

## ASSESSMENT OF METHODS TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

# PRACTICE

### AT A GLANCE

**Title:** Prevention and Restoration Actions to Combat Desertification. An Integrated Assessment

**Instrument:** Support Action FP7

**Total Cost:** 1.109.720 €

**EC Contribution:** 976.963 €

**Duration:** 36 months

**Start Date:** 01/09/2009

**Consortium:** 15 partners from 11 countries

**Project Coordinator:** CEAM Foundation, ES

**Project Web Site:**

<http://www.ceam.es/practice>

**Key Words:** desertification prevention, restoration, evaluation, knowledge transfer, participatory approach

### THE CHALLENGE

Responding to desertification by improving the efficiency of land management represents a crucial step towards social welfare in drylands. While science has made noticeable progress in aiding our understanding of the drivers and processes of desertification, local adoption of good practices, the exchange of experience and knowledge, and the incorporation of the human dimension in the solutions often remain limited. Two fundamental gaps stand out: Systematic evaluation of practices to combat desertification is still lacking, and the valuable local knowledge of those influenced by land degradation is too rarely fully considered.

PRACTICE addresses this challenge integrating evaluation of prevention and restoration practices and knowledge exchange in a process defined by both scientists and stakeholders in an iterative manner.

### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The central goal of PRACTICE is to link science to society in order to share and transfer evaluation methods and practices to combat desertification. To pursue this goal, PRACTICE first aims to develop and implement an integrated evaluation tool to assess the effectiveness of prevention and restoration practices. Second, to develop translational science strategies and education material addressing and involving stakeholders at all levels, from farmers and local organisations to national and international bodies. Third, to create an international platform of long-term monitoring sites aimed at supporting future



synthetic analysis, improving the accessibility and use of long-term data, and disseminating knowledge on best practices worldwide.

## METHODOLOGY

Two key activities of PRACTICE will be the establishment of a coordination platform, linking a variety of field sites for the long-term assessment of sustainable management and

PROJECT PARTNERS	
CEAM Foundation (CEAM), ES	University of Hamburg, BioCentre Flottbek (UHAM), DE
University of Alicante (UA), ES	Liga para a Protecção da Natureza (LPN), PT
Nucleo di Ricerca sulla Desertificazione, University of Sassari (NRD), IT	Ben Gurion University (BGU), IL
University of Trier (UTRIER), DE	School of Environmental Sciences and Development, North-West University (NWU), ZA
Euro Mediterranean Center on Climate Change (CIP-CMCC), IT	NE Normal University & Shengyang Institute of Applied Ecology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (NENU-CAS), CN
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), GR	Instituto de Ecología y Biodiversidad (IEB), CL
University of Aberdeen (UNIABDN), GB	Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León (UANL), MX
Fundación Universidad Empresa Región de Murcia (FUERM), ES	

actions to combat desertification, and the definition of an integrated protocol for the assessment of these actions. The assessment protocol will integrate ground-based and remote-sensing approaches, biophysical and socio-economic evaluation, and expert and local knowledge. The protocol will be implemented in the field to consistently document and evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and restoration techniques and strategies. Finally, PRACTICE will link assessment and evaluation with training and education, adaptive management, and knowledge sharing and dissemination, by implementing innovative participatory approaches –involving all relevant stakeholders.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

PRACTICE will collect and disseminate long-term experiences and datasets on land restoration and sustainable management in various involved countries all over the world. An integrated method for the assessment of prevention and restoration practices will be developed, and will provide the basis for

evaluating a wide diversity of actions to combat desertification, in a wide range of socio-economic, biophysical, and technical conditions. In addition, PRACTICE will facilitate the direct links between stakeholders through their involvement in the evaluation process, bridging the gap between research and practice. Integrated assessment of the efficiency of mitigation and adaptation techniques in the network of sites will foster

feedbacks for proposing new actions to optimise prevention and restoration results, in the framework of adaptive management principles.

