through advocacy for the role of rural development and agriculture in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and shared learning in order to enhance the quality and impact of rural development investments. Natural resources and their sustainable use are recognized as one of the drivers of rural development.<sup>14</sup>

What are options and chances?

- One option is to reduce the complexity pretending that the issue of desertification be less complicated than it is in reality or – better less than nothing - by simply reducing the catalogue of activities to technical and political priorities. This often turns out to be reforestation.
- A more ambitious approach could rely on promises to increase ODA as well as on “Greening of PRSPs” and that these efforts will open the door wider for UNCCD concerns. A recent study in Senegal<sup>15</sup> proved that greening the PRSP led to budget allocation for the whole environmental sector that went far beyond the absorptive capacity of the relevant institutions. Challenges in this case would rather be to enhance planning and implementation capacities at national and decentralized level and to update the NAP in a way that it would give guidance for decentralized investment opportunities in sustainable land management.

<sup>14</sup> see: <http://www.donorplatform.org>

<sup>15</sup> Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Protection de la Nature (MEPN), Ministère des Affaires Etrangères Français, GTZ: Potentialités et Actions génératrices de Revenues pour la Réduction de la Pauvreté en Milieu Rural à travers la Mise en Œuvre de la CCD au Sénégal : Eléments pour un plan d'investissement conçu sur la base de l'articulation entre le DSRP et la CCD/PANLCD, Dakar 2005

#### 4. The way ahead

Just to start: the authors would have liked to derive pertinent guidance from past NAPs to figure out how future NAPs should be to make them yield more success in terms of mainstreaming, attracting investment and contributing to sustainable land-management and poverty reduction. Unfortunately we have to conclude that advice based solely on the evaluation of past NAP experiences is not sufficient to improve NAP performance in the future.

- As long as UNCCD is lacking clear benchmarks at the level of goal achievement, it becomes a very sketchy exercise to try and explain success and failure of the Convention just by success and failure of NAPs, their making, their structure and content and their implementation. Is it deserts which vanish or the creation of which are avoided? Is it a higher awareness of local resource-users vis-à-vis the environment and their increased capacity to manage it in a sustainable manner and still survive? Is it the (visible) amount of public funds spent on NAP implementation? Or is it the ability of entire societies to arrive at collectively binding solutions regarding the harmonization between economy and environment
- Checking on the compliance of NAP with what they are expected to be or to do by the text of the convention in the fields of legitimacy, participation, inclusiveness and attractiveness for investment, produced as a result, that each criterion offers a range of possible reactions. NAP quality and external conditions for NAP success are too complex to give them a ranking within a simple two-dimensional model whose extremes are marked with “bad” and “good”.
- There seem to be trade-offs between indicators of success and quality because what is good from one view-point is rather bad from another. Participation is one of those cases: important to create commitment from within the society and good because it is widely appreciated by donors and requested by the convention, it tends at the same time to multiply claims for benefits and spoils and risks therefore dilute a clear strategic vision of NAPs. Also: the more a NAP is inclusive, the more it will lose in visibility and, hence, ability to attract own financial resources.
- A rather trivial conclusion is that political ownership is the core of success. No matter how participative the NAP has been elaborated, no matter how inclusive it is and how much attractiveness for investment it develops, lack of ownership removes any chance for implementation. Or the other way round: as long as the topic occupies a central place within the attention of the respective political elite even a small-time NAP might trigger necessary reforms and enhanced investments.

The following proposals are rather incremental in nature. They could be considered when drawing-up new NAPs or when improving those which exist already.<sup>16</sup> Their common denominator is the assumption that there is some kind of hierarchical mechanism between the convention, member states and NAPs with the latter being the most important instrument to translate the convention’s objectives into practical policies. In other words it is assumed that through improved guidance from the convention and its institutions it will be possible to influence the behaviour of member countries that in turn employ other approaches in the elaboration and the implementation of NAPs.

