



Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

Twentieth session

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

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

**Draft decisions for consideration at the twentieth session of
the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the
Convention**

Note by the secretariat*

Summary

By its decision 32/COP.14, paragraph 5, the Conference of the Parties (COP) requested the secretariat to circulate in all official languages at least six weeks prior to the fifteenth session of the COP a single document with all draft decisions prepared for Parties for consideration at the COP and to ensure that draft decisions are clearly written and properly formatted.

Accordingly, document ICCD/CRIC(20)/10 includes all substantive draft decisions proposed by the secretariat that will serve as starting point for discussion and further negotiation in the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention contact group.

* This document was scheduled for publication after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.



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1. Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling articles 5, 6, 20 and 21 of the Convention,

Also recalling decision 9/COP.14,

Welcoming the continuous support for United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification implementation provided through the Global Environment Facility,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth session on the activities of the Global Environment Facility as they relate to sustainable land management for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2021, as contained in document ICCD/CRIC(20)/4;
2. *Calls for* a (i) strong eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility; (ii) a robust increase to land degradation focal area resources; (iii) a continuous focus on land-based actions through Global Environment Facility Impact Programs; and (iv) opportunities to enhance synergies among all focal areas bearing in mind the importance of land degradation focal area as integrator of those areas;
3. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to continue its support for countries in programming land degradation focal area resources to combat desertification/land degradation and drought and achieve their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, including in the context of land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes;
4. *Requests* the Global Environment Facility to continue supporting Parties to meet their reporting obligations in a timely manner;
5. *Notes with appreciation* the Global Environment Facility's engagement to initiate and support the Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, and *requests* continued Global Environment Facility support and partnership engagement;
6. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to further align the land degradation focal area strategy implementation with the Convention goals to enable countries to address their desertification/land degradation and drought priorities, in particular through sustainable land management and the restoration of degraded lands;
7. *Also invites* the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to support the implementation of relevant aspects of the national drought plans, especially strengthening early warning and monitoring systems and capacity-building;
8. *Encourages* the Global Environment Facility to further enhance the means to harness opportunities for leveraging synergies among the Rio conventions and other relevant environmental agreements, as well as with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, at the implementation level;
9. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to report on the implementation of this decision as part of its next report at the future session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention held in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session.

2. Report by the Global Mechanism on progress made on mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 2/COP.13, 3/COP.13, 3/COP.14 and 13/COP.14 and their elements related to the voluntary land degradation neutrality target-setting process, as well as decisions 3/COP.14 and 16/COP.14 and their elements related to land-use planning,

Also recalling decisions 14/COP.13, 13/COP.14 and 2/COP.14 and their elements related to exploring and mobilizing innovative financing and support of the preparation of transformative projects and programmes,

Recognizing that Sustainable Development Goal 15.3 has created strong momentum for the implementation of the Convention and that the setting of voluntary land degradation neutrality targets supports countries in achieving synergies with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, contributing to the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030), and mobilizing funding in this regard,

Noting the elements contained in documents ICCD/CRIC(19)/6 and ICCD/CRIC(20)/5 and their recommendations,

1. *Invites* Parties who wish to do so to refine their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets by ensuring that land degradation neutrality targets are specific, time-bound, policy-coherent, quantitative, spatially explicit, gender-responsive and adequately integrated into planning frameworks;
2. *Also invites* Parties participating in the Drought Initiative to translate the recommendations in their national drought plans into concrete action on the ground;
3. *Welcomes* efforts by Parties to strengthen intersectoral collaboration at (sub)national, national and regional levels to ensure that the impacts/effects of desertification/land degradation and drought are prioritized in national development plans and other relevant sectoral plans (such as finance and planning, biodiversity, climate change, agriculture, energy, water, and infrastructure development, among other things) and to strengthen internal coordination with national focal points responsible for endorsing projects (such as finance and planning officials, Global Environment Facility operational focal points, Green Climate Fund national designated authorities as well as focal points for bilateral funding);
4. *Encourages* developed country Parties and other Parties in a position to do so to provide substantial financial and non-financial resources to affected country Parties, in particular to strengthen collaboration aimed at capacity-building and the facilitation of technology transfer;
5. *Requests* the Global Mechanism and the secretariat, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with relevant financial and technical partners in position to do so, to:
 - (a) Develop a methodology and conduct a needs assessment to determine the financial requirements for the implementation of the Convention, building on national reporting and on a voluntary targeting-setting exercise;
 - (b) Support the process of setting and/or refining voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, streamlining it with other Convention and associated processes, and integrating these targets into (sub)national integrated land-use planning frameworks in those country Parties that may wish to engage in this process;
 - (c) Support country Parties in creating an enabling environment at the national level to facilitate the Convention reporting process, the implementation of national drought plans and the mainstreaming of land degradation neutrality in integrated land-use planning frameworks and national development plans;

