



**Communication Strategy
for the Global Mechanism of the
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
2006-2010**

June 2006



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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfDB	African Development Bank
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CARI	Centre d'Action et de Réalisations Internationales
CGIAR	Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research
COP	Conference of Parties
CRIC	Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention
CSEA	Consolidated Strategy and Enhanced Approach
CSFD	French Scientific Committee on Desertification
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FC	Facilitation Committee
FIELD	Financial Information Engine on Land Degradation
G8	Group of Eight
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GM	Global Mechanism
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	International Financial Institution
IT	Information Technology
IUCN	World Conservation Union
IYDD	International Year of Deserts and Desertification
KM	Knowledge Management
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
RBM	Results-Based Management
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
TV	Television
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCSD	United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNU	United Nations University
WB	World Bank



Section 1.

BACKGROUND

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) has long identified management and exchange of knowledge amongst stakeholders as a key instrument for the convention's implementation. At its third session, the Conference of the Parties (COP) recommended that the Global Mechanism (GM) develop, as part of its operational strategy, an information and communication strategy¹ with a view to facilitate contact with Parties and other actors, increase awareness of the Convention, and promote participation in its implementation. In line with the COP recommendations, the development of an Information, Knowledge and Communication Strategy was included in the GM Business Plan for 2003-2006.

In fulfilling this mandate the GM assembled a task force of communication experts² from IDS (Institute of Development Studies), IISD (International Institute for Sustainable Development), IUCN (World Conservation Union) and UNAIDS (Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS) to work on the development of the strategy. The task force collaborated with the GM in grounding strategic communications issues, challenging assumptions and seeking focus through reference to readily available impact, audience and stakeholder data. The task force's activities included:

- reviewing communications needs implicit in the high level functions of the GM³ (i.e. relationships with potential sources of financing; analyzing and advising on request; mobilizing and channelling financial resources; reporting to the COP);
- reviewing a cross section of documentary sources on the audience for and impact of communications about the GM and the UNCCD;
- drawing on comparative experience of communications strategies and activities.

The development of the GM Communications Strategy draws on insights and ideas from the task force and operational priorities from the GM's Consolidated Strategy and Enhanced Approach (CSEA) to resource mobilization. These priorities recommended pursuing a smaller number of practical activities in the first year of the Strategy, learning and innovating based on experience in the second year and scaling up in years three to five.

The GM shared progress made in carrying forward the development of the Communication Strategy with the Facilitation Committee (FC)⁴ at its fifteenth meeting (FC15) at COP 7 in October 2005. The meeting noted inter-alia that:

- The messages conveyed through the Communication Strategy have to be clear and focused on the core business of the GM;
- The approach followed by the GM in addressing key communication questions and the resulting proposal to develop donor relations, awareness and advocacy programmes was considered as positive;
- More bilateral meetings and interpersonal networking should be considered as means to facilitate strategic partnerships;

¹ Decision 9/COP.3

² C. Jackson (Manager, Knowledge Partnerships, IDS), H. Creech (Director, Knowledge Communications, IISD), C. Pretorius (Head, Global Communications, IUCN), M. Tomasevic (Communication and Public Information, UNAIDS). Inputs were also provided by K. Reddy, a communications consultant hired by the Global Mechanism.

³ Decision 24/COP.1

⁴ Members of the GM Facilitation Committee are: IFAD, UNDP, WB, the regional development banks (ADB, AfDB, IADB), FAO, UNEP, CGIAR, GEF secretariat, and UNCCD secretariat.



- There is a need to clarify areas of collaboration between the GM and the UNCCD Secretariat in the Communication Strategy, in line with decision 3/COP6.

On the basis of the recommendations of the task force and on the feedback received by the GM from FC15 and COP7, the GM decided to finalize a first “prototype” version of the strategy to be implemented throughout 2006 and generate lessons, experience and client feedback that will be taken into account for the fine-tuning of the strategy for the following years. This allowed to limit the costs that would have been incurred in the immediate term for the implementation of a full-fledged strategy. In particular, cost savings were obtained from the reduced need to rely on external consultancies to undertake stakeholder surveys, target audience analyses, and expert consultations.

Between January and March 2006, the prototype version of the communication strategy was developed and fine-tuned in collaboration with IDS, under the overall supervision of the GM Managing Director. In April, the strategy was circulated to all GM staff for comments, which were then consolidated and discussed at a workshop on 9 May.

Some of the views expressed by GM staff included:

- need to build internal capacity and increased access to country-level knowledge in order to undertake advocacy role successfully;
- need to strike a balance between responding to the needs of countries and those of their financing partners (e.g. development agencies);
- given GM’s global mandate, the FIELD system should be used more effectively to inform affected countries of relevant financial and investment opportunities;
- the GM should regularly update its basic corporate publications, including Power Point presentations with GM core messages, to facilitate outreach at various events;
- over time, in addition to an annual report and policy series, the GM should develop a flagship publication, possibly in co-operation with FC members;
- although multi-lingual support is deemed important, it will be too expensive for GM to publish everything in all UN languages. It is therefore suggested to focus on English as GM’s main outreach language, particularly with regard to the website. However, regional-specific documents may be disseminated in their original language.