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<sup>16</sup> As it has been pointed out in chapter 3 the number of NAPs under preparation or bound for reviewing amounts to 55 as opposed to 88 NAP validated and officially submitted. This does make up for a critical mass of NAP which are not yet finalized and for which it could be worthwhile considering changes in methods and procedures.

- **Translating UNCCD objectives into operational national targets and setting priorities**

It has been pointed out that one feature of UNCCD is its complexity at the level of objectives of the convention, a complexity which is conserved over all levels and throughout the entire process of implementation. This is not to advocate a reduction of complexity - as it was described above - by simply redefining desertification as being a problem of one (the forestry) sector and thus accessible to sectoral approaches of maximization and optimization. The proposal does advocate defining problems and solutions by priorities in terms of time. A NAP would then concentrate for an indicated time on the solution of a few and the most urgent problems while recognizing that there are other problems which will be dealt with later on or that are supposed to be tackled by other actors. The same approach could be applied at the level of the convention's objectives likewise. The CST could play a decisive role in defining what kind of technical problems deserve more urgent attention than others and give the respective guidance through COP decisions and respective communications by the secretariat.

- **Change of the project paradigm**

Project lists attached to NAPs have in general failed to attract investments. On the other hand a clear road map or operational plans with steps, stakeholders and tasks on how to achieve defined goals and targets is lacking.

- **Alignment with and complementarity to other planning processes**

It is above all the overlap between NAPs on one side and PRSPs, Sustainable Development Strategies and particularly NAPAs of UNFCCC on the other which strongly suggests merging planning and programming in an attempt to reduce the effort necessary for the elaboration of each of those strategies. It assumes of course that different planning processes are carried out in parallel and appear on the political agenda of a given country at roughly the same point in time. On the other hand, revision could offer the opportunity to do more than one exercise at a time.<sup>17</sup>

- **On-the-ground investment and reform agenda**

Most NAPs contain a reform agenda and spell out the need for enhanced on-the-ground investments. Linking NAP elaboration to other processes of strategic planning could contribute to assign needs and responsibilities beyond the outreach of NAP stakeholders for reform processes necessary to create an enabling environment. As in general more than one strategy depends on the same improved enabling environment this would reduce the political entry price for each of those strategies concerned.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> In six African countries NAPs have been systematically integrated into the respective PRSP; they are now being revised in the course of a regular update of the PRSPs (→ **Annexe 2**)

<sup>18</sup> In Morocco the following frame conditions have been identified as being crucial for NAP implementation: Improved cooperation between state and civil society, deconcentration and devolution of public decision making, more flexible processes of public budgeting and improved cooperation between sectorial state departments. The identical items are equally necessary to facilitate the implementation of the National Strategy for Rural Development (*Agenda 2020*) and the Initiative for Human Development (*Initiative pour le Développement Humaine*), which – in the absence of a Moroccan PRSP – takes up a good deal of typical PRSP features.

- **Focalisation on environmental issues**

One variation of reducing NAP complexity at the level of objectives would be to focalise on environmental issues while making sure that the poverty aspect is taken care of by other strategies and actors. The task would of course not be limited to a mere indication of who is supposed to care about poverty. The respective NAP would have to define precisely what kind of interaction is needed in order to make the division of labour work without the risk of losing important aspects.

When choosing this option, countries may find it convenient to couple NAP elaboration with the work on other strategies for environmentally sustainable development and above all with other multilateral environmental agreements for which they have signed up. This regards above all the other Rio Conventions. Multiple commitments towards different international agreements on environmental issues could suggest having any programmatic work on one or more strategies preceded by an exercise of Strategic Environmental Assessment for which international standards are increasingly available.<sup>19</sup> The result would be a strategic partnership in order to address various international agreements at the same time and through one and the same investment programme.<sup>20</sup>

- **Methods and procedures**

Quite a lot of proposals is at hand which aim at improving the rationality of NAP elaboration and implementation without changing the general setting.<sup>21</sup> Most of them regard clearer guidance by the convention or COP decisions and stiffer ruling through the introduction of benchmarks, indicators for success and failure, more precise rules for reporting and mechanisms to ensure compliance. The latter includes the proposal of building-in civil society institutions as watch-dogs into NAP implementation by giving them a forum at the highest level of the convention where to report on serious deviations of NAP implementation from NAP objectives.<sup>22</sup>

