

REDUCING DEFORESTATION AND LAND DEGRADATION IN DRY FORESTS: A CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION IN PIURA, PERU

Local communities, sub-national governments and civil society organizations of Piura and Lambayeque in the north coast of Peru have increased their knowledge and awareness about dry forests and climate change because of an innovative initiative about forest emissions reductions.

In 2013, AIDER established a partnership with Olmos community and Regional Governments of Piura and Lambayeque for generate information about carbon stocks, deforestation and degradation in dry forests in order to increase knowledge about this ecosystem, which is among the most threatened and least studied forest ecosystems in the world. A research of the University of Alberta in 2011 shows that the relationship of scientific articles for rainforests and dry forests in America is 300: 1.



Farmers of Olmos community and other villages surrounding Salitral Huarmaca conservation area, local specialists and students performed a carbon inventory for more than 38 thousand hectares of dry land ecosystems in Piura and Lambayeque. It was the first time that local communities were involved in forest measurement

activities and for many of them, this experience allowed the increase of knowledge about their lands and resources. They have to travel by foot and spend more than one or two weeks inside the forest, this give them the opportunity to identify sources of water, new beekeeping potential and appreciate the natural beauty of the ecosystem like never before.



Local specialists elaborated maps of historical dry forests loss and deforestation projections; Piura and Lambayeque Governments are currently using that information for decision- making processes.

All the results of this experience, the first one in Peru, is being socialized with governments, civil society and universities and allowed the design of a voluntary REDD+ project. Local land managers will develop this project following good governance practices and the respect of local rights, especially small farmers.

Piura and Lambayeque stakeholders expect that this carbon project can foster public and private responsible investment in dry lands for the implementation of activities for avoiding deforestation and land degradation, contributing to climate change mitigation and community-based adaptation.

MARILDY SÁNCHE, AIDER, LIMA@AIDER.COM.PE

DÉSERTIF' ACTIONS 2015, MONTPELLIER, THE UNUSUAL MOBILIZATION FOR THE LAND

During 2015, a crucial year for key deadlines in terms of global governance and climate regulations, CARI, supported by various partners, including the UNCCD, the Global Environment Facility and the French government, organized the international forum Désertif'Actions 2015 in order to allow the mobilization of the civil society to raise its voice in the context of combatting desertification, land degradation and climate change.



The multistakeholder forum brought together in June in Montpellier (France) more than 300 people from nearly 60 countries around the world (NGOs, researchers, national representatives, international institutions). During four days they exchanged on the issues related to climate change particularly on the drylands and a common public declaration was presented at the end of the same.

The session had the opportunity to receive supporting messages from Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Ms. Naoko Ishii CEO of the Global Environmental Facility, Ms. Annick Girardin, French Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development. Personalities like Ms. Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, Mr. Adamou Chaifou, Minister of Environment of Niger or Mr. Xavier Sticker French Ambassador for the Environment attended personally the meeting. Representatives of local authorities and members of the UNCCD CSO panel also contributed to the diversity of testimonies in the forum.

Désertif'Actions also managed to mobilize an important amount of actors before the event. National preparatory workshops in 13 countries bringing together more than 400 people as well as an e-forum with 380 participants from 46 countries were organized to prepare the forum. These meetings facilitated the compilation of contributions from those that were not able to participate and offered the basis for work.

The meeting enabled the civil society to highlight the essential role of the land and the sustainable land management to face the impacts of climate change. The capacity of land and soil for carbon sequestration (around 30% of the annual emissions of CO₂), could make the regeneration of degraded land a real opportunity for mitigating the effects of climate change. Particularly the drylands that for its importance in terms of geography (40% of the total Earth surface), demography (livelihood for 2 billion people) economic (1/3 of the world poorest population) and geopolitical (international migration), remain a stake and an opportunity to tackle climate change.



The agriculture also appeared to be equally a main instrument in the land preservation, even if it is nearly forgotten in the international negotiations. The household or small scale agriculture is directly at risk.

Sustainable land management is a key element to face international crisis (climatic, agricultural, economic and social) and it should be one of the strong point for COP21. During the meeting the participants highlighted the main role of the civil society in the debate bringing ideas and proposed solutions for the negotiations.

Ultimately, Désertif'Actions 2015 has been the occasion of meeting the public at large through the projection of three movies followed by a debate with around 320 people, the organization of a day for the people of Montpellier with stands and scientific conferences for more than 3000 people. The event closed with a march for the land and the climate around the streets of the city

that brought together around 300 people and a public concert for more than 2500.

