FORUM: Environmental Commission Sub-Commission 2

QUESTION OF: Measures to combat desertification

SUBMITTED BY: Argentina

THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION,

*Taking into account* that agricultural activity accounts for 30% of Argentina’s GDP and 50% of its export, including its manufactured products,

*Noting* that Argentina is the ninth country in the world when looking at the percentage of drylands that cover the area,

*Further noting* that Argentina is also one of 14 highest countries in the world where Arid, and semi-Arid lands cover more than 1 million km2 of the country,

*Emphasising* that Argentina has 60 million hectares of land, with severe corrosion, which 10 million people inhabit,

*Noting with deep concern* that 66% of forests have been depleted over the last 75 years, and if this continues this natural resource will run out by 2036, leaving more lands exposed for corrosion,

*Concerned* that 83% of the Argentina’s population is living in urban areas and relies on healthy farmlands and soil to stay out of poverty,

1. Urges a policy change in the world's governments to implement laws for farmers to adhere to a guideline with specific times and places for farming, to ensure that the ground is given recuperation time to recover and stop degrading of the soil, and in countries with corrupt governments that are facing desertification there will be UN officials who are designed to supervise that the laws are implemented and adhered to;
2. Recommends for a rainwater collection system to be set up in dry areas for natural rehabilitation of soil and a natural way to provide water to plants and animal life in countries where management of water is flexible, by such measures, with attention to their own climate system;
3. Further urges for more non-governmental organisations (NGOs), such as Fundación Patagonia Natural (FPN), to help encourage responsible management of soil and land in the world:
4. through working together with the governments and companies of countries to:
5. provide money
6. provide support
7. encourage citizen participation
8. through educating citizens on how to improve the way one uses the land's resources;
9. Promotes education of local farmers on the principles of sustainable farming practices and the importance of stopping overgrazing and over usage of land, and emphasises that funding to allow:
10. suitable teachers to be found for this by either the government or NGOs, preferably local people for improvement in employment
11. funding to be given to farmers to afford sustainable agriculture and better implement techniques such as:
    * 1. farming on terraces
      2. planting crops which are adapted to the area
      3. planting a variety of crops to help further strengthen the soil;
12. Calls for strategies to be developed on how to best handle desertification so that one is able to effectively and immediately allow for livestock to live in already desertificated areas helping re-fertilize the soil;
13. Strongly urges for NGOs to be set up for further research in:
14. advances in technologies to help rehabilitate soil erosion
15. advances in technologies to stop further soil erosion from occurring
16. strategies to grow back trees (afforestation) and crops in desertification areas, helping to create new employment in rural areas, through initiatives such as the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) in Australia, which promotes and educates farmers on how to regenerate land in a cost friendly way;
17. Requests to create awareness in the world that this is a major environmental issue that needs to be addressed:
18. Through usage of advertisement methods, that target citizens aged 20 – 50 years old, such as:
19. posters
20. television advertisements
21. radio advertisements
22. social media
23. Through sponsoring of social, and charity events hosted in the towns that are being affected
24. By creating a dedicated website that explains the importance and the situation and is easily understandable;

1. Encourages all countries to take action on the issues that are dealt with in the Desertification Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD) the implementation of local, national and global policies;
2. Asks for all countries to record environmental issues, mainly desertification, and report upon the main issues that are stated in the DLDD, as this will not only help give an overview of different issues in countries, and their severity, but will also create awareness both locally and globally;
3. Expresses its hope that all countries follow article 6 of the United Nations (UN), which states that developed countries must fully state policies, actions undertaken and future plans in a constitution in accordance with poverty and the DLDD;
4. Further recommends the enforcement of national policies on the use of land, as this will coordinate and increase agricultural effectiveness, thereby increasing productivity as well, and increase sustainability, in order to:
5. educate citizens to make good use of land
6. allow control holding of land in rural areas that will decrease conflicts due to human and livestock migration
7. instead of punishment, further educate them
8. appoint land where farming is allowed/ not allowed;
9. Suggests that all countries continue their involvement with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNNCCD), as this is a convention that not only combats desertification but is legally binding to all countries within the UN (with exception of Canada), and helps further the research that is currently being done by the committee on science and technology (CST).