

Side event on the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI)



COP18/CMP8
SIDE EVENT

Date: 5th December 2012, from 10.30 AM to 12.30 AM

Venue: EU Pavilion, Hall 3, Doha, Qatar

Organizers: African Union Commission, European Commission, FAO, Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy (France), Global Environment Facility (GEF), The Global Mechanism of the UNCCD (GM-UNCCD) and the World Bank

Objectives:

- Presenting and reviewing the status of implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI);
- Formulating recommendations for a wider collaborative partnership and resource mobilization in support to the implementation of the GGWSSI.

The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI) is an African driven initiative aiming at “improving the resilience of human and natural systems in Sahel and Saharan areas to Climate Change through sound ecosystems’ management, sustainable development of land resources, protection of rural heritage and improvement of the living conditions and livelihoods of populations living in these areas”.

Some 200 million of the poorest people in Africa are food insecure, many through their dependence on climate sensitive livelihoods – predominantly rain-fed agriculture and extensive livestock. Their vulnerability is expected to increase with climate change and due to anticipated increases in climate variability (e.g. more droughts and floods).

The Great Green Wall Initiative is a direct contribution to a joint implementation of the Three Rio Conventions (UN Convention to Combat Desertification, UN Framework Convention on Climate change and UN Convention on Biodiversity) and particularly to Climate Risk Management in the Africa drylands. This was recently emphasized by the fourteenth (14th) Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) held in September 2012, Arusha, Tanzania which decided to consider the GGWSSI, in the framework of the Environmental Action Plan of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as a flagship programme that represents the African contribution to the achievement of a Land degradation neutral world in the context of sustainable development, as recommended by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

Since early 2011 an African Union Commission programme in support to the implementation of the GGWSSI, is being implemented by FAO in collaboration with 13 partner countries. The programme is funded by the European Union within the framework of the theme 6 “Climate Change and Environment” of the AU-EU strategic partnership and benefits from technical and financial support of FAO and the GM-UNCCD. Furthermore, the GEF and the World Bank are also supporting the implementation of the initiative in 12 countries through the Sahel and West Africa Program (SAWAP).



The 18th session of COP/UNFCCC offers an opportunity to inform the international community and African countries on the results so far achieved by the initiative and to discuss the way forward to build a solid and wider partnership/coalition to support Africa for the implementation of the GGWSSI. In addition to the status of the implementation of the Initiative, the potential of the GGWSSI for carbon sequestration as well as for adaptation and resilience to climate change will be presented and discussed.

Tentative agenda

- Welcome address by Ms Tumussiime Rhoda Peace, Commissionner in charge of Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission (5mn)
- Statement by the Minister of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy (France) on the AU-EU strategic partnership/ theme 6 and commitment of France to the initiative (5mn)
- Status of implementation of the programmes in support to the implementation of the GGWSSI: AUC programme supported by EU, FAO and the GM-UNCCD and the Sahel and West Africa Program (SAWAP), supported by the GEF and World Bank (15 mn)
- GGWSSI's contribution to carbon sequestration by the representative of IRD France (10 mn)
- Building a wider collaborative coalition/partnership on the GGWSSI: a call for action by one representative of the participating countries (10 mn)

Debate (35 mn)

- Questions and answers

Closing (5 mn)

- Concluding remarks by COMREA, AUC

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