

Saturday, August 27 14:00-15:45 | Sarova Panafric Hotel "Simba"

New African Initiative for Combating Desertification to Strengthen Resilience to Climate Change in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa

Cohosted by Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Kenya, Government of Senegal (TBD) , and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

1. Background

Sub-Saharan African countries, particularly in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa region, face mounting development challenges. Environmental deterioration has made the situation worse. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development pledge that no one will be left behind cannot be achieved without the sustainable growth of the region.

The major part of the region is desert or drylands, and most of it is estimated to be degraded. The region has been also affected by frequent and severe droughts in recent years. The recent climate change is likely to make desertification even worse. As the poor in the region heavily depend on natural resources, persistent drought has deteriorated their livelihoods even further. The poverty in the region could further exacerbate insecurity and lead to an increase of refugees.

Addressing desertification properly and strengthening resilience to climate change are keys to helping nations of the region achieve sustainable development and to bringing peace and stability to the world as well as the region.

Acknowledging that the issues of drought and desertification have not necessarily obtained sufficient international attention despite their importance and urgency, and that finance for addressing those issues has not been mobilized enough, the Government of Kenya, the Government of Senegal, and JICA propose to launch a new initiative to combat desertification to strengthen resilience to climate change at the TICAD VI.

The initiative aims to promote measures for combating desertification by the countries in the region and supports for their efforts by development partners mainly through networking, knowledge-sharing, and improving access to finance.

2. Objectives

This side event aims to share challenges of desertification that the Sahel and Horn of Africa countries are facing and discuss how the countries and development partners can work better to address desertification issues and strengthen resilience to climate change. The side event will be an opportunity to launch the initiative officially.

3. Key Questions

- What challenges are the Sahel and Horn of Africa countries facing in response to desertification and land degradation?
- What actions are needed to address those challenges and strengthen resilience to climate change?
- How can the countries and development partners work better to combat desertification to strengthen resilience to climate change and achieve SDGs?

4. Speakers

- Prof. Judi Wakhungu, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, Kenya
- TBD, Representative, Government of Senegal
- Mr. Hiroshi Kato, Vice President, JICA
- Dr. Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson, Global Environment Facility
- TBD, Representative, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- Prof. Atsushi Tsunekawa, Arid Land Research Center, Tottori University, Japan/Science and Technology Correspondent for United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification of Japan
- TBD, Representative, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
- TBD, Other speakers from the Sahel and Horn of Africa Countries
- Moderator: TBD, Mr. Henry Bonsu , International Broadcaster

