

## **UNCCD: Environmental Mandate & Activities**

### **Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification**

#### **Environmental mandate**

Combating desertification is essential to ensuring the long-term productivity of inhabited drylands. Unfortunately, past efforts have too often failed, and around the world the problem of land degradation continues to worsen. Recognizing the need for a fresh approach, 191 governments have joined the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. This Convention aims to promote effective action through innovative local programmes and supportive international partnerships. The treaty acknowledges that the struggle to protect drylands will be a long one - there will be no quick fix. This is because the causes of desertification are many and complex, ranging from international trade patterns to unsustainable land management practices. Real and difficult changes will have to be made, at both local and international level.

#### **Environmental activities**

Countries affected by desertification are implementing the Convention by developing and carrying out national, sub-regional, and regional action programmes. The Secretariat facilitates the development of action programmes. Consultations among affected countries, donors, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations improve coordination and channel development assistance to where it can be most effective. They also produce partnership agreements that spell out the respective contributions of both affected and donor states and of the Secretariat and other international organizations.