



Mitigating Dust and Sandstorms through Combating Desertification

The Serious Challenge of Desertification, Dust and Sandstorms (DSS) in the Subregion

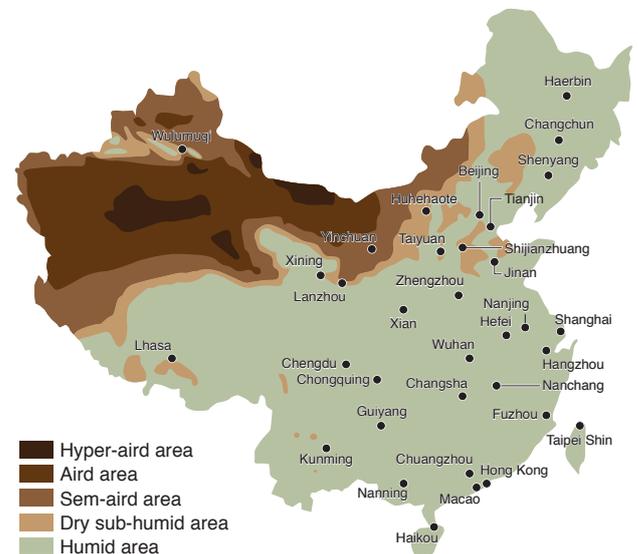
Described by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon as “a complex challenge with long-term social, economic and environmental implications”, desertification and land degradation affects two billion people globally and remains a serious challenge for the North-East Asia subregion. Vast areas in the subregion continue to suffer from desertification, land degradation and its associated consequences including the yellow dust.

CHINA

Desertification threatens over 25% of its landmass (approximately 2.6 million km²) in 18 provinces with more than 70 severe DSS taken place since the 1950s. Desertification and DSS have affected more than 400 million people in total. They bring about great economic losses, most importantly, hinder the progress on poverty reduction and have adverse impact on health.

Key actions of China in response to this severe threat:

- Reversed the desertification process and achieved annual reversal of over 1200km²
- Enacted the Law on Prevention and Control of Desertification in 2002, it is the world's first law which dedicates to desertification prevention and control
- Established benefit-driven system to encourage active participation of society on sustainable landuse systems (eg PES, ForestES and GrassES)
- Invested over USD 100 million annually in key desertification control projects since 2000
- Research, monitoring and dissemination of best practices

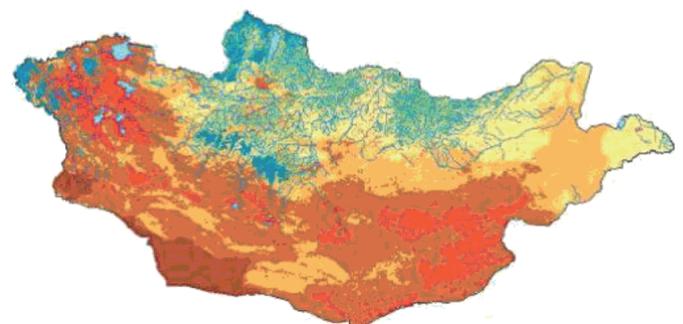


MONGOLIA

Almost all grasslands and 90% of Mongolia's pastureland are under threat of desertification. Mongolia is highly vulnerable to ecological changes and impact of climate change on increasing temperature and decreasing precipitation during heavy rain season. The number of days with dust and sandstorm events has multiplied by more than 3 folds between 1960-2006.

Key actions taken by Mongolia to combat desertification:

- Established the National Committee on Combating Desertification (NCCD)
- National “Green Wall” Programme for a 3000km green zone between desert and steppe ecozones from western to eastern regions
- Strengthened the nation legal framework with a number of new or modified laws regarding ecosystem management (Law on Land, Law on Land Fees, Buffer Zone Law, Law on Environmental Impact Assessment, etc)
- Desertification is considered in a variety of policies to mitigate desertification such as the Comprehensive National Development Strategy, National Climate Change Programme and the National Programmes on Forest and Water



Rate of desertification

Light yellow	Slightly	Red	Severely
Orange	Moderately	Dark red	Very severely or irreversibly

Source of maps: Combating Desertification
Land Degradation: Proven Practices from Asia and the Pacific, Korea Forest Service (2011)

NEASPEC has worked with governments and various partners over the years to collaborate and build capacity in prevention and control of DSS in North-East Asia.

Training Workshops on Combating Desertification in North-East Asia, Beijing and Inner Mongolia, China, 2011 and 2013

NEASPEC and the Institute of Desertification Studies (IDS), Chinese Academy of Forestry, have jointly held two training workshops for Mongolian officials and experts. The workshops consisted of lectures and field visits to sand control project sites in Inner Mongolia. The workshops offered a unique opportunity bringing together Chinese and Mongolian experts and officials to exchange information and experience, as well as to explore practicality of techniques in Mongolian context.



Implementation of Regional Master Plan

The Regional Master Plan is a joint initiative jointly developed in 2005 by four agencies (ADB, UNESCAP, UNEP and UNCCD) and four countries (China, Mongolia, Japan and Republic of Korea). It aimed to enhance prevention and control of dust and sandstorms in North-East Asia through strengthening transboundary cooperation. The Project covered a cross-border area of Zamyn-Uud, Mongolia and Erenhot, China.

The NEASPEC Implementation Project began in 2011 at the Inception Meeting held in Ulaanbaatar and Zamyn-Uud, Mongolia. The following work has then been carried out under the implementation of the Regional Master Plan:

- Capacity-building: NEASPEC partnered with the Chinese Academy of Forestry and held training workshop for Mongolian participants in 2011
- Tree planting and irrigation system installation
- Development of self-financing mechanism
- Development of online GIS database on national programmes for combating desertification
- Publication of awareness raising and capacity building materials



NEASPEC was launched in 1993 as a comprehensive intergovernmental cooperation mechanism comprising all six North-East Asian countries, namely, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, and the Russian Federation.

UNESCAP-ENEA Office functions as the Secretariat.

Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) is held annually as the governing body and principal vehicle for the evolution of NEASPEC.

NEASPEC works on



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