



United Nations

ICCD/CRIC(20)/INF.1



## Convention to Combat Desertification

Distr.: General  
30 March 2022

English only

---

### Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

#### Twentieth session

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 12–18 May 2022

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**Improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties**

## Guidelines for the technical review of national reports

### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

By its decision 11/COP.14, the Conference of the Parties (COP) requested the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to use the available resources to, among other things, improve the quality assurance process for submitted reports. By the same decision, the COP also requested the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates, to use the reporting quality assurance exercise as a part of national capacity-building processes, making in-depth technical reviews of the reports of selected countries per region with broad stakeholder engagement.

This document contains guidelines for the technical review of national reports. The objectives of these guidelines are to promote transparency, accuracy, consistency, comparability and completeness in the review of information reported under the strategic objectives of the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework.



## Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction .....	1–7	3
II. Purpose of the technical review.....	8–11	3
III. General procedures.....	12–15	4
IV. Scope of the technical review.....	16–19	5
V. In-country reviews .....	20–25	5
VI. Conclusions .....	26–29	6

## Annex

Quality assurance checklist for the technical review of national reports.....	8
---	---

## I. Introduction

1. By its decision 7/COP.13, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) adopted the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework.
2. Strategic objective 1 (SO 1) of the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework aims at improving the condition of affected ecosystems, combating desertification/land degradation, promoting sustainable land management and contributing to land degradation neutrality (LDN). Information reported by countries under this strategic objective is also used to report against Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 15.3.1 (Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area). The UNCCD secretariat is the custodian agency for SDG indicator 15.3.1.
3. The other four strategic objectives under the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework seek to: improve the living conditions of affected populations (SO 2); mitigate, adapt to and manage the effects of drought in order to enhance resilience of vulnerable populations and ecosystems (SO 3); generate global environmental benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD (SO 4); and mobilize substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources to support the implementation of the Convention by building effective partnerships at global and national level (SO 5).
4. The first reporting process against this new Strategic Framework took place in 2018. National reports submitted before the reporting deadline were reviewed in line with a basic quality assurance procedure established to ensure completeness, internal coherence, comparability with global data sources, and accuracy of information submitted to the COP.
5. By its decision 11/COP.14, the COP requested the secretariat to use the available resources to, among other things, improve the quality assurance process for submitted reports. By the same decision, country Parties also requested the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates, to use the reporting quality assurance exercise as a part of national capacity-building processes, making in-depth technical reviews of the reports of selected countries per region with broad stakeholder engagement.
6. This document contains guidelines for the technical review of national reports. The objectives of these guidelines are to promote transparency, accuracy, consistency, comparability, and completeness in the review of information reported under the strategic objectives of the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework.
7. Building on the quality assurance methods used by the UNCCD for the 2018 reporting process, these guidelines provide a revised technical review process for future UNCCD national reporting, starting from the 2022 reporting process.

## II. Purpose of the technical review

8. The main objectives of the technical review of national reports are to:
  - (a) Develop capacity in country Parties by assisting them to:
    - (i) Submit transparent, accurate, consistent, comparable and complete information, adhering to the methodological guidelines;
    - (ii) Fulfil reporting obligations by improving their reporting of information contained in national reports and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;
  - (b) Ensure that the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) has accurate, consistent and relevant information in order to review the implementation of the Convention.
9. The technical review process will take on an extra layer of importance in the 2022 reporting process. This is because once the reporting process has concluded, the reported

data will be exposed, at least in an aggregate form, on a publicly available data visualization and data discovery interface in the recently upgraded UNCCD reporting platform, the performance review and assessment of implementation system (ver. 4) (PRAIS 4).<sup>1</sup> Any inaccuracies in the reported data could therefore lead to greater scrutiny of the reporting process by Parties and the general public. Thorough quality assurance of the reported data should minimize the risk of error and increase the credibility of publicly available information derived from the reported data.

10. The technical review process should provide clear, constructive and consistent recommendations for how a Party can submit credible data and factual information to meet the reporting requirements of the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework.

