

Government of Barbados

Statement on Land Degradation and Desertification

Inter-governmental Preparatory Meeting For the 17th Session of CSD February 26th 2009

Madam Chair

Recognizing the possible threat that land degradation and drought poses to Barbados' social and economic development, government continues to address the problem via some key governmental institutions.

- The Soil Conservation Unit addresses issues relating to land degradation within the vulnerable Scotland District,
- The Drainage Unit focuses on flood related matters.
- The Coastal Zone Management Unit deals with all coastal related matters, including the evident increase in beach erosion which is now a major threat to coastal plant communities around the island's coastline.

More recently a Natural Heritage Department (NHD) was established in 2005, with part of its mandate to ensure that land-use practices occurring within the proposed National Park are consistent with sustainable land management. Similarly, a National Botanical Gardens Unit was established primarily to promote and showcase best land-use practices on environmentally sensitive landscapes.

Government's support and commitment to the implementation of the provisions of the UNCCD is reiterated via the following actions:

- ongoing capacity building;
- structured and coherent reviews, participatory planning and implementation of governance-based systems;
- continual allocation of financial resources via national budgetary processes;
- continual amendments to existing legislation and the creation of new laws and regulations;
- participation in regional and international functional and technical cooperation arrangements on degradation and drought issues;
- establishment of national data collection, indicator, and information dissemination systems; and
- increased efforts in public consultation, engagement, education and outreach programmes.

While we have put some measures in place- the area of land information systems, access to new and developing technologies in monitoring and surveillance and training of personnel in this particular area remains a constraint.

The Government of Barbados is hopeful that emerging from CSD 17, we will be able to identify partners with whom we can share our experience in addressing land

degradation. We also hope to identify opportunities for capacity development and technology transfer in the area of land management monitoring and information systems.

I Thank you.