



Undegraded desert vegetation in the erg of Djenein, southern Tunisia (elevation, 200 to 400 meters; rainfall, 50 to 70 millimeters). Barkhans on a lime crust support the growth of *Calligonum comosum*, *Aristida pungens*, and *Helianthemum confertum* subspecies *brachypodum*. [From *Arid Lands in Transition* (AAAS, Washington, D.C., 1970)]

Arid Lands Activities

Desertification—the spread or intensification of land degradation in arid and semi-arid regions due to climatic changes or human activities—is occurring at an alarming rate around the world.

In an effort to foster international scientific cooperation and to assist in development of a worldwide effort to combat desertification, AAAS is undertaking a series of activities which will revolve around the upcoming United Nations Conference on Desertification.

This project will be located in the AAAS Office of International Science and will be under the direction of a special Advisory Committee. Chaired by Harold E. Dregne of the International Center for Arid and Semi-Arid Land Studies, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas, the Committee will be inter-

disciplinary in nature and will include the chairmen of the Committee on Arid Lands and the Committee on Desert and Arid-Zones Research. Priscilla Reining, an anthropologist with extensive experience in Africa, will be project director within the AAAS Office of International Science.

Activities scheduled to date are an international strategy meeting of arid land scientists in Italy in June; a 3-day symposium of international scientists immediately preceding the August–September 1977 U.N. Conference in Nairobi, Kenya; and the identification and development of global research projects to assist in the implementation of the U.N. World Plan of Action.

In addition, a *Directory of Arid Land Scientists in North America* and a worldwide *Directory of Arid Land Institutions* are being prepared for the U.N. Conference at the Office of Arid Lands Studies, University of Arizona.

Educational and public information activities also are expected to be undertaken within the project.

In addition to Dregne, members of the Committee are Alonzo C. Atencio, Department of Biochemistry, University of New Mexico Medical School; Marion Baumgardner, Laboratory for Applications of Remote Sensing, Purdue University; John W. Bennett, Department of Anthropology, Washington University; Bahe Billy, Farmington, New Mexico; Thadis W. Box, College of Natural Resources, Utah State University; Carl N. Hodges, Environmental Research Laboratory, University of Arizona; Helen Ingram, Institute of Government Research, University of Arizona; Robert W. Kates, Programme in International

Development and Social Science, Clark University; Jack D. Johnson, Office of Arid Lands Studies, University of Arizona; William E. Martin, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Arizona; J. D. McQuigg, Columbia, Missouri; D. F. Peterson, vice president for research, Utah State University; M. L. Riedesel, Department of Biology, University of New Mexico; and Calvin H. Raullerson, International Center for Arid and Semi-Arid Land Studies, Texas Tech University.

Persecution, Limits to Scientific Freedom to Be Studied by Committee

The boundaries of scientific freedom, alleged persecution of scientists at home and abroad, professional and social responsibilities of the scientist, and freedom of science teaching have been identified as subject areas for new subcommittees created by the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility.

The five working groups, named during the Committee's first meeting in Washington, D.C., 8 and 9 October, are the Subcommittee on Infringements of Scientific Freedom in Foreign Countries; Subcommittee on Infringements of Scientific Freedom in the United States—Individual Appeals; Subcommittee on the Boundaries of Scientific Freedom—Ethical and Legal Limits; Subcommittee on Professional and Social Responsibilities of Scientists; and Subcommittee on Freedom of Science Teaching.

Several projects to be developed by the subcommittees were discussed during the full Committee meeting. In particular, activities will include establishment

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