

WG [8] - Desertification and Restoration in Mediterranean Drylands (Activities and Work Plan) Time 11:15-11:25

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As it is known, Turkey has been a member of FAO since 6 April 1948 and her relations with FAO have developed stronger in recent years due to close cooperation works.

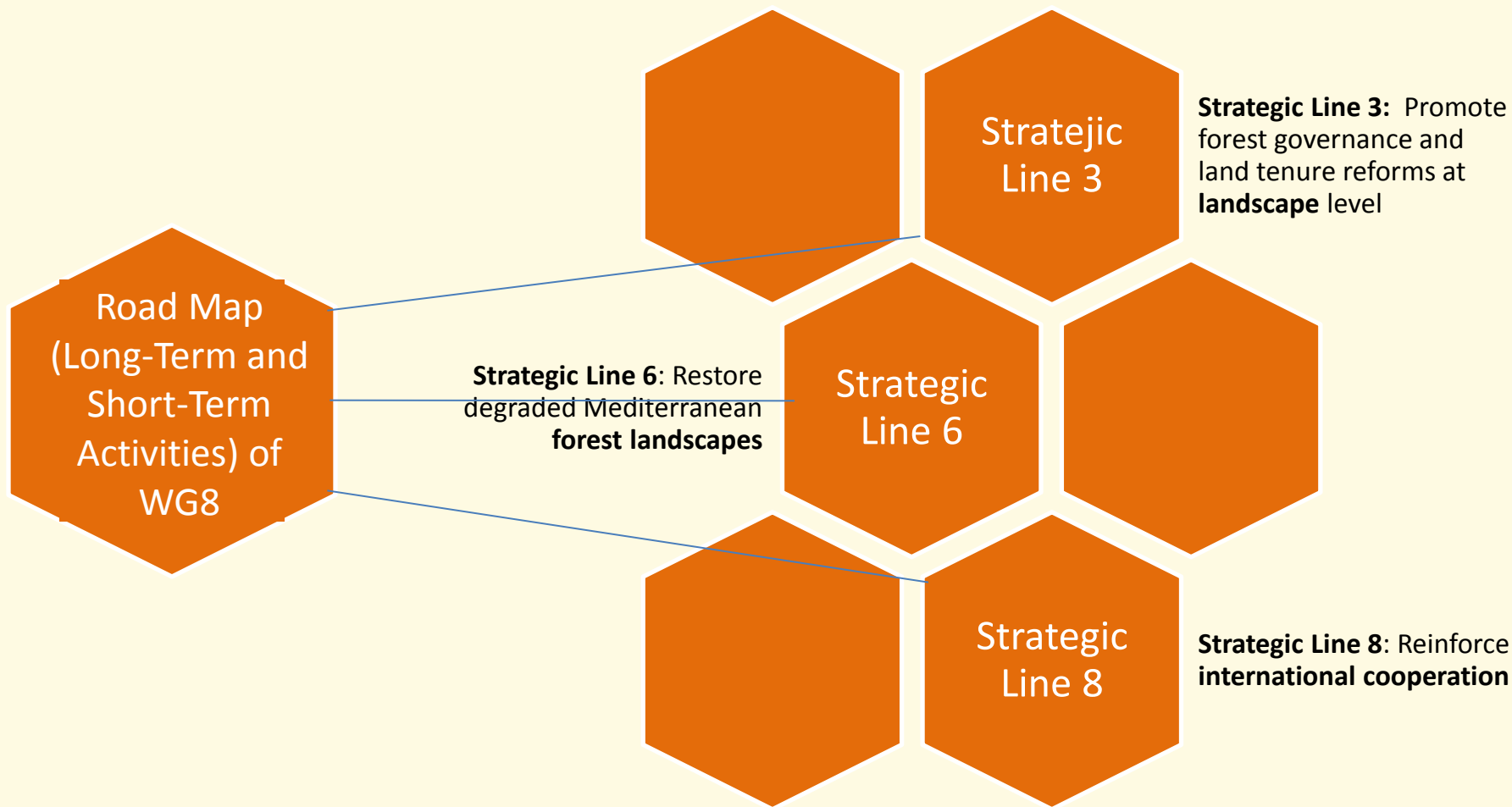
A significant part of the Mediterranean region is considered as drylands and a large part of the Mediterranean area is affected by desertification.

In February 2012 in Antalya, Silva Mediterranea adopted a decision to create a new working group on “**Desertification and Restoration in Mediterranean Drylands**” (WG8) to be lead by Turkey (to begin with) with the technical support expressed by FAO (Forestry Officers in charge of Arid Zones) and Italy.