The information on Désertif'Actions 2015 including report and pictures is available on

<http://www.desertif-actions.fr/en/>



CONSTRUCTION OF THE STRATEGIC VISION OF LATIN-AMERICAN CSOs WORKING TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

In recent years, the number of Latin American CSOs participating in the processes of the convention has considerably diminished and CSOs that are still participating face financial limitations. Because of this, the capacity of the CSOs of this region to interact and communicate has been affected.

Desertification and land degradation are seriously affecting Latin American countries; the economic model based on unsustainable use of natural resources and the weak land governance are its causes. Most of these countries have been unable to update their National Action Plans and to implement them accordingly to the new challenges of development investments, climate change among other issues.

During Désertif'actions 2015, nine Latin American CSOs attending the forum agreed that is imperative that the efforts of civil society of the region must lead to put land degradation as a priority topic in national agendas and to increase awareness about its causes, current effects and impacts in the short and long term.

Fundacion del Sur and GADE from Argentina, APREQC, Bolivia Inti- Sud Soleil and Probioma from Bolivia, Caatinga from Brasil, Accion por la Tierra and OLCA from Chile and AIDER from Peru, discussed about the relevance of the role of CSOs in the implementation of the UNCCD and highlighted the necessity of knowledge exchange and collaborative work among them.

These CSO consider that their local experience and knowledge about land management can outline innovative proposals involving key stakeholders such as private sector, which is currently a relevant topic under UNCCD processes.



During Désertif'actions Forum, the nine CSOs expressed to Secretariat of the UNCCD their commitment to advocate for policies that benefit and safeguard rural farmers' rights, and to promote new business schemes that strengthen family agriculture instead of weakening it.





These CSOs expect to continue the coordination between them and with the UNCCD Secretariat with the aim of the organization of a regional workshop in which Latin American CSOs working to combat desertification can define their strategic vision for increasing their contribution to land degradation neutrality and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

A NEW APPETITE FOR LAND: BUT WHO IS GOING TO EAT?

The issue of land, for too long ignored in international climate negotiations and processed with little priority in development issues, is back on the front of the stage. Blindness or willful default of the reality of the land's capacity to sequester the carbon excess and to contribute at the same time to the food security, have both delayed the reflection on possible remedies facing climate change and development issues. Boosted by the imminent COP21 in Paris, various initiatives dealing with the issue of agriculture, and therefore the land, have emerged recently. For example, the Climate Smart Agriculture promoted by many actors grouped within the Global Alliance on CSA hosted at FAO, which however hardly does clarify its preferred agricultural model to meet the diverse challenges of environment and development without reproducing the excesses and impasses of the agro-industrial model. But also the initiative to "4 per mill" put forward by the French Minister of Agriculture Le Foll and announcing a double benefit in terms of carbon sequestration and food security. This by simultaneously developing friendly practices burial of organic matter (sequestration) and reducing emissions through the restoration of land. Finally, the initiative supported by the UNCCD to implement the principle of neutrality of land degradation backed to the creation of a dedicated financial fund and that raises a set of questions about the business model, governance, management, individual and collective benefits and costs. All these initiatives have in common to

At the initiative of Ms. Barbut and Working Group on Desertification Group, a first consultation with French CSOs took place in Paris on July 23 on the establishment of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund. Part of the veil has been lifted, including the essentially private source of funds, the management delegated to a private entity, the contracting with operators, the structuration of the fund as a platform housing a set of funding facilities depending on the nature and surfaces of land and intended users, on the intention of creating an ethics committee and the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation system based in particular on the voluntary guidelines established by the committee on food security. But many questions remain, recognized by Mrs. Barbut herself, outstanding. No doubt, that civil society mobilization is needed on this initiative, because it touches, like the other two mentioned initiatives, emergencies that needs an answer. It is also for this reason that the timetable announced for their development does target COP12 and COP21. Proposals are on the table, let's look at them without any complex!

PATRICE BURGER, CARI

CALENDAR OF EVENTS (August – December)

25-27 September – United Nations Summit to Adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda (New York, USA)

12-23 October – COP12 of UNCCD (Ankara, Turkey)

30 November -11 December - COP21 of UNFCCC (Paris, France)



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**