(d) Develop the capacity of country Parties to improve intersectoral coordination with relevant sectors, such as finance and planning, biodiversity, climate change, agriculture, energy, water, and infrastructure development, among other sectors;

(e) Strengthen partnerships to accelerate the development of a geographically balanced project preparation pipeline, through a partnership model, to facilitate gender-responsive, large-scale integrated landscape investment programmes and flagship initiatives that support work on sustainable land management and drought resilience;

(f) Continue to support countries in promoting a paradigm shift in the way drought is managed and forge specific partnerships to mobilize technical and financial support for transformative projects and programmes on drought;

6. *Also requests* the Global Mechanism, within its mandate and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with relevant financial and technical partners in a position to do so, to accelerate efforts to support private sector engagement and promote innovation through:

(a) Developing standards and norms to support the private sector in integrating sustainable land use in their investment decisions;

(b) Engaging supply chain managers and other relevant partners to future-proof land-based value chains;

(c) Identifying impact investment opportunities in sustainable land management with the private sector, notably enhancing collaboration with the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund;

(d) Developing and testing dedicated models for technology transfer through partnerships, including in the area of productive capacity for sustainable land management;

(e) Testing innovative drought financing models and instruments such as drought funds, bonds, microfinance and risk finance;

(f) Exploring pilot projects to demonstrate the viability of innovative financing mechanisms on debt-for-land-restoration swaps and leveraging diaspora funding for the future consideration of Parties;

7. *Further requests* the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism to report to future sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention held in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties on progress made in the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention.

3. Promotion of capacity-building to further the implementation of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 19 of the Convention,

Also recalling decisions 3/COP.8, 1/COP.9, 1/COP.10, 1/COP.11, 3/COP.12, 13/COP.12, 7/COP.13, 8/COP.13 and 2/COP.14,

Restating the importance of capacity-building for the efficacious implementation of the Convention and for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals,

Having considered the conclusions and recommendations contained in document ICCD/CRIC(20)/6,

Acknowledging the work done by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to facilitate targeted capacity-building to further the implementation of the Convention and in support of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals,

Welcoming the efforts of Parties, international organizations and institutions, civil society organizations and other Convention stakeholders in support of capacity-building for the implementation of the Convention,

1. *Requests* the secretariat to continue enhancing, within available resources and in keeping with its mandate, all measures to support the facilitation of capacity development for the effective implementation of the Convention, including:

(a) The wider involvement of the public at large, including the participation of women and the education of students in the capacity-building process for a more effective and participatory approach;

(b) Development of more and better strategies, modules and other relevant materials to support the gender-responsive and transformative implementation of the Convention through the use of the most recent and applicable data sources available;

(c) Expansion of the Capacity Building Marketplace and the exclusive e-learning platform by increasing the number of opportunities offered in other United Nations languages and through the continuous widening of their clientele;

(d) Organization of on-demand media training activities for journalists with a more structured approach to media training, focused on popularizing key United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification concepts and priorities and covering, inter alia, issues pertaining to the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030);

(e) Development of additional tools that concerned country Parties may use in furthering national capacity-building efforts to address sand and dust storms;

(f) Further promotion of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Drought Toolbox and organization of training sessions on its use, as well as the development of additional tools in this field;

2. *Also requests* the secretariat, the Global Mechanism and the Science–Policy Interface, within available resources and in accordance with their respective mandates, to:

(a) Continue the pursuit of partnerships, both formal and informal, by redoubling their efforts to encourage Parties, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to participate fully in the capacity-building process by being active partners, especially in the areas of training, awareness-raising, drought mitigation, the achievement of land degradation neutrality, and the gender-responsive and transformative implementation of the Convention;

(b) Broaden their scope of cooperation with all relevant public and private sector entities in the development of partnerships to support the capacity-development process, including relevant regional and subregional entities;