- **Bringing in facilitators**

Another proposal concerns issues which are clearly beyond the current procedures. Processes of NAP elaboration or implementation could be supported by sending in trained facilitators or by involving resource persons with NAP experience from other countries.<sup>23</sup> Their task would be *inter alia* to train e.g. national focal points as facilitators in order to enable them to run the process on their own at a later stage. Such an approach would lay its stress on process quality rather than on the process' results. At the level of NAP reviewing this could take the form of peer-reviews between neighbouring countries or countries where combating desertification has comparable scope and range.

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<sup>19</sup> Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistance Committee: Applying Strategic Environmental Assessment, Paris: OECD 2006

<sup>20</sup> Tunisia has advanced on this road although the joint approach has not yet been taken to implementation levels. République Tunisienne, Ministère de l'Agriculture et des Ressources Hydraulique, Stratégie Nationale d'Adaptation de l'Agriculture Tunisienne et des Ecosystèmes aux Changements Climatiques; Cahier 2 "Sythèse, Tunis 2006.

<sup>21</sup> The National Forests Programme Facility of the FAO gives detailed advice to its constituency on how to improve data compilation and processing in the course of national strategies for sustainable forest development; FAO: Understanding National Forest Programmes – Guidance for Practitioners, Rome: FAO 2006, pp.37

<sup>22</sup> Durwood Zaelke and Thomas Higdon, Compliance Strategies for Enhanced Implementation of the UNCCD, draft paper 16<sup>th</sup> January 2007, § 4.4 "Engaging Non-State Actors"

<sup>23</sup> The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development has been gathering experiences with this type of centrally provided support over the last two years. When exploiting systematically the experiences made by outside facilitators, one could indeed arrive at a sort of standardized international procedure on how to run NAP elaboration, on what errors to evitate and on which good practices to build on. Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, Operational Guidelines for the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development's facilitation service. Bonn: Secretariat of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development 2006 ([www.donorplatform.org](http://www.donorplatform.org)).

- **Concentrating on country ownership**

Country ownership is a feature to which PRSP engineers are attaching a great deal of importance. While it is incontestable that country ownership – which is usually coming along with political support from the highest decision making level – comes in nicely for all kind of development related strategies, there are not much clear recipes on how to trigger or how to improve country ownership. The literature on PRSP offers at least some tools on how to assess country ownership, which seem to apply for typical NAP situations as well. The tools rely on basically six factors which are examined in order to establish good practices:

- Leadership within and participation across the executive
- Role and impact of national institutions
- Government-stakeholder dialogue
- Role and impact of internal partners
- Role and impact of external partners
- Political and economic shocks <sup>24</sup>

- **And if there was no NAP?**

As it has been pointed out in chapter 1, there is basically no binding obligation for member states to draw-up NAPs and have them presented for official recognition by the Convention's institutions. A country may therefore find that it has strategies, laws and regulations in sufficient number and precision so that adding another National Programme to the collection provides only limited added value for the country's tools for policy guidance. Or else, a country feeling it has to up-date an already existing NAP may not find it useful anymore, because the programme landscape is sufficiently populated and decides to by-pass a NAP and to introduce the necessary programmatic elements for UNCCD into other already existing strategies.

The Convention covers such a procedure by its article 5c by saying: (*...affected country Parties undertake to) establish strategies and priorities, within the framework of sustainable development plans and/or policies, to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought.* The obligation to elaborate NAPs is restricted by the Convention to those cases, where “*appropriate relevant ... legislation*” does not exist (art. 5e) and concedes even in those cases to pass through “*new laws*” or “*long-term policies*” as an alternative to drawing-up NAPs.

The challenge for such a procedure is obviously to create effects similar to what has been said before about NAPs but rather through processes governed by other objectives and not through a separately documented NAP elaboration. As long as the process succeeds to “*address the underlying causes of desertification and pay special attention to the socio-economic factors contributing to desertification processes*” (art. 5c) there is no reason to assume a case of non-compliance with the Convention.

