

Introduction

The deadline for Intention to participate and submission of abstract has been extended to September 01ST 2008

Evaluation results

The 9th Conference on Desert Technologies, DT 9, is a continuation of a series of conferences initiated in the year 1991. It is a follow-up on DT 8, the last conference which was organized by the Japanese Association for Arid Land Studies in November 2006, at Nasu, Tochigi, Japan. It is also a follow-up of the activities undertaken under the auspices of the International Year of Desert and Desertification, IYDD 2005, and especially of the Tunis and Algiers Conferences. Like previous conferences, DT 9 will address issues of desertification which remains a main global concern. Desertification is one of the major environmental and socio-economic issues threatening the entire Mediterranean region and many other regions around the World. It is a physical process, induced by biological or biophysical mechanisms which reduce plant cover and primary bio-productivity. Water shortage, unstable and fragile soils and adverse climatic conditions are the main causes of desertification and represent the most crucial physical constraint to higher productivity from arid and desert lands. The contributions of biotechnology towards overcoming these physical constraints are now better understood and more widely recognized, especially the role of plants in improving the micro-climate and conserving soil and water resources on which local food security depends. Thus, Man-made major climatic changes in desert areas would not be avoided in the future without massive biotechnological and energy research and investment. Therefore, DT 9 will also consider the desert as an asset, as a target for original research studies on the physiology of plants and xerophytes, in particular, and as an immense reservoir of rare and fragile natural resources due to its specific climatic conditions: high temperature, temperature wide variation between night and day light intensity, drought and salinity. It offers, therefore, a wide area of investigation and a great source of learning on the adaptive characteristics of natural genetic resources to such specific environmental conditions, and to what we might call the "Sahara stress". The Sahara desert can also be approached as an immense reservoir of solar energy. New desert technologies can help harness this clean, safe and renewable form of energy. People in the Sahara and other Desert environments, have developed adaptive behaviors regarding dress code, dietary customs, economic and trade activities, and social organization systems. These and other adaptive behaviors to life in the Desert which have helped develop a thriving industry of travel and tourism can also become a subject of investigation and a source of learning. "The Sahara Stress" and The Sahara desert with its specific environment, wide areas, immense reservoir of natural resources and peculiar customs and traditions may hold lessons and offer solutions to the challenges related to food, energy, environment, and life in arid regions. Thus the Desert, and especially the Great Sahara Desert, can be just like the North or South Pole, an important center of investigation and a great source of learning.