(c) Expand and deepen the innovative approaches being taken to facilitate capacity-building and development, making innovation a central element in their efforts to realize their capacity-building mandates;

3. *Urges* Parties to make full use of the opportunities for capacity development being offered through various means by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, including the opportunities to post their own offerings on the Capacity Building Marketplace and the exclusive e-learning platform;

4. *Supports* the efforts of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism aimed at developing partnerships, including at the subregional and regional levels, to better facilitate capacity development and further advance a more participatory approach to the same, especially in the areas of:

- (a) Drought mitigation;
- (b) Measures to achieve land degradation neutrality;
- (c) Gender-responsive and transformative implementation;
- (d) Measures to address sand and dust storms;
- (e) Development of on-the-ground training activities for journalists;

5. *Invites* Parties to continue to support and fully participate in the efforts being made by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to develop and implement, as appropriate, specific capacity-building programmes concerning:

- (a) Gender-sensitive and transformative approaches to the implementation of the Convention;
- (b) Resilience to sand and dust storms;
- (c) Drought preparedness;

6. *Invites* accredited civil society organizations involved in capacity-building to make full use of the opportunities being offered through various means by the secretariat and Global Mechanism, including the opportunities to post their own offerings on the Capacity Building Marketplace and the exclusive e-learning platform;

7. *Also invites* developed country Parties, as well as technical and financial institutions, to continue to provide technical and financial support for targeted capacity development in support of the implementation of the Convention;

8. *Requests* the secretariat to report on the implementation of this decision to future sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention held in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties.

4. Integration of Sustainable Development Goal 15 and related target 15.3 into the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and land degradation neutrality

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 3/COP.12, 3/COP.13, 8/COP.12, 7/COP.13 and decision 3/COP.14,

Recognizing that Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3 has generated significant momentum for the implementation of the Convention and that the setting of voluntary land degradation neutrality targets supports countries in mobilizing funding and technical capacities,

Welcoming the start of United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030) and newly established partnerships, and *encouraging* Parties to deepen their engagement with these and existing partnerships for the enhanced implementation of the Convention and the achievement of land degradation neutrality,

Noting with appreciation the progress made by country Parties in land degradation neutrality target-setting and the support provided by the Global Mechanism, the secretariat and relevant technical and financing partners as regards the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme and the development of land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes to enhance the implementation of the Convention and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3 on land degradation neutrality, as per the results reported in document ICCD/CRIC(20)/5,

Also noting with appreciation the elements discussed in document ICCD/CRIC(20)/5 regarding a proposed way forward to support a more dynamic national enabling environment and higher efficiency and effectiveness at scale for both setting land degradation neutrality targets and supporting land degradation neutrality implementation efforts, and the related recommendations,

1. *Invites* Parties that have not yet done so to formulate voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, as appropriate;
2. *Also invites* Parties that have committed to voluntary land degradation neutrality targets to implement measures to accelerate their achievement, as appropriate, by:
 - (a) Fostering synergies among the Rio conventions and other multilateral environmental agreements, including the consideration of joint programming activities at the national and subnational level;
 - (b) Strengthening national-level coordination and cooperation based on, inter alia, integrated land-use planning and landscape management to guide the implementation of land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes;
 - (c) Creating an enabling environment for the achievement of land degradation neutrality, including through the responsible governance of land and tenure security, the engagement of all relevant stakeholders and the improved access of smallholders to advisory and financial services;
3. *Further invites* Parties, as appropriate and on a voluntary basis, to enhance the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular target 15.3, into their national strategies, plans and programmes and map them with those of the other two Rio conventions and other processes, including national development strategies, to increase transparency, policy coherence and synergies in their implementation;
4. *Invites* developed country Parties, and others in a position to do so, to provide financial and technical support for the implementation of the Convention and the achievement of land degradation neutrality;
5. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates and subject to available resources, to:

(a) Support Parties to create an enabling environment for the achievement of voluntary national land degradation neutrality targets, including the modalities for more responsible governance of land and tenure security, efforts to increase gender-responsive approaches to land restoration, the engagement of relevant stakeholders, especially vulnerable and disenfranchised groups, and better access to innovative financing sources;

