

# UN summit spotlights financial need to combat land degradation

6 September 2017 – The head of the United Nations body tasked with addressing desertification today stressed the importance of financing for national commitments to combat land degradation, as a global summit on the issue got underway in China.

“It would be [intolerable for me](#) that we have invested so much time and effort into getting to this point and you, dear Parties, did not see the real benefit,” said Monique Barbut, the Executive Secretary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), in her remarks to the 13th session of the Conference of the Parties.

“Much of the work needs to continue to be done by your own governments, of course,” she added, announcing the launch of the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Fund – the first fund dedicated to rehabilitating degraded land. It will be managed by the private sector.

Ms. Barbut told participants at the meeting, being held in Ordos, Inner Mongolia, that 110 countries have set voluntary national LDN targets to drive their national action plans.

Once an increasing amount of public and private financial resources is made available, she said, “the missing piece is now a pipeline of technically sound projects.”

Ms. Barbut also stressed the need to take decisions on issues that have not yet been dealt with, particularly droughts or sand dust storms, while also underscoring the special importance of making projects more gender sensitive and responsive to the heavy daily workload of rural women.

The 196 country Parties attending the session, which runs through 16 September, are expected to agree on a 12-year strategy to contain runaway land degradation that is threatening global food and water supply.

“The end goal is to protect our land, from over-use and drought, so it can continue to provide us all with food, water and energy,” said Ms. Barbut.

The UNCCD is the only legally binding international agreement on land issues.

**VIDEO:** Land Degradation Neutral World. Credit: UNCCD