

Project results and dissemination to stakeholders

- development of a Harmonised Information System (HIS) that will be the centre for comprehensively archiving, documenting and giving access to all the material collected, organized, and developed in DESIRE,
- dissemination of all information within the project, so that all partners can access the information,
- the HIS will be made internet based in a number of languages,
- construction of decision support tools to suggest “best management practices” as determined by research and testing in the study sites,
- preparation of guidance and training packages to enable facilitators to bridge the information gap between scientists and stakeholders in the partner countries,
- dissemination of the DESIRE products to the international community, in an international DESIRE conference and through special sessions at other conferences.

Project partnership

No.	Organisation name	Country
1	Alterra	Netherlands
2	Catholic University of Leuven	Belgium
3	University of Leeds	United Kingdom
4	University of Wales Swansea	United Kingdom
5	Centre for Development and Environment, University Bern	Switzerland
6	Estacion Experimental de Zonas Aridas	Spain
7	University of Aveiro	Portugal
8	CNR Research Institute for Hydrogeological Protection	Italy
9	Agricultural University of Athens	Greece
10	Eskisehir Osmangazi University	Turkey
11	University of Mohamed V, Chair UNESCO-GN	Morocco
12	Institut des Regions Arides	Tunisia
13	Institut for Soil and Water Conservation	China
14	Wageningen University	Netherlands
15	Democritus University of Thrace	Greece
16	BothEnds	Netherlands
17	ISRIC	Netherlands
18	Escola Superior Agrária de Coimbra	Portugal
19	CARI	France
20	University of Botswana	Botswana
21	ITC	Netherlands
22	IRD	France
23	Cornell University	USA
24	Deakin University	Australia
25	MEDES	Italy
26	MSUEE	Russia
27	INIA	Chili
28	INIDA	Cape Verde

Contact address:
 ALTERRA, Soil Science Centre
 Coen Ritsema
 P.O. Box 47
 6700 AA Wageningen, The Netherlands

Phone: +31 317 47 42 66
 Fax: +31 317 41 90 00
 Email: Coen.Ritsema@wur.nl



Introduction

Twenty-eight partner institutions from across the world, consisting of research institutes, universities, NGOs, and SMEs, prepared a large integrated research proposal, entitled DESIRE, which is in the contract negotiation phase at the EU currently. The anticipated project budget is more than 8 million Euro, and the project duration 5 years.

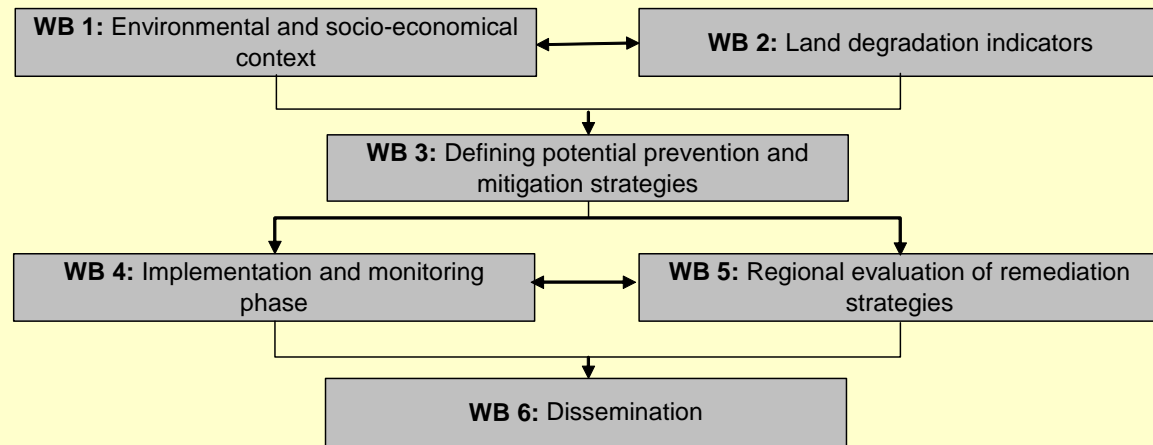
The proposed DESIRE project aims to establish promising alternative land use and management conservation strategies in sixteen degradation and desertification hotspots around the world, based on a close participation of scientists with local stakeholder groups. This integrative participatory approach ensures the acceptability and feasibility of conservation techniques, as well as a sound scientific basis for the effectiveness at various scales. DESIRE employs a bottom up approach, as favoured by the UNCCD:

- degradation and desertification hotspots and stakeholder groups have been identified in all countries surrounding the Mediterranean, and in 6 external nations facing similar environmental problems,
- desertification indicator sets will be defined in a participatory approach and a harmonized information system will be constructed to organize socio-economic and geo-information data,
- new and existing conservation strategies will be defined with the stakeholder communities;
- these strategies will be implemented in the field, and monitored and modeled to quantify their effectiveness at various scales,
- the results will be extrapolated using indicator sets, geo-information data, and integrated modeling systems combining socio-economic and environmental aspects, and
- finally the results will be translated to a series of practical guidelines for good agricultural practices and environmental management, which will be disseminated to practitioners, agricultural extensionists, governmental authorities, policy makers, NGOs, land users, land owners, and local communities.



DESIRE

In order to achieve the goals mentioned in the introduction, the DESIRE IP has been divided into a logical series of interrelated Working Blocks (see Figure below), each with specific goals, tasks and deliverables.