Recent initiatives addressing improved policy frameworks and enhanced investments for SLM (e.g. Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management or TerrAfrica) will be facing the question on how to deal with obviously outdated or technically weak NAPs in their respective constituency: ignore them or invest energy in updating them? This issue should be dealt with in a pragmatic way.

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<sup>24</sup> World Bank: Getting Serious About Meeting the Millenium Development Goals. A Comprehensive Development Framework Progress Report, Washington DC: World Bank 2003, pp.26

## **5. Requirements in terms of capacity building**

Proposals to review and revise NAP guidance contained in the present report and in particular in the last section, have been quite numerous and varied. Since proposals belong sometimes to different scenarios, there tends to be even conflict among them. Therefore it does not seem very useful to trace in detail the consequences in terms of capacity building for each proposal and for various levels at this juncture. It is suggested to postpone the exercise to a later stage when there seems to be consensus to a certain degree about which road to take to deal with NAPs in future.

## Annexe 1: Criteria for formal compliance

By signing the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) the member parties agree to fulfil the obligations set by the convention. The requirements formulated in the convention vary a lot in their obligation to comply and therefore open options for the member parties to accomplish their duties.

In the present context, it is the obligation to establish National Action Programmes (NAPs) as stated in UNCCD Article 5 (e) which is of particular importance:<sup>25</sup>

*Obligations of affected country Parties*

*In addition to their obligations pursuant to article 4, affected country Parties undertake to:*

[...]

- (e) ...provide an enabling environment by strengthening, as appropriate, relevant existing legislation and, where they do not exist, enacting new laws and establishing long-term policies and action programmes.*

Although the convention leaves numerous alternatives to react to the challenges of desertification through legislation or otherwise, member parties considered elaboration and submission of new NAPs specifically related to UNCCD implementation as obligatory.

Purposes of the NAPs are, as defined in article 10,

- to identify the factors contributing to desertification and practical measures necessary to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought*
- specify the respective roles of government, local communities and land users and the resources available and needed*

In articles 9 and 10 requirements related to the elaboration process and content of NAPs are defined with different priorities. The preparation, the publication and the implementation of NAPs as well as building on existing relevant plans and programmes do not result as being obligatory in the sense of article 5 (e).

In contrast it is expected that NAP elaboration shall

- proceed and be updated through a continuing participatory process on the basis of lessons from field action, as well as the results of research and*
- be closely interlinked with other efforts to formulate national policies for sustainable development.*

Further obligations of the NAPs are to

- a) incorporate long-term strategies to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought, emphasize implementation and be integrated with national policies for sustainable development*
- b) allow for modifications to be made in response to changing circumstances and be sufficiently flexible at the local level to cope with different socio-economic, biological and geo-physical conditions*
- c) give particular attention to the implementation of preventive measures for lands that are not yet degraded or which are only slightly degraded*
- d) enhance national climatological, meteorological and hydrological capabilities and the means to provide for drought early warning*
- e) promote policies and strengthen institutional frameworks which develop cooperation and coordination, in a spirit of partnership, between the donor community, governments at all levels, local populations and community groups, and facilitate access by local populations to appropriate information and technology*

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<sup>25</sup> Secretariat of the UNCCD, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries experiencing serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, Text with Annexes, Bonn/Geneva 2003

- f) *provide for effective participation at the local, national and regional levels of non- governmental organizations and local populations, both women and men, particularly resource users, including farmers and pastoralists and their representative organizations, in policy planning, decision-making, and implementation and review of national action programmes*
- g) *require regular review of, and progress reports on, their implementation.*

Supplementary recommendations of measures and fields of activities to be included in NAP elaboration are made in article 10 on a discretionary basis.