11. Finally, the technical review process will gather lessons learned for improving reporting that could inform future revisions and updates of the reporting tools and related methodological guidelines.

### III. General procedures

12. It is envisaged that the technical review of each national report shall be conducted as a desk review throughout the reporting process and prior to the reporting deadline by the experts recruited by the secretariat to provide technical backstopping to country Parties.

13. The technical review of national reports will be conducted in PRAIS 4, leveraging its in-built revision and review system. PRAIS 4 builds an audit trail of the evolution of the national report from the working draft to as many revisions as required prior to the reporting deadline. Parties can submit revisions of their national report at any moment during the reporting process for review by their assigned technical expert. The country-assigned expert will use the in-built commenting system to interact with the Party as they report by adding comments and suggestions for improvements to the reported data for their consideration. Conversely, Parties can use the commenting system to add comments for consideration by the expert, thereby enabling interaction and collaboration for the improvement and review of national reports.

14. Depending on the availability of resources, a limited number of in-country reviews will be performed (i) where major issues in country Party reports warrant deep investigation; or (ii) to draw lessons from high quality reports so that the next round of national reporting is improved. During an in-country review, the secretariat, Global Mechanism and expert reviewers would visit a country to meet with relevant stakeholders and review their national report, all pending available financial resources for this exercise.

15. The key roles and responsibilities of actors involved in the technical review process are as follows:

(a) The secretariat and the Global Mechanism shall coordinate practical arrangements concerning the review and facilitate the communication between experts and country Parties via PRAIS 4, an online help desk<sup>2</sup> and email, as needed. During in-country reviews, the secretariat and the Global Mechanism shall support the review process with a focus on institutional arrangements for reporting and the identification of other reporting challenges in consultation with relevant national stakeholders;

(b) The experts shall perform a thorough and comprehensive review of individual national reports as a desk review and participate, as necessary, in in-country reviews in accordance with the procedures and timeframes established in these review guidelines, as well as with the duties set out in their terms of reference;

---

<sup>1</sup> PRAIS 4 can be accessed at the following link: <<https://reporting.unccd.int/>>. For more information on PRAIS 4, see document ICCD/CRIC(20)/9.

<sup>2</sup> The help desk can be found at the following link: <<https://support.unccd.int/>>.

(c) Country Parties shall provide transparent responses to the review questions/comments and strive to revise and improve their national report based on the findings of the technical review in a timely manner.

#### IV. Scope of the technical review

16. The technical review shall provide a detailed technical examination of national reports submitted within the UNCCD reporting process under the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework, including any institutional challenge faced by country Parties when compiling reports.

17. The guiding principles in the technical review are to check for:

- (a) Transparency;
- (b) Accuracy;
- (c) Consistency;
- (d) Comparability;
- (e) Completeness;

(f) Adherence to the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1,<sup>3</sup> the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on UNCCD Strategic Objective 3,<sup>4</sup> and the PRAIS 4 Reporting Manual.<sup>5</sup>

18. The technical review shall focus on the progress indicators, particularly their current status and any changes to their values over time, used to report progress against strategic objectives 1 to 5, taking into account unique national circumstances such as capacity to collect, synthesize and interpret data and metrics contributing to the indicators.

19. The scope of the technical review is further detailed in the annex to this document, which contains a quality assurance checklist.

#### V. In-country reviews

20. Subject to the availability of resources, in-country reviews of the 2022 national reports shall be held soon after the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 21) in selected countries. Five in-country reviews, one per Regional Implementation Annex, could be held to both build capacity in a country (where there is a need for the country to substantially improve reporting), or for the UNCCD and other country Parties to learn from countries which produced very comprehensive national reports.

21. Countries to host in-country reviews shall be selected by the Bureau of the CRIC based on recommendations of the experts formulated during the technical review period. Countries shall be selected based on the quality of the country Party's national report and regional balance.

22. Each in-country review shall involve the secretariat, the Global Mechanism, review experts, country Party experts, and a broad range of stakeholders, including all institutions involved in the reporting process at the national level.

<sup>3</sup> Version 2 of the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1 is available at: <https://www.unccd.int/publications/good-practice-guidance-sdg-indicator-1531-proportion-land-degraded-over-total-land>.

