



U N C C D

**FINAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**VII REGIONAL MEETING OF THE COUNTRIES OF  
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN  
ON THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION  
TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT**

**LA SERENA, CHILE, FROM 21 TO 24 AUGUST, 2001**

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**VII REGIONAL MEETING OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES  
UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT**

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**FINAL REPORT**

**I. Background**

1. The Regional Annex for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought establishes the need to carry out regional meetings in order to strengthen the co-operation and exchange of information among country Parties and implement the Annex concerning the Regional Programme.
2. In this context, the Latin America and Caribbean country Parties have held six (6) Regional Meetings, respectively, in Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Antigua and Barbuda, Peru and El Salvador to identify priority actions, and establish and develop sub-regional and regional co-operation through a Regional Action Program to Combat Desertification.
3. The present Regional Meeting, the 7<sup>th</sup>, was convened in co-ordination with the Government of Chile, in La Serena, Chile, from 21 to 24 August 2001.

**II. Objectives of the Meeting**

4. The objectives of the Seventh Regional Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean countries were the following:
  - 4.1 To exchange experiences on the use and application of indicators and benchmarks in the implementation process of National Action Programmes;
  - 4.2 To exchange experiences on the use and application of traditional knowledge, both in local and indigenous communities, in the process of combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought;
  - 4.3 To become familiar with the concrete experiences of the host country in the field of mitigation of drought and land degradation;
  - 4.4 To be informed of the progress realised in the implementation of the Convention in the Region;
  - 4.5 To be informed of the work carried out by the Regional Executive Committee;
  - 4.6 To examine the progress realised in activities of the Regional Action Programme;
  - 4.7 To examine the conclusions of the national report synthesis recently submitted to the UNCCD Ad Hoc Working Group, following the request of the COP in its third and forth session.

**III. Participation**

5. All the Latin American and Caribbean country Parties to the Convention were invited to the Meeting, as well as regional and sub-regional intergovernmental organisations, United Nations



agencies and non-governmental organisations. Twenty-eight governmental representatives of countries of the region, fifteen representatives of international, regional and sub-regional organisations, five non-governmental organisations and fourteen organisations from Chile attended the meeting. The list of participants is included in Annex III of this document.

### **Item 1 of the Agenda: Opening of the Meeting.**

6. The Opening Ceremony took place on Tuesday, 21 August 2001 in La Serena Club Resort Hotel, La Serena Chile. Ambassador Hama Arba Diallo, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought, and Mr. Carlos Weber, Executive Director of the Chilean Forest Service (CONAF) and Mr. Renán Fuentealba Regional Governor, whom on behalf of the Government of Chile, opened the Seventh Regional Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean country Parties to the UNCCD.

#### 1.2 ORGANISATION OF WORK.

##### **1.2.1 Election of Bureau of the Meeting.**

The Meeting decided that the Bureau was to be made up by the following country delegates:

<b>President:</b>	Chile	Mr. Carlos Weber
<b>Vice-President:</b>	Nicaragua	Mr. Carlos Rivas Leclair
<b>Rapporteur:</b>	Jamaica	Mr. Philbert Brown

##### **1.2.2 Approval of the Agenda Meeting.**

7. The Meeting approved with amendments the provisional Agenda as in Annex II of this report.

### **Item 2 of the Agenda: Workshop on Desertification Benchmarks and Indicators.**

Mr. Ahmed Cissoko, Principal Scientific Advisor of the Secretariat to the CCD gave a presentation on desertification benchmarks and indicators, based on the results of the reports for Latin America and the Caribbean in the meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group, held in Bonn, Germany, in April 2001.

Mrs. Elena Abraham from the Argentine Institute for Investigation of Arid Zones (IADIZA) gave a presentation on the same topic, followed by Mr. Fernando Santibáñez of the University of Chile.

The delegates conformed three Working Groups (South America, Caribbean and Mesoamerica) for the exchange opinions and the preparation of concrete actions for the use of desertification benchmarks and indicators tools.



The Argentine Delegation was designated as General Facilitator of the activities and each group had a Facilitator and a Rapporteur.

- South America: Facilitator Brazil, Rapporteur Perú
- Mesoamerica: Facilitator Mexico, Rapporteur Argentina
- Caribbean: Facilitator Chile, Rapporteur Grenada

At the end of deliberations, each group presented the following conclusions:

#### 10.1 SOUTH AMERICA GROUP

- To create indicators, interaction is necessary between national institutions such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Environment etc. Also needed is a transversal and intersectional vision.
- Community awareness is important at different levels. Local communities would identify a framework of indicators. It is important to rely on the population's perception of these processes.
- The elements that may be considered in the elaboration of indicators:
  - i. Discontinuity of governments in the follow-up of topics.
  - ii. Decentralisation process
  - iii. Institutional management, strengthening and development
  - iv. Connection between physical, social and economic aspects
  - v. Harmonisation of public policy
  - vi. Emphasis on the topic of gender, referring to women and children
- Indicators must be taken into account for the NAPs, and included for their follow through. This is a fundamental tool for the evaluation and monitoring of the implementation process in the pursuit of co-operation and financing of the international organisations.
- It is necessary to include the topic of desertification in policies regarding water, soil and the fight against poverty, as well as in policies of development and establishing synergy with the climate change and biodiversity conventions.
- The work methodology on indicators would be:
  - i. Identification of people or teams that have the capacity for co-operation
  - ii. Definition of a common work mechanism (meeting calls, discussion lists and messages)
  - iii. The listing of problems to be assessed, and the corresponding indicators and establishment of gaps of information.
  - iv. Prioritise the indicators and define the work scale at the different levels.
  - v. It is necessary to validate the methodologies already developed in order that may be adopted.



- There must be regional, sub-regional and local indicators. These must include indicators of sub-regional, regional and local projects and in the last case, generate pilot areas. Also, the data should be integrated and incorporated in environmental standards and legal frameworks.
- Problems to overcome in the elaboration of indicators:
  - i. Institutionalisation and co-ordination between institutions.
  - ii. Continuity and precision in the collection of data.
  - iii. Diversity of methodology.
  - iv. Actualisation and investigation of data.
- The identification of the user is important as well as who is willing to pay for the service in such way as to not depend exclusively on financial co-operation, and how the indicators link to the solution of problems and how the demand relates to the development of information.

## 10.2 Mesoamerica Group

- The problem of desertification must be “visualised” within the countries as well as at the international level to facilitate measurement and prioritisation and above all to be introduced in the agendas of the policymakers.
- The severity of the problem of desertification must be demonstrated along with its social and environmental consequences. Presently, following hurricane Mitch, the sub-region has been affected by a prolonged drought which has deteriorated even more the population’s living conditions, generating hunger, poverty and migration.
- This situation emphasises the direct and urgent social implications of desertification problems (land ownership, employment, migration, etc.) and the transversality of the causes and effects, which differentiates the objectives of prior conventions such as those of biodiversity, climate changes, etc.
- All the Mesoamerican countries show a high interest in obtaining a system of monitoring and follow up of desertification based on indicators that arise from those problems identified as priorities. Not only physical/biological problems must be considered, but also specifically socio-economic, cultural, politic-institutional and managerial aspects as well. It has been acknowledged that working with indicators is the most effective tool in achieving the proposed objectives.
- The countries in the subregion have developed high national capacities in the inventory of processes and in other environmental phenomenon that may be used in obtaining and evaluating indicators: databases, information, established human resources, institutional capacity and coordination. With little effort, and with technical and financial co-operation, information can be organized, lacking information can be



obtained and a system of follow up and monitoring of desertification can be designed with the support of the countries that have already achieved the process in the region.

- The countries in Mesoamerica are currently at different phases of developing their NAPs with the exception of Mexico and Nicaragua who have already achieved them. To accelerate the process, the Secretariat of the Convention has offered to celebrate a workshop in November 2001 to promote the elaboration process of the NAPs in those countries which have not yet developed them and conclude with SAP. This will be done in the agreement of the CCED.
- The countries show interest in developing their own systems of follow up and monitoring of desertification and at the same time make the effort to develop a regional system and participate in south-south co-operation.

### 10.3 CARIBBEAN GROUP

The group considered the following points to be of importance:

- Lessons learned from Cuba include experiences in dealing with special periods of drought
- Application of indicators and benchmarks at the national and local level.
- The indicators are identified for policymakers, technicians and farmers.
- For the farmers, the indicators were obtained by constant observation at the local level. The Cuban experience can contribute towards the development of a model by other countries in the Caribbean region.

