

Consultation on integration of priority activities related to combating land degradation in the Caribbean into the Country Support Strategies in the framework of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement

Kingston, Jamaica, 28-29 May 2001

The participants in the above mentioned consultation,

- After wide exchange of views on the common objectives and principles of the UNCCD and the Cotonou Agreement, and
- Having examined the status of the UNCCD implementation in the Caribbean sub-region and the delay registered in the process in this sub-region,

Agreed on the following actions :

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Measures to be taken at National level

1. Urge the UNCCD Secretariat to adopt the necessary measures that will enable the countries of the Caribbean sub-region to elaborate their National Action Programmes (NAP) before 2005, in conformity with the decision 8/COP4. To comply with the UNCCD provisions, the process must include all relevant stakeholders in particular, Government Ministries, local governments, industries, farmers and NGOs as well as Governments from the region in a position to provide technical support in collaboration with the UNCCD Secretariat.
2. The UNCCD National Focal Points in those country Parties that do not have NAPs are encouraged to engage in consultations with the National Authorising Officers (NAO) to ensure the inclusion of the elements of their future NAPs into the Country Support Strategies (CSS) and subsequently into the National Indicative Program (NIPs).
3. To ensure that NAPs or national priority activities are included in the CSS, the UNCCD National Focal Point should conduct, as a matter of urgency, a dialogue with high ranking officers of the ministries concerned, the NAO, on the importance and relevance of integrating the priority programmes in combating land degradation in the CSS and the NIP.
4. Since NAPs will be government agreed-on programmes, the concerned Ministries, mainly those of agriculture, environment, economic planning and finance will have to articulate the NAP issues in the appropriate national forums so as to facilitate dialogue and their inclusion in the NIPs and rolling programming.

5. The UNCCD National Focal Point, in collaboration with the NAO, should organise and conduct a national dialogue and an information campaign to create and consolidate public awareness of the need to include the NAP priorities in the finalised National Indicative Programme.

6. The UNCCD National Focal point, in collaboration with the NAO, should call for a consultative joint dialogue among the EU member States, the UNDP and World Bank representatives and the EU delegate, to create the awareness needed to include the NAPs into the rolling programming, bearing in mind that the Cotonou Agreement introduces rolling programming in which, progress in the implementation of the NIP is systematically reviewed.

7. The UNCCD National Focal point, in collaboration with their National Co-ordinating Bodies, should co-operate with counterparts in the others two related UN conventions on Climate Change and Bio-diversity to promote synergies.

8. The UNCCD National Focal Point, in collaboration with the NAO should, by utilising Article 71 of the Cotonou Agreement which supports decentralised co-operation , seek to develop micro programmes in the field of land degradation that can be directly financed by the EU delegate in the country concerned.

9. The specific sectors of NAPs which strongly emphasise awareness raising and capacity building could benefit from the EU budget line of decentralised co-operation which aims to provide strategic funding to strengthen programmes of the civil society organisations such as NGOs.

10. The NAOs, taking into consideration the criteria already agreed to, should ensure the allocation of adequate resources to civil society for their active participation in projects and programmes in combating land degradation.

11. The country Parties to the UNCCD are invited to use the existing capacities and experience of the ACP countries in the elaboration and implementation of the NAP so as to promote South-South co-operation with the support of the UNCCD Secretariat.

B. Measures to be taken at Caribbean Sub-region level

12. The Cariforum governments are invited to include environment and in particular land degradation in the Regional Support Strategy (RSS) and subsequently in the Regional indicative Programme (RIP). In support of this effort, the UNCCD and ACP Secretariats should prepare as a matter of urgency, a draft project/programme document for submission to Governments and the Cariforum Secretariat.

13. Sub-regional and regional civil society organisations should continue to actively participate in the consultative process of elaborating and implementing the RSS and RIP.

14. The Caricom/Cariforum Secretariat should initiate awareness and capacity building programmes on trade and environment issues, in order to assist member states to articulate their positions in implementing EU-ACP trade negotiations in line with Articles 48 and 49 of the Cotonou Agreement.

C. Measures to be taken at international level

15. Request is made to the EU, FAO, GEF, UNDP, UNEP, IDB, the World Bank, IFAD, WMO, CDB, GM and other international institutions and agencies to provide financial and technical support to facilitate the implementation of activities at the national and sub-regional levels, in the Caribbean with the support of the UNCCD Secretariat.

16. The international community is called upon to further accelerate the access of UNCCD related activities to the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

D. Measures to be taken at UNCCD and ACP secretariat levels

17. The participants express their satisfaction with the Memorandum of Understanding established between the UNCCD and ACP Secretariats aims at facilitating the implementation of the UNCCD and the Cotonou Agreement related activities, and call for reinforcement of co-operation between the two Secretariats in order to further facilitate the implementation of the NAP process in countries of ACP group.

18. Request the UNCCD Secretariat to establish close working relationships with the European Commission, the Caricom and Cariforum Secretariats, the Caribbean Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank and other lending agencies, in order to raise the awareness of this problem in these institutions and have it reflected in their country analysis and lending programmes.

19. The UNCCD and the ACP Secretariats should facilitate, upon request by the ACP Country Parties concerned, the process of accessing EDF resources through the National Indicative Programme and other financial instruments.

20. The Secretariats should consult with Cariforum Secretariat to ensure that the processes at the sub-regional and regional levels reflect the interests of all member states concerned.

21. The Secretariats are required to follow up on identified actions at national and regional levels, through the provisions of the requisite support to enable countries to elaborate their CSS and RSS, taking into account the recommendations above.