<sup>4</sup> The Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on UNCCD Strategic Objective 3 is available at: <https://www.unccd.int/publications/good-practice-guidance-national-reporting-unccd-strategic-objective-3-mitigate-adapt>.

<sup>5</sup> The PRAIS 4 Reporting Manual for the 2022 reporting process is available in all United Nations languages at <https://PRAIS-4-reporting-manual.readthedocs.io/en/latest/index.html>.

23. The in-country review shall focus on issues raised during the technical review period, with a focus on the quality of the data used by the country Party in their national report. In addition, during the in-country review, the experts shall complete a thorough review of national arrangements to learn what worked well (in the case of exemplary national reports) or did not work well (in the case of poor national reports).

24. Several outputs are expected to be produced during in-country reviews. In addition to recommendations for how the country can improve reporting next time, in-country reviews could also be an occasion to refine the national voluntary targets for implementing the Convention by ensuring that they are specific, time-bound, policy coherent, quantitative, spatially explicit, gender-responsive and adequately integrated into planning frameworks. This will help improve the decision-making process and guide investment planning while advancing implementation and related monitoring and reporting activities. A combined output from all in-country workshops will be a synthesis of lessons learned for accurate and successful reporting that could be shared and replicated in other countries, and that would inform the revision and update of the reporting tools.

25. The budget for in-country reviews would include expert costs, travel costs of the expert team and a small grant to support the selected countries in organizing the workshops. An estimate of resources needed to support in-country reviews and three-day workshops in five countries is contained in the table.

Table  
**Resources needed to support five in-country reviews**

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Cost (euros)</i>	<i>Total (euros)</i>
Country grant	5 countries	3 000 per country	15 000
Experts to conduct the in-country review	5 experts	4 000 per expert	20 000
Travel and daily subsistence allowance for team	4 experts/staff members per country	Varies by country	50 000 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Total cost (euros)</b>			<b>85 000</b>

<sup>a</sup> = Rough estimate.

## VI. Conclusions

26. These draft guidelines describe the process for a technical review of national reports submitted by country Parties to meet their obligations under the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework.

27. The technical review of each national report will be conducted as a desk review throughout the reporting process and prior to the reporting deadline by the experts recruited by the secretariat to provide technical backstopping to country Parties. It will be conducted in PRAIS 4, leveraging its in-built revision and review system.

28. If resources allow, in-country reviews of the 2022 national reports will be convened in five countries soon after CRIC 21. Parties to host in-country reviews shall be selected by the Bureau of the CRIC based on recommendations of the experts formulated during the technical review period and taking into consideration the quality of the country Parties' national reports and regional balance. In-country reviews would produce recommendations for how countries can improve reporting and refine the national voluntary targets for implementing the Convention. This will help improve the decision-making process and guide investment planning, while advancing implementation and related monitoring and reporting activities.

29. The following activities can be done to support country Parties in their national reporting and mitigate problems during technical review:

- (a) Improve the capacity-building activities on reporting requirements as one of the core functions of the secretariat, with a focus on training technical reporting officers;
- (b) Enhance the level of technical backstopping and helpdesk support throughout the reporting period, including through bilateral virtual meetings between reporting officers and technical backstopping experts;
- (c) Improve e-learning opportunities, such as webinars and web-based learning material, and tools like Trends.Earth to further develop country Parties' capacities for the use of Earth observation data in LDN planning, implementation and monitoring;
- (d) Ensure that questions and answers sent back and forth between the experts and the country Party are complete, clear, concise, well-documented and timely so as not to delay the review process;
- (e) Continue the collaboration with the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Initiative, which is committed to assisting the UNCCD and its country Parties with the development of minimum data quality standards, analytical tools and the capacity-building needed to strengthen land degradation monitoring and reporting.

## Annex

### Quality assurance checklist for the technical review of national reports

1. The technical review of national reports shall comprise standard data checks, an assessment of transparency, accuracy, consistency, comparability and completeness in reported data and methods, as well as an assessment of how well country Parties have adhered to the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1, the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on UNCCD Strategic Objective 3, and the PRAIS 4 Reporting Manual.