This document builds on the above grounds, comments and recommendations. It is set out in three sections:

1. Background
2. GM Communication Strategy: Principles, Objectives and Operational Guidelines
3. Draft Implementation Plan



Section 2.

THE GM COMMUNICATION STRATEGY: PRINCIPLES, OBJECTIVES AND OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

The implementation of communications activities, which are part of the GM's operational strategy, will be set within a framework that clarifies objectives and expected outcomes.

2.1 Purpose and Objectives of the GM Communication Strategy

The purpose of the GM Communication Strategy is:

To help the GM enhance its impact in fulfilling its mandate and equip GM partners, through communications, with information and knowledge on effective financing strategies for UNCCD implementation.

To support the achievement of this purpose the GM Communication Strategy will focus on three specific objectives:

Objective 1 – Increasing GM Visibility: Promote a new corporate identity and an increased visibility of the GM as a centre of excellence, trusted advisor, valuable partner and effective broker of financial, instrumental, and knowledge resources for UNCCD implementation.

Objective 2 – Promoting UNCCD Mainstreaming: Promote the integration of UNCCD objectives within appropriate development frameworks and processes, both at country and international level, by generating and disseminating instrumental information to substantiate the role of Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in development. In particular, this includes informing donor, recipient countries, intergovernmental processes and other relevant fora (e.g. budgetary processes at country level, priority-setting processes within the governing bodies of International Financial Institutions, etc.) of issues of relevance to/impact on finance for UNCCD implementation, in order to expedite informed decision-making and resource allocation for SLM.

Objective 3 – Transferring Knowledge on Financial Opportunities: Build capacity and enable GM partners in affected countries to plug the gaps and harness the opportunities for financing UNCCD Action Programme implementation by facilitating access to information and knowledge on available and emerging sources of finance, funding/investment policies and priorities, quality financial analysis, thematic research on strategic options, and expert assessments of risks, opportunities, returns and prospects for SLM investments.

The Communication Strategy is embedded in the GM long-term perspective to facilitate knowledge sharing, learn from experience, disseminate success stories and replicate good practices pertaining to resource mobilization. The success of the Communication Strategy is instrumental to the achievement of increased quality in UNCCD implementation.



2.2 Principles of GM Communications

To ensure that communication work across the GM is consistently of a high quality all relevant activities will be expected to adopt and be monitored against the following principles:

- Communications resources and expected outcomes focus on a known primary target audience;
- All communication initiatives contribute to GM's "big picture", that is *Think Big/Globally and Act Small/Locally*;
- Messages are consistent throughout all relevant GM external communications at all levels;
- Communication initiatives are demand-driven, i.e. responsive to the needs arising from the GM operating environment;
- Communications activities are practical, timely and commensurate with the available budget;
- Expectations and assessments of stakeholders with regard to the GM as a broker of resources are in close alignment with GM capabilities and values;
- Communications build on, add value to, and strategically complement activities of related organisations.

2.3 Definition of Audience

The Communications Strategy's objectives and overall purpose can only be achieved if the GM is clear about its target audience. The GM will not address all audiences at the same time. To do so would spread resources so thinly as to risk very limited impact.

Therefore, the GM will set annual priorities for focusing on specific groups within its vast audience base (the donor community and other country-level and international partners), and communicate with them in different ways and over different time-scales in order to achieve the communications objectives.

For 2006 the target audience is identified as follows:

- i) The donor community at national and international level;
- ii) Relevant Ministries in GM partner countries, and their bilateral and multilateral development partners;
- iii) Institutional partners (particularly, UNCCD's Conference of Parties – COP, Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention – CRIC, other UNCCD Subsidiary Bodies, and Facilitation Committee members);
- iv) New partners in thematic and strategic areas of GM intervention (i.e. trade, education, private sector, forestry, civil society, etc.);
- v) Relevant international/regional/national policy-making processes (e.g. UNCCD's Implementation Cycles, OECD's Development Assistance Committee, G8 Africa Action Plan, TerrAfrica, Poverty-Environment Partnership, Forest Landscape Restoration, etc.);
- vi) General public (mainly in relation to the celebrations for the International Year of Deserts and Desertification – IYDD).

This definition is based on the GM's current understanding of national and international priorities in relation to the convention, and by virtue of the fact that 2006 has been declared "International Year of Deserts and Desertification" by the UN General Assembly.

From 2007 onwards, segmenting of primary, secondary and tertiary audiences will be enhanced through a matrix scoring exercise based on criteria that reflect: (i) the results achieved in 2006, (ii)



the status of UNCCD implementation in affected developing countries (e.g. planning and reporting under the UNCCD, status in relation to MDGs, governance, roles in financing, brokering and policy leadership, etc.), and (iii) GM priorities in line with its rolling Business Plan and corporate work programme.

The matrix scoring exercise may lead to a distinction between the core permanent GM target audience, mainly consisting of institutional partners at country and regional/international level, and distinct target groups in relation to specific events or initiatives. For example, it may recommend to target UNCCD Focal Points in relation to CRIP/COP or other regional events.

