



## **World Future Council awards international prize for best policies to combat desertification in China**

*Hamburg (Germany) / Ordos (China), 12<sup>th</sup> September 2017 –* Yesterday, the Future Policy Award (FPA) ceremony was held at the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD in Ordos, Inner Mongolia (China). The international “Oscar for best policies” honours laws and practices that successfully combat desertification and land degradation. The FPA is awarded by the World Future Council (WFC) in cooperation with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Among the laureates are the Ethiopian Tigray region, Brazil and China.

The ceremony was attended by 300 high-level guests and ministers from all over the world including H.E. Mr. Zhang Jianlong, Minister of State Forestry Administration of China, H.E. Ms. Bu Xiaolin, Governor of Inner Mongolia, as well as Tigray’s President H.E. Mr. Abay Weldu.

The FPA aims to draw more attention to desertification and effective ways to combat it: In the last century, droughts cost more

lives than any other weather-related catastrophe. Climate change intensifies the process of desertification. Actions to combat desertification, therefore, not only contribute to protecting the environment but can also provide social and political stability.

Ethiopia's Tigray region was granted the Gold Award. Using a unique combination of collective action, voluntary labour and the involvement of youth, the people of Tigray are restoring land on a massive scale. As a result, erosion has decreased significantly, groundwater levels are recharged, and the uptake of sustainable agricultural practices made a remarkable contribution to food self-sufficiency and economic growth.

The Future Policy Award highlights the world's best policies and laws that create the framework for better living conditions for current and future generations.

The winning policies are introduced in short videos which are on our [YouTube Channel](#). Further information on the winning policies may be obtained through our [website](#) as well as on [futurepolicy.org](http://futurepolicy.org).

[Read in other languages](#)

*Please check out our [Flickr album](#) for more pictures of the award ceremony.*

## **STATEMENTS:**

**Monique Barbut, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD):**

*“Drylands cover close to 40% of the Earth's land surface. Hundreds of millions of people are directly threatened by land degradation and climate change is only going to intensify the problem. So far, this underestimated environmental disaster has received far too little attention. The Future Policy Award 2017 is*

*turning the spotlight on the looming environmental challenge and effective responses. The seven Future Policy Awardees are all from affected countries, and demonstrate great environmental and political determination.”*

**Jakob von Uexkull, Founder of the World Future Council (WFC):**

*“Drylands are among the most conflict-prone regions in the world. Not tackling desertification and land degradation means accepting humanitarian disasters. But if we take up this challenge, so much is gained: By reversing desertification we can help build peace, food security and a safe future for millions of people.”*

**H.E. Abay Weldu, President of Tigray State (Ethiopia)**

*“I am delighted and honoured as head of the Regional Government of Tigray knowing that Tigray has won Gold Future Policy Award 2017. The people of Tigray demonstrate that all challenges can be overcome if the leadership is addressing the will, need and priority of the people. Tigray’s people have proved that development is possible without harming our mother Earth.”*