#### Standard data checks and completeness of national reports

2. The experts shall complete an assessment of completeness and a standard check of the data provided in national reports, and identify whether:

(a) The submission is complete, that is the data has been submitted for all progress indicators in line with the reporting attributions for affected country Parties and developed country Parties as specified in the reporting manual;

(b) Data sources are provided when the country's own national data or other data are used in place of the default data;

(c) Methods of calculation are provided where relevant, for example when a country's national data is used to estimate trends in land productivity;

(d) Reported values fall within the expected range (e.g. percentage values should not exceed 100 per cent);

(e) There are no irregularities or unusual estimates provided for any of the indicators, such as extremely anomalous values;

(e) Voluntary targets are reported, if they exist; this includes checking that all national voluntary targets included in a country report to the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme are duly included in the national report;

(f) Key reasons for recalculations are reported when a country's national data is used and baseline estimates are recalculated, as recommended in the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1.

#### General checks for national reports that use default data

3. The experts shall check the national report for whether default data has been used, and if yes, assess whether:

(a) Any default data value has been edited;

(b) The default estimates of total land area have been edited and whether this compromises the consistency with other indicators;

(c) The country boundary is consistent across all spatial datasets;

(d) The country has provided a qualitative assessment and interpretation of the observed changes in the indicators considering national and local conditions;

(e) Missing data, if any, affects the integrity of the national report;

(f) The geospatial functionality of the performance review and assessment of implementation system (ver. 4) (PRAIS 4) has been used (i) to full effect by the Party; and (ii) to enhance the default data with the creation of added-value layers, such as the location and extent of hotspots of land degradation or voluntary targets, and that these have been reported in a spatially explicit fashion where possible and feasible.

### **General checks for national reports that use national or non-default data**

4. The experts shall check reported data for whether any national or non-default data has been used, and if yes, assess for all indicators whether:

- (a) The data sources and methods are credible;
- (b) There are any irregularities between the national data and the default data that would suggest that an anomalous or spurious value was reported;
- (c) Any geospatial data has been uploaded to PRAIS 4, in vector or raster format, and if that data is appropriate, relevant to the national report and has been supported by metadata included in the form provided;
- (d) The country boundary is appropriate, consistent with data boundaries and consistent across all spatial datasets;
- (e) The spatial resolution is sufficiently fine-scale for robust reporting and to identify changes in the indicator;
- (f) The temporal resolution and range are sufficient for showing changes in the indicator. There should be at least three data points for each indicator to assess changes;
- (g) The reporting years are consistent across all time-series indicators;
- (h) The reasons for any deviation from the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1, the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on UNCCD Strategic Objective 3, and the PRAIS 4 Reporting Manual are provided;
  - (i) Missing data affects the integrity of the national report;
  - (j) There is consistency with national reports for previous reporting periods;
  - (k) In case of any recalculation:
    - (i) Justifications and explanations are given for recalculations;
    - (ii) The difference between the new and the former estimate is reported;
    - (iii) The impacts of recalculations on national targets is discussed.

### **Specific checks for strategic objective 1**

5. More specifically, if national data on trends in land cover is used, the experts shall assess whether:

- (a) The sum of the land area in each terrestrial land cover class is consistent with the total land area, in particular for 2015 and 2019, as the calculation of other indicators are dependent on the land area values reported for those years;
- (b) Key degradation processes that should be included in the country's assessment of land degradation have been identified;
- (c) A national land cover legend competent for capturing the key degradation processes was used, and whether it is sufficiently described in PRAIS 4;
- (d) The national land cover legend has been adequately aggregated to the seven land cover classes required for United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) reporting;
- (e) A sensible transition matrix that specifies land cover changes as being either degradation, improvement or neutral transitions has been generated;
- (f) The key degradation processes relevant in the country and the corresponding land cover transitions defined are consistent with the default land cover legend and, if not, that a suitable national land cover legend has been defined so that the transition matrix defines the correct land cover changes as degradation;

(g) Quantitative data in the land cover change matrices are consistent with the key degradation processes and land cover transitions defined;

(h) The land cover change is reported for all classes;

(i) The estimates of land cover degradation are consistent with the estimates of land cover change and the transition matrix;

(j) The country has provided interpretations of changes in land cover according to the major land cover change processes;

(k) The relevant national geospatial land cover data have been uploaded to PRAIS 4, whether they are supported by appropriate metadata and whether the national land cover dataset has been formatted correctly according to the Trends.Earth style so that it can be rendered effectively in the PRAIS 4 spatial data viewer;

(l) There is deviation from the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1, and if yes, reasons are provided.