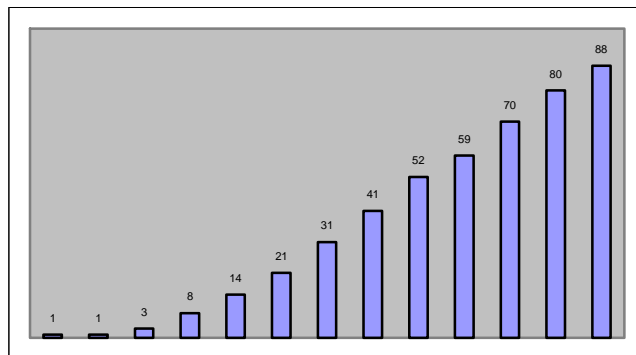
Further orientations of the same character are contained in the regional annexes of the convention. They are formulated in respect of particular regional conditions and their implementation depends mostly on local appropriateness. Annexe III emphasizes article 10 regarding the participation of civil society in the elaboration process of the NAPs as well as regarding the integration with national policies. This underlines the importance of participation in the NAP process. Furthermore Annex I mentions the strengthening of local authorities and decentralized governmental structures as well as mobilization of non-governmental organizations as measures expected to be included especially in African NAPs.

Additional sources of formal rules governing the NAP process are decisions taken at the occasions of COPs and CRICs. These decisions show a chronology of efforts to push for the inclusion of important issues into the NAP process. Decisions provide concrete measures to be considered during NAP preparation as they provide strategic visions for the orientation of NAPs.

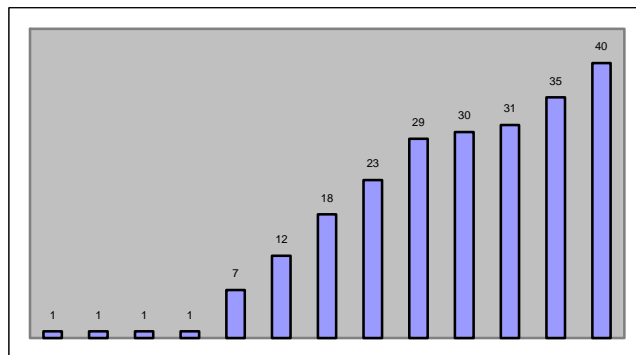
In this way and during the course of the years, COP and CRIC decisions stressed the need for participation and research cooperation, later for mainstreaming efforts and integration into strategic frameworks and finally the role of NAPs as instruments of resource mobilisation.

## Annexe 2: Evolution of NAP validation 1994 to 2006

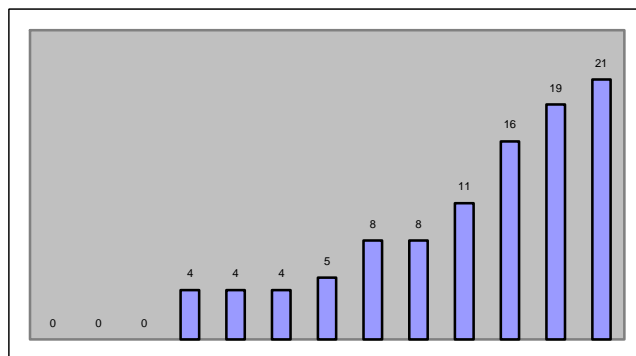
### All continents



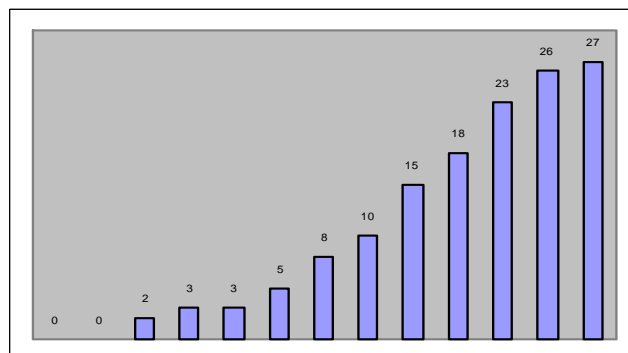
### Africa



### Latin America



### Asia



### Annexe 3: NAP status of the countries parties to the convention

The contents of the table are based on information from: <http://www.unccd.int> 01/2007; <http://www.worldbank.org> 01/2007; UNCCD Secretariat Bonn

