Land and Ecosystem Degradation and Desertification: Assessing the Fit of Responses

FP7-ENV-2009-1
Collaborative project (SICA)
Grant Agreement No. 243857

Policy Conference: Research on Responses to Land Degradation and Desertification

March 17-18, 2014

Hotel Aquino, Hannoversche Straße 5b, 10115 Berlin, Germany

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On-site contact
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LEDDRA - Research on Responses to Land and Ecosystem Degradation and Desertification (LEDD)

Scope and Aim of the Conference

More than 20% of land at the global level has been affected by land degradation, negatively impacting soil productivity, the provision of ecosystem services, and people's livelihoods. The most common land degradation problems include soil erosion, water stress, ecosystem fragmentation, biodiversity decline, and land desertification. Land degradation caused by unsustainable land use practices may be influenced by socio-economic factors, leading land users to make land management decisions which contribute to rather than alleviate desertification. The increasing effects of climate change and the need to cope with global challenges, such as the mounting demand for food production, are accelerating these trends. Various types of actions are being taken to respond to land and ecosystem degradation and desertification (LEDD), seeking to address both land and ecosystem-related problems and a range of socio-economic concerns.

The EU-funded research project LEDDRA (Land and Ecosystem Degradation and Desertification: Assessing the Fit of Responses) works collaboratively within a cross-national context to elaborate on scientifically sound practices and inform policies to combat LEDD. Special emphasis is placed on assessing the socio-ecological fit of responses to LEDD in order to identify policies which tackle environmental, economic and social impacts in an integrated manner. The overall aim of the assessment is to improve the effectiveness of policies addressing LEDD worldwide by understanding, adapting, and applying shared concepts to different contexts. This process is a fundamental requirement for rational, responsive, and effective land management, planning, and policy making that contributes to sustainable development in LEDD-affected areas.

Led by the University of the Aegean (Lesvos, Greece), the LEDDRA project team comprises experienced researchers from the natural, social, and political sciences working across Europe and in China and Morocco. The project has also involved a wide variety of local and regional stakeholders at 10 different study sites located in cropland, grazing land, and forests/shrubland regions.

The 2014 LEDDRA Policy Conference marks a milestone in the LEDDRA project research and also closes this research project. The primary aim of the Policy Conference is to present selected, policy-related, project findings and to discuss associated policy recommendations, as well as to develop new critical thinking to support future initiatives addressing LEDD.

The conference brings together LEDDRA researchers, policy makers from international, EU organisations, and Member States, as well as stakeholder groups and NGOs. The discussion and questions raised by the presentations and dialogue at the conference will contribute to the ongoing efforts to combat land degradation and desertification at the international, European, and national levels.

More information on LEDDRA can be found under: http://leddra.ecologic-events.eu/

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AGENDA

Monday, March 17, 2014

Plenary Session and Working Roundtables
Presentation of Project Results and Discussions

08:30 **Registration and coffee**

PLENARY SESSION

09:00 **Welcome**
Prof. R. Andreas Kraemer, Director, Ecologic Institute, Conference Chairman

09:05 **Can we stop desertification with Nature-Based Solutions? A Science-Policy Dialogue**
Maria Yeroyanni, Policy officer of LEDDRA, European Commission - DG Research and Innovation

09:15 **The LEDDRA project – Four years of research on human responses to Land and Ecosystem Degradation and Desertification (LEDD)**
Prof. Helen Briassoulis, LEDDRA project coordinator, University of the Aegean

RESPONSES AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO LEDD -FINDINGS FROM THE LEDDRA PROJECT

09:30 **Theory of responses to LEDD and community resilience**
Prof. Geoff Wilson, Dr. Claire Kelly, LEDDRA, University of Plymouth

09:50 **Responses to LEDD in cropland, grazing land, forests and shrubland**

Responses to LEDD in cropland
Prof. Costas Kosmas, Agricultural University of Athens

Responses to LEDD in grazing land
Prof. Concepción L. Alados, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas

Responses to LEDD in forests and shrubland
Prof. Agostino Ferrara, Università degli Studi della Basilicata

10:40 **Policy recommendations - findings from the LEDDRA project**
Ruta Landgrebe, Ecologic Institute

11:00 **Discussion**
Moderation by Prof. R. Andreas Kraemer, Ecologic Institute

11:30 *Coffee break*

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Monday, March 17, 2014

RESPONSES TO LEDD – PRACTICAL APPROACHES AND POLICY INSTRUMENTS IN PLACE – INSIGHTS FROM LOCAL AND REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE STUDY SITES

11:50 **The gap between formulation and implementation of European / National policy in Messara Valley and Asteroussia Mts, Crete, Greece**
Konstantinos Damianakis, Farmer - Environmental microbiologist; Dimitris Psarras, Coordinator of the environmental NGO Phoenix and Evgenia Stylianou, Agriculturist, Planning authority of the municipality of Asterousia

12:10 **Evaluation of legal responses to the management of Pyrenean pastures**
Federico Fillat, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas

12:30 **Discussion**

13:00 *Lunch break*

WORKING ROUNDTABLES

Facilitation of the working round tables by LEDDRA partners

14:15 **Introduction to the 'rotating' working round tables**
Sandra Naumann, Ecologic Institute

14:30 **Responses to LEDD and policy recommendations**
Based on the project findings presented during the morning, the working round tables will discuss a series of key questions related to the socio-ecological fit of responses to LEDD and proposed policy recommendations.

