

Mashhad Resolution
on
Drought Management and Desertification Control

WE, THE DELEGATES to the 3-days International Workshop on "Drought Management and Desertification Control", jointly organised by the Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries (NAM S&T Centre) and Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, and Khorasan Razavi Agricultural and Natural Resources Research and Education Center (KRANRREC), at Mashhad, Iran during 22nd– 24th May 2017, comprising scientists, researchers, academicians and policy makers from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Palestine, Sri Lanka and Uganda;

RECOGNIZING that though drought, desertification and land degradation in dry lands have been under focus at national and international levels for the past four decades and that some reclamation efforts have also followed, the problem has persisted and even aggravated in some respects;

HAVING considered that the consequences of these environmental issues and the affected populations are more serious particularly in the developing world, there is paucity of enabling resources, and/or inadequacy of expertise that constrain effective desertification control and development efforts;

HAVING deliberated upon the experience over the years, it is seen that the problem of land degradation cannot be tackled by just physical remedies of one or the other types alone and the underlying driving factors namely, the socio-economic milieu and the entailing exploitative systems need an equal attention;

TAKING into account that manifestations of desertification and drought are strongly inter-linked and that major accentuation of the adverse consequences and land degradation and human strife occur during prolonged periods of deficit rainfall or drought, planning and development strategies need to have an inbuilt recognition and preparedness for such eventualities;

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVE THAT: The Mashhad International Workshop has helped in discussing issues and strategies relevant to enhancement of land productivity on sustainable basis in some of the affected countries with varied socio-cultural levels of economy and nature of biophysical resources to mutual advantage;

AND RECOMMEND THE FOLLOWING

- Since the cost and effort involved in land degradation control are much higher than the prevention, early recognition of the problem and matching conservation-oriented management effort should form a cornerstone of long-term plans of action.
- The recent driving cause underlying all natural resources degradation problems in most countries is the pressure inducted by human activities. Even with possible resource conservation and development effort, the land production may be inadequate to meet the current and aspirational needs. Therefore, as a long term strategy it is

important to generate alternative, non-farm employment potential in different sectors of economy.

- Experience over the decades has shown that though technologies have worked in restoring degraded lands, the resultant gains have got undermined to a considerable measure by inadequate management regime arising from socio-economic disparities and community disharmony.
- The problem of safeguarding ecological integrity/services and ensuring livelihood security are constrained by inadequacy of required resource base and capacity and hence a need does exist for a stronger international cooperation amongst the affected and other nations across the world.
- Evaluations have shown that government policies and programs for rehabilitation of degraded lands have not been integrated adequately with the concerns and participation of local stakeholders. Immense amount of emphasis should be placed on the concerns, capacity limitations and expectations of the directly affected populations.
- Climate change and global warming severely impact the performance of agricultural and natural resources sectors and hence adaptation and mitigation strategies are emphasised.
- The time has come that developing countries make rigorous and scientifically sound analysis of all the mitigation and adaptation efforts. Such efforts will come very handy in future course of action and in experience-sharing workshops at the forthcoming Rio+20 and UNCCD international activities.
- Training, education and capacity building are essential components of the strategy for effective desertification control.
- Indigenous knowledge reflects a huge understanding of potentialities and thus should be appropriately adopted as an important component of resource-constrained regions management and development.
- Non-Governmental Organizations can play a critical role in capacity development and in this regard should be appropriately involved and provided necessary support in various programs and projects.
- Research and new technologies are crucial in the mitigation and adaptation of the impact of climate change and desertification and should be included in all projects.
- Drought and desertification are global issues and hence involvement of all countries in management and control is seriously needed.

THUS RESOLVED AND ADOPTED ON THE 23rd MAY 2017 AT MASHHAD, I.R. IRAN