



**Convention to Combat  
Desertification**

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**Conference of the Parties**

**Fifteenth session**

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 9–20 May 2022

Agenda item 5

**High-level opening ceremony**

**Land, Life and Legacy Declaration**

**Draft decision submitted by the President of the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth session**

*The Conference of the Parties,*

1. *Welcomes* the “Land, Life and Legacy Declaration” with appreciation;
2. *Decides* to include the “Land, Life and Legacy Declaration” as an annex to this decision.

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## Annex

### Land, Life and Legacy Declaration

*We, the Ministers and Representatives gathered for the high-level segment at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, held from 9–10 May 2022 in Abidjan, at the invitation of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire,*

*Expressing* our sincere appreciation to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire for its hospitality and to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification secretariat for the organization of the session,

*Acknowledging* that land and soil are the foundation of livelihoods, human health and prosperity, and that they are often the most important assets held by countries and communities,

*Reconfirming* that desertification/land degradation and drought are major environmental, social, and economic challenges to global development and welfare, primarily impacting individuals and communities in situations of vulnerability,

*Deeply concerned* about the increased frequency and duration of droughts, floods, wildfires, and sand and dust storms that are exacerbated by land degradation, climate change, and biodiversity loss, and that have dire consequences for human health and environmental sustainability,<sup>1 2</sup>

*Welcoming* the 27<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be hosted by the Arab Republic of Egypt in November 2022, and the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be hosted by the Peoples' Republic of China, and *requesting* all Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity to consider the outcomes of the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

*Noting* the high-level dialogue on desertification/land degradation and drought hosted by the President of the 75<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly in New York on 15 June 2021, and *also noting with appreciation* that the United Nations General Assembly has declared the year 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists,

*Taking note of* the Glasgow Climate Pact and the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use, and *recognizing* that sustainable land management approaches and technologies are also central to tackling the climate crisis,

*Noting* the outcomes of the United Nations Food Systems Summit and the momentum of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and *also noting* the Group of 20 Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats to prevent, halt, and reverse land degradation by achieving, on a voluntary basis, a 50 per cent reduction of degraded land by 2040,<sup>3</sup>

*Welcoming* the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility,

*Taking note with appreciation of* the Abidjan Call from the Heads of State Summit and the Abidjan Declaration on Achieving Gender Equality for Successful Land Restoration, held on 9 May 2022,

1. *Invite* Parties to pursue a systemic approach to land conservation and restoration as well as to the sustainable land management of all types of degraded ecosystems,

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<sup>1</sup> <<https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/>>.

<sup>2</sup> <<https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/>>.

<sup>3</sup> <[https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/G20\\_Riyadh\\_Summit\\_Leaders\\_Declaration\\_EN\\_0.pdf](https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/G20_Riyadh_Summit_Leaders_Declaration_EN_0.pdf)>.

recognizing that a significant portion of all land is degraded,<sup>4</sup> and thus *encourage* Parties to avoid, reduce, and reverse land degradation by accelerating the implementation of existing national commitments to achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030, taking into account the connectivity of ecosystems;

2. *Also invite* Parties to strive for more effective partnerships, financing, and cooperation at all levels, among the Rio conventions and other relevant mechanisms and processes, including exploring ways to catalyse more synergies at the national level between the individual action plans of the Rio conventions;

3. *Further invite* development partners, international financial institutions, the private sector and other stakeholders to boost investments and technological and technical support, as appropriate, for the implementation of the Convention and the achievement of land degradation neutrality;

4. *Welcome* the second edition of the Global Land Outlook which demonstrates that the mismanagement of land resources – soil, water, and biodiversity – represents a threat to humanity and the planet, and that sustainable land management and land restoration are a proven and cost-effective strategy that offers multiple pathways towards an inclusive, sustainable recovery, and resilient economies, societies, and ecosystems;

5. *Urge* Parties to take a proactive, comprehensive, and holistic approach towards sand and dust storms source mitigation and drought impact mitigation, adaptation and resilience, including through responsive policy frameworks that incorporate early warning systems and timely interventions, scientific collaboration, and multi-stakeholder partnerships which should be sustained with adequate levels of finance;

6. *Acknowledge* the new strategy of the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility on land degradation, and recognize the importance of providing guidance to facilitate the successful implementation of the three integrated programmes of the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility, focusing particularly on desertification/land degradation, and drought;

7. *Call upon* all Parties and stakeholders to move towards more sustainable food systems;

8. *Stress* the importance of promoting secure tenure rights and access to land for all, in particular groups in vulnerable situations, as well as the need to further mainstream gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls into the development of desertification/land degradation and drought-related policies and activities within the national context;

9. *Reaffirm* the contribution of sustainable land management and land restoration to improving the living conditions of affected communities, and as a means of preventing forced migration and displacement;

10. *Confirm* that young people are an important positive force leading the next generation to create more sustainable urban and rural environments, and *commit* to partnering with young people to create meaningful and dignified employment opportunities, especially in rural areas;

11. *Invite* Parties to promote the involvement of all sectors of society, in particular civil society organizations and Indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as subnational and local governments, in their initiatives to achieve land degradation neutrality, harnessing their knowledge, innovation and practices;

12. *Also invite* Parties to join the multi-partner Abidjan Legacy Programme as a model for increasing sustainability and ambitions, while protecting and restoring forests and lands and improving the resilience of communities and ecosystems to climate change.

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<sup>4</sup> <<https://www.fao.org/land-water/solaw2021/en/>>.