2.4 Message Development

In conformity with the GM Consolidated Strategy and Enhanced Approach to resource mobilization, key communication messages will be developed according to a new paradigm that responds to the need to: (i) challenge the traditional thinking surrounding the UNCCD arena, (ii) change conventional perceptions, (iii) mainstream SLM within sectoral policies and strategies, and (iv) leverage existing networks (including civil society organizations) to expand the GM's capacity to influence national and international policy making.

Adequate messages will be devised according to the various segments of the target audience and the channels used (i.e. printed or electronic media). When appropriate, messages will be crafted to stimulate "thinking outside the box", generate responses and inspire action. As a general rule, messages will be clear, crisp, and assertive so as to frame a positive agenda for UNCCD-related investments in affected countries.

The messages should be supportive of the following outcomes:

- The climate of opinion for financing UNCCD congruent implementation is an enabling one because of increased awareness of land degradation and SLM issues;
- The potential finance base for UNCCD congruent implementation is broadened by influencing prospective UNCCD partners in the public and private sectors;
- The benefits of investing in SLM is demonstrated on the basis of credible success stories, as well as financially and statistically proven high rates of returns;
- The perception of a non-fashionable Convention (or an "aid" Convention) by some bilateral and multilateral donors is reversed;
- The negative heritage of a decade of slow progress is overcome and the UNCCD process is revitalized;
- The typical short-termism associated with relevant issues being perceived as cyclical emergencies or natural disasters is challenged.

The tone of GM's communication on land degradation and desertification should be informative, relevant and credible. While it is important to convey that land degradation is a major underlying cause of poverty, the information should not be packaged as a "doomsday scenario." It should be made clear that action can and should be taken to reverse land degradation, and countries around the world are committed to doing so. Communication materials should also feature success and surprising stories of how desertification is managed.

GM should be positioned as an organization that brings solutions to desertification issues by mobilizing policy, instrumental and financial resources and technology to combat it, as well as by providing specialised advisory services to governments in affected countries. The underlying assumption should



be that, because of the close linkages between desertification, poverty and other developmental and environmental issues, it makes socio-economic sense to invest in land rehabilitation and SLM.

Corporate or headline messages to be communicated by the GM can be developed in any area of operations, however their use will be carefully screened for quality and consistency with the overall strategy. All messages will therefore need prior approval from the GM Communications Advisory Group (consisting of the GM Managing Director, a representative of the GM Communications and Web Group, and two other GM staff representing regional and strategic programmes on a rotational basis).

The underlying core message of GM communications is:

*Sustainable Land Management to improve living conditions of affected populations
(tapping opportunities for sustainable development)*

This message aims to inject confidence and optimism in the development community with regard to SLM as an effective approach to stimulating economic growth and enhancing welfare while at the same time protecting the environment, promoting better management of natural resources, and generating benefits from ecosystems services.

This message highlights the key role of SLM for UNCCD implementation. To deploy this message, the GM needs to bring together and perhaps add to existing research and policy on the linkages between SLM and, for example, climate change mitigation and adaptation agendas, corporate social and environmental policies, trade globalization and future agricultural scenarios, etc. This message would help position GM's resource mobilization strategy as contemporary and innovative in its approach to global concerns and, possibly, build a legitimate case for tapping into funding streams associated with mainstream, sectoral and other cross-cutting strategies.

This message is based on the GM conviction that:

1. sustainable development requires a shift in paradigm: from dependence on external assistance to country ownership and self-determination;
2. effective and long-lasting ecosystem management requires local, household-level action, as is reflected in the culture, knowledge and resilience of peoples living in arid, semi-arid, dry sub-humid lands and even deserts;
3. there is a large, unexploited potential for managing lands as a way out of poverty. Seizing this potential will require addressing issues of tenure, adaptation, technology, policy and market-based incentives, etc.

In 2006, this message will be reflected in the initiatives organized in the framework of the celebrations for the International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD), which has been designated by the UN General Assembly to raise global public awareness of drylands, of ways to safeguard the biological diversity of arid lands and of the need to protect the knowledge and traditions of over 2 billion people affected by the phenomenon.

2.5 Operational Guidelines

To implement the Communications Strategy the GM will adopt enhanced ways of working that capitalize on the knowledge, expertise and comparative advantages of its partners, in line with the GM consolidated strategy and enhanced approach to resource mobilization for UNCCD implementation. The following operational guidelines indicate how the GM will work differently in specific areas of communications.



2.5.1 Practical and Timely Methods

The GM is determined to make maximum use of well proven communication methodologies that deliver results in the short term, rather than innovating or championing novel or unproven methods. However, while the use of experimented communication tools is considered to be the best way to strengthen existing GM capacities in the field of communications, it is not excluded that GM will not adopt emerging and innovative Knowledge Management (KM) approaches and tools.

Examples of practical and timely methods which will be given priority include:

- electronic communications (i.e. GM corporate website, FIELD, CD/DVD-ROMs, e-forums, email newsletters, list-serves, etc.);
- printed publications and marketing products;
- face-to-face meetings, including participation at relevant events.

2.5.2 Communication Partners

The GM will strive to maximize the cost-effectiveness of its communication efforts by forging and strengthening strategic partnerships and alliances with various partners.