Looking at some of the issues:

- Availability and access to information.
- Identifying the institutional capacity in each country.
- A needs analysis to define the key issues and priorities at the national level.
- Coordinate existing capacity in-country and in the region.
- Diagnostics of existing problems (bio-physical and socio-economic structures) related to desertification and drought.
- The need to establish channels for lateral cooperation within the region.
- There is a need to develop a list of experts to assist with the needs of the different countries in the sub-region.
- There is a need to define a common framework that can be adapted to specific needs of the countries of the Caribbean sub-region. The framework should take into consideration that countries are at different levels of implementation of the CCD (NAS, NAP).

Common framework:



Problems – causes – solutions to be dealt with at both the institutional and the local level. The desertification monitoring system (DMS), as a suggested approach will lead to development of a national strategy. The DMS will rely on the benchmarks and indicators.

- The framework can be developed by experts from the Caribbean region and other sub-regions.
- The suggested venue is St. Lucia with Surinam as an alternative.
- The suggested timeframe is March 2002.
- Countries need to make their contributions regarding the content of the agenda of the workshop by January 18<sup>th</sup> 2002.
- The two countries in the regional committee along with the host country will coordinate the organisation of the workshop.

Additionally:

- The countries request the Secretariat to take the necessary action for the organisation and planning of the workshop to define a common framework that can be adapted to specific needs in the sub-region. The main objective of the workshop will be to design a common framework for the development of benchmarks and indicators as part of a desertification monitoring system for implementation in the Caribbean sub-region.
- The countries request that the secretariat develop a concept paper based on the contributions received from member countries of the sub-region.

**10.4 As general conclusions for the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean the following points were identified:**

- The problem of desertification must be given “visibility”, within the countries as well as at an international level, and be strongly introduced in the agendas of policymakers.
- The development of the indicator themes must be integrated in the National Action Programs (NAPs).
- The NAPs must be integrated in the policies of national development.

To define in the short-run:

- A working method
- Establish a common framework of action.
- Identify and apply the existing institutional capacities.
- Organise priorities
- Establish channels of participation and carry out horizontal actions of co-operation in the region.
- Emphasise south-south co-operation.



- Generate indicators at a local, national, sub-regional and regional level.
- Integrate a group of basic common indicators in a Follow-up and Monitoring System of Desertification.
- Include the NGOs in the consulting process and implement the follow-up and monitoring system for desertification.
- Utilise the countries National Reports that were presented in the Work Group Session during the COP 4 as a starting point to:
  - Improve the diagnostics by country.
  - Utilise them as sources of data for the creation and assessment of indicators.
- All the countries agreed on the necessity to obtain technical and financial mechanisms of co-operation for the development of the proposed initiatives.

#### 10.5 During the meeting the following actions were proposed:

- Organise and celebrate in the Caribbean, in March 2002, a workshop to define a common framework that can be adapted to specific needs in the sub-region. The main objective of the workshop will be to design a common framework for the development of benchmarks and indicators as part of a desertification monitoring system for implementation in the sub-region.
- Convene in November 2001, in Mesoamerica, a workshop to promote the elaboration process of the NAPs in those countries which have not yet developed them and conclude with the Program of Sub-regional Action (SAP). Also, develop initiatives to advise of early warnings of severe drought which affect the majority of the countries in the sub-region.
- To advance in South America in the management and fulfilment of the "Attainment and Evaluation of Indicators for Latin America and the Caribbean" Project.
- Organise the experiences in Argentina, Chile and Cuba and make them available to the countries in the Region.

#### **Item 3 of the Agenda: Report of the CCD Secretariat on the activities carried out in the region and activities of the UNCCD regarding the COP 5.**

11. Mr. Oscar Oramas, representative of the Secretariat of the Convention presented the report on the activities of the UNCCD in Latin America and the Caribbean to fulfil the agreements



of the sixth Regional Meeting, held in San Salvador, El Salvador in October 2000. These were concentrated on a review of activities carried out during 2000-2001 taking as a main basis the results of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

12. Mr. Oramas also emphasised on the fulfilment of the growing level of activity regarding the topics of the CCD. By way of example, he cited a series of awareness seminars and international fora held during 2000-2001. Underlining the meeting of the Caribbean countries with the European Community, exchanges with African Countries on saline soils, awareness seminars on the topics of desertification and drought in seven countries of the Region and the finalisation of the national action programmes in three countries which means that by 2002, ten countries in the Region will have their NAPs; and eight additional countries will be in a position to finalise them during the same year.
13. Regarding the decision related to the Regional Co-ordination Unit, the Secretariat informed that a new proposal is being prepared to make the unit operational. Some delegates expressed their concern that in the current meeting the RCU, and UNEP were absent from this forum, which is the last prior to the celebration of COP 5 of desertification and Rio +10. The Executive Secretary of the CCD, Ambassador Hama Arba Diallo shared the concern of the delegates, which noted the absence of some financial and sustainable development organisations invited to this meeting.
14. After wide debate, in which twenty-three country delegates participated and several national and international agencies, the report of the Secretary was approved.
15. Mr Oramas emphasised that the Secretary has prepared a synthesis of the National Report and a report on the recent work of the Ad Hoc Working Group, which can be found in the Secretariats' web page. Also, he reported on the relevant topics to be considered by the Conference of the Parties, at its fifth session.

**Item 4 of the Agenda: Report of the out-going President of the Regional Executive Committee.**

16. The Representative of El Salvador, Mr. Carlos Salazar, submitted to the delegates the report of the Executive Committee, emphasising that diverse activities were planned and carried out according to its last two meetings held this year. He also was grateful for the support received by the other committee members and by the Secretariat in the achievement of his work plan. He requested support for Central America and the Caribbean, the completion of awareness seminars in the countries of the Region and NAPs' formulation in all countries.
17. The representatives expressed their gratitude to the out-going President of the REC for the presentation of the report.

**Item 5 of the Agenda: Regional Programmes**

18. The delegates of Argentina and Bolivia, representing the Regional Programs for the Gran Chaco Americano and the Puna Americana respectively, reported on the current status of their implementation. The objectives of these programs are to improve the socio-economic conditions of the population and the sustainable development of said ecosystems through participative approaches.
19. The presentation of the regional programs caused ample debate, emphasising again in the absence of international organisations and donors with the notable exception of the Inter-american Development Bank, the GTZ and the Global Mechanism, who informed on the operational procedures and required steps for the reception of applications.
20. The delegates agreed upon the need to continue mobilising existing national resources to trigger international linked effects (partnerships), as the provision of domestic resources in said programs has been generally greater than the mobilisation of international funds.

#### **Item 6 of the Agenda: The Global Mechanism**

21. The representative of the Global Mechanism, Mrs. Ana Saez gave a presentation on the objectives, activities and strategies of the Global Mechanism in Latin America and the Caribbean, including linkages with other international co-operation agencies such as the GEF. She also addressed the re-activation of the Public Policy Project in Selected Countries of the Region, expressing that during the meeting, its co-ordinator, Mr. Gonzalo Chapela y Mendoza, will meet with the focal points of those respective countries (Mexico, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru and Chile).
22. The delegates exchanged extensively on the Global Mechanism report, stating that the level of activities in the Region has increased since COP 2, when the managing Director was criticised for lack of action in the Region. Mention was made on the means of collaboration of the GM with the FAO and IFAD.

#### **Item 7 of the Agenda: Activities of the COP 5 for Latin America and the Caribbean**

23. The Executive Secretary of the Convention outlined the three topic areas that will be discussed in the Conference of the Parties of the CCD at its fifth session, which is to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, 1 to 12 October 2001. The activities refer to a technical segment (from 1 to 5, October), a high level segment (8 and 9, October), and other technical works (10 to 12, October). The establishment of the Revision Committee on the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) was emphasised, the improvement in the effectiveness of the Convention, the future relations with the GEF and the preparation and insertion of the topics of the Convention in the meeting of the Rio +10, in Johannesburg, South Africa. He also mentioned that the high level segment may serve as a positive exchange for the countries of the Region, only when and if, they were to have a representation not only of Ministers and Vice-Ministers but also at the Presidential level for the countries.



