



Dear GNDRI member,

25 September, 2009

**Founding
Institutions**

Arid Land Research Center
Tottori, Japan

Centro de Investigaciones
sobre Desertificación
Valencia, Spain

Cold and Arid Regions
Environmental & Engineering
Research Institute
Lanzhou, China

Desert Research Center
Cairo, Egypt

Desert Research
Foundation of Namibia
Windhoek, Namibia

Desert Research Institute
Reno, NV, USA

Dryland Research Centre
Hamburg, Germany

Gujarat Institute for
Desert Ecology
Bhuj, Gujarat, India

Instituto Argentino de
Investigaciones de las
Zonas Áridas
Mendoza, Argentina

International Center for Arid
and Semiarid Land Studies
Lubbock, TX, USA

Jacob Blaustein Institutes
for Desert Research
Ben-Gurion University
of the Negev
Sede Boqer, Israel

**International
Organizations**

International Crop Research
Institute for Semi-Arid
Tropics (ICRISAT)

Re: Report on “Launching GNDRI” Side Event in COP9 of UNCCD, Buenos-Aires, Argentina

“Launching GNDRI” Side Event took place on the 24th September 2009, in the Buenos-Aires Hilton Hotel, under the auspices of the 9th Conference of the Parties of the UNCCD (COP9P). A couple of days prior to the event, it was announced during a segment of the “Scientific Conference” of the Committee for Science and Technology (CST) of the UNCCD, under the heading of “Global Initiatives”. The two-minutes PowerPoint presentation briefly described GNDRI and extended an invitation to the participants of the “Scientific Conference” to attend the Side Event. In addition, two hundred flyers were handed out to the delegates of the UNCCD and were posted in the various meeting rooms of COP9.

The “Side Event” was opened by an introductory presentation delivered by me, in which the rationale, mission, programs, website and governance structure of GNDRI were described. This was followed by short presentations delivered by researchers representing each a GNDRI member institute and describing its activities, especially those relevant to UNCCD implementation. The presenters were Professor Atsushi Tsunekawa (ALRC, Japan), Professor Pedro Berliner (BIDR, Israel), Dr. Gary Bastin (CSIRO, Alice Springs Lab), Dr. Mary Seely (DRFN, Namibia), Professor Elena Abraham (IADIZA, Argentina), Dr. Aderbal C. Correa (ICASALS, USA), and Dr. Suhas Wani (ICRISAT, India).

Prof. Jose Rubio (CIDE, Spain), Dr. Norbert Jurgens (DRCH, Germany), Professors Nicholas Lancaster and Dave Mouat (DRI, USA) and Dr. Vijay Kumar (GUIDE, India) prepared presentations on their respective member institutes, which I delivered. Thus, the only GNDRI member institutes not presented in this Side Event were CARRERI (China) and DRC (Egypt).

The meeting, lasting one and a half hours, was attended by around 70 members of national delegates to the UNCCD and scientists participating in the “Scientific Conference”. In closing the meeting I announced that GNDRI is open to new member institutes, provided they are committed by their mandate to dryland research. Indeed, after closing I received quite a number of requests for joining the network,

The event was preceded by a complimentary lunch provided by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Israel in Buenos Aires, the latter also printed the flyers. All presentations delivered during the side event, and also that of the announcement in the “Scientific Conference” are to be uploaded into GNDRI website, www.GNDRI.net.

Sincerely yours,

Uriel Safriel, GNDRI Coordinator, on behalf of BIDR