Collaboration with the UNCCD Secretariat on Public Awareness Raising

The Communication Strategy will take full advantage of bilateral arrangements between the UNCCD Secretariat and the GM to work jointly on communication activities such as:

- sharing of information that can be used in the preparation of joint publications and in organizing relevant events;
- contribution to the celebrations for the 2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD).

Collaboration with FC Members

To maximize the impact of the Communication Strategy and avoid duplication of efforts, the GM will strengthen its interaction with partner organizations, particularly Facilitation Committee (FC) members, who have a vast amount of specific knowledge, publications, expertise, and international exposure..

Various FC members are already working with the GM to develop strategies and tools to position the issues of desertification and SLM as development priorities on the international agenda which can serve to effectively reduce poverty. This includes the expansion of the stakeholder base and the development of a sustained strategic approach to UNCCD implementation.

In addition to contributing to the enhancement of the UNCCD-wide knowledge sharing process, the FC might identify areas where, individually or as a group, FC members could add value to the GM communication objectives, particularly in relation to the mainstreaming of UNCCD principles within their respective development agendas and programmatic cycles.



Expanding the Group of Key Stakeholders Involved in Relevant Communications

In the implementation of the Communication Strategy, the GM will regularly look for opportunities to collaborate directly with and add value to other actors' communication strategies. In particular, it is envisaged that the GM will expand the group of key stakeholders involved in relevant communication activities by:

- collaborating with established international communications processes (e.g. launches of annual reports of partner Agencies, campaigns by international NGOs active in development and environment, etc.);
- targeting organizations who could be part of the funding solution but who are not yet engaged with the UNCCD;
- engaging in dialogue with organisations specialising in other sectors where significant programmed resources could potentially be linked to or directed toward greater impact on UNCCD-related activities. Such organisations will be approached by demonstrating that connecting to UNCCD agendas can be beneficial for their objectives.

2.5.3 Monitoring & Evaluation

Indicators of progress in meeting the objectives of the Communication Strategy will be both quantitative and qualitative. Drawing from the Outcome Mapping methodology of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), monitoring should focus on changes in relationships and behaviors as indicators of progress towards GM goals.

These would include, most notably, increases in levels of participation of partners/stakeholders with the GM; increases in number of new partners and contacts; recognition given to GM in other venues and media vehicles; sustained or increased levels of financial support from partners. The above Outcome Mapping indicators will define the logical framework for monitoring performance over time. Therefore, they will have to be introduced at an early stage of implementation of the GM Communications Strategy.

Communications practice and plans will be developed in response to feedback from stakeholders in the target audience. Feedback will be actively encouraged through opinion surveys, online web-forms, email list-serves, and direct bilateral communications. Feedback and comments will be synthesized annually in the GM's management reports and be treated as a vital input to its learning and innovation process in delivering the overall corporate objectives.

2.6 Communication Programmes

The GM communication strategy will be implemented through three programmes, which will address the communication objectives, target audiences, and implementation methodologies indicated above. The programmes are:

1. Donor Relations Programme⁵
2. Partnerships Incubator Programme⁶

⁵ Mainly addresses objectives 1 and 2, as indicated in Section 2.1.



3. Advocacy Programme⁷

Although each programme seeks to address a distinct communications need, the three programmes are entwined and may overlap in terms of audience and messages. The activities that will be conducted within each programme will contribute to promoting GM's corporate image and identity and serve to increase the capacity of UNCCD constituencies to access mainstream development finance.

To effectively run the three communication programmes the capacity of the GM may need to be enhanced through training to a functional level of competence in communication techniques and tools, including negotiation and presentation techniques, journalistic writing and editing, RBM and financial reporting, KM systems and content management tools. These competencies will need to be deployed across the range of all staff roles involved in internal reporting and external communications.

In addition, the GM may need to develop a roster of specialist communications service providers in areas including:

- technical and journalistic writing
- copywriting and marketing
- print and exhibition design and production
- audio-visual production
- event management and facilitation.

2.6.1 Donor Relations Programme

In line with the GM Resource Mobilization Strategy, the GM will work to broaden and strengthen its relationships with International Financial Institutions (IFIs), bilateral and multilateral development agencies, the private sector and civil society partners. In particular, it will demonstrate its capacity and credentials as a trusted and specialised adviser in the mobilization of resources for UNCCD implementation in affected developing countries. Developing working relationships with current and prospective partners will allow the GM to promote specific policies and priorities which would, in turn, allow to leverage greater resources towards UNCCD implementation activities.

Through targeted outreach the GM will seek to engage partners in mobilising financial, institutional, policy and knowledge resources for UNCCD issues. Outreach will also target other prospective partners who have not traditionally been part of UNCCD implementation. Examples of instruments of this programme will be:

- (i) bilateral and multilateral meetings and targeted communications with donors and partners;
- (ii) GM active participation at key events related to development financing;
- (iii) targeted information packages highlighting investment needs and opportunities, lessons learned, success stories, case studies, results-based reports, etc.

