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International Network on Water,
Environment and Health

UNU-INWEH Policy Seminar Series
Commemorating the World Desertification Day 2009

Climate Change and Water Stress: A Recipe for Desertification

Organized in Conjunction with
The School of Public Policy & Administration, Carleton University, Ottawa

Venue: Dunton Tower, room 2017
Carleton University, Ottawa

Date: Monday, 22 June 2009

Context: It has now become clear that desertification is one of the most pressing global environmental challenges of our time, threatening to reverse the gains in sustainable development that we have seen emerge in many parts of the world. The changes in water distribution in water-scarce countries as a result of climate change are and will make the situation worse in the coming years. Desertification can destabilize societies by deepening poverty and creating environmental refugees who can often add stress to areas that may not yet be degraded. The impacts of desertification are exacerbated by political marginalization of the dryland poor, by the slow growth of health and education infrastructure and by the lack of livelihood alternatives to resource depleting agricultural practices. A major rethinking in the international and national policies is essential. This seminar explores such policy changes and highlights success stories from many countries where adaptation to climate change can help minimize the impacts of desertification.

Programme:

- 16:00 The Silent Global Desertification Crisis - The Strong Links between Climate Change and Increased Water Stress Worldwide
Dr. Zafar Adeel, Director UNU-INWEH
- 16:20 Adapting Livelihoods to Climate Change - Case Studies from 8 Countries
Dr. Richard Thomas, Assistant Director (Drylands) UNU-INWEH
- 16:45 A Panel Discussion on Desertification in the Context of Global Climate Change
Panellists: Dr. Robert Slater, Prof. Manfred A. Bienefeld (Carleton University), other panellists to be confirmed.
Moderator: Dr. Zafar Adeel
- 17:30 Cocktail Reception