	UNCCD party countries (affected developing countries)	NAPs validated	Validation under way	SRAPs/RAPs	Review of NAP planned
<b>Africa</b>	Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malati, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania (United Republic of ), Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	Algeria (2003), Benin (1999), Botswana (2006), Burkina Faso (1999), Burundi (2005), Cameroon (2006), Cape Verde (1998), Chad (2000), Congo (2006), Djibouti (2001), Egypt (2005), Equatorial Guinea (2005), Eritrea (2002), Ethiopia (1998), Gambia (2000), Ghana (2002), Guinea (2006), Guinea-Bissau (2006), Kenya (2002), Lesotho (1999), Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (2005), Madagascar (2001), Malawi (2001), Mali (1998), Mauritania (2002), Morocco (2001), Mozambique (2002), Namibia (1994), Niger (2000), Nigeria (2000), Senegal (1998), South Africa (2004), Sudan (2000), Swaziland (2000), Tanzania (1999), Togo (2001), Tunisia (1998), Uganda (1999), Zambia (2002), Zimbabwe (1998)	Angola, Central African Republic, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritius, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone	<p>SRAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Ouest (CEDEAO) et Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS) (2000)</li> <li>• Southern African Development Community (SADC) (2000)</li> <li>• Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA) (2000)</li> <li>• Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) (2001)</li> </ul> <p>RAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• currently under work</li> </ul>	In the following countries, the NAPs are included in the PRSPs and will be reviewed together: Burkina Faso (2004), Ghana (2005), Mali (2002), Niger (2002), Senegal (2005), Tanzania (2005)

	<b>UNCCD party countries (affected developing countries)</b>	<b>NAPs validated</b>	<b>Validation under way</b>	<b>SRAPs/RAPs</b>	<b>Review of NAP planned</b>
<b>Asia</b>	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Niue, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor Leste, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen	China (1996), India (2001), Indonesia (2002), Iran (2004), Kazakhstan (2005), Kyrgyzstan (2000), Laos (1999), Lebanon (2003), Mongolia (1996), Myanmar (2004), Nepal (2002), Niue (2004), Pakistan (2000), Palau (2005), Philippines (2004), Saudi Arabia (2005), Sri Lanka (2002), Syria (2002), Tajikistan (2001), Thailand (2004), Turkmenistan (1997), Tuvalu (2006), United Arab Emirates (2003), Uzbekistan (1999), Vietnam (2002), Yemen (2000)	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Vanuatu	<p>SRAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRAP for the Central Asian countries (2003)</li> <li>• SRAP for North-East Asia under work</li> </ul> <p>RAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 TPN, last was launched in 2004</li> </ul>	China Several Central Asian countries are planning on it but no official submission

	<b>UNCCD party countries (affected developing countries)</b>	<b>NAPs validated</b>	<b>Validation under way</b>	<b>SRAPs/RAPs</b>	<b>Review of NAP planned</b>
<b>Latin America and the Caribbeans</b>	Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Domenica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela	Argentina (1997), Bahamas (2006), Bolivia (1997), Brazil (2004), Chile (1997), Colombia (2005), Costa Rica (2004), Cuba (2000), Dominican Republic (2004), Ecuador (2003), El Salvador (2003), Grenada (2006), Guatemala (2001), Honduras (2005), Mexico (1997), Nicaragua (2001), Panama (2005), Paraguay (2003), Peru (2001), Venezuela (2004)	Antigua and Barbada, Barbados, Belice, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago	<p>SRAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRAP for the sustainable development of the Gran Chaco Americano (1999)</li> <li>• SRAP for the sustainable development of the Puna Americana (2002)</li> </ul> <p>Under way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRAP in Meso-america</li> <li>• SRAP in the Caribbean</li> <li>• SRAP Hispaniola</li> </ul> <p>RAP</p> <p>6 TPN, last update: IX LAC Regional Meeting BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA, June 2003</p>	Chile, Mexico Soon expected for Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Honduras
<b>Europe</b>	Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Hungary, Latria, Lithuania, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine	Armenia (2002), Georgia (2003), Greece (2001), Italy (2000), Portugal (1999), Republic of Moldova (2000), Romania (2000), Turkey (2004)	Albania, Azerbaidjan, Belarus, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croacia, Cyprus, Malta, Macedonia, Hungary, Slovakia, Ukraine, Latvia	Subregional Droughts Management Centre for South East Europe (DMCSEE)	