(b) Continue to develop partnerships to support the implementation of the Convention and land degradation neutrality, taking note of, as appropriate, the Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats, the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Initiative, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030), the Changwon Initiative, the Ankara Initiative, the Peace Forest Initiative and other complementary initiatives, including national, subregional and regional scientific bodies, to provide support to Parties;

(c) Continue to contribute to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;

(d) Continue to promote synergies and knowledge-sharing among Parties on land degradation neutrality target-setting and land degradation neutrality implementation efforts;

6. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to report, as appropriate, on the implementation of this decision at the next session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention held in conjunction with the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

5. Programme of work for the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling articles 22 and 23 of the Convention,

Also recalling decision 13/COP.13 and its annex containing the terms of reference of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention,

Highlighting the importance of engaging development partners, such as United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations and other groups, as appropriate, in the interactive sessions of the intersessional session,

Recognizing that regional meetings play an important role in reviewing progress and make a useful contribution to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

1. *Decides* to include the following items on the agenda of the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention for the Parties to review and discuss:

(a) Inputs from regional meetings in preparation for the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;

(b) Implementation of the Convention using the progress indicators contained in the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and new indicators tested in the 2022 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting process;

(c) Implementation of voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and related implementation efforts;

(d) Financial flows for the implementation of the Convention;

(e) Procedures for the communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties;

(f) Exchange of information through interactive dialogues on actions on the ground related to the implementation of sustainable land management practices, restoration and rehabilitation practices that assist with the recovery of ecosystem functions and services, the promotion of alternative livelihoods, and the establishment of systems for sharing information and knowledge on best practices and approaches to drought management;

(g) Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: sand and dust storms, land tenure, gender and drought;

2. *Requests* the secretariat to circulate in all United Nations languages, at least six weeks prior to the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, a provisional annotated agenda and appropriate documentation for that session, reflecting the items contained in paragraph 1 above, as well as any additional items necessitated by decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth session.

6. 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

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 22/COP.11, 7/COP.13, 15/COP.13 and 11/COP.14,

Having reviewed documents ICCD/COP(15)/CST/7-ICCD/CRIC(20)/8 and ICCD/CRIC(20)/9,

Also having reviewed documents ICCD/CRIC(20)/10 and ICCD/CRIC(20)/INF.1,

Recognizing that, in line with the Group on Earth Observations data sharing principles, the societal benefits arising from Earth observations can only be fully achieved through the sharing of data, information, knowledge, products and services,

Acknowledging with appreciation the continued efforts by Conservation International in enhancing Trends.Earth to support national reporting under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Acknowledging the United Nations Secretary-General's strategy on data titled "Data Strategy for Action by Everyone, Everywhere",

Recognizing the need for periodic scientific review and updating of the Good Practice Guidance documents to inform reporting, brought about by the continuous advances made in science and the *developing* capacities of Parties to monitor the Convention,

1. *Endorses* the guidelines for the technical review of national reports contained in document ICCD/CRIC(20)/INF.1;

2. *Urges* Parties to:

(a) Use the spatial tools provided in the performance review and assessment of implementation system platform to delineate hotspots of land degradation and brightspots of land improvement, as well as the location and extent of their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and related implementation actions, thereby ensuring that they are quantifiable, spatially explicit and time-bound, in line with levels of national ambition;

(b) Share national data through the performance review and assessment of implementation system platform with as few restrictions as possible on its use in order to maximize the potential of reported data to inform decision-making on land;

(c) Engage in the technical review of national reports undertaken prior to the submission of national reports in order to ensure that comparable, robust and credible data will be submitted through the upgraded performance review and assessment of implementation system platform to the Conference of the Parties;

3. *Encourages* Parties to use their own national data for tracking progress in the implementation of the Convention;

4. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, to:

(a) Support Parties in reviewing and refining their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and in delineating their location and extent in order to ensure that they are quantifiable, spatially explicit and time-bound, in line with levels of national ambition;

(b) Continue collaborating with Conservation International for the further development of Trends.Earth in line with new guidance and new indicators and to support the preparation and analysis of data for United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification national reporting in a format that can be automatically transferred to the performance review and assessment of implementation system;

(c) Ensure that the performance review and assessment of implementation system remains current and relevant to Parties and is sustainable in the longer term;

(d) Continue efforts towards upgrading its in-house data management system while pursuing data-centred partnerships to enable a data-driven transformation as envisioned by the United Nations Secretary-General in the Data Strategy for Action by Everyone, Everywhere;

