PART II

Mediterranean Regional Perspective on Assessment and Condition

("the country reports")
PROBLEMATIQUE DE LA DESERTIFICATION EN ALGERIE: ETAT ET MESURES DE LUTTE POUR LA PROTECTION DES RESSOURCES NATURELLES

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ABSTRACT

Desertification problems in Algeria are defined in terms of development. An examination of natural resources degradation (including soil, vegetation, water), seems to indicate that the principal causes of this phenomenon are principally of human origin. The South Algerian region, including a large part of the Sahara Desert, is already desertified, but this process is also of great concern in the northern regions and as well as on the steppes where more than half of the surface (20 millions of hectares) is threatened by desertification.

Some measures have been undertaken since 1971 to stop this phenomenon through the “Green dam” project done by the young people of the National Army Service, but they still are insufficient.

The acceleration of desertification processes has brought negative socio-economic impacts on affected communities and can be expressed in terms of:

- reduction of forage
- livestock carrying capacity and numbers
- disruption of the pastoral system
- sand encroachment of communication infrastructures and of some towns.

A National Action Plan has been developed and it should be validated soon in the framework and implementation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification.

Besides the classic techniques to fight against desertification (reforestation, erosion control, land improvement, dune fixation, etc…), other techniques are also introduced, principally to evaluate processes, and aided by satellite image interpretation, and through the implementation of regional management schemes.

The fight against desertification is also the fight against poverty and starvation and consequently, it is the fight against insecurity and the decrease of social conflicts.