24. The Representatives debated and exchanged their concerns regarding the lack of financing to assure the presence in the COP 5 of high level governmental personalities, which is most serious in the smaller countries of the Region. Nevertheless, they considered a point of great importance to agree on and implement a negotiation strategy for the issues of the COP 5, in order to optimise regional opportunities. A contact group was created to make the division of the negotiation topics, so that the representatives of the countries could express their particular interests and assure a Regional presence in all of them. This contact group submitted the status of negotiation, which is included in the Annex IV of this report.

**Item 8 of the Agenda: Report on the Synergy Workshop among Sustainable Development Conventions held in La Paz, Bolivia in August of 2001.**

25. Mr. Marco Montoya, delegate of Bolivia, reported on the event held in Bolivia with the support of the Secretariat, and emphasised in the four operational lines of the joint activities schedule for the focal points and other stakeholders regarding topics of synergy and interlinkages of the following conventions: Climate Change, Biodiversity, Ramsar and Desertification. He emphasised particularly about the preparation on the framework for actions, the supporting financial mechanisms and the need to act based on a broad and active local participation. The desired results of the synergistic exercises are to achieve a better proposal capability in the country, to better take advantage of foreign assistance and to optimise governance.

**Item 9 of the Agenda: Case Study of the Elaboration Process of the NAP in Nicaragua.**

26.-The Representative of Nicaragua, Mr. Carlos Rivas Leclair, gave a presentation on the recently completed process of the NAP preparation of this country, the first in the Region of Central America. Mr. Rivas emphasised the high level of community participation in the eight workshops, which took place throughout the year, in different communities of the country. Among the possibilities for its prompt implementation, he identified the need to have similar programs in other countries from the sub-region which share ecosystems with Nicaragua (Honduras and Costa Rica) and the need to hold, at the shortest timeframe possible, a round table with the donor community interested in NAP implementation in Nicaragua.

27. The participants congratulated the Nicaraguan delegation for the very clear presentation of their NAP process and expect that other countries in similar conditions should follow their example.

**Item 10 on the agenda: Drought: The Chilean experience.**

28. Mr. Patricio Aceituno, from the Geophysics Department of the University of Chile, gave a presentation on the ENSO phenomenon, and its dynamics in several regions of Latin America. The very high quality of his presentation called for questions related to the replication possibilities of the diagnostics and forecasts in other countries of the Region,



aiming to design systems for early warning, prevention and adaptation to climatic variability.

**Item 11 of the agenda: Local and indigenous communities.**

29. Mr. Julio Curruchiche, Guatemalan delegate, presented the issue of the existing need to include, at the policy making and technical level, the issue of indigenous communities, generally poor, who live in affected zones and that are excluded from sustainable development processes. He mentioned that the Latin American and the Caribbean Region have an important stock of cultural and traditional knowledge that come from indigenous communities.

30. Similarly, Mr. Miguel Torrico, from the “Comité Nacional Pro Defensa de la Fauna y Flora”, CODEFF, gave a presentation on practical approaches with reliable results in combating desertification, based on processes decentralised towards the community. The project “Capacitación para la Formulación de Proyectos para Combatir la Desertificación en Tres Regiones de Chile”, has recently concluded with positive results. After his report, the delegates watched a video related to the formulation and implementation of this project.

**Item 12 of the agenda: Traditional knowledge.**

31. The scientific adviser to the CCD, Mr. Ahmed Cissoko, took the floor and expressed the importance of traditional knowledge and practices in combating desertification particularly the issues of poverty reduction and the attainment of higher levels of land productivity among local communities. Similarly Ms. Nery Urquiza, from Cuba, and Mr. Cesar Cervantes, from Peru, emphasised the goodness of traditional practices in sustainable management of lands and water, reporting real cases from their countries.

32. The country delegates and participants from international institutions broke into three working groups (South America, the Caribbean and Mesoamerica) to exchange views and to identify practical usage of traditional knowledge in combating desertification.

The Delegation from Saint Lucia was designated as General Facilitator of the activities and each group had a Facilitator and a Rapporteur.

- South America: Facilitator Peru, Rapporteur Colombia
- Mesoamerica: Facilitator Mexico, Rapporteur El Salvador
- Caribbean: Facilitator Cuba, Rapporteur The Bahamas

At the end of deliberations, each group presented the following conclusions:

**32.1 SOUTH AMERICA GROUP**

- The application of traditional knowledge and technology (TKT) contributes to sustainable development, for which Governments need to recognise their importance in seeking



financial mechanisms, regulations and operational guidelines in order to put them again to use by the countries.

- The TKT are the answer to the cultural and ecological variables in the countries of the region and should constitute the fundamental instruments for present and future development.
- Socio-economic importance of *lomas* as a source of water in the coastal arid zones.
- Promotion, socialisation and implementation of TKT preparing guides or making up a network of National and International information concerning the matter.
- Technical-scientific validation of the TKTs and certification of origin.
- Promote the recognition of intellectual property of TKT.
- Promotion of intermediate technologies and establishment of the cost-benefit of the application of TKT considering environmental services and synergies in regards to topics of biodiversity and climate change.
- Incorporation of TKT in University curricula.
- Incorporation and promotion of TKT in the productive chain with the introduction of organic products.
- Promotion of the entrepreneurial approach in the community, aiming at the different products coming out of the usage of the TKT for market-oriented economic production.
- Inclusion of TKT in the NAPs and the National Development Policies.
- Support for financial and technical co-operation in the implementation of the TKT.
- Promotion of opportunities and stimulus for those producers who utilise the TKT.
- Implementation of the Regional Project for the recovery and appreciation of traditional knowledge, technology and practices, in the fight against desertification.

### 32.2 Central America Group

- Include the issue of traditional technologies in the NAPs, and in development plans and programmes, as well as in the agendas of decision-makers.
- Integrate the promotion of traditional technologies with food security, poverty alleviation the combat against desertification, increase of the quality of products obtained.
- Promote the creation of productive farms and plantations, which use traditional technologies.
- Prepare inventories of traditional technologies which can serve as a tool for exchange or transfer to those areas and producers with similar characteristics in order to be implemented.
- Establish training and experience exchange programme related with traditional technologies between the Latin America and Caribbean countries, and to organise a workshop in order to allow the dissemination of information on traditional technologies



- Establish through the Convention or the Regional Co-ordination Unit a programme of pilot centers on traditional technologies.
- To foster through the mechanisms of the Convention an incentive programme for producers, so they can make use of traditional technologies.
- Preparation of educational materials on traditional technologies, which should be of easy access and understanding for farmers.
- Request the support of the Secretariat for the project on traditional technologies presented by Peru and approved during the V Regional Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean.

### 32.2 Caribbean Group

With specific reference to the Convention, specifically Articles 17, section (c) and (d) and Article 18, section 2, this working group looked at the issues of traditional knowledge, its transfer and barriers to this transfer.

THE GROUP RECOGNISED THAT TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IS A RESOURCE THAT IS TO BE:

- valued
- protected
- passed from generation to generation
- promoted
- respected and validated
- Combined with modern technology in cases where it can improve the results of the application of traditional knowledge.

The group identified barriers to the transfer of Traditional Knowledge which include:

- Poverty – where local communities may be forced to abandon traditional practices and use modern technologies that are more productive in the short-term.
- Poor communication – problems in transferring technology can be encountered when technicians or academics working in local communities are unable to properly communicate with local communities. They talk rather than listen, and transfer is lost.
- Lack of visible examples – receiving local communities may not respond to words but rather to what they can see. They would best be reached through field visits or pilot projects that clearly exhibit the success of traditional technologies.



- Lack of respect – academics and scientists often do not recognise the value of traditional knowledge and do not respect guardians of this knowledge.