Given that representatives of donor agencies and other development partners are also members of wider professional and civil networks and communities, improved donor relations will also have spill over benefits in terms of greater general awareness of the UNCCD, the GM and SLM issues.

⁶ Mainly addresses objective 3, as indicated in Section 2.1.

⁷ Mainly addresses objective 2, as indicated in Section 2.1.



For the Donor Relations Programme to be successful, the existing capacity of the GM may need to be deployed more effectively and strengthened, for example through an increased delegation of representational functions and a more sustained exposure within relevant national and international policy and decision making processes. Networking, communication, negotiation and problem solving skills may also need to be improved.

2.6.2 Partnerships Incubator Programme

To fully achieve its communication objectives, the GM will increase its presence in key fora, networks and processes, particularly at national level, where it will proactively disseminate information, stimulate policy dialogue, and generate interest for new initiatives, investment opportunities and innovative financing strategies for UNCCD implementation.

The Partnership Incubator Programme will facilitate the packaging and transfer of knowledge and expertise by developing and nurturing a network of relationships and processes specialised in knowledge harvesting, management and synthesis, and by opening up "spaces" for partnerships to grow.

As part of this programme, the large information base available to or accessible by the GM (e.g. through inter-agency networks) will be used to serve specific communication needs. For example, country and thematic communication packages may be prepared to consolidate and synthesize pertinent information to promote UNCCD mainstreaming. This information will include, inter-alia, short review documents signposting relevant analytic findings, good practices, instruments and organisations with relevant technical expertise or instrumental knowledge.

To help catalyse and broker partnerships with or between potential partners during UNCCD conferences and other major events, the GM will secure for itself exhibition spaces and meeting rooms for dissemination of its publications and to facilitate interaction between stakeholders and GM staff. To this effect, GM exhibition booths will be professionally designed, allocated adequate meeting space, and equipped with the necessary multi-media equipment and facilities.

To support GM brokered partnerships as they develop and encounter technical questions, as well as responding to individual organisations enquiries, the programme foresees the establishment of a "Partnership Service" which, in response to written queries, will help to mobilize existing knowledge resources to inform decision-making. Over time the queries and responses made will themselves contribute to the growing knowledge pool available from the GM.

2.6.3 Advocacy Programme

An advocacy programme is necessary to motivate and mobilize the target audience to take action. To do so, the GM will need to persuade and engage different groups and stimulate adequate responses. The GM Advocacy Programme will mainly reach government officials, organizations and civil society who are involved in relevant policy processes to ensure that UNCCD objectives are incorporated and/or further mainstreamed in the wider development agenda.

This implies and requires a good level of understanding of the central importance of the Convention's objectives to sustainable development. Building on the various national and international awareness raising initiatives organized in the context of the UNCCD, the programme will promote policy,



programmatic and budgetary commitment of all parties concerned for the implementation of the Convention.

The Advocacy Programme will benefit from and add value to the communication programmes of partner UN Agencies, NGOs, and academia, who can strengthen message development and delivery in the affected countries. They can also provide networks for disseminating information at the local, national, and international level and influence policy-making.

Examples of instruments and channels for the Advocacy Programme include:

- (i) the Internet;
- (ii) printed publications, information kits, presentations, and CD/DVD-ROMs;
- (iii) civil society fora;
- (iv) parliamentarians round tables;
- (v) university workshops and seminars;
- (vi) celebrity advocates and popular events;
- (vii) TV and radio (as and when appropriate).

2.7 Instruments, Channels, KM Tools and other Related Activities

As a knowledge brokering and advisory institution, Knowledge Management (KM) is an essential dimension that permeates all aspects of GM work. In this connection, the Communication Programmes mentioned above will draw upon and strengthen the following GM communication and KM instruments, channels, activities and tools:

2.7.1 Results-Based Management Reporting

Results Based Management (RBM) is a comprehensive, life cycle, approach to management that integrates business strategy, people, processes and measurements to improve decision-making and drive change. The approach focuses on getting the right design early in a process, implementing performance measurement, learning and changing, and reporting performance.

Reporting on results is much more than reporting on activities. It assesses actual progress in comparison to initial plans and it is an opportunity to stop and take stock. Reporting is also a communications tool to stimulate discussion among project or programme partners. The overall purpose for reporting is to support the achievement of development results.

The GM Communication Strategy will contribute to RBM Reporting as indicated below:

- Since the involvement of stakeholders in defining the assessment framework for RBM at the outset is key, the enhanced relationships that will be developed through the three communication programmes will lay a strong foundation for this work;
- Given that the sharing of findings and conclusions from RBM performance assessments in order to deepen the understanding and stimulate the debate amongst key stakeholders is also key, the improved channels of communication that will be developed (face to face, internet, print) will provide means to communicate more effectively GM results.



Examples of reports that will be prepared following the UN results-based management reporting guidelines are: the reports to COP/CRIC; the reports on donor contributions received by the GM; and the GM Annual Reports.

2.7.2 Networking & Partnerships

Key to the achievement of GM's communication objectives, particularly those associated to the Donor Relations Programme is the capacity of the GM to forge strategic partnerships and alliances with a number of players in its business and operating environment.