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- Combating desertification and landscape restoration have been mentioned several times at the SoMF and SFMF and also the international cooperation
 - **Strategic Line 3:** Promote forest governance and land tenure reforms at **landscape** level
 - **Strategic Line 6:** Restore degraded Mediterranean **forest landscapes**
 - **Strategic Line 8:** Reinforce **international cooperation**

The Road Map of WG8



- **Strategic Line 3:** Promote forest governance and land tenure reforms at **landscape** level
 - Compose a Forum to Share Experiences on LDN, Desertification/ Land Degradation and Drought Under «The Institute of Combating Desertification» which is mentioned to be established according to Ankara Initiative.
 - Making Collaborations Due To Ankara Initiative

- **Strategic Line 6: Restore degraded Mediterranean forest landscapes**
 - Identifying Criteria and Indicators for LDN
 - Desertification Monitoring System – The MoFWA together with TUBİTAK is working for this project
 - Dissemination of the Guidelines- A web page dedicated for this aim could be prepare.
 - Supporting the preperation of the SoMF 2018 Edition- This edition should be prepared with the line of other international reports.

Road Map of WG8 -3- (Long Term Activities / up to 5 Years)

- **Strategic Line 8: Reinforce international cooperation**
 - Attending/Organizing International Events
 - Providing Training Materials for «The Institute of Combatting Desertification»
 - To support to the «Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism (FLRM)» which has conducted by FAO <http://www.fao.org/forestry/flrm/en/> with being a partner

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- With in the frame work of this working group Turkey supported the preparation of the [«Global guidelines for the restoration of degraded forests and landscapes in drylands»](#).
- For this aim two international workshops organized in Konya, Turkey and in Dakar, Senegal.
- Also a side event was organized at FAO, during COFO in 2012.

In cooperation with relevant departments of the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, in particular the General Directorate of Combating Desertification and Erosion, TIKA has been a major partner of FAO, with which it is working closely on several forestry activities, including forest and watershed management.

TIKA is also an enthusiastic supporter of activities undertaken by the FAO Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions–Silva Mediterranea, **including its Working Group on Desertification and Restoration of Degraded Forest Ecosystems in Arid Zones.** In the **formulation of these guidelines**, TIKA made significant contributions to the funding of two international workshops: in Konya, Turkey, and another in Dakar, Senegal.

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- Turkey gives much importance to cooperation with FAO. The FAO sub regional Office for Central Asia operates in Ankara. Turkey and FAO signed a [partnership](#) agreement on [just forestry](#) at **4th June 2014**.
- During the signing ceremony the Minister Prof. Dr. Eroglu indicated that the number of the countries concerned should be increased more and also he emphasized that they would make serious work to prevent desertification issues, forestry and erosion control especially starting from **North Africa** and developing activities in **Middle East, Central Asia, Balkans and the Caucasus**.
- Combating desertification and dry lands forestry is an important aspect of Turkish Forestry.

- On October 16, 2015, on the occasion of the 12th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 12) to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) held in Ankara, Turkey,
- During the UNCCD COP12, side event which name is "Mediterranean Drylands Desertification and Restoration" was held and 25 experts participated the meeting from Seven Mediterranean countries (Portugal, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, Spain, France and Lebanon) in Ankara / Turkey, October 16, 2015.

Other meetings recently organized in Turkey

- During the UNCCD COP12 endorsed SDG target 15.3 and the concept of land degradation neutrality (LDN) as a strong vehicle for driving the implementation of the Convention.





Activities achieved

- At the UNCCD COP 12 meeting the Parliamentary Forum presidency passed to Turkey. During the presidency of Turkey; Turkey's experience in combating land degradation, Ankara Initiative and Turkey-Africa Relations and Experience of Turkey's land rights (cadastre and ownership) issues will be taken into consideration.

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- This subject was also mentioned at Tlemcen Declaration adopted during the III. Mediterranean Forest Week (MFW)
- *“Convinced that combatting the already on going desertification in our Mediterranean landscapes should be a priority in our forest and environmental policies.”*
- Turkey has attended to this MFW with a huge delegation headed by the Vice Minister and the adopted results has been sent to Ministry of Forests and Water Affair **via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be distributed all relevant agencies and to be included national agendas.**
- *The subject is also a part of Turkish Constitution, Laws and Development Plans*

Activities achieved

- As a working group (8) we are supporting the activities of the working group during international conferences and meetings:
- ❖ We participated meetings which names are 1st meeting of the contributors to the new edition of the State of Mediterranean Forests and 6th meeting of the Enlarged Executive Committee of Silva Mediterranea in 7-8 April 2016, Rome/ ITALY
- ❖ 30 May-5 June 2016 in Konya-Mersin, Turkey: International Training Course on Combating Desertification
- ❖ 28-30 May 2016 in Konya, Turkey: Land Degredation Neutrality Workshop
- ❖ 17 June 2016 World Day to Combat Desertification

Turkey also supported COFO's activities on this issue.

