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Interuniversity Learning in Higher Education on Advanced land Management

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DECLARATION OF INTENT

BETWEEN THE

UNIVERSITY OF SASSARI, UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS,

ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI,

UNIVERSITY OF CAIRO, UNIVERSITY OF ALEXANDRIA, UNIVERSITY

OF ZAGAZIG, UNIVERSITY OF DAMANHOUR,

MEDITERRANEAN UNIVERSITIES UNION (UNIMED)

TO COOPERATE

IN DEVELOPING

SCIENTIFIC AND HIGHER EDUCATION

ON SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT

PREAMBLE

The Universities of Sassari, University of Leeds, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, University of Cairo, University of Alexandria, University of Zagazig, University of Damanhour and the Mediterranean Universities Union (hereinafter referred to in the singular as a "Participant" and jointly as the "Participants")

RECOGNISING the goals and principles stated in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

FURTHER RECOGNISING the goals and principles of the 2030 Agenda of United Nations for the Sustainable Development;

AWARE that poor land and water management, and a lack of appropriate governance and regulatory frameworks to deal with increasing pressure on limited resources lead to degradation of land resources;

AWARE that desertification and drought are closely related phenomena, they can affect large areas and have serious environmental, social and economic impacts;

AWARE that desertification and drought are problems for the Mediterranean Countries in that joint action of the international scientific community is needed to combat desertification and/or mitigate the effects of drought;

SHARING the common concern and responsibilities of the Participants to enhance cooperation in the field of high education in all areas, including the themes of desertification, drought and sustainable development;

CONVINCED that cooperation between the Participants in the field of high education is of mutual benefit and will further promote the friendly relations among their respective countries

HAVE HEREBY REACHED the following understanding:

ARTICLE 1

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Declaration of Intent (DoI) is to promote scientific and high education cooperation among the Participants in the field of sustainable land management on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

ARTICLE 2

AREAS OF COOPERATION

The following areas have been identified by the Participants as priority areas of scientific cooperation:

- (a) Land degradation and desertification;
- (b) Climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- (c) Water resources management and governance;
- (d) Food security;
- (e) Biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- (f) Other areas related to the objective referred to in ARTICLE 1, as mutually agreed upon among the Participants.

ARTICLE 3

FORMS OF COOPERATION

The Participants undertake to cooperate in:

- (a) Student Mobility: exchange of students, study-abroad programs and summer schools; internships/traineeships.
- (b) Joint Programmes: collaboration in the training of students through joint academic programmes; co-supervision of doctoral theses.
- (c) Knowledge Transfer and Co-creation: exchange of publications and other academic materials; exchange of academic staff for teaching; conferences and seminars.

- (d) Research Collaborations: exchange of faculty members, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows; development of collaborative research; joint research programs; collaborative scholarly publications.
- (e) other relevant forms of cooperation in the field of desertification, land degradation and sustainable water and land management, as mutually agreed upon among the Participants.

ARTICLE 4

IMPLEMENTATION

- (1) To implement this Dol, the Participants are invited to encourage their respective scientific communities, enterprises and research institutions, to establish and develop a network of Universities sharing higher education initiatives in the field of desertification, land degradation and sustainable land and water management.
- (2) Each Participant will bear its own costs and expenses arising from the implementation of this Dol.
- (3) For the carrying out of the above activities, the Participants agree to draw up a specific agreement for the implementation of the programmes and activities of cooperation, in compliance with legislations and regulations in force in the country where they are implemented and provided that relevant funding is confirmed by either party.

ARTICLE 5

SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

Any dispute among the Participants arising out of the interpretation, application or implementation of this Dol is to be settled amicably through consultation and negotiations among the Participants.

ARTICLE 6

AMENDMENTS

This Dol may be amended by mutual consent of the Participants through an exchange of Letters among the Participants.

ARTICLE 7

ENTRY INTO FORCE, DURATION AND TERMINATION

- (1) This Dol is to enter into force on the date of signature thereof and shall remain in force for a period of five years, after which it shall be automatically extended for further periods of five years, unless terminated in terms of sub-ARTICLE (2).
- (2) This Dol may be terminated by any Participant by sending a written notice of its intention to terminate it to the other Participants at least six months in advance.
- (3) The termination of this Dol will not affect any arrangement or activity that had already been made before the termination, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Participants in writing.

ARTICLE 8

GOVERNING LAW

The provisions of this Dol shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Participants deriving from any previous agreement and this Dol shall be implemented in accordance with the domestic law in force in their respective countries.

This Declaration of intent is written in duplicate copies in English, with each of the copies being equally authentic and signed by their duly authorized representatives.

Each Participant will be responsible for any fiscal charge related to the execution of this Dol, according to the rules and regulations applicable in each institution.

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