In other words, the GM is called upon to build networks through both formal and informal contact with decision makers in partner agencies and organizations in order to stimulate action, leverage support, and/or foster the sharing of ideas and experience in the development, financing and implementation of SLM policies and projects.

To be most effective in networking, the GM will need to further increase its presence in relevant events and organize more face-to-face meetings with key players. This will imply an intense programme of visits and missions by GM staff commensurate with the available budget for duty travel.

In addition to direct inter-personal meetings, networking can effectively be achieved through other means, such as: (i) electronic forums using Internet-based technology; (ii) (e)mailing to target individuals and organizations; (iii) engagement with influence groups of the civil society in the international policy dialogue; (iv) engagement with local NGOs and CBOs for information on local and traditional knowledge, good practices, and success stories; (v) involvement of the private sector, research and academic institutions, particularly on issues related to the transfer of technology.

2.7.3 Policy Research and Analysis

In the framework of the Consolidated Strategy and Enhanced Approach to resource mobilization, the GM will aim at (i) strengthening and supplementing the NAP processes with more comprehensive processes and innovative entry points into overarching development strategies and (ii) mainstreaming SLM and UNCCD implementation into funding instruments and national financing strategies.

Given that the economic linkages between land degradation, poverty, and other development objectives - especially in Africa - are driven by the policy environment, policy analysis is considered to be the most needed aspect in reversing land degradation. The GM strategy will therefore be supported by robust financial and policy analyses of thematic and strategic issues and linkages of relevance for SLM and UNCCD implementation that would facilitate multi-stakeholder engagement and the identification of opportunities for mobilizing available sources of financing.

As an output of the communication programmes, intended as a resource for GM partners at national and international levels, the GM will publish an occasional Policy Research and Analysis series which will cover a wide range of policy, technical and thematic issues of strategic importance for UNCCD financing. Through this series, the GM will provide an overview of existing policy and technical analyses and will publish the findings of innovative research and studies delineating specific opportunities and challenging conventional thinking. The series will highlight key dimensions of the poverty-environment nexus and will identify 'good' and 'bad' policies resulting in economic (dis)incentives for Sustainable Land Management. The series will contain informative editorial overviews synthesizing the policy implications for the international community.



The development and format of the policy series will be defined in a concept note which will be used to guide implementation of the whole series. It is however anticipated that the series will be published both in print and electronic versions, so as to facilitate its dissemination to specific target audiences. The series after one or two years could also be published as a collection.

2.7.4 The Internet

As a component of the overarching Communication Strategy, an Internet Strategy will be developed to describe the use that the GM will make of the Internet as a channel to communicate to the identified target audiences. The Internet Strategy will describe, for example, how the GM will effectively and consistently develop new ways to communicate through the Internet and make use of innovative tools to disseminate information and manage knowledge.

As part of the Internet Strategy, a new corporate website will be launched and a Content Management and Editorial Policy developed to purposely and accurately select, assemble and generate knowledge to be posted on the GM corporate website. It is anticipated that above policy will choose English as the main language for the GM website. However, the main GM messages on the website will be translated into French and Spanish to reach the widest audience possible. Further multi-lingual support may be provided in the future, depending on the availability of resources.

The new GM website will address the following objectives:

1. Reaching out to the GM stakeholders, informing them on:
 - i) Relevant thematic and strategic issues (e.g. Trade and market, Private Sector, Financing Strategies, etc.);
 - ii) GM activities included in its business plan (e.g. partnerships, donor initiatives, country activities, etc.)
2. Building and managing knowledge:
 - i) Sharing and building up selected knowledge;
 - ii) Deploying state-of-the-art IT tools for KM.
3. As a result of point 1 and 2, promoting partnerships, which entails in practice:
 - i) Building networks;
 - ii) Strengthening the capacity of stakeholders.

2.7.5 FIELD: Financial Information Engine on Land Degradation

The GM believes that better use of better statistics and knowledge leads to better policies and better development outcomes. In line with this principle and in conformity with its institutional mandate⁸, the GM developed the Financial Information Engine on Land Degradation (FIELD) with the objective of supporting evidence-based policy-making by generating and managing knowledge of specific value to the resource mobilization process.

One of the core elements of FIELD is a comprehensive database of desertification-related projects, funding agencies and organization profiles, including information on their policies, strategies,

⁸ Decision 24/COP.1



priorities, eligibility criteria, and application modalities. In total, this database currently contains over 12,000 cross-referenced records covering over 190 countries and 1000 organizations involved in UNCCD implementation worldwide. This information is classified according to a multi-dimensional set of about 150 thematic topics. Given that the quality of the information provided by FIELD is seen as an indicator of GM's added value, it is important that this database is regularly updated, improved and enhanced to respond to the stakeholders' requirements.

As an instrument of the GM Communication Strategy, FIELD will increasingly be used to inform and sensitize target audiences using accurate and reliable information on funding sources, financial needs and investment flows related to the implementation of the Convention. FIELD will therefore be used as a platform to facilitate the sharing and consolidation of knowledge, particularly in support of the Donor Relations and Partnerships Incubator Programmes. FIELD will also help monitoring the use and impact of available resources for the implementation of the Convention.

