

## Decision 16/COP.15

### Policy recommendations resulting from the work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2020–2021: Objective 1

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Recalling* decisions 23/COP.11 and 19/COP.12,

*Also recalling* decisions 3/COP.13, 18/COP.13, 3/COP.14 and 16/COP.14,

*Further recalling* the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, its vision for a future that minimizes and reverses desertification/land degradation and mitigates the effects of drought in affected areas at all levels, and strive to achieve a land degradation neutral world consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, within the scope of the Convention and in particular strategic objective 1 to improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality,

*Mindful of* resolutions A/RES/76/206, A/RES/75/218 and A/RES/73/233,

*Acknowledging* the work conducted by the Science-Policy Interface in implementing its work programme for the biennium 2020–2021,

*Also acknowledging* that the scientific conceptual framework for land degradation neutrality<sup>7</sup> provides guidance for planning, financing, implementing and monitoring land degradation neutrality,

*Recognizing* that creating an enabling environment for land degradation neutrality is fundamental to realizing the potential contribution of land degradation neutrality to enhancing the well-being and livelihoods of people affected by desertification/land degradation and drought,

*Also recognizing* the importance of the effective implementation of integrated land use planning for (i) establishing the full integration of a neutrality framework for counterbalancing assessed losses with equal or greater gains; and (ii) applying the land degradation neutrality response hierarchy to measures to avoid, reduce and/or reverse land degradation,

*Recalling* Article 24 of the Convention stating that the Committee on Science and Technology is to provide information and advice on scientific and technological matters relating to combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought,

*Recognizing* that Parties take this information and advice and use it as appropriate within their national context,

*Having considered* document ICCD/COP(15)/CST/2 and the conclusions contained therein, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality,

1. *Encourages* Parties to provide a more central role for integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management beginning with an assessment of land capability and suitability in national, subnational and local policy development to address desertification/land degradation and drought, help achieve land degradation neutrality, and support efforts to address the interlinked challenges underpinning the Sustainable Development Goals;
2. *Also encourages* Parties to foster and support integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management as an enabler of synergies, complementarities and policy coherence among the three Rio conventions, in tandem with the implementation of land

<sup>7</sup> Decision 18/COP.13.

degradation neutrality targets, considering the potential of land degradation neutrality for climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as biodiversity conservation and sustainable use;

3. *Further encourages* Parties to integrate land degradation neutrality target-setting and implementation into national and subnational integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management processes;

4. *Reiterates* the importance of respecting land tenure in the development and implementation of land use planning approaches and tools;

5. *Encourages* Parties to further strengthen cross-sectoral governance and land use planning for transformative change in support of efforts to address