- Mr. İsmail Belen attended to the “Forest and Landscape Restoration regional initiatives” on behalf of Turkey at 20 July 2016. [Http://www.carfu.org/?p=787](http://www.carfu.org/?p=787)
- He also attended “The Great Green Wall : Africa’s Response to Climate Change and Zero Hunger-Monday, 18 July 2016” [Http://www.carfu.org/?p=890](http://www.carfu.org/?p=890)
- Our views were shared by participating in the COFO Forests and Sustainable Development Goals High Level Panel on 18 July 2016. [Http://www.carfu.org/?p=885](http://www.carfu.org/?p=885).
- In addition, interviews were conducted with relevant units of FAO. [Https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdPzT00_GEs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdPzT00_GEs)

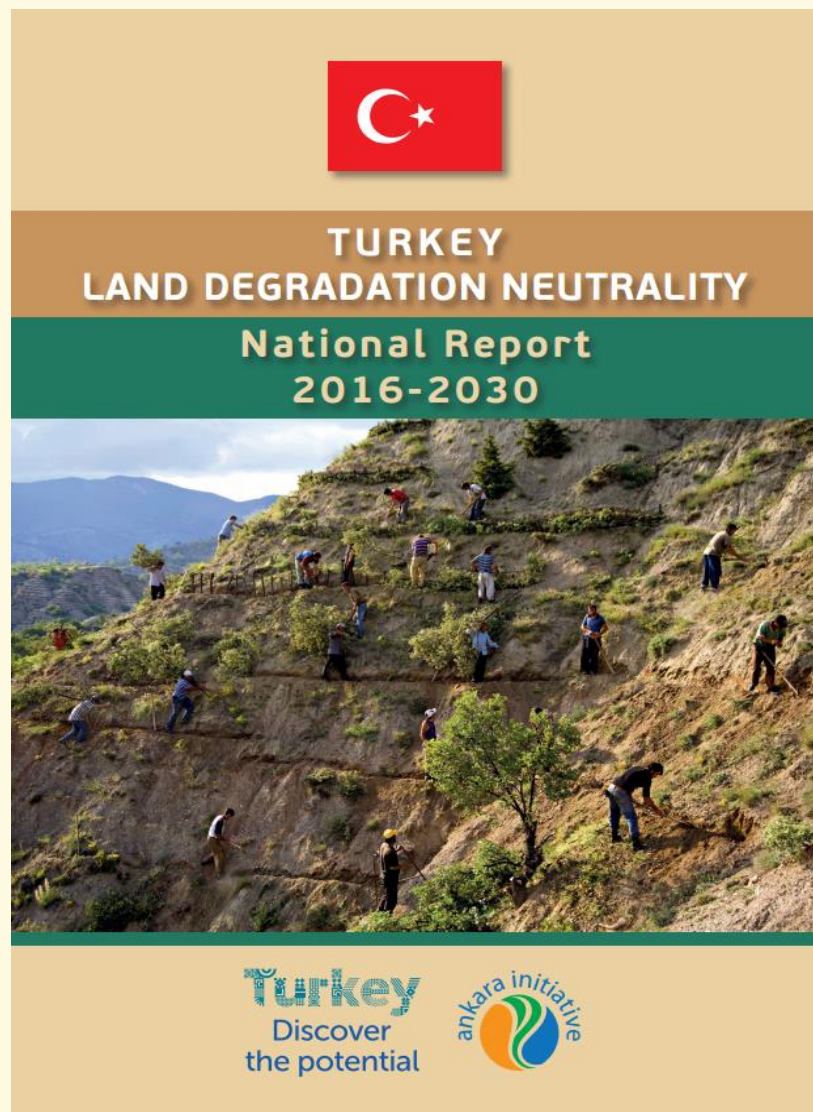


- During the International Training Course on Combating Desertification between May 30 and June 5, 2016, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between our Ministry and the Panafrika Great Green Wall Agency on the fight against desertification in order to share the experience of Turkey with the desire to combat desertification.