(e) Continue efforts and collaborate towards further supporting the development of national capacity to monitor and report on the implementation of the Convention;

(f) Continue efforts to establish a United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification virtual data centre that will assist Parties in, inter alia, using data-driven tools for informed decision-making using the performance review and assessment of implementation system database as the foundation for this long-term objective;

5. *Invites* Conservation International to continue enhancing Trends.Earth, not only for its usefulness in United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting and Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.3.1 reporting, but also as a fully integrated framework that may enable users to evaluate and prioritize the implementation of activities to (i) avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation and achieve land degradation neutrality targets; (ii) forecast the costs and benefits of these actions; and (iii) evaluate potential trade-offs of alternative land management approaches;

Methodological updates for strategic objectives 1 to 5:

6. *Endorses* version 2 of the Good Practice Guidance for Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 15.3.1 and the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on Strategic Objective 3, published in 2021 and summarized in document ICCD/COP(15)/CST/7-ICCD/CRIC(20)/8, as methodological documents of reference for national reporting;

7. *Requests* the secretariat, following the practical ‘learning-by-doing’ approach of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, to periodically review and update, within available resources, the Good Practice Guidance documents informing United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting;

8. *Endorses* the updated monitoring framework for United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting as contained in the annex to document ICCD/COP(15)/CST/7-ICCD/CRIC(20)/8 and adopts the following new indicators:

(a) Trends in the proportion of the population exposed to land degradation disaggregated by sex;

(b) Trends in protected area coverage of important biodiversity areas;

(c) International and domestic private resources;

(d) Technology transfer; and

(e) Future support for activities related to the implementation of the Convention.

9. *Encourages Parties to:*

(a) Follow the guidance contained in the Good Practice Guidance for Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 15.3.1 and the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on Strategic Objective 3 for the preparation of their national reports;

(b) Report during the 2022 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting process and on a voluntary basis on the newly proposed indicators for strategic objectives 2, 4 and 5;

(c) Recalculate, as needed, previously submitted baseline estimates of the indicators in order to capitalize on scientific and technical advances in the quality of underlying datasets and indicator derivation methodologies, and ensure comparability between baselines and future reporting data;

(d) Make use of the updated implementation framework and provide, among other good practices, information on the gender dimension of projects or activities implemented at national level;

(e) Provide United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification-relevant information and good practices to the designated World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies database, where appropriate;

10. *Invites* the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Initiative to encourage the Earth observations community to develop multi-decadal high-resolution (10–30m) interoperable data products for the land surface dating back to the year 2000 as a contribution to United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting and Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.3.1 reporting;

11. *Requests* the secretariat to report to the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention on the progress made in implementing this decision.

7. Report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention at its nineteenth session

A. Update on the implementation of the voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and related implementation efforts

The Conference of the Parties,

Noting the cross-sectoral role of land and Sustainable Development Goal 15,

Welcoming with appreciation the support provided by the secretariat, the Global Mechanism and relevant partners to effectively assist countries in their voluntary land degradation neutrality target-setting processes and related implementation efforts, as well as knowledge-sharing, including through the UNCCD Knowledge Hub and capacity-building efforts;

Acknowledging with appreciation the financial resources mobilized to date in order to support Parties' work on voluntary land degradation neutrality target-setting and related implementation efforts, including numerous bilateral and multilateral initiatives (e.g. the Ankara Initiative, the Changwon Initiative, the Drought Initiative, the Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, the Greening Drylands Partnership, the Group of 20 Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats, the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme, the Peace Forest Initiative, and transformative projects and programmes) and relevant financing windows (e.g. the Adaptation Fund, the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund), as well as the support provided by the secretariat, the Global Mechanism and technical partners to facilitate access to these financial resources,

Stressing the importance of voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and related implementation efforts as a key contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of multiple Sustainable Development Goals, as well as to achieving increased coherence and greater synergies with other relevant ongoing processes (e.g. national Sustainable Development Goal agendas, nationally determined contributions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans under the Convention on Biological Diversity, land restoration commitments towards the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030),

Highlighting the importance of mainstreaming large-scale land restoration and science-based monitoring as implementation efforts in terms of realizing voluntary land degradation neutrality targets as well as increasing capacity-building support at both national and regional level, particularly relating to the development of national land degradation neutrality monitoring and decision-support systems that use the best available data, including access to high-resolution data on land degradation neutrality indicators,

