

## **Somalia: the EU enhances food security by combatting desertification in Puntland**

19/03/2013

Today, the European Union and its partners, Adeso and CARE, have signed two contracts allowing them to carry out a new environmental programme that will assist Puntland, the North East region of Somalia, in managing the fragile and heavily degraded rangeland.

Environment degradation in Puntland is a serious concern for the local population. It threatens the environment and the local economy, mainly based on livestock and pastoral activities, as it affects the large area of land partially covered by shrubs and trees used predominantly for extensive livestock grazing. Climatic hazards, absence of effective management and charcoal production (however banned since 2002) has accelerated land degradation. That is why the EU has decided to finance a major programme that will cover the entire rangeland of Puntland for a period of 4 years.

With a total amount of 25 million EUR, the EU will contribute to reversing the desertification cycle by assisting the Puntland authorities in effective management of rangelands and by empowering 120 communities in the region to identify the conservation priorities of natural resources in their territories.

The new initiative, that will be implemented by CARE and ADESO, will create alternative employment opportunities to rural populations through revived rangeland-based livelihoods and "Cash for Work" activities. Additionally, the programme will address the issue of charcoal consumption in urban areas by supporting the use of different sources of cooking fuel (LPG).

The EU programme is part of a European Union worldwide initiative that seeks to improve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). This initiative will particularly contribute to Somalia's MDG 1, eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, and MDG 7, ensuring environmental sustainability. **END**

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