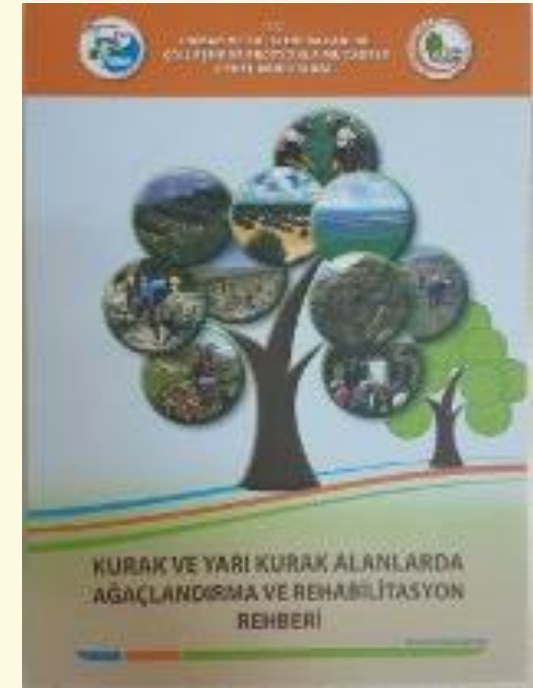
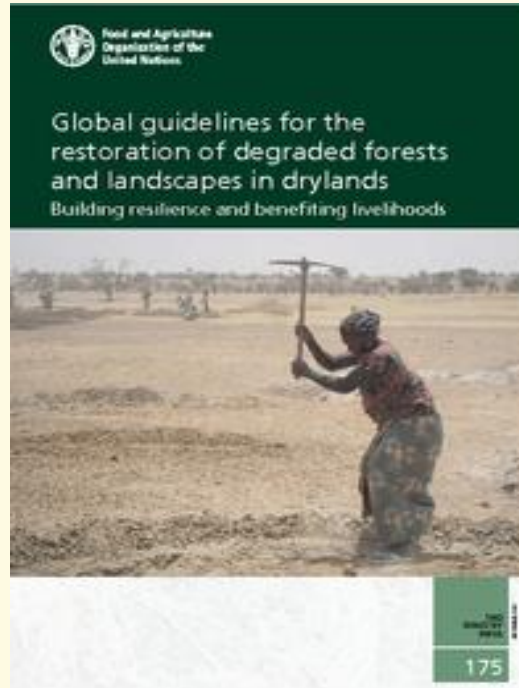
Activities achieved

- In response to the decisions taken by the UNCCD COP.12, the Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD established a LDN Target Setting Programme (TSP), which aims to support countries to define national LDN targets and associated measures. Therefore, Land Degredation Neutrality Workshop was held in Konya/TURKEY between 28-30 May 2016 for African Countries.



Objectives of The Working Group-Dissemination of the Guidelines

- The working /thematic group will be focusing its effort on the implementation of the Strategic Line 6 “Restore degraded Mediterranean forests landscapes” of the Strategic Framework on Mediterranean Forests (SFMF) at national/regional level by; promoting the dissemination and implementation of the Guidelines
- We should provide the member countries to prepare their own national guidelines based on this global directory as Turkey already did March 2016