The GM will use FIELD for the purpose of highlighting the benefits of investing in Sustainable Land Management. At the same time, the GM will intensify its communication efforts to facilitate mainstreaming, partnership building, and the transfer of knowledge on financial opportunities to affected country Parties. Furthermore, the GM will expand its collaboration with country Parties, FC members and the OECD/DAC in the analysis of relevant investment trends and project/programme portfolios, as well as in the improvement, standardization and harmonization of reporting.

2.7.6 Publications and Media Relations

Printed publications and good media relations are two important channels of communication. Print material is generally regarded as (i) public information or promotional materials, such as annual reports, programme/project factsheets, brochures, flyers, official statements and press releases; (ii) technical documents, such as proceedings of national or regional meetings, as well as policy analyses and "position papers"; (iii) administrative documents, such as GM reports to CRIC/COP. Each publication must be designed and written to respond to the requirements of the specific target audience.

In addition to publishing and updating on a regular basis its annual reports, donor reports, programme and corporate brochures, and reports to COP/CRIC, the GM will explore the possibility to develop over time a flagship report to inform its key constituencies and the general public of core GM policies, strategies and messages, as well as issues and indicators of global concern, such as, for example, levels and trends in SLM financing. The emerging work on policy research and analysis, as well as the increasing co-operation with FC members, will inform and facilitate this task.

Coverage by the Media in target countries can enhance advocacy efforts and galvanise interest and support from key constituents. Therefore, to maximize the impact of its communications, the GM may decide to use different channels, including newsletters, press releases, articles, radio programmes, and film production. GM does not currently have capacity to produce these materials in-house and will therefore contract them out and/or collaborate with its partner agencies on materials design, production and related services. GM will also seek a closer collaboration with the UNCCD Secretariat in the development of specific awareness materials.

Ongoing communication activities to be delivered through publications and diffused to the media will include: (i) GM brochures and reports; (ii) relevant articles and surveys published by external sources; (iii) electronic publications and working papers; (iv) journalistic coverage of GM events; (v) interviews, speeches and public announcements; (vi) press conferences and briefings; (vii) production of



audio/video material; (viii) statements, public announcements and advertisements by GM/UNCCD goodwill ambassadors and honorary spokespersons, etc.

A periodic review of publications, press, journals, audio-visual programmes and other material will determine the specific media to use for achieving GM communication objectives. Over time, this work will allow the GM to build a network of journalists and develop a roster of favourite media. For instance, in 2006 the GM has decided to collaborate with the BBC for the production of a series of documentaries and a TV debate to celebrate the IYDD, to be aired on BBC World and BBC On-line.

2.7.7 Other Knowledge Management Activities

In the context of UNCCD, Knowledge Management (KM) can be defined as the process through which stakeholders generate value from their intellectual assets by sharing them with other organizations and institutions, in an effort to facilitate the dissemination and replication of best practices in UNCCD implementation. In particular, KM offers a way to improve outcomes in areas such as capacity building, learning from and with the governments and monitoring and evaluating progress.

The GM can contribute to this process by facilitating distillation of knowledge and lessons learned, developing systems and services for organizing and providing access to information and knowledge, analyzing and synthesizing the vast amount of relevant information to obtain targeted and relevant knowledge, and fostering meaningful use of it. To this effect, it is essential that an internal KM system is put in place to harness the information, knowledge and expertise gathered by the GM at country, regional and international level.

Other KM activities that may be considered by the GM, in order of priority include:

- Knowledge Networks and specific web-based tools (e.g. list-serves, newsletters and fora) supported by the GM to connect experts and capitalize on existing knowledge networks in relevant fields as mechanisms to generate and disseminate knowledge;
- Awareness-raising campaigns to develop trust, contacts and outline areas of potential collaboration for more ambitious KM activities;
- Packaging knowledge for adaptation and dissemination by local knowledge brokers (e.g. telecentres, radio stations, libraries) already supported through initiatives to bridge the digital divide;
- Distance Learning to transfer knowledge and build relationships, developed in collaboration with existing providers.



Section 3.

GM COMMUNICATION STRATEGY 2006-2010: DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

3.1 Resources

The resources required to implement the GM Communication Strategy will vary from year to year depending on the communication challenges and opportunities at stake. As a general “rule of thumb”, resulting from the experience of GM communications advisers and from established practices of organizations working on development cooperation⁹, a minimum of 10% of the corporate budget is generally allocated to communications.

Given the modularity of the components of the GM Communication Strategy, which permit a phased implementation, the GM will develop annual Programmes of Work and Budget commensurate with the resources available. As core budget resources are likely to be modest, the majority of the activities under the strategy are going to be dependent on mobilization of voluntary and collaborative resources. Potential sources for these might include: FC Partners, bilateral partners (development assistance and other international programs), development banks, private foundations and private sector partners.

Based on an initial consultation with multilateral and bilateral stakeholders there would appear to be scope for exploring collaborative resourcing in the following areas:

- forestry sector, including non-timber forest products
- trade, markets and private-sector development
- renewable energy sector
- water sector
- extraction and mining sector
- compensation for ecosystem services
- ethical investment and corporate social and environmental responsibility.