16:15 *Coffee break*

16:45 **Feedback from working round tables and discussion**
Moderation by Prof. R. Andreas Kraemer, Ecologic Institute, and Chairs of working round tables

17:30 **Closing remarks**
Prof. R. Andreas Kraemer, Ecologic Institute

17:50 **Special feature: Gorillas featuring LEDD**

18:30 End of day 1

18:30 Cocktail reception and finger food

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AGENDA

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Plenary Session
Policy Recommendations

PLENARY SESSION

09:00 **Recap on the feedback from working round tables & discussion**
Moderation by Prof. R. Andreas Kraemer, Director, Ecologic Institute

09:15 **Views of the International and EU stakeholders - how to improve the institutional framework of responses to LEDD - the need for policy action at the International and EU levels**

09:15 **The International perspective**
Sergio Zelaya, Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

09:30 **The European perspective**
Claudia Olazabal, European Commission - DG Environment, Unit Head of B1. Agriculture, Forests and Soil

09:45 **The Economics of Land Degradation - Integrating the economic perspective into the science-policy interface**
Mark Schauer, Coordinator of the ELD-Initiative and Hannes Etter, Science Desk Officer, Economics of Land Degradation (ELD)-Initiative

10:00 **Panel discussion - Land and Ecosystem Degradation - Opportunities for EU and global action**

Moderation by Prof. R. Andreas Kraemer, Ecologic Institute

Sergio Zelaya, Executive Secretary, UNCCD

Claudia Olazabal, European Commission - DG Environment, Unit B1. Agriculture, Forests and Soil

Mark Schauer, Coordinator of the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD)-Initiative

Luca Montanarella, European Commission - European Commission - DG JRC

Prof. Uriel Safriel, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research

11:30 *Coffee break*

11:50 **Final conclusions and closing of the Policy Conference**
Prof. R. Andreas Kraemer, Ecologic Institute, and Prof. Helen Briassoulis, University of the Aegean

12:30 Lunch

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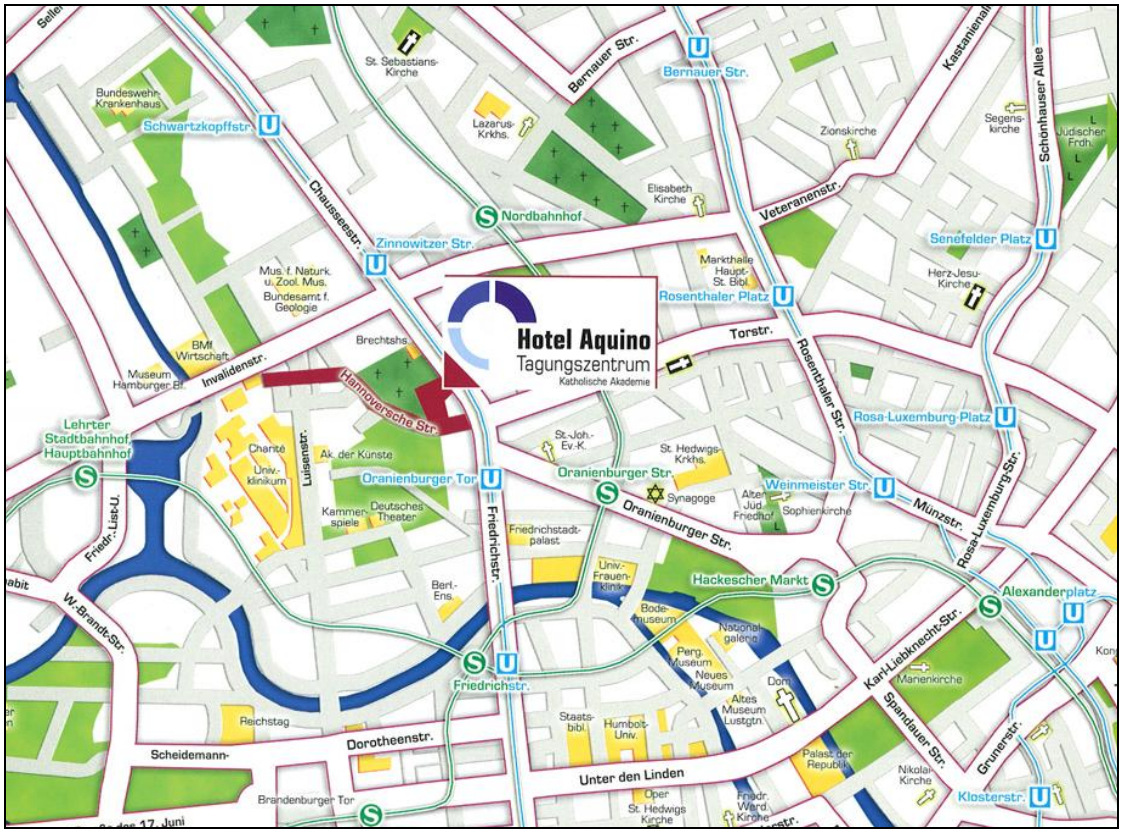
Logistic Information

Conference venue
Hotel Aquino - Tagungszentrum Katholische Akademie
Hannoversche Straße 5b, 10115 Berlin-Mitte
Tel.: +49 30 28486-0

Getting there by public transport:

- Bus: 142 – "Philippstrasse" bus stop
- Tram: M1, M6 and M12 - Oranienburger Tor stop (located on Friedrichstrasse)
- U-Bahn: U6 - Oranienburger Tor station (located on Friedrichstrasse)
- S-Bahn: Friedrichstrasse Station, then take the U6 or tram to Oranienburger Tor



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