The following recommendations were made in light of the discussion:

- Need for identification and documentation of Traditional Knowledge – It was agreed that there is a need in the Caribbean to identify existing traditional knowledge, practices and technologies. This can be done through development of an inventory of these within those countries that lack this information. Once these have been identified, the technologies need to be evaluated to determine which are applicable to combating desertification. Documentation of this knowledge is important to preserving it, especially in societies where intergenerational exchange is diminished.
- Protection of Traditional Knowledge – Once documented, there is the need to ensure that this knowledge is protected through effective legislation so that it is not transported out of the country of origin and exploited by others.
- Involvement and Sensitising of Academic Institutions – Institutions of higher learning must be encouraged to participate in the identification and study of traditional knowledge and techniques. Students should be encouraged to conduct studies in this area. Not only will this increase capacity in the country but also reduce the need and cost of bringing in experts from outside.
- Target agents of transfer – These agents may include local community leaders and NGO groups that work closely with the communities. These persons should be informed of goals to be achieved and importance of facilitating the transfer process. There must also be capacity building of these agents to ensure proper documentation, transfer and protection of this knowledge.
- Respect for Traditional Knowledge – It is vital for transfer of this knowledge that it be respected and valued by all involved in the process, from politicians to school children. This can be achieved through promotion in the media and national awards recognizing the achievements in traditional techniques.
- Traditional Knowledge as a priority area in NAPs – If Traditional Knowledge is incorporated into the NAP and given priority, its transfer and promotion can be fostered in a structured way. Focal points should be more conscientious as regards the use of traditional knowledge which can benefit the implementation of the Convention.



- Recognition of Traditional Knowledge from all sectors – while much emphasis has been placed on Traditional Knowledge with respect to agricultural practices and techniques, it should be recognised that many other sectors and their traditional practices can negatively impact the land. These sectors include mining and construction. Traditional practices within these sectors must also be identified and applied where they can aid in combating desertification.
- Need to source funding – Countries within the sub-region need to source funding from agencies that support activities related to Traditional Knowledge to achieve its transfer.

33. After the summary conclusions from the delegate from St. Lucia, the delegates exchanged views on traditional knowledge issues and agreed that those that have been already identified must be utilised, especially in NAP implementation; similarly they agreed that in those places of the region that still have to identify them, the process must be released, addressing respect and the proper value of existing traditional knowledge in the country. The delegates requested to the CCD secretariat the publication and dissemination of already made research related to traditional knowledge.

**Item 13 of the agenda: Field visit to assess the Chilean experiences in combating desertification and drought.**

34. The participants of the Seventh Reunion of Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought had the opportunity to see in-field activities and experiences in the Coquimbo Region, on social organisational processes and technologies to combat desertification. They visited the Jimenez y Tapia Community, the El Sauce School and the Francisco de Aguirre Vineyard.

35. The delegates took note on these experiences, assessing possibilities to replicate them in other countries of the region, and considered the development of joint work plans on horizontal co-operation in future regional initiatives. They profoundly thanked the people and government of Chile, particularly the Coquimbo Region, for their hospitality during the regional meeting.

**Item 14 of the agenda: Adoption of the Report of the Seventh Regional Meeting.**

36. On Friday 24 August, the rapporteur presented to the plenary the draft report of the Seventh Regional Meeting of the Latin American and the Caribbean country Parties to the UNCCD. After an intensive and constructive debate on the amendments that the different delegations considered to be introduced in the document, the plenary adopted the final report including the decisions as in Annex I of this document.

**Item 15 of the agenda: Closing of the Meeting.**



37. The Meeting ended at 20:00 hours on August 24, 2001. The participants to the meeting expressed their gratitude to the people and the Government of Chile. The representative of Chile, Mr. Carlos Weber, on behalf of his Government, officially closed the Seventh Regional Meeting of Latin American and the Caribbean country Parties to the UNCCD, thanking all the participants, and sponsors to the meeting, such as the CCD Secretariat, the Global Mechanism, UNESCO, and the government of Spain.

La Serena, Chile, August 24<sup>th</sup> 2001

### ANEXXES

- I. Decision of the Seventh Regional Meeting America Latina and the Caribbean
- II. Agenda of the Meeting
- III. List of Participants

ANNEX I

**DECISIONS**

**BY THE SEVENTH REGIONAL MEETING OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

The representatives of Governments present at the Seventh Regional Meeting of Latin American and the Caribbean country Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought held in La Serena, Chile, from 21 to August 24, 2001 decide,

<b>Decision 1</b>	<b>National Action Programs (NAPs) and the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP.5)</b>
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**Having** reviewed and evaluated the contents of the National Reports from Latin American and the Caribbean countries on the implementation of the Convention, submitted to the Ad Hoc Working Group in April 2001, the participants affirmed that opportunities exist in the region to stimulate the implementation process of the Convention, through a larger use of traditional knowledge and appropriate benchmarks and indicators management in the monitoring processes;

**Taking into account** that, already during the last regional meeting held in El Salvador in October, 2000, the Secretariat committed itself to fulfil its mandate regarding the National Action Programmes;

**Considering** that the Regional Executive Committee held two meetings in 2000-2001 in order to move forward the activities that Parties considered essential for the implementation of the Convention at the national level;

**Considering** that only few countries completed their NAP formulation process and others have just started this process;

**Taking into account** previous decisions on NAPs formulation, subregional programmes implementation;

**Bearing in mind that** most of the countries of the region have limited human, financial and technical resources;

**Considering also** the importance to ensure a continuity to the decisions adopted at the VI Regional Meeting held in San Salvador in October 2000; and

**Aware** of the importance to present the outcomes of the Seventh Regional Meeting to the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties,

**DECIDE**

1. **To request** the COP to provide technical assistance for the identification of economic instruments and environmental services that could allow the channelling of public and private investments to combat desertification and to mitigate the effects of drought at the local, national and regional levels;
2. **To reiterate** their request to the COP for the inclusion of the operational costs of the Regional Co-ordination Units (RCU) in the core budget of the Secretariat as integral functioning bodies, so as to support more efficiently the implementation process of the Convention in the region;
3. **To underline** that the Latin America and Caribbean countries are committed to complete the elaboration of their respective NAPs by the year 2005 at the latest;
4. **To request** the support of the Secretariat and its implementing mechanisms in this process, as per the provisions of Decision 8 of the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties.

<b>Decision 2</b>	<b>Sustainable development policies and the combat against land degradation in Caribbean Countries</b>
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**Bearing in mind** the need to ensure continuity in the agreements contracted by the countries of the region for the implementation of the Convention;

**Recalling** the recommendation for the inclusion of priority areas of their NAPs into their Country Support Strategy and the respective National Indicative Programme of the EU/ACP agreement;

**Taking into** account the initiative taken by the ACP/UNCCD Secretariats and the Government of Jamaica to organise a consultative meeting in Kingston in May 2001;

#### DECIDE

1. **To encourage** the Secretariat to continue its efforts, as per Decision 2 adopted in the VI Regional meeting in San Salvador in October 2000, concerning the process of linking poverty and land degradation aspects in the Caribbean countries through the Cotonou Agreement, while ensuring that ministries dealing with finance, economy, foreign relations, environment and agriculture participate in, include and prioritise the Convention's objectives into National Sustainable Development Policies;
2. **To express their gratitude** to the people and Government of Jamaica, for the excellent organisation of the first forum of co-operation ACP/UNCCD and for the kind hospitality extended to all participants;
3. **To recommend** the Secretariat to continue those efforts and to commend this initiative to integrate land degradation issues into national support strategies to be considered as a

positive indicator to increase co-operation links and international support to environmental and socio-economic programmes at the national and international levels;

4. **To request** the Secretariat of the UNCCD to involve the Secretariats of CARIFORUM / CARICOM by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on the inclusion of Land Degradation in their Sustainable Development Strategies where these do not exist;
5. **To request** the CCD Secretariat to extend similar support to all the countries of the region aimed at developing and implementing action plans focusing on the linkages between land degradation and poverty.

<b>Decision 3</b>	<b>Implementation of national awareness seminars in the Caribbean</b>
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**Bearing in mind** that all the Caribbean community countries have ratified the UNCCD;

**Recalling** that lack of awareness on land degradation related issues was identified during the national reporting process of the Ad Hoc Working Group, as a serious problem in these countries;

**Considering** Decisions 8 of the Fourth Regional Meeting, held in Antigua and Barbuda, that recognised the urgent need to address the multiple problems faced by small island States, and Decision 3 of San Salvador, that requested to urgently hold awareness seminars in the Caribbean sub-region;

**Recognising** that during 2001, according to the relevant decisions, the CCD Secretariat supported the holding of awareness seminars in San Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, as well as in Venezuela, Colombia and Surinam;

**Bearing in mind** that the Caribbean sub-region is taking part in the processes of linking land degradation and poverty issues within the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement framework; and

**Taking into account** the pressing need to raise awareness and facilitate the effective participation of all stakeholders in the above mentioned seminars,

### DECIDE

1. **To commend** the actions taken by the CCD Secretariat to support awareness seminars in 7 countries of the region, during the year 2001;
2. **To recommend** that the CCD Secretariat further this process by convening, during the first half of the year 2002, similar awareness seminars in the remaining 5 countries of LAC;

3. **To request** the UNDP to elaborate, together with the CCD Secretariat, a working plan to support the remaining countries in the organisation of their respective national awareness seminars and in the consequent elaboration of their National Action Programmes to combat desertification.