3.2 Timeframe

The Communications Strategy will be implemented over a five year time frame, with activities prioritised within the following Communication Plans:

1. GM Communication Plan for 2006
2. GM Communication Plan for 2007
3. GM Communication Plan for 2008-2010

⁹ See, for example, DFID’s “Communication of Research: Guidance Notes for Research Programme Consortia”, October 2005.



3.3 GM Communication plan for 2006

In 2006, the GM will undertake the following activities:

- Strengthen GM communication capacity;
- Frame a positive agenda for investments in dry and degraded lands;
- Implement the GM communication plan for the 2006 IYDD (see Annex 1);
- Develop and launch a new corporate website;
- Prepare communication material for CRIC5;
- Consolidate and coordinate the preparation of communication material for regional/thematic purposes, workshops, meetings and events;
- Conceptualize the GM Policy Analysis Briefing Series;
- Conceptualize and design the GM Annual Report;
- Develop a strategy to reposition FIELD as a reference database on SLM financing;
- Open channels for direct communication for the donor relations programme with donors at headquarter and country level from within the target audience;
- Develop communication packages for target countries/themes in support of partnership building and other corporate objectives;
- Define joint public awareness activities to be carried out in collaboration with the UNCCD secretariat as part of the biennial Joint Work Programme;
- Use results-based methodology to monitor and assess communication results;
- Develop the Communication Plan for 2007;
- Conduct a publication/press/media review to identify relevant media to implement the GM communication strategy in 2007.

3.4 GM Communication plan for 2007

In 2007, the GM will undertake the following activities:

- Enhance GM communication instruments and channels, in response to results achieved, lessons learned and feedback from stakeholders;
- Implement the GM communication plan for 2007, which will, inter-alia, include:
 - Communication material for COP8;
 - Communication material for regional/thematic purposes/events;
 - GM Policy Analysis Briefing Series;
 - GM Annual Report;
 - Regular updating of the GM corporate website;
 - Updating and maintenance of FIELD in line with the strategy developed in 2006;
- Map primary, secondary and tertiary target audiences using criteria and matrix scoring;
- Update the joint public awareness programme with the UNCCD secretariat;
- Repeat the publication/press/media review to identify most relevant media;
- Open channels for direct communication with more donors at headquarter and country level from within the target audience and sustain the relationships established in 2006;
- Organize innovative exhibition space for GM at COP8;
- Establish a partnership service as part of the GM Partnerships Incubator Programme;
- Monitor and assess communication results;
- Develop the Communication Plan for 2008-2010.



3.5 GM Communication plan for 2008-2010

In 2008-2010, the GM will undertake the following activities:

- Further develop and enhance GM communication instruments and channels, in response to results, lessons and feedback;
- Implement the GM communication plan for 2008-2010, which will inter-alia include:
 - Communication material for CRIC/COP sessions;
 - Communication material for UNCSD 2008-2009;
 - Communication material for regional/thematic purposes/events;
 - GM Policy Analysis Briefing Series;
 - GM Annual Reports;
 - Regular updating of the GM corporate website;
 - Updatind and maintenance of FIELD;
- Target audience mapping on the basis of results achieved and lessons learned;
- Review experience and intensify outreach with primary and secondary target audiences;
- Continue opening up and sustaining donor relations and partnerships;
- Identify and build synergies with mainstream communications initiatives by other actors and initiatives that present collaboration opportunities;
- Repeat the publication/press/media review to identify relevant media;
- Review and update the GM Communication Strategy for the following period.


GM participation in official UNCCD events and other initiatives to celebrate the 2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification.

DATE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
19-20 January	Rome (Italy)	Workshop on Combating desertification and poverty in drylands: Promoting the participation of civil society and decentralized cooperation in the framework of the UNCCD implementation
11-12 April	Geneva (Switzerland)	International Geneva Conference: Combating Desertification, Hunger and poverty
13-16 April	Marrakech (Morocco)	Decentralisation and local development in arid zones: Launch of the GM's SolArid programme
29 May-1 June	Beijing (China)	International Conference "Women and Desertification"
19-21 June	Tunis (Tunisia)	International scientific conference "The Future of Drylands", organized by UNESCO and other partners
27-31 August	Cape Town (South Africa)	GEF Assembly - Presentation of the GEF-GM resource mobilization study and status of funding for desertification
4-6 September	Bamako (Mali)	International Conference "Youth and the environment"
21-23 September	Montpellier (France)	International conference "Civil society and desertification" organised by CARI and supported by the GM
25-27 October	Almeria (Spain)	International Symposium on Desertification and Migrations
November	Algiers (Algeria)	Conference of the Heads of State about Deserts and Desertification
4-5 December	Rome (Italy)	International Workshop on "Environmental and socio-economic cost of desertification": Event organised by the French Scientific Committee on Desertification (CSFD), supported by the GM and IFAD
1-7 December	Rome (Italy)	International film festival "Desert nights: tales from the desert". Sponsored by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and under the patronage of the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage
17-19 December	Algiers (Algeria)	UNU International Conference: "Desertification and the International Policy Imperative"