Activities achieved

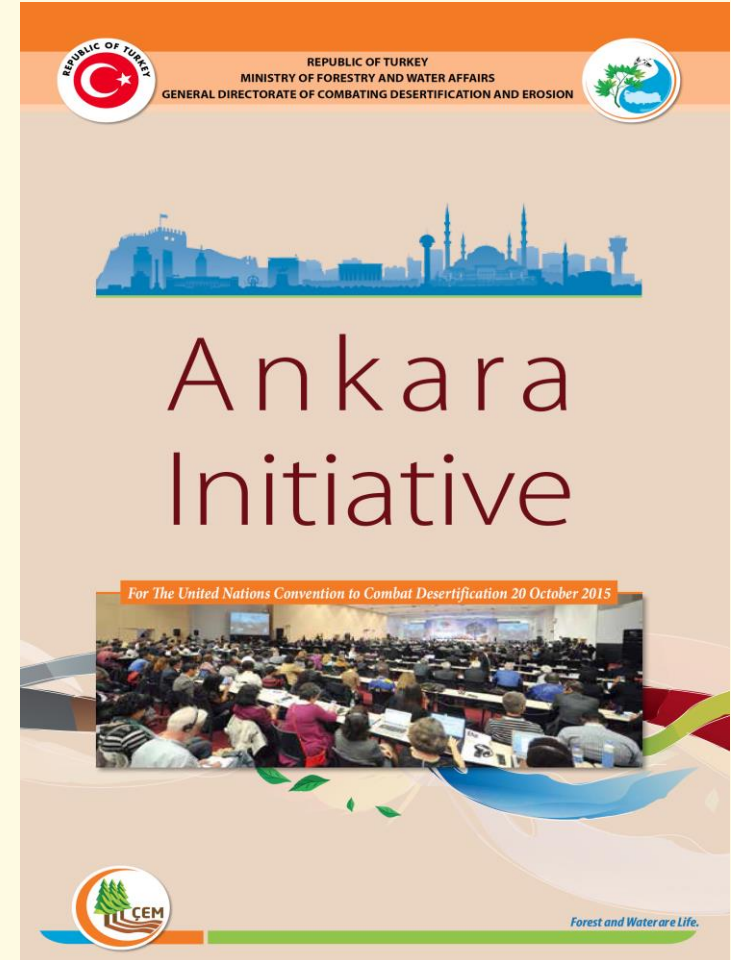
After UNCCD COP12 held in Turkey, two relevant issues released;

- Ankara Initiative
- UNCCD Northern Mediterranean Regional Coordination Office was launched in İstanbul/Turkey

<http://www2.unccd.int/news-events/unccd-northern-mediterranean-regional-coordination-office-opens-istanbul>

Ankara Initiative

- The Ankara Initiative is launched to strengthen implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in the period 2016 to 2019. It will support the global sustainable development agenda and leverage the lessons learned from Turkey's past experience and approaches to land management.



Activities achieved

- The aim of the Ankara Initiative is to help to achieve **Land Degradation Neutrality** using UNCCD tools and practical resources.
- Within the scope of framework of the Ankara Initiatives, "**International Training on Combating Desertification**" was held in Konya-Mersin-Adana/TURKEY between 30 May-5 June 2016 cooperation with the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs and TIKA.
- And also, **International Training on Combating Desertification** will be held to share experiences with **Central Asia and Balkan Countries in 22-26 May 2017**, cooperation with the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs and TIKA.



Activities achieved

UNCCD Northern Mediterranean Regional Coordination Office

- The UNCCD Northern Mediterranean Regional Coordination Unit office was inaugurated by the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs 1st Regional Directorate in accordance with the agreement signed on 23/09/2015 between the Republic of Turkey and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).



Activities achieved

- A training program was launched about the International Workshop on Sand and Dust Storm for Middle east and North Africa in 4-7 October 2016 İstanbul/TURKEY.



- As Turkey our opinion is that there is close relationships between Ankara Initiative and Agadir Commitment.
- As a working group (8) we have contributed to **the Agadir Declaration** which will be accepted at the ‘High Level Segment’ of the MFW.

- Turkey's Minister of Forests and Water Affairs HE Prof. Dr. Eroglu received an invitation letter from the Minister of Morocco to attend the fifth Mediterranean Forest Week.
- In response to letter Dr. Eroglu indicated that as the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs we will support "Regional Mediterranean Initiative on Forest and Land Restoration" by contributing to the studies for 100.000 hectares of land annually from 2017 to 2021 which means totally 500.000 hectares for 5 years.
- We support the proposal made with in the Agadir Declaration/Commitment that the Committee of Mediterranean Forestry Questions should coordinate this regional initiative and WG8 should play an important role



REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
MINISTRY OF FORESTRY AND WATER AFFAIRS

Mr. Abdelafim LHAFI

16. 03.2017

*The High Commissioner for Water,
Forests and the Fight against
Desertification of the Kingdom of Morocco*

Dear Mr. LHAFI,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to your kind invitation to the Fifth Mediterranean Forest Week (5th MFW) to take place in Agadir, Morocco from 20th to 24th March. Unfortunately, I regret to inform you that I will not be able to attend the 5th MFW due to my pre-determined programs and tight schedule during the Conference.

However, Mr. İsmail Belen, who acts as the head of Silva Mediterranea, will represent our Ministry during the said Conference.

I avail myself of this opportunity to state my pleasure that our Ministry will support "Regional Mediterranean Initiative on Forest and Land Restoration" by contributing to the studies for 100.000 hectares of land annually from 2017 to 2021 which means totally 500.000 hectares for 5 years.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Prof. Dr. Feyyaz EROĞLU
Minister



**Thank you for your
attention**