#### Annexe 4: NAPAs of UNFCCC

UNFCCC strongly emphasizes the mainstreaming character of its NAPAs. The objective of the NAPAs is to identify priority activities that respond to urgent and immediate needs with regard to adaptation to climate change. Since overlap with existing strategies and programmes are obvious, the integration of existing strategies is a prerequisite. Therefore building NAPAs *upon existing plans and programmes, including national action plans under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification [...]* (UNFCCC Dec.28/CP.7) is to be considered a binding obligation of the convention.

Further guiding elements of NAPA elaboration are participation, multidisciplinary, sustainability, gender-equality, action-orientation, country-drivenness, cost-effectiveness, simplicity and flexibility of procedures based on individual country circumstances. As far as NAPAs at our disposal have been examined, these requirements have made their way into the existing strategies.

Despite of this, concrete activities within NAPAs can be seen as elements of an approach to enhance existing environmental strategies. In respect of the NAPAs, NAPAs open possibilities to implement national strategies to combat desertification through their priority activities. Whether this opportunity can be used to advance UNCCD implementation depends on the national ambitions and priorities and can therefore not be judged at a general level. Importance is being attached to involve desertification issues into the elaboration process through the participation of relevant stakeholders.

Since there are only a few NAPAs which have been finalized so far, it is difficult to evaluate to what extent aspects relevant for desertification have indeed been considered. Out of nine countries which have adopted NAPAs five are situated in dryland areas. In terms of content, similarities between NAPAs and NAPs can be identified easily in dryland NAPAs as desertification is identified as one of the major environmental problems and CCD is mentioned as an important reference.

The case of Mauretania is one example of an existing dryland NAPA. Synergies with and relevance of the UNCCD in the context of adaptation in Mauretania are mentioned explicitly. The following criteria are applied inter alia to identify priority areas within NAPAs:

- synergy with other multilateral agreements in the field of environment
- sustainable land management
- food security
- biological diversity

The same requirements are criteria for the UNCCD NAP and underpin the overlap between the two programmes in terms of sustainable resource management.

As a result, at the level of un-the-ground activities nearly all of the 25 projects mentioned in Mauretania's NAPA could be seen as fitting the context of combating desertification as well, since they do respond to expectations made in the NAP. Activities are e.g. the improvement of crop production through the use of appropriate technologies, reforestation and the improvement of energy security.

Although in other countries the thematic focus may emphasize the preparedness for floods or the fight against climate sensitive diseases. Sustainable resource management and, thus, combating desertification is always an important component of the strategy.

## Annexe 5: Priorities of Mainstreaming in Latin American NAPs

Specific objectives defined in the NAPs	Action lines defined in the NAPs
<b>Cuba</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of desertification into environmental politics which aims at economic and social development</li> <li>• Integration of judicial instruments and policies in the combat of desertification</li> <li>• Integration of the NAP in all levels of action</li> <li>• Development and strengthening of institutions and instruments for a successful implementation of the NAP</li> <li>• Integration of initiatives in the economic and social policies to promote a sustainable resource use</li> <li>• Increase of soil productivity</li> <li>• Coordination of programs and initiatives which aim at combating desertification</li> <li>• Awareness raising through participation</li> <li>• Foster research, permanent observation and prevention of desertification</li> <li>• Development and transfer of appropriate technologies in affected or sensitive areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic and social development</li> <li>• Strengthening and application of judicial, economic and administrative instruments</li> <li>• Integration and coordination of policies and strategies</li> <li>• Environmental education and popular participation</li> <li>• Scientific research and technological innovation</li> <li>• Institutional strengthening and international cooperation</li> </ul>
<b>Honduras</b>	
<p>No specific objectives but 12 guiding principles that link the NAP to other strategic frameworks including the poverty reduction strategy (PRSP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable agricultural production</li> <li>• Management, preservation and reforestation of priority watersheds</li> <li>• Environmental education and sensitization</li> <li>• Institutional strengthening and local capacity building</li> </ul>
<b>Chile</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved livelihoods of the population living in affected areas through sustainable land use</li> <li>• Definition of priority areas for prevention, control and mitigation of desertification and concentration on territories where multisectoral actions are currently implemented</li> <li>• Coordination of actors in the field of desertification</li> <li>• Integration of combating desertification in national, regional and local strategies of social and economic development</li> <li>• Strengthening of participatory methods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public social policies</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Natural resources</li> <li>• Use of natural resources in desertification affected areas</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• International relations</li> </ul>