<b>Decision 4</b>	<b>Reports of the Ad Hoc Working Group</b>
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**Considering** the relevant decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its third and fourth session with regards to the presentation of national reports at the UNCCD Ad Hoc Working Group;

**Recognising** that all Latin American and the Caribbean countries submitted their respective national reports in conformity with the official format and deadline;

**Being aware** that the Ad Hoc Working Group identified the strengths and weaknesses in the implementation process of the Convention,

#### DECIDE

1. **To congratulate** the CCD Secretariat, the Global Mechanism, GTZ, UNEP and the Government of Finland for the technical and financial support provided to LAC country Parties for the presentation of their National Reports at the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties and the Ad Hoc Working Group;
2. **To underline** the commitment of the countries to analyse and put in practice the experiences resulting from the Ad Hoc Working Group meeting process, particularly concerning the promotion of traditional knowledge and benchmarks and indicators for monitoring desertification in Latin America and the Caribbean;
3. **To request** the CCD Secretariat to take all the necessary measures to support LAC countries in the process leading to the updating of their national reports and in putting into practice the experiences gained from the Ad Hoc Working Group meeting.

<b>Decision 5</b>	<b>Sub-regional Workshop on benchmarks and indicators</b>
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**Recalling** the recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Working Group with regards to the need for the use of benchmarks and indicators;

**Taking into account** that the countries of the region need to develop benchmarks and indicators as an integral part of their National Action Programmes;

**Bearing in mind** that the region will embark on the elaboration of National Action Programmes with the support of the UNCCD Secretariat,

**DECIDE**

1. **To host** a sub-regional workshop on benchmarks and indicators in Suriname in March 2002;
2. **To request** the Secretariat to organise this workshop in conjunction with the Government of Suriname;
3. **To further request** the Secretariat to prepare a concept paper on benchmarks and indicators for this sub-region based on comments and inputs from these countries, to be submitted to the Secretariat no later than January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

<b>Decision 6</b>	<b>Synergies with other Sustainable Development Conventions</b>
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**Considering** the interest manifested by the countries of the region in the development of a Monitoring System of Desertificación based on indicators, to improve the decision taking process and the pursuit of combating desertificación;

**Keeping in mind** the existence of an appreciable critical mass and of experiences in some countries of the region that allows to accelerate the development and attainment of indicators in a process of strengthening of horizontal co-operation,

**DECIDE**

1. **To request** to the CCD Secretary to promote the horizontal technical co-operation among all the countries of the region in the design of Systems of Indicators of Desertificación;
2. **To invite** to the Secretary of the CCD to provide, through international agencies, the means for obtaining financial support in order to implement the horizontal technical co-operation.

<b>Decision 7</b>	<b>Synergies with other Sustainable Development Conventions</b>
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**Taking into account** that article 8 of UNCCD underlines the relationship existing with other conventions, particularly with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on the Climate Change (UNFCCC) and other environmentally related agreements;

**Recalling** that Article 22, paragraph 2 (i) of the UNCCD encourage the promotion and strengthening of relationship with other relevant conventions, and that Article 23, paragraph 2 (d) requests the CCD Secretariat to co-ordinate its activities with the secretariats of other relevant international bodies and conventions;

**Taking also into account** the resolutions adopted by the Ministers of the Environment of the region concerning the effective use of human, financial and technical resources available in their respective countries;

**Recognising** that the Rio Conventions share a common concern in many environmental and sustainable development aspects, especially in ecosystem dynamics, and consider local participation as fundamental in their sustainable management;

**Bearing in mind** that these conventions share common obligations for their country Parties, like in the field of research, information, public awareness, training and education, as well as in the elaboration of national and regional programmes, the collection of scientific data and the participating process;

**Aware** of Decision 17 of the VI Latin American and Caribbean Regional Meeting, concerning the support and contribution of the Rio conventions secretariats to the implementation of synergistic schemes of action in the countries of the region;

**Aware also** of the marked interest of the countries of the region on the need to establish synergies among the four conventions, of climate change, biological diversity, Ramsar and desertification;

## DECIDE

1. **To express their gratitude** the CCD Secretariat for the support provided to activities aimed at promoting synergies among the Rio conventions and the Ramsar convention in the countries of the region;
2. **To request** the Secretariat to promote, according with a specific timetable, the celebration of workshops on synergies in all the countries of the region by the year 2003 aimed promoting a more effective use of the human, technical and financial resources;
3. **To request** the UNDP to elaborate, together with the CCD Secretariat, a program that allows the achievement of the objectives indicated in point 2 of this decision;
4. **To invite** other agencies of the United Nations system to join LAC countries in these efforts to promote synergies among the sustainable development Conventions;
5. **To express their gratitude** the CCD Secretariat for the assistance provided to Central America countries to elaborate the basic guidelines of a Subregional Project on Synergies amongst the Conventions, which will be submitted to the GEF for financing;

6. **To request** to the CCD Secretariat the promotion of technical co-operation among the countries of the region that have advanced in the establishment of synergies among the Conventions of Climate change, Biological Diversity, Ramsar and desertification.

<b>Decision 8</b>	<b>Hosting of the Eighth Regional Meeting</b>
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**Bearing in mind** the results of the first regional meeting (Buenos Aires, Argentina), the second (Mexico City, Mexico), the third (Havana, Cuba), the fourth (St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda), the fifth (Lima, Peru), the sixth (San Salvador, El Salvador) and the seventh (La Serena, Chile);

**Considering** the importance to maintain the rotation principle among the different LAC sub-regions to host regional meetings;

**Considering** that Barbados gave an initial indication for hosting the Eight Regional Meeting,

**DECIDE**

1. **To welcome** with pleasure the proposal of Barbados to host the Eighth Regional Meeting;
2. **To request** to the Secretary to carry out the pertinent arrangements to guarantee the success of the Meeting.

<b>DECISION 9</b>	<b>COMPOSITION OF THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</b>
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**AWARE** OF DECISION 16 ADOPTED IN SAN SALVADOR, IN OCTOBER 2000, ON THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE;

**RECOGNISING** THE WORK CARRIED OUT BY THE OUTGOING REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE; AND

**CONSCIOUS** OF THE IMPORTANT ROLE THAT THIS ORGAN HAS TO PLAY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF THE DECISIONS ADOPTED IN THE REGIONAL MEETINGS,

**DECIDE**

1. **To ORGANISE** THE NEW REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WITH THE FOLLOWING COMPOSITION:
  - i. PRESIDENT, CHILE
  - ii. VICE-PRESIDENT, EL SALVADOR
  - iii. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CARIBBEAN, BARBADOS AND CUBA
  - iv. REPRESENTATIVE OF ANDEAN COUNTRIES, COLOMBIA
  - v. REPRESENTATIVE OF RIOD (OBSERVER)

**Decision 10**

**SUPPORT TO RIOD LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

**Considering** article 10 paragraph 2 (f) of Convention, article 3, paragraph 2 of the Regional Annex referring to the full participation of non-governmental organisations and local communities in the planning and formulation of policies, decision-making, implementation and review of the National Action Programmes at the local, national and regional level;

**Having in mind** the fundamental role that non-governmental organisations must play in the countries of the region throughout the International Network of Non-governmental Organisations on Desertification of Latin America and the Caribbean (RIOD-LAC) as well as other networks;

**Emphasising** the importance of supporting in all Latin American and the Caribbean countries the participation of the civil society;

**Being convinced** that the progress registered in the implementation of the Convention at the regional level must necessarily bring up to date the RIOD-LAC co-ordinating mechanisms;

**Recalling** Decision 13 of the VI regional meeting that asked for the CCD Secretariat support for the celebration of a RIOD regional meeting in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2001,

**DECIDE**

1. **To express their gratitude** to the CCD Secretariat for the support provided for the hosting of the Third RIOD-LAC Regional Meeting, held in Havana, Cuba, in May 2001;
2. **To welcome** the RIOD Focal Points elected during the third regional meeting and request them to co-ordinate their action with the National Focal Points of the region so as to contribute to an effective implementation of the Convention;
3. **To request** the CCD Secretariat to fully take into consideration the concerns of civil society, and reflect them in the actions undertaken to achieve the objectives of the Convention.

