



**Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought
8th IWG Coordination Committee Meeting
13 November 2020, 15:00-16:30 CEST**

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Opening Remarks

Gunilla Björklund (Chair) welcomed the participants to the 4th meeting of the IWG Coordination Committee (IWG CC) and introduced Miriam Medel Garcia, ERPA unit head, and Barron Orr, Lead Scientist at UNCCD to the members. The Chair adopted the agenda, where the Secretariat will inform the status of the interim report for the CRIC.

Daniel Tsegai (UNCCD Secretariat) updated the members on the submission of the interim report for translation to CRIC. He congratulated the IWG members for their efforts in putting together interim report in this COVID19 period. For today's meeting, he highlighted that the TGs would offer their feedback on the existing process and identify plans to speed up the next phase for a concrete and actionable report, which will be a game changer and revolutionary step on drought for UNCCD. On the next steps, he stated that the Secretariat will focus on facilitating the IWG for regional consultations, task group (TG) seminars, and activities during CRIC.

2. Status and Feedback from Task Group Leaders

The Task Groups are looking for feedback from the CRIC and to carry out the next steps and follow-up with their group members accordingly. Parallel efforts from other organizations on drought and within UNCCD on which IWG needs to build synergy was highlighted. TG 2 has made significant progress in fielding questionnaires to the national focal points. About 40 parties have responded to the questionnaire, which is being taken up by TG 2 to highlight some of the significant tools, methods and policies related to drought risk and vulnerability assessment. The compiled information will be shared with all TG members to be used as appropriate. The secretariat highlighted that support will be provided from the Global Mechanism unit of the UNCCD through a consultant on the innovative financing instrument on drought risk (TG3). In addition, the secretariat is engaged with UNEP for further support on financing instruments. TG 4 is working on four national level topics: policies, advocacy, legal and institutional, and implementation and coordination frameworks. This will be applied at regional and local levels. Members of the TG will be assigned for each of the four topics (two members per task). This will be condensed and supported with case studies and interviews with Parties and international organizations. The group will focus its work on the role of UNCCD on drought preparedness.

The chair encouraged the TGs to increase collaboration and integrate the knowledge being collected across TGs to avoid creating silos. These will be discussed in the next steps to speed up the process.

Vice-chair observed that the TGs are moving with different approaches and at different paces. In addition, a lot of external activities or processes that are taking place parallel, which could be explored to complement the work of the IWG. We should therefore take note of the key processes and their timelines to leverage on these parallel processes. He further cautioned that the IWG should not rely heavily on external resources e.g. consultant. The focus should rather be on improving the group dynamics and harnessing the expertise within the IWG.

3. Presentation on the Next Steps

A draft timeline was presented (Box.1). However, in the current global context, it is likely that the timeline will continue to change.

Box. 1 Timeline of the IWG

2020	
STATUS	INTERIM REPORT AVAILABLE AMONG CRIC DOCUMENTS
NOVEMBER 13 TH	❖ COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING – PLANNING NEXT PHASE
NOV/DEC	❖ SUPPORT TO INDIVIDUAL TASK GROUPS
DECEMBER	❖ 1 ST TASK GROUP SEMINAR
2021	
JANUARY	❖ REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETINGS (JAN-FEB) BY THE SECRETARIAT (OUTCOME: FEEDBACK ON THE INTERIM REPORT FROM THE REGIONS) ❖ 2 ND & 3 RD TASK GROUP SEMINARS
FEBRUARY	❖ 4 TH TASK GROUP SEMINAR ❖ IWG MEETING
MARCH	❖ CRIC MEETING ○ PANEL DISCUSSION OF IWG ○ FORMAL FEEDBACK FROM PARTIES ON THE INTERIM REPORT
APRIL-MAY	❖ TASK GROUPS FINALIZE THEIR INPUT TO THE 1 ST DRAFT REPORT ❖ IWG MEETING (TO DISCUSS THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE REPORT)
JUNE 30 DECEMBER (TBC)	❖ FINAL REPORT AVAILABLE AMONG COP DOCUMENTS ❖ COP 15

The period during November and December 2020 will involve discussing and identifying potential support to TGs. The TGs are the pillars of the IWG, so the Chair and Vice-Chair, along with the Secretariat proposed Task Group Seminars. To achieve the timelines presented, the coordinating committee should reflect on the support required by TGs.

Task group seminars

The Task Group Seminars will be driven by the TGs where the members will have a forum to share the challenges and opportunities in their topic. This will also have an opportunity to facilitate inter- and intra-group interaction.

The seminars will be a tool to promote exchanges within each TG therefore the format will be decided by each TG. The TGs can also invite other IWG members or external experts to present at the seminars.

The Seminar will be a preparatory phase to the final report to COP. A suggestion was made to organize the seminars after CRIC to facilitate discussion on content and benefit from external experts. The Secretariat will consult with TG leaders to decide on the format, date and other details of the seminar.

There was a request made to share the analysis of the recent survey submission which can feed into substantive discussions at the seminars.

A proposal was made to hold TG seminars in a full day back-to-back workshop. This was reported to be the original plan for the physical meeting organized at the CRIC. However, the CRIC is now expected to be held online.

Most groups considered December to be too soon to organize the seminars as substantive preparation and internal discussion are required to ensure that the seminar discussions are based on substance rather than process.

Recognition was made of the heavy workloads by IWG members, therefore a window should be created for members to hold informal engagements without creating an extra burden.

A suggestion made by TG 4 is to invite UNEP Legal office to make a presentation. However, caution was raised that the IWG should finalize substantive discussion on the role of UNCCD prior to discussions on legal issues.

Clarification was also sought on the support expected from the consultant to be hired by the GM of UNCCD as part of the COP decision on innovative finance mechanisms on drought. The Secretariat clarified that he will mainly support the work on TG 3 on a needs-driven basis.

Regional Consultative Meetings and IWG at CRIC

Regional consultation meetings are normally held before CRICs and COPs to discuss and familiarize country parties with documents and issues under discussion. The CRIC 19 consultations will be held online in January/February 2021 prior to the CRIC in March 2021. Dates are however yet to be finalized.

Due to changes in the meeting format, CRIC discussions will focus on recommendations presented in each of the CRIC documents. The CRIC organizers however identified that the IWG report does not have a recommendation section.

A Suggestion was made for the Regional IWG representatives to present the findings of the report during the regional consultation meetings. This would promote discussions prior to CRIC considering the time limitation at the CRIC virtual meeting.

4. Concluding Remarks

CRIC was noted to be an important opportunity to receive feedback from parties, particularly the proposed policy options which would inform the work on TG 4 going forward.

Suggestion made to hold preliminary discussion on legal instruments at least 3 weeks before CRIC in anticipation of the discussions at CRIC. This requires substantive preparation and discussions by groups beforehand.

Secretariat reiterated their commitment to provide support to the IWG process. The secretariat will approach each TGs to identify required support to maintain the current momentum.

Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.

Participants

IWG Members: Gunilla Björklund, Gaius Eudoxie, Caroline King-Okumu, Luca Perez, Roger S Pulwarty, Robert J Stefanski, Mark Svoboda, Michael Brüntrup, Nathalie van Haren, Vanina Pietragalla, Maher Salman, Trevor Hadwen, Theodore Horbulyk

UNCCD Secretariat: Daniel Tsegai, Miriam Medel Garcia, Barron Orr, Norah Ngeny, and Saravanan Subramanian.