

Side events organized within the sidelines of the official sessions of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and/or its subsidiary bodies convened by the UNCCD provide an informal opportunity for Parties and accredited observer organizations to exchange information and experiences on diverse issues related to the objectives of the Convention.

The fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) and meetings of its subsidiary bodies will be held from 9 to 20 May in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

In the context of the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration and with the theme **Land. Life. Legacy: from Scarcity to Prosperity**, COP 15 is a call to action to ensure that land, the life-land of this planet, continues to benefit present and future generations.

COP15 is expected to agree on policies and actions to increase effective large-scale land restoration and tackle the impacts of drought. Issues around the enabling environment for land restoration, such as secure tenure rights, gender and youth perspectives, migration, among others, will also be important aspects of the COP 15 agenda, along with concrete projects and programs, such as the Great Green Wall and a Legacy Programme for land restoration in the country, Cote D'Ivoire. General guidelines for organizers of side events

1. The proposed side event should be directly related to the goals and objectives of the UNCCD and should reflect an approach to sustainable development that integrates the land-based perspective.
2. Every effort should be made to align the proposed event with the main thrust of the agenda of the COP15 and its subsidiary bodies. The side event should constitute a potential contribution to the outcome of the conference. The agenda of the COP is available on the UNCCD website.
3. In order to accommodate as many requests of side events as possible, side event proposals that involve several organizing partners (jointly organized by two or more entities) are particularly encouraged. Preference will be given to events that are organized jointly by civil society organizations, governmental and intergovernmental partners.
4. Non-governmental representatives proposing a side event must be accredited to the UNCCD.
5. Side events are open to all registered delegates participating at the official sessions of the COP or any of its subsidiary bodies. The side event organizers should make appropriate arrangements to enable the registration of individuals, invited speakers, or guests to the event who may not be registered delegates.
6. Inter-governmental meetings always have priority over other events or meetings. As per general practice, no event can be organized during the official meetings of the Conference. Side events may have to be cancelled at the last minute if an intergovernmental meeting needs to use the room where the side event was scheduled to take place. In these cases, the secretariat will attempt to reschedule the cancelled event to another location or another date.

7. The secretariat is responsible only for room allocation. Time slots and rooms will be accommodated according to availability on a first-come, first-served basis. Due to in-session activity, last-minute changes or even cancellations can occur on rare occasions for some side events. No side events are to be scheduled on 9 and 10 May 2022 due to the celebration of the High-Level Segment.
8. Standard equipment (i.e. sound system, one table microphone for each two delegates and fixed projection facilities) will be provided in the side events meeting rooms. Side event organizers can request additional technical equipment and services for their event on a commercial basis from local service providers.
9. A list of available services that may be obtained on commercial basis from local accredited providers (such as catering, technical equipment, interpretation, shipment and storage etc.) will be made available on the host country COP 15 and secretariat website.
10. The duration of side events cannot exceed 90 minutes to ensure having the necessary sanitation breaks between events to comply with the COVID-19 regulations. Side events organizers are requested to ensure that the events start and finish on time.
11. Side event attendees will be able to enter side event rooms on a first come, first served basis. It will not be possible to have more people in the room than determined by the room seating capacity. Standing will not be permitted.
12. Depending on the venue and availability, webcast connections may be provided during the side event. The UNCCD side event team should be notified in advance so that the necessary connection can be arranged. This may involve additional costs that need to be covered by the side event organizer.
13. Publicizing a side event is the responsibility of its organizers; the Secretariat will not produce fliers, distribute notices, or run other publicity efforts for side events.
14. Given the paperless nature of the COP, the UNCCD secretariat encourages organizers to eliminate the documents produced for the advertisement of the side events and their organization.
15. The sale of printed materials (or any other items) at the premises of the session during the side events or at any time is strictly prohibited.
16. Displays and exhibitions can only be organized through the secretariat. Side event organizers are advised not to set up displays or put-up posters on meeting room walls during a side event or at any other time during the meeting to avoid removal and loss of their materials.
17. Food will not be allowed into side event rooms. Therefore, in case that catering is permitted by the COVID19 protocol it should be provided outside the side event rooms.

Submission of Proposals for Side Events

Requests to hold side events during COP15 should be submitted by **14 March 2022**. Information on the approved side events will be sent by the UNCCD secretariat approximately one month prior to the session.

Accredited organizations interested in organizing a side event during COP15 must submit a proposal using the Application Form for Side Events enclosed as an Annex to these guidelines. The application should include a detailed description of the proposed event, including its theme focus, speakers/presenters and its potential contribution to the COP15.

All completed and signed forms must be emailed to: sideevent@unccd.int to the attention of the side events team. Please indicate in the title of the email the name of the organization and a short title for the side event for ease reference.

Note: Only submissions received before the 14th March via the e-mail indicated above will be considered.

For more information on side events, please contact:
UNCCD Secretariat
E: sideevent@unccd.int
T: +49 228 815-2800