6. If national data on trends in land productivity is used, the experts shall assess whether:

(a) The methods used to estimate productivity are sufficiently described;

(b) The time series data cover a sufficiently long period to control for any seasonal variations;

(c) The time periods for the productivity data and the land cover data used to stratify the presentation of the results respect the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1 (i.e. that a 16-year period is adopted to monitor changes in land productivity, both for the baseline and reporting periods, and that any deviations from this guidance are justified);

(d) The country has provided interpretations of changes in land productivity for each land cover and land cover change class;

(e) The relevant national geospatial land productivity data have been uploaded to PRAIS 4 and whether they are supported by appropriate metadata;

(f) There is deviation from the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1, and if yes, reasons are provided.

7. If national data on soil organic carbon (SOC) stock is used, the experts shall assess whether:

(a) The methods used to estimate SOC stock and SOC stock changes are sufficiently described;

(b) The SOC averages for land classes are consistent across time series land cover data;

(c) The country has provided interpretations of changes in SOC stock for each land cover and land cover change class;

(d) The relevant national geospatial SOC data have been uploaded to PRAIS 4 and whether they are supported by appropriate metadata;

(e) There is deviation from the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1, and if yes, reasons are provided.

8. For the calculation of the proportion land that is degraded over total land area (i.e. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 15.3.1), the experts shall assess whether:

(a) The estimates of the proportion of degraded land are consistent with the estimates of the total area of degraded land and of the total land area;

(b) The 'one out, all out' rule was applied to calculate the proportion of degraded land, and if not that, an alternative method was proposed and documented;

(c) Any false positive or false negative has been identified, whether these have been reported in a spatially explicit fashion where possible and feasible, whether the recode option (i.e. how the country wants improved or degraded pixels to be recoded in the recalculated result) has been filled out for each feature reported, and whether the SDG indicator 15.3.1 has been recalculated accordingly;

(d) Any hotspot or brightspot has been identified and whether these have been reported in a spatially explicit fashion where possible and feasible;

(e) There is deviation from the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1, and if yes, reasons are provided.

9. If national data on voluntary targets for strategic objective 1 is provided, the experts shall assess whether:

(a) The target formulation is consistent with the information on the expected year of target achievement, location, type of land degradation neutrality intervention, and planned or ongoing measures to achieve the target;

(b) The area extent indicated in the target formulation is consistent with the total target area calculated using geospatial data;

(c) The area extent indicated in the implemented action formulation is consistent with the extent of action calculated using geospatial data.

### **Specific checks for strategic objective 2**

10. If national data on trends in population living below the relative poverty line and/or income inequality in affected areas is used, the experts shall assess whether the data provided is consistent with United Nations and World Bank definitions.

11. If national data on trends in access to safe drinking water in affected areas is used, the experts shall assess whether the data provided is consistent with the definitions used by the World Health Organization/United Nations Children's Fund Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene.

12. If national data on trends in the proportion of the population exposed to land degradation disaggregated by sex is used, the experts shall assess whether:

(a) The source of spatially explicit population data is clearly described;

(b) The relevant national geospatial data of population exposed to land degradation have been uploaded to PRAIS 4 and whether they are supported by appropriate metadata.

### **Specific checks for strategic objective 3**

13. If national data on trends in the proportion of land under drought over the total land area is used, the experts shall assess whether:

(a) Justification is given for why the Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) was not used in cases where a different index was used;

(b) Drought intensity classes are consistent with the SPI drought intensity classes described in the reporting manual;

(c) The relevant national gridded spatial summary of the most extreme drought conditions have been uploaded to PRAIS 4 and whether they are supported by appropriate metadata;

(d) There is deviation from the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on UNCCD Strategic Objective 3, and if yes, reasons are provided.