Noting the need to strengthen the capacity of the Global Mechanism and to increase the resources available in order to meet the steady demand for voluntary land degradation neutrality target-setting or refinement and support the development of a pipeline of transformative projects and programmes to help country Parties access relevant financing sources and provide related capacity-building and knowledge-sharing support,

1. *Requests* the Global Mechanism and the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with relevant financial and technical partners in a position to do so, to:

(a) Continue supporting voluntary land degradation neutrality target-setting processes and encourage country Parties to review and refine their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and promote their adoption at a high political level;

(b) Further develop training and capacity-building support at both national and regional level, particularly related to (i) land degradation neutrality assessment, data collection, monitoring and national reporting; and (ii) the development of national land

degradation neutrality monitoring and decision-support systems that use the best available data, building on relevant existing platforms and initiatives such as Trends.Earth, the performance review and assessment of implementation system and the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Initiative;

(c) Assist country Parties in developing the necessary tools to translate the voluntary land degradation neutrality targets into concrete actions, increasing efficiency in the deployment of existing financial resources, building greater synergy with relevant processes, identifying innovative resources for implementation, and promoting the development of large-scale national, multi-country and subregional transformative projects and programmes thus ensuring a geographical balance;

(d) Provide further support to country Parties to improve and accelerate the preparation and development of gender-responsive, bankable transformative projects and programmes that jointly address desertification/land degradation and drought and increase knowledge-sharing among countries and partners;

2. *Invites* developed country Parties, and all other Parties and partners in position to do so, to increase financial and technical resources specifically dedicated to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in order to bridge the current financing gap and scale up Convention implementation activities related to desertification/land degradation and drought;

B. Update on the operationalization of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund

Acknowledging the information contained in document ICCD/CRIC(19)/3,

Welcoming the update on activities related to the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund and *noting with appreciation* the progress made by the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund and its Technical Assistance Facility in mobilizing blended public and private resources that promote sustainable land use and land restoration,

Acknowledging the pivotal role that the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund could play in achieving the strategic objectives of the Convention and serving as a successful, replicable model of collaboration between the public and private sector,

Stressing the importance of the environmental and social standards developed and applied by the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund and highlighting the need to further facilitate this process to minimize risk and increase the impact of private sector investment on degraded land,

Highlighting the importance of monitoring the expected impacts of Land Degradation Neutrality Fund investments for other relevant environmental and social indicators, such as climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, poverty eradication and gender,

1. *Encourages* the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund to facilitate a larger and more regionally and subregionally balanced project portfolio and an accelerated geographical expansion of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund to include more projects in dryland areas located in developing countries;

2. *Requests* the Global Mechanism to continue to engage with national focal points and facilitate information-sharing and awareness-raising on the operational modalities, requirements and achievements of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund;

3. *Also requests* the Global Mechanism to facilitate capacity-building for the private sector and other interested stakeholders on accessing the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund;

4. *Further requests* the Global Mechanism to support, with virtual capacity-building and training events, country Parties in accessing various innovative and private sources of financing, including, but not limited to, the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund;

5. *Requests* the Global Mechanism to collaborate with the Technical Assistance Facility of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, subject to availability of resources, to provide

technical pre-investment support to country project developers, in collaboration with partners, to ensure that projects are increasingly feeding into the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund project pipeline;

6. *Also requests* the Global Mechanism to report, during Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention sessions held in conjunction with sessions of the Conference of the Parties, on the activities of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund and the application of social and environmental standards and indicators;

C. Update on the implementation of the Drought Initiative and related implementation efforts

1. Drought Initiative

Noting with appreciation the work of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism in terms of the support provided to country Parties with regard to the implementation of the Drought Initiative and in particular the support provided for developing national drought plans;

Welcoming the information contained in document ICCD/CRIC(19)/5,

Also welcoming the upgrade and expansion of the Drought Toolbox and the e-learning courses provided via e-learning platforms,

Taking note of the need for Parties to enhance data availability to support and guide decision makers to improve their policies in order to better address desertification/land degradation and drought,

Also taking note of the importance of sharing best practices on mitigating the impacts of drought through the exchange of experiences, case studies, evidence and lessons learned among regions and Parties,

1. *Requests* the secretariat, the Global Mechanism and appropriate United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification institutions and bodies, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, to:

