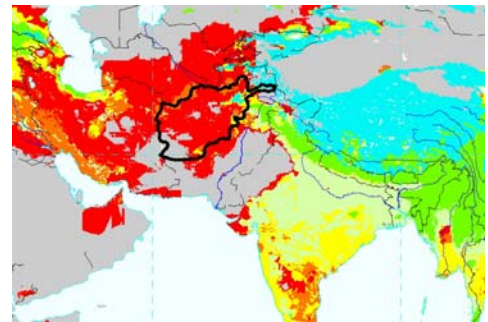


12 September 2007

## Desertification Workshop in Herat 17-18 September 2007 - NCSA and NAPA Process in Afghanistan

Initiated in 2004 with support from the United Nations Environment Programme and the Global Environmental Facility, the National Capacity Needs Self Assessment (NCSA) and National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) projects have two aims. Firstly, their purpose is to improve the capacity of the Government to implement three international conventions to which Afghanistan is Party: Biodiversity (UNCBD), Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Desertification (UNCCD). Secondly, they support the development of a program of action for adapting to climate change.



*Vulnerability of Afghanistan to desertification and land degradation: red indicates highly vulnerable. Source: Global Desertification Vulnerability Map, NRCS USDA*

An estimated 41% of the Earth's land, home to some 20% of the world's population, is considered dryland. This fragile environment which characterizes almost all of Afghanistan, is particularly



*Wind erosion is often augmented by poor agricultural practices that reduce vegetation cover. Photo: Nimroz, Afghanistan 2006, by Wali Modaqiq, UNEP*

vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change and desertification. Widespread agricultural expansion across natural rangelands, unplanned drilling of deep wells, increased demands for energy (often in the form of fire wood), and associated processes of deforestation, desertification and soil erosion, are driving sometimes irreversible processes of environmental degradation.

In Afghanistan almost 80% of the population relies on the country's natural resource base for their livelihoods, so the balance between nature and humans is precarious. The consequences of land degradation and climate change are severe, threatening the very subsistence of large proportions of the rural population.



The NCSA and NAPA processes have been initiated with specialized training and participatory exercises with government officials in the areas of the climate change, desertification and biodiversity conventions. Kabul-based workshops are now being followed up with a series of regional workshops aimed at identifying the various impacts of climate change on local people's livelihoods

On the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of September, approximately 40 farmers from the Provinces of Nimroz, Farah and Herat will gather in the city of Herat to discuss the effects of climate change on their day-to-day lives. Focussed discussions will be realized with Baluch, dryland (rainfed) farmers, farmers practicing irrigated agriculture, and livestock herders. Amongst other topics, the farmers will discuss the impacts of climate change and associated dynamics on drinking water, crops, livestock production, rangeland, and grazing patterns.

Local knowledge gathered through these workshops will inform national reports on the effects of climate change in Afghanistan and will facilitate the identification of priority follow-up projects to prevent and mitigate the negative impacts of climate change on rural livelihoods.

**For further information and interviews, please contact:**

Wali Modaqiq  
United Nations Environment Programme  
National Project Coordinator GEF  
Tel: +.93.(0)79 9 .131.618  
Email: wali.modaqiq@unep.ch