14. If national data on trends in the proportion of the total population exposed to drought is used, the experts shall assess:

- (a) The source of spatially explicit population data is clearly described;
- (b) The relevant national gridded spatial summary of the population exposed to the most extreme drought conditions have been uploaded to PRAIS 4 and whether they are supported by appropriate metadata;
- (c) There is deviation from the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on UNCCD Strategic Objective 3, and if yes, reasons are provided.

15. If national data on trends in the degree of drought vulnerability is used, the experts shall assess whether:

- (a) The data sources of all input factors describing the economic, social and infrastructural components of drought vulnerability are clear;
- (b) The tier level of vulnerability reported has been clearly stated and the data reported is consistent with that tier level; if tier 2 is stated, sex-disaggregated vulnerability data must be reported; if tier 3 is stated, subnational vulnerability data must also be reported;
- (c) There is deviation from the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on UNCCD Strategic Objective 3, and if yes, reasons are provided.

#### **Specific checks for strategic objective 4**

16. If national data on trends in abundance and distribution of selected species is used, the experts shall assess whether:

- (a) The data is appropriate to show trends in species extinction risk;
- (b) The Party has customized the Red List Index using the tools provided on the Red List Index website, and the process of customization was clearly documented;
- (c) The most significant negative or positive changes in the indicator and their direct and/or indirect drivers or levers have been described.

17. If national data on trends in protected area coverage of important biodiversity areas is used, the expert review shall assess whether the data provided is consistent with the definitions of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

#### **Specific checks for strategic objective 5**

18. If national data on the mobilization of substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources to support the implementation of the Convention is used, the experts shall assess whether:

- (a) The data is appropriate and from a reputable source;
- (b) The tier level of reporting has been clearly stated and the data and/or information reported is consistent with that tier level;
- (c) The definitions and methods are clearly explained and documented;
- (d) The guidance provided in the PRAIS 4 Reporting Manual is followed, and if alternate methods are used, reasons are provided.

#### **Examination of the effectiveness of the national reporting system**

19. Information on institutional, financial and legal arrangements as well as data planning, preparation and management are important elements to improve the quality of the national reports. A detailed examination of the effectiveness of the national reporting system and the enabling institutional and financial arrangements would be conducted during the in-country review through (i) interviews with personnel involved in the report's implementation and management; and (ii) examination of institutional procedures and of relevant records and documentation, including quality control procedures. This examination could be done during the desktop review, but it may

be less revealing because of challenges with the timing and effectiveness of remote communication with officials involved in the reporting.

20. A minimum set of inquiries by expert reviewers should be completed regardless of whether the review is done remotely as a desk review or in-country. These are:

(a) Verify whether the national reporting system and the institutional and financial arrangements, based on the information provided from the Party, are effective for the timely fulfilment of the requirements defined in the guidelines;

(b) Verify if the country Party has nominated a single national entity with overall responsibility for the reporting process or if specific responsibilities have been clearly defined across several entities;

(c) Verify if the country Party has established a process for approving the reporting and collaborating with national stakeholders with the aim to improve the quality of the report;

(d) Verify if and how the national report or data and information generated through reporting are used by the country Party in their land degradation, drought and desertification monitoring system, national decision-making processes or strengthening of synergies with Rio conventions.

21. Based on this set of inquiries, the experts shall assess:

(a) The capacity of the reporting agency to continue to collect, maintain and improve any of the national datasets used for reporting;

(b) The extent of collaboration between the reporting agency and other agencies and sectors (e.g. private sector, non-governmental organizations, civil society);

(c) The level of involvement of stakeholders in reporting;

(d) Whether any financial resources were received to support reporting;

(e) The level of harmonization with data used for reporting under the other Rio conventions;

(f) The level of harmonization with data used for SDG reporting.

22. Finally, the experts shall assess the extent to which any recommendations made in previous technical reviews have been implemented and resolved.

---