<b>Argentina</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination and participation on a national, provincial and municipal level and in the public and private sector</li> <li>• Provide a comprehensive study of the actual situation that can be updated regularly and that shows advancements in the combat of desertification</li> <li>• Awareness raising and education for a more effective participation of all social levels</li> <li>• Provide legal, economic and institutional instruments that permit an optimized combat of desertification</li> <li>• Integration and harmonization of the NAP with other national and international agreements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial action programs (PAPs)</li> <li>• National information network about combating desertification</li> <li>• Education, training and awareness raising</li> <li>• Strengthening of the institutional and judicial framework</li> <li>• Strengthening of the finance framework</li> <li>• Integration of NAP into regional and international initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>Peru</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reverse or avoid degradation processes in dryland areas through the application of sustainable farming methods</li> <li>• Implementation of initiatives to prevent and reverse desertification in governments, private sector, civil society as part of poverty alleviation and sustainable development strategies</li> <li>• Improved livelihoods for present and future generations through sustainable development</li> <li>• Sustainable resource use in fragile areas</li> <li>• Evaluation of the factors contributing to desertification, determination of appropriate methods for combating desertification and mitigate its effects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic development</li> <li>• Social development</li> <li>• Cultural, scientific, technological and educational aspects</li> <li>• Political, legal, and institutional mechanisms</li> <li>• Conservation of ecosystems</li> </ul>
<b>Nicaragua</b>	
<p>Same as the action lines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revert soil degradation</li> <li>• Mitigate the impact of drought</li> <li>• Protect the natural resources</li> <li>• Strengthen national and municipal capacities</li> </ul>
<b>Bolivia</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of institutions for the combat of desertification with participation of all relevant sectors and on all institutional levels</li> <li>• Transpose the policies and strategies of the NAP to actions on community level with the help of participatory methods</li> <li>• Combat and control of desertification with the help of sustainable land use for an improved livelihood of the affected population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration of the NAP into politics</li> <li>• Sensitize and instruct authorities in the field of combating desertification</li> <li>• Ensure participation of all actors</li> <li>• Implement bi- and multilateral projects</li> <li>• Ensure exchange of experiences</li> <li>• Develop a strategy for prevention, early warning and the rehabilitation of degraded areas</li> <li>• Establish a monitoring system for degraded areas</li> <li>• Capacity building</li> </ul>

## List of acronyms

ASA	Articulacao no Semi-Arido, Semi-Arid Network
CEDAO	Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest Economic Community of West African Countries
CILSS	Comité Inter-Etats pour la Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel, Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel
CONAMA	Conselho Nacional do Meio Ambiente, Nacional Environmental Council
COP	Conference of the Parties
CRIC	Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention
CST	Committee on Science and Technology
DMCSEE	Droughts Management Centre for South East Europe
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit German Technical Cooperation
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NAP	National Action Programme
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PAP	Provincial Action Programme
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RAP	Regional Action Programme
RIOD	International NGO Network on Desertification and Drought
SA	Sustainable Agriculture
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SRAP	Sub-regional Action Programme
SWA	Sector-wide approaches
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change



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