The 5th International Conference on Deserts, Drylands and Desertification (DDD)

Concluding Statement

We, the participants of the 5th International Conference on Drylands, Deserts and Desertification, held at the Sede Boqer Campus of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, having heard the report of the deliberations from members of the UNCCD's Science-Policy Interface (SPI) Committee, do hereby endorse the following statement with regard to the science behind sustainable land use as an adaptation to climate change and the availability of indicators for monitoring this land-based climate change adaptation.

1. Since (a) land degradation exacerbates climate change (with high certainty); and

(b) sustainable land management (SLM) reduces land degradation (with medium certainty),

SLM may be qualified to be considered a climate change adaptation strategy.

2. Currently available knowledge has to be further assessed for detecting existing or proposed adaptations to projected, rather than current, climate conditions.

3. The already proposed and agreed-upon land degradation indicators may be found by some *not* to be qualified as indicators that reflect land-based climate change adaptation.

4. Therefore, an effort that explores newly proposed indicators for specifically monitoring land-based climate adaptations may be useful.

5. If the latter indicators are found to also indicate mitigation efforts, it would surely be a welcome development.

6. Finally, the UNCCD process is commended for establishing a science-policy mechanism, but it needs to take note of the following:

(a) Interfacing with science is, in itself, a science;

(b) Policy-making is a science too;

(c) The direct land users -- the farmers -- would also greatly benefit from interfacing with science; and

(d) We scientists need their knowledge in order to successfully interface it with both science and policy.

Endorsed at the Concluding Plenary Session of the DDD conference, Sede Boqer Campus of Ben-Gurion University, Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research, November 20, 2014