**Decision 11**

**Support of the Secretariat of the Convention to the elaboration process of the National Action Programs**

**Taking into consideration** the urgent need to progress in the development of the National Action Programmes as indicated in Decision 8 of COP 4;

**Being aware** that only 7 countries have developed their respective National Action Programme and that only 3 are moving forward in this process;

**Bearing in mind** that the countries of Annex III of the Convention consider the prevention and mitigation of the impacts of drought as priority issues, fundamental for their sustainable development;

**Acknowledging** that, among its tasks, the CCD Secretariat has to provide the necessary support and assistance for the effective implementation of NAPs, including a harmonised methodology for their elaboration;

**Considering** that the countries of the region that have not yet elaborated their NAP often lack the technical and financial resources indispensable for the elaboration of the these mentioned strategies;

**Considering**, that the countries that have already elaborated their respective NAPs still need supplementary support to implement them,

**DECIDE**

1. **To request** the CCD Secretariat to prepare, in co-ordination with other United Nations agencies, a Plan to Support NAP Preparation that includes the establishment of methodological guidelines;
2. **To express their gratitude** to the CCD Secretariat, the Global Mechanism and UNDP for the support and assistance provided to some countries in the process of elaboration of their respective NAP;
3. **To request** the CCD Secretariat to initiate, in consultation with country Parties and other relevant UN agencies, regional banks and bilateral donors, the organisation of round table discussions aimed at identifying financial resources needed for implementation to the NAPs;
4. **To hold** a subregional workshop for the NAP elaboration in the Central American countries, in November 2001, in Costa Rica.

<b>Decision 12</b>	<b>Expression of empathy and support for Central American countries</b>
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**Taking into account** the frequent occurrence of drought phenomena in the sub-region of Central America;

**Bearing in mind** that currently almost one million persons are suffering from starvation and the lack of water in this sub-region,

**DECIDE**

1. **To express** their solidarity and support to the peoples of this sub-region and strongly request the international community especially the multilateral and bilateral donors to give full assistance to these affected countries;
2. **To strongly recommend** that all the countries of the region develop early warning systems and mitigation measures to combat the effects of drought.

<b>Decision 13</b>	<b>Participation of indigenous communities</b>
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**Bearing in mind** that in LAC there are 38.7 million indigenous peoples living in rural areas;

**Conscious** of their particular situation and their tremendous resources of traditional knowledge;

**Considering** the potential effective contribution of the indigenous peoples towards the implementation of the UNCCD,

**DECIDE**

1. **To request** the Secretariat to prepare a comprehensive report on the situation now facing these indigenous communities by the next regional meeting;
2. **To introduce** the report to the next regional meeting for examination and decisions.

<b>Decision 14</b>	<b>Platform of Co-operation Africa / Latin America and the Caribbean</b>
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**Recalling** that the Platform of Co-operation Africa / Latin America and the Caribbean was adopted in Recife, Brazil, in 1998 and further elaborated during the second meeting held in Bamako, Mali, in 2000;

**Taking into consideration** the existing complementarities of the Convention in the two regions, and;

**Considering** the political willingness to establish a strong south/south co-operation between Africa / Latin America and the Caribbean,

**DECIDE**

1. **To express their gratitude** to the experts of Mali, Venezuela and Cuba for their participation in the meeting held in Holguin, Cuba, in May 2001, and for the analysis and presentation of their respective experiences in preventing and reversal of salt-affected soils and the preparation of related national projects to be submitted to the GEF for consideration;

2. **To additionally express their gratitude** to Venezuela for the generous financial contribution provided for the implementation of the Platform of Co-operation;
3. **To request** the CCD Secretariat and the three above-mentioned countries to organise similar initiatives for exchange of experience, involving other countries that could enrich from them.

<b>Decision 15</b>	<b>Support for Haiti</b>
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**Taking into consideration** the gravity of the situation of Haiti described by its representative;

**Considering** that the countries of the region are extremely concerned about the current situation in Haiti with respect to desertification and poverty;

**Recalling** the different decisions adopted in previous regional meetings on this issue,

**DECIDE**

1. **To strongly request** the international community and especially CARICOM to support Haiti in the development of measures and plans to deal with those challenges;
2. **To request** the Government of Haiti to adopt the appropriate measures that would facilitate and encourage support for the restart of multilateral and bilateral activities.

<b>Decision 16</b>	<b>Gran Chaco and Puna Sub-regional Programmes</b>
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**Taking into consideration** the comprehensive report introduced to the meeting on the activities and plans of the Gran Chaco and La Puna sub-regions;

**Bearing in mind** the important efforts developed at the national level by the different governments of the sub-region;

**Considering** the observations made at the meeting on the importance of the support of the international community,

**DECIDE**

1. **To commend** the countries of these sub-regions for the work carried out until now;
2. **To encourage** these countries to continue to pursue efforts to complete implementation of those programmes;

3. **To encourage** the international community, in particular multilateral institutions and bilateral donors, to support those programmes as a priority for the sub-regions.

<b>Decision 17</b>	<b>DESELAC</b>
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**Considering** the Decision adopted during the Third Regional Meeting held in Mexico, related to the creation of an interactive information system among the countries of the region;

**Noting** that the information system DESELAC represents a very useful working tool, especially if strengthened,

#### DECIDE

1. **To express their gratitude** to the CCD Secretariat for its efforts in publishing the monthly Informative Newswire Bulletin on the activities implemented in the region;
2. **To provide** the CCD Secretariat with all information that can be usefully shared with other countries of the region through DESELAC;
3. **To commend the efforts** of the Secretariat for the support extended to four countries to improve their technical capacity in interacting within DESELAC;
4. **To encourage** the UNCCD Secretariat to continue its efforts to expand support for improving technical capacity in interacting within DESELAC to all the remaining countries in the region where needed;
5. **To call upon** the country representatives of the region to improve and increase the use of DESELAC so as to strengthen horizontal co-operation among themselves;
6. **To request** the Secretariat to organise thematic fora and electronic conferences.

<b>Decision 18</b>	<b>Committee on Science and Technology</b>
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**Taking into consideration** the prerogatives entrusted to the Committee on Science and Technology by the Conference of the Parties in the process of implementation of the Convention;

**Aware** of the diverse experiences identified during the Ad Hoc Working Group for the review of National reports;

**Conscious** of the existing potential in Latin America and the Caribbean in the field of traditional knowledge,

**DECIDE**

1. **To recommend** to the countries to insist in that the issues of benchmarks and indicators in desertificación and the revaluation of traditional technologies and local knowledge so that they occupy a substantive space in the respective NAPs.
2. **To request** to the CCD Secretary to support and to attend the countries in the implementation of benchmarks and indicators useful to the preparation and implementation of the NAPs in the respective countries of the region;
3. **To request** to the Secretary of the CCD, support the initiative of holding a training workshop and exchange of experiences in traditional technologies and local knowledge to take place in 2002.
4. **To recommend** to the Secretary the opening of new research lines to contribute to the awareness on desertification processes and the implementation of the Convention.
5. **To request** the inclusion of the local and indigenous populations and their traditional knowledge in natural resource management, within the process of implementation of the convention, recognising the role that corresponds to them as relevant stakeholders in combating desertificación and the mitigating the effects of drought.