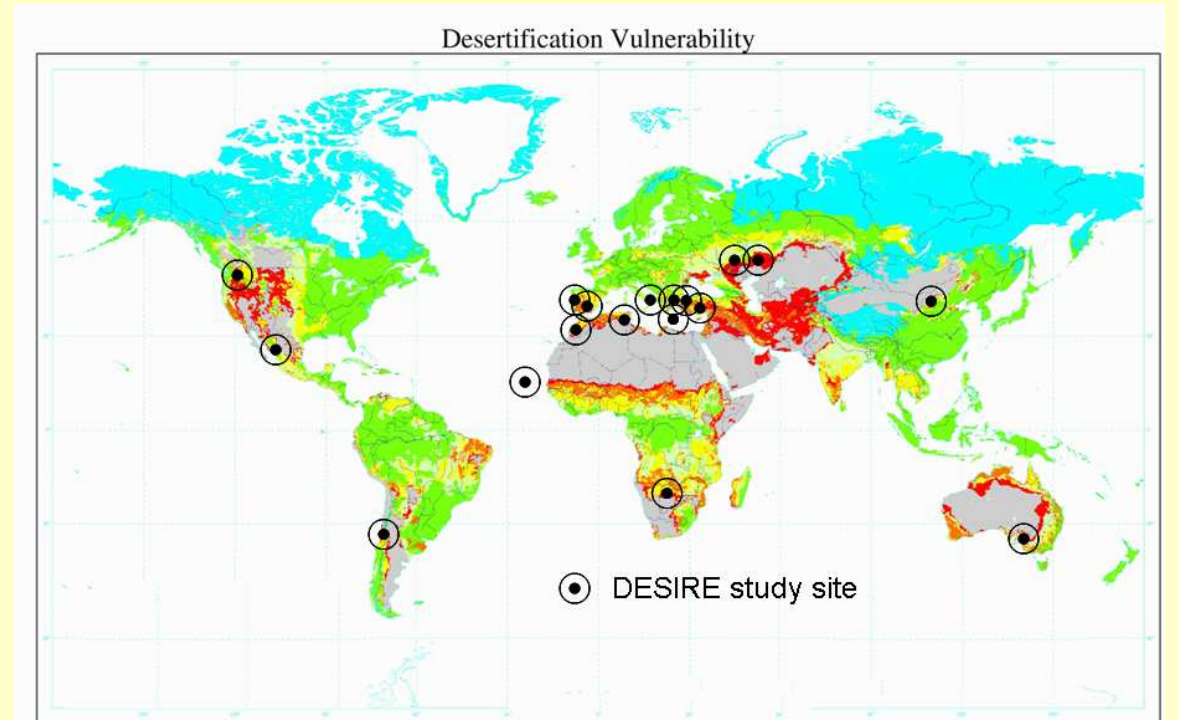


WB1 inventorizes the 18 hotspot target areas and organizes both spatial environmental data and socio-economic data of stakeholder groups. WB2 uses this information and available results from other EU projects to define and evaluate sets of desertification indicators. These indicators are tested for their efficiency in the monitoring phase in WB4 and used to organize the monitoring results into a framework. WB3 uses the information of WBs 1 and 2 to develop a series of conservation and remediation strategies in close cooperation with the stakeholders. These strategies are implemented in each of the hotspot areas in WB4 and their efficiency is measured and modeled over the course of several years. The goal of WB5 is to upscale the results of WB4 and model them on a larger scale, forecasting regional effects of combating desertification both in environmental and socio-economical terms. WB6 finally runs parallel to the other workblocks in that it designs a harmonized data information system to which all WBs contribute data, and organizes the dissemination of the results.



DESIRE

The DESIRE project encompasses a set of 18 study sites around the globe (see Figure below) that are affected by one or more desertification related problems. These areas have a different socio-economic context in the form of land use and management, and a different physical context in the form of climate and landscape. This gives DESIRE a truly global "laboratory" to apply both tested conservation and remediation measures, and find new and innovative approaches to combat desertification. One of the main challenges will be to merge the results into a methodological framework and harmonized database information system. This calls for a well structured approach.



Hotspot area	Main Problem\ Desertification process
Guadalentin Basin, Murcia, Spain	Drought, soil erosion by water
Mação, Portugal	Forest fires
Rendina Basin, Basilicata, Italy	Soil erosion by water
Crete, Greece	Soil erosion by water, overgrazing, water stress
Nestos Basin, Maggana, Greece	Salinisation
Konya Karapinar Plain, Turkey	Soil erosion by wind
Eskisehir Plain, Turkey	Soil erosion by water
Mamora/Sehoul, Morocco	Increasing pressure due to urbanization nearby
Zeuss-Koutine, Tunisia	Competition for scarce water resources
Djanybek, Russia	Poor vegetation growth
Novij, Saratov, Russia	Salinisation
Loess Plateau, China	Soil erosion by water and wind
Boteti Area, Botswana	Overgrazing and decreased flooding
Cointzio catchment, Mexico	Soil erosion by water
Walnut Gulch Watershed, USA	Vegetation change, flash floods
Glenelg Hopkins region, Australia	Salinisation, and sporadically bush fires
Secano Interior, Chili	Soil erosion by water, extensive gullying
Santiago Island, Cape Verde	Soil erosion, drought flash floods