(a) Continue to review existing global and regional challenges associated with drought and to consider geographical balances in terms of the planning and implementation of regional and national drought projects, especially in the context of the ongoing Global Environment Facility-supported project titled Enabling Activities for Implementing Drought Decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

(b) Support country Parties in translating national drought plans into concrete projects on the ground;

(c) Consider (i) the transboundary nature of drought; and (ii) upgrading regional institutions into focal agencies to address issues relating to drought and sand and dust storms;

(d) Support Parties by developing further regional and subregional projects to address the issues of drought and sand and dust storms, given the interconnectedness of these two phenomena;

(e) Facilitate (i) the development of research programmes on drought with the active participation of local and vulnerable communities; and (ii) the sharing of knowledge and information on data (high-resolution satellite data and indicators) in the context of the ongoing development of national drought plans;

(f) Continue to provide training and further strengthen capacity-building activities;

(g) Encourage the strengthening of the existing work, as well as the stepping up of international partnerships to this end; reinforce the work on the Drought Initiative; and strengthen synergies among the three Rio conventions;

(h) Adopt an integrated approach, linking drought with humanitarian and development efforts, notably with regard to response, resilience-building and sustainable recovery;

(i) Ensure that drought issues are integrated into the land degradation neutrality target-setting and implementation process;

2. *Urges* Parties to:

(a) Integrate national drought plans into overall national frameworks in order to improve drought indicators and help build the resilience of land users and communities as they work towards a post-COVID-19 recovery;

(b) Consider gender mainstreaming and the inclusion of youth and children in the further implementation of the priority action areas identified in their national drought plans;

2. Gender

Noting that desertification/land degradation and drought has disproportionate impacts on women and that the COVID-19 pandemic is further exacerbating inequalities, especially among women and other vulnerable groups,

Recognizing the importance of gender equality in combatting desertification/land degradation and drought and *emphasizing* that women and girls need to participate in the development and implementation of policies, projects and programmes to address desertification/land degradation and drought,

Acknowledging that awareness-raising and capacity-building on gender and the full integration of gender into the Convention is a cross-cutting issue that involves, inter alia, gender-responsive decision-making, the collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data, and the promotion of gender-responsive sustainable land management best practices,

Welcoming the efforts of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to enhance the gender-responsiveness of the Convention and its implementation, including the first Gender Caucus at the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the success of the Gender Caucus in promoting gender issues in decisions as well as mainstreaming gender concerns into concept notes for land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes,

1. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to continue their efforts to:

(a) Effectively integrate gender equality into the structure and function of the Convention and its bodies;

(b) Assist Parties by providing guidance and capacity-building, including through virtual workshops, on mainstreaming gender equality to address all aspects of desertification/land degradation and drought and enhance progress towards achieving voluntary national land degradation neutrality targets;

3. Land tenure

Acknowledging that national circumstances related to land tenure vary and are reflected in different legislation and policy frameworks, and that such differences should be considered in all activities related to the implementation of decision 26/COP.14,

Welcoming the work undertaken by the secretariat and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the technical guide to integrate the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security into the implementation of the Convention and the achievement of land degradation neutrality,

1. *Urges* Parties to act independently in implementing the recommendations contained in decision 26/COP.14 for improved land governance towards achieving land degradation neutrality and the objectives of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, including fostering legal and political environments

that promote women's and vulnerable populations' equitable access to and control over land and resources, including secure and non-discriminatory land tenure,

2. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to assist Parties with the effective implementation of the technical guide mentioned above with the aim of mainstreaming land tenure in decisions made on investments as well as in the design and implementation of projects and programmes to (i) address desertification/land degradation and drought; and (ii) help achieve voluntary national land degradation neutrality targets, including by:

(a) Enhancing existing partnerships and exploring new ones to address the diversity of land tenure challenges, including policy and legal reviews;

(b) Exploring mechanisms for financial and technical assistance for planning and administrative infrastructure that enhance tenure security, especially for the vulnerable and disenfranchised;

(c) Increasing awareness-raising and training efforts, including through multi-stakeholder platforms;

(d) Developing social and environmental safeguards;

(e) Facilitating international and regional knowledge exchanges, including data- and information-sharing on case studies and best practices;

3. *Also requests* the secretariat to report to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention at its twenty-first session on the progress made in implementing this decision.
