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**CLEMDES - Clearing House Mechanism  
on Desertification for the Northern Mediterranean Region**

**General Directorate of Rural Services  
Eskisehir Yolu 10.km  
Ankara, Turkey  
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Mid-Term National Report - 01 November 2002- 31 October 2003

By

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### 1. Objectives

This report has been prepared for the the first year of the Turkish component of the CLEMDES project.

The objectives of the project are to:

- promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation within and among Annex IV and other affected countries
- develop mechanisms for the participation of scientific community, stakeholders and NGOs in the exchange and integration of information on desertification
  - disseminate available research results
  - establish a relevant central (portal) website
  - develop a tool kit to assist national internet data bases
  - develop synergies with other related initiatives.

The objectives will be reached through; (a) promoting and facilitating scientific and technical cooperation in combating desertification, among institutions, organizations and other stakeholders within the countries of Annex IV of the UNCCD. Thus, the first objective of the implementation phase was to collect information about various institutions in Turkey, governmental and non-governmental, and individuals within those institutions whose field of action or research is related to combating desertification and who may contribute relevant information to the Turkish node of the network, and then to the whole Mediterranean network. (b) disseminating information about CLEMDES among as many relevant institutions as possible, and encourage them to join the network and contribute information on activities in which they are involved and are related to



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combating desertification. (c) collecting updated data on desertification-related physical characteristics of Turkey such as aridity index variables and land uses in areas prone to desertification, and to create thematic maps for presentation on the CLEMDES website.

## **2. Methodology and Scientific Achievements**

In order to achieve the objectives described above, a database was prepared to which information about potential institutions and organizations in Turkey will be fed. This database includes governmental ministries, universities and research institutions, municipal and local authorities and non-governmental organizations. The institutions identified as relevant, will be informed about the CLEMDES project via e-mail after the completion of the web site.

Each of the participating institutions will be requested to collect relevant information about projects, activities or experts within institution and feeding that information periodically to the Clearing House Mechanism. This activities will be checked regularly by the principal contractor.

## **3. Socio-economic relevance and policy implications**

It is always mentioned that policy and measure implementation is a difficult task. It requires the cooperation of many actors including NGOs. Specific measures and strategies should be designed and applied by local agencies and stakeholders. Multifunctional approaches should be applied. Policy makers and legislators must be persuaded for the necessity of sustainable management of soil and water resources. Local populations in desertification sensitive areas should be given, in pursuing their livelihood and income, alternative choices beyond the exploitation of the soil and water resources.

The socio-economic relevance of desertification relates to several communities in Turkey who live in areas prone to desertification. The livelihoods of some of these communities are farming, hence these people are prone to desertification risks, especially due to their unstable socio-economic status.

Desertification, being related to important concepts like land, water, climate, forestry, agriculture, migration, education, poverty, health and natural



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stability, requires an interdisciplinary approach. As desertification lies under the authoritative power of several institutions, problems arise in coordination and harmonization.

#### **4. Discussion and conclusion**

As an semi-arid country with a relatively large agricultural land use, Turkey is prone to desertification. Therefore, many bodies and institutions in Turkey deal with the various aspects of desertification and produce data and information which could be useful to other institutions in and outside of Turkey.

The CLEMDES project will provide a platform on which information can be shared, not only among the many various bodies in Turkey who deal with aspects of desertification, but also, this information can be shared with interested parties in other countries. Bringing those institutions to take part in a joint meeting and later on in sharing information through the Clearing House Mechanism network helps in introducing the extent of the problem to a wide range of institutions in Turkey from different perspectives, and could promote in the future cooperation between those different stakeholders.

#### **5. Plan and objectives for the next period**

The main objective for the next period of the CLEMDES project is to accomplish National Meeting and to create a mechanism by which each of the institutions taking part in the network, will provide relevant information about projects, activities or experts from within his institution. This information will be fed to the Clearing House Mechanism periodically by each institution, using the web mechanism created by the project coordinators.

An electronic communications among the relevant institutions is planned to be ready in 2004.