<b>Decision 19</b>	<b>Publication of documents</b>
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**Bearing in mind** the Regional Program of Action of Latin America and the Caribbean adopted during the III Regional Conference held in Havana, Cuba;

**Recalling** the wealth of documents generated along the different activities coming out of the resolutions adopted in past Regional Conferences;

**Remembering also** the compilation about traditional technologies in Latin America and the Caribbean, presented in the V Regional Meeting held in Lima, Peru and the valuable contributions made by different countries and NGOs, that enriched the mentioned document;

**Taking into account** the national reports submitted by 30 country Parties to the Ad Hoc Working Group, established under a mandate of the Conference of the parties at its fourth session, as well as the aggregated information generated by the Secretariat based on those reports;

**Taking into account further** the different decisions adopted and the activities carried out in the fulfilment of those mandates;

**Bearing in mind** the background information provided by the Latin America and the Caribbean Unit of the CCD Secretariat and by the Regional Co-ordinating Unit;

**Recognising** that the on-going sub-regional activities have provided to date a wealth of documents that may be used to enrich similar initiatives in other parts of the Region or elsewhere in the world; and

**Taking into consideration** that such gathering of documents will constitute a valuable bibliographic resource for the delegations as well as for the implementation of future initiatives in the Region, and as an archive that may be used in the search of new financial support for the countries and / or for the Region;

DECIDE

1. **Request** to the CCD Secretariat the compilation, printing and dissemination of the information mentioned in the paragraphs above during 2002;
2. **Request** that the said publication be distributed to the different focal points, RIOD-Latin America and the Caribbean, donor community and agencies linked with combating desertification and drought;
3. **Provide** the required endorsement to the Secretariat to review the documents, to finish those in need of this procedure and to provide support for the dissemination and distribution efforts.

Decision 20	GRULAC working strategy at the COP.5
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**Considering** the relevant issues that will be discussed during the COP.5,

**Conscious** of the importance of guaranteeing an effective participation of the LAC group in the negotiations;

**Taking into account** the need of structuring the work of the GRULAC countries members during the next conference,

DECIDE

1. **To assign** responsibilities on the different negotiation documents to the countries of the region divided into groups with the aim to make a more in depth analysis of the texts and strengthen the GRULAC thematic agenda during the COP.5;

2. To approve the synthesis scheme enclosed at the end of these Decisions.

<b>Decision 21</b>	<b>Participation of Ministries in the High Level Segment of the COP 5</b>
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**Taking into account** the importance that the implementation process analysis of the Convention assumes in the context of the Rio +10 Summit;

**Considering** that already 176 countries are Parties to the UNCCD as a convention stemmed from the 1992 Rio Summit;

**Bearing in mind** that Latin American and the Caribbean countries have shown a clear engagement towards the Convention,

#### DECIDE

1. **To call upon** the Ministries of the region dealing with environment to participate in the political debate in the context of the High Level Segment of the COP 5, that will be held in Geneva, on October 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2001;
2. **To request** the CCD Secretariat to take all the necessary measures to facilitate the participation of the Ministries in the High Level Segment.

<b>Decision 22</b>	<b>Financing implementation of the CCD</b>
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**Emphasising** the need to rely on predictable financial resource flows to implement initiatives and projects in the struggle against desertification and mitigating the effects of drought;

**Considering** that other global environmental conventions rely on the GEF as their main financial mechanism for the fulfilment of their mandate and the achievement of the objectives set by their governing bodies;

**Taking into account** that 176 countries have already ratified the CCD Convention and that most of them have begun the development of their respective NAPs with the objective of concluding this process by the year 2005, in accordance with Decision 8 of COP.4;

**Recalling** Decision 9 of COP 4 on the follow up to be given by the Executive Secretary of the CCD to the November 2000 GEF Council Decision, requesting the GEF Chief Executive Officer to look for the best options for supporting affected countries to combat desertification and mitigation of the effects of drought;

**Bearing in mind** that the GEF Council fully agreed that the designation of land degradation (desertification and deforestation), as a GEF focal area, should be pursued as a means of enhancing GEF support for the successful implementation of the UNCCD,

**DECIDE**

**To strongly request** the Conference of the Parties to designate the GEF as the operational financial mechanism of the UNCCD, so as to provide it with predictable financial resources to achieve its objectives in a timely and efficient manner;

**To request** the GEF, at its next Assembly meeting in Beijing, China in 2002, to put Desertification as a fully fledged GEF focal area along with biodiversity, climate change, the protection of the ozone layer and international waters;

**To invite** the Global Mechanism to continue providing up to date information on available financial resources to implement the UNCCD, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and bearing in mind the GEF co-funding clause requested for projects;

**To request** the Secretariat of the CCD to continue to actively promote all the measures needed to ensure that the CCD is implemented in all regions in a timely and efficient manner.

<b>Decision 23</b>	<b>Co-operation with UNDP</b>
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**Considering that** the decision of the UNDP Executive Board on enhancement of partnerships to promote socio-economic development of arid zones and the alleviation of poverty are intrinsically linked to the objectives of the UNCCD;

**Taking into account** the decisions taken by the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties and the needs of developing country Parties, as expressed during the Ad Hoc Working Group for an in-depth review and analysis of the national reports submitted at the Conference of the Parties in its third and fourth sessions;

**Bearing in mind** that the commitments undertaken by Parties under the Convention are fully in conformity with the mandate given to UNDP in the framework of its poverty reduction strategy;

**Noting further** that UNDP has a comparative advantage in organising consultative meetings at the national level due to its long standing experience and presence in almost all affected developing countries;

**Recalling also** that UNDP and UNCCD intend to work together in close co-operation with other related agencies and institutions,

**DECIDE**

1. **To request** the UNCCD Secretariat and UNDP Administration to strengthen their co-operation regarding the support to be provided to UNCCD Latin American and Caribbean country Parties and to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding accordingly;
2. **To further request** UNDP to organise, together with the UNCCD Secretariat, consultative meetings with donor countries and international agencies for the launching and implementation of NAPs in the LAC region;
3. **To further request** UNDP and the UNCCD Secretariat to strengthen their support to countries in the organisation of their national awareness seminars and in the elaboration of their respective NAPs;
4. **To encourage** both UN agencies to develop initiatives on synergistic programmes dealing with desertification, drought, bio-diversity, climate change and protection of wetlands in dryland zones of the LAC region.

<b>Decision 24</b>	<b>Strengthening National Capacities</b>
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**Taking into consideration** the expressed need for strengthening the level of participation at the Conference of the Parties and other related meetings;

**Considering** that various delegations have raised this sensitive matter;

**Recognising** the limited resources available to the countries of this region; and

#### DECIDE

1. **To request** the Secretariat of the UNCCD, along with other multilateral and bilateral agencies organise appropriate activities to train peoples of their different sub-regions in the area of negotiating skills;
2. **To request** the Secretariat of the UNCCD to present to the next regional meeting, a plan and timetable of implementation on this subject.

<b>Decision 25</b>	<b>Acknowledgement to the Global Mechanism</b>
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**Bearing in mind** relevant COP 4 decisions and the outcomes of the Ad Hoc Working Group concerning the fundamental role of the Global Mechanism in supporting the UNCCD implementation;

**Taking into account** the work of the Global Mechanism to support the implementation of the convention, particularly as regards regional programmes and the support to this Seventh Regional Meeting,

### DECIDE

1. **To recognise** the support of the Global Mechanism and its commitment with the countries Parties of the region on the application of the Convention, in the attendance granted to the Subregional programmes; as well for its valuable contribution for the development of the works of the Seventh LAC Regional Meeting.
2. **To request** also to the CCD Secretary and the Global Mechanism to improve co-operation with relevant agencies of the United Nations System and other international organisations related with combating desertificación, to achieve an effective implementation of the Convention in the region in a more effective and timely manner.

<b>Decision 26</b>	<b>Participation of NGOs in UNCCD</b>
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**Considering** Article 10, paragraph 2 (f), and Regional Annex III, Article 3 paragraph 2;

**Recalling** the need for the broad participation of non governmental organisations and local populations in the planning and design of policies, in the adoption of decisions and the execution and revision of the actions programmes at local, national, and regional levels;

**Taking into consideration** the important task that non governmental organisations and community-based organisations should develop in the regions of the countries, through the Latin American and Caribbean Chapter of the International Network of NGOs on Desertification (RIOD-LAC).

**Recognising** that non governmental organisations and community-based organisations are effectively fulfilling an important role in the combating desertification in areas such as awareness raising in partnership with national governments;

**Recognising** the value of the achievements of non-governmental organisations and community based organisations in the matter of co-ordination at the regional level, particularly in the Third Regional Meeting of RIOD-LAC held in Havana, Cuba in May 2001,

### DECIDE

1. **To reaffirm** the commitment of the countries of the region to ensure a broad participation of non-governmental organisations and community based organisations in the process of implementation of the UNCCD, particularly in the design, implementation and monitoring of the National, Sub-regional and Regional Action Programmes;

2. **To express** support to RIOD-LAC Action Plan 2001-2003, approved in the Havana Regional Meeting;
3. **To request** the effective co-operation of international organisations and donor countries to ensure that non governmental organisations and community-based organisations be enabled to accomplish the goals established in the plan;
4. **To further request** the involvement of the Secretariat of the UNCCD to facilitate the contacts between international organisations and donor communities and the non-governmental organisations and community based organisations in order to find the necessary funding to make the accomplishment of these goals possible.

