



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

# UN Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (SDS)



SDS have direct negative impacts on 11 of the 17 SDGs. The UN SDS Coalition was born of a global desire to tackle this growing threat. Launched in September 2019, the Coalition comprises more than 15 UN entities and non-UN organizations and aims to catalyze global and regional actions to reduce SDS impacts on people's health, agriculture, the environment and other economic activities.



## The global impact of SDS

Blowing dust events are the third largest weather-related cause of highway casualties in the US state of Arizona, causing at least 157 fatalities and 1324 injuries state-wide in 56 years.



A study in Iraq concluded the impact of SDS on crop yields is greatest for vegetables, date palms and other fruits, all recording more than 2% decline in yields for an additional day of SDS.



The March 2021 catastrophic dust storm in Mongolia killed 200,000 livestock and 8 people.



An outbreak of Saharan dust over the Canary Islands in February 2020 resulted in 1000 flights being cancelled at a cost of over €17 million.



Sand and dust deposited on photovoltaic solar panels in northern Chile leads to annual energy losses of up to 39%.



In Sahelian Africa, epidemics of meningococcal meningitis appear to be related to Saharan dust intrusions brought by seasonal Harmattan winds. 350 million people are at risk across 21 countries.



More than 80% of the entire populations of Turkmenistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran are exposed to medium and high levels of poor air quality due to SDS.



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of FAO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers and boundaries. Dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.



## Priority themes for the UN SDS Coalition include:



Identify and analyse SDS source areas



Help countries develop policy plans



Identify and implement good practices for source and impact mitigation



Facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity enhancement



Identify vulnerable places and vulnerable populations

MORE INFO AT: [www.unccd.int/actions/sand-and-dust-storms](http://www.unccd.int/actions/sand-and-dust-storms)

## Coalition background

The UN Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (SDS) consists of more than 15 UN agencies and non-UN organizations and aims to promote global action on SDS. Following an invitation from the General Assembly, through its resolution 72/225 to consider initiating an inter-agency process to prepare a global response to SDS, the SDS Coalition was formally launched in September 2019.

The SDS Coalition is currently under the leadership of FAO until July 2022.

The SDS Coalition is mandated to:

- promote and coordinate a collaborative UN system response to the growing issue of SDS on local, regional and global scales, ensuring unified and coherent actions.
- facilitate exchange of knowledge, data, and best practices among Coalition members to promote effective and coherent actions on SDS across the UN system and beyond.
- encourage and promote collaboration on initiatives and actions among members of the Coalition, including advocacy and funding initiatives.
- facilitate dialogue and collaboration amongst affected countries and the UN system to address SDS issues collectively.
- facilitate the capacity development of Member States, raise their awareness and enhance their preparedness and response to SDS in affected countries and regions.



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