<b>Decision 27</b>	<b>Participation of NGOs in the sub-regional workshop on Benchmarks and Indicators</b>
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**Considering** Article 10, paragraph 2 (f), on the UNCCD and reaffirming Article 3, paragraph 2 of Regional Annex III;

**Recalling** the need for the broad participation of non-government organisations and local communities in the planning and design of policies in the adoption of decisions and the execution and revision of action programmes at the local, national, and regional levels;

**Recognising** the need for capacity building and collaboration among NGOs in the Caribbean sub-region, especially in light of the completion of National Awareness Seminars in the vast majority of countries of the sub-region,

#### DECIDE

1. **To request** the Secretariat of the UNCCD to support the participation of NGOs in the workshop on Benchmarks and Indicators for the Caribbean sub-region, to be convened in Suriname in March 2002.

<b>Decision 28</b>	<b>Acknowledgement to the Government of Spain</b>
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**Aware** of the generous support granted by the Government of Spain for the organisation of the different LAC regional meetings;

**Recognising** the long standing commitment of the Government of Spain in supporting Latin American and Caribbean countries efforts towards achieving sustainable development particularly in their combat against desertification and the mitigation of the effects of the drought,

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**DECIDE**

1. **To express** their gratitude, on behalf of the people and governments of Latin America and the Caribbean, to the people and Government of Spain for the admirable and continuous support provided to the implementation process of the Convention in the region throughout these years;
2. **To request** the CCD Secretariat to convey, through the appropriate diplomatic channels, the gratitude of the peoples and governments of Latin America and the Caribbean to the people and Government of Spain for the efforts carried out in promoting the implementation of the Convention in the region;
1. **To express** their gratitude to the Spanish Agency of International Co-operation for having granted scholarships to attend the course on soil degradation organised in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, hoping that this commendable opportunity will also be offered in the future;
2. **To invite** the Government of Spain to continue supporting the region in the efforts for achieving sustainable development, particularly through combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought.

<b>Decision 29</b>	<b>Acknowledgement to the People and Government of Chile</b>
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**Taking into account** the deliberations of this meeting, the governments, the international organisations and the NGOs present at the UNCCD Seventh Latin American and Caribbean Regional meeting held in La Serena, Chile, from 21 to 24 August 2001;

**DECIDE**

1. **To express** their profound gratitude to the People and Government of Chile for the excellent organisation of the meeting and the kind hospitality extended to all participants.

**\* DECISION 20 TABLE INDICATING INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNTRIES' DELEGATES AT COP 5**  
**\* DECISIÓN 20 TABLA RESUMEN DE LAS RESPONSABILIDADES INDIVIDUALES DE LOS DELEGADOS NACIONALES A LA COP 5**

	ISSUE TEMÁTICA	Time Tiempo	Document number Número de documento	Country País
1	Agenda and Budget <i>Agenda y Presupuesto</i>	2 weeks	5/1, 5/2, 5/2 add.1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, RIOD
2	Implementation of the Convention and CRIC <i>Implementación de la Convención y CRIC</i>	2 weeks	5/1, 5/3, 5/3 add.1	St. Lucia, Grenada, Belize Guatemala, Cuba, Argentina, RIOD
3	Improving Science and Technology Committee <i>Mejoramiento de Comité de Ciencia y Tecnología</i>	2 weeks	5/1, 5/3 add.2	St. Vincent, , Cuba, Mexico, Brasil, Argentina
4	GEF financing issues and GM <i>Aspectos financieros Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial, y Mecanismo Mundial</i>	2 weeks	5/1, 5/3 add.3, 5/4	St. Lucia, Grenada, Jamaica, Uruguay, Ecuador, Belice, Dominican Republic, RIOD
5	Synergies among conventions <i>Sinergias entre las convenciones</i>	2 weeks	5/1, 5/6	Suriname, Haiti, Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Peru, Uruguay, The Bahamas, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Cuba, Mexico
6	Rule of procedure <i>Reglas de procedimiento</i>	2 weeks	5/1, 5/7, 5/8	St. Lucia, Chile
7	Agenda CST, Traditional knowledge, Communication and information, Report CST Bureau <i>Agenda del CST, Conocimientos tradicionales, comunicación e información, Informe del Buró del CST</i>	4 days	5/CST/1, 5/CST/2, 5/CST/2/add.1, 5/CST/6 and 5/INF.6	Brazil, Suriname, Cuba, Peru, Uruguay Mexico, RIOD
8	Survey and evaluation, Report CST Bureau <i>Encuesta y evaluación, Informe del Buró del CST</i>	4 days	5/CST/1, 5/CST/3 and 5/INF.6	Barbados, Guatemala, Paraguay
9	Early warning system, help guide, Report CST Bureau <i>Sistemas de alerta temprana, guías de ayuda, Informe del Buró del CST</i>	4 days	5/CST/1, 5/CST/4, 5/CST/5, 5/INF.6	Guyana, El Salvador, Paraguay, Nicaragua, Honduras, Mexico, Dominican Republic
10	Benchmarks and indicators, Report CST Bureau, LADA and MEA <i>Puntos de referencia e indicadores, Informe del Buró del CST, LADA y MEA</i>	4 days	5/CST/1, 5/CST/7, 5/INF.7, 5/INF.6	Brazil, St. Vincent, St. Kitts, El Salvador, Chile, Colombia, Uruguay, Suriname, Ecuador, Mexico, Argentina, RIOD

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**VII REGIONAL MEETING OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES  
UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT**

**LA SERENA, CHILE, 21 TO 24 AUGUST, 2001**

**ITEMS ON THE APPROVED AGENDA**

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING
2. WORKSHOP ON DESERTIFICATION BENCHMARKS AND INDICATORS
3. Report of the UNCCD secretariat on the activities carried out in the region and activities of the UNCCD regarding the cop 5
4. Report of the out-going president of the regional executive committee.
5. Regional programmes
6. The Global Mechanism
7. Activities of the cop 5 for Latin America and the Caribbean
8. Report on the synergy workshop among sustainable development conventions held in La Paz, Bolivia in august of 2001.
9. Case study of the elaboration process of the nap in Nicaragua.
10. On the agenda: Drought: the Chilean experience.
11. Local and indigenous communities.
12. Traditional knowledge.
13. Field visit to assess the Chilean experiences in combating desertification and drought.
14. Adoption of the Report of the Seventh Regional Meeting.
15. Closing of the Meeting.

**ANEXO III**  
**LISTADO DE PARTICIPANTES EN LA 7A REUNIÓN REGIONAL ALC – CCD**  
**LA SERENA, CHILE 21-24 AGOSTO 2001**

PARTICIPANTES EN LA VII REUNION REGIONAL ALC - CCD LA SERENA, CHILE 21-24 DE AGOSTO DE 2001								
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GOBIERNO DE CHILE  
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**PARTICIPANTS TO THE 7TH REGIONAL MEETING LAC  
LA SERENA, CHILE 21-24 AUGUST, 2001**



U N C C D

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**PARTICIPANTS TO THE 7TH REGIONAL MEETING LAC  
LA SERENA, CHILE 21-24 AUGUST, 2001**



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LA SERENA, CHILE 21-24 AUGUST, 2001**



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LA SERENA, CHILE 21-24 AUGUST, 2001**



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PARTICIPANTES EN LA VII REUNION REGIONAL ALC - CCD LA SERENA, CHILE 21-24 DE AGOSTO DE 2001								
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LA SERENA, CHILE 21-24 AUGUST, 2001**



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**PARTICIPANTS TO THE 7TH REGIONAL MEETING LAC  
LA SERENA, CHILE 21-24 AUGUST, 2001**



U N C C D

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**PARTICIPANTS TO THE 7TH REGIONAL MEETING LAC  
LA SERENA, CHILE 21-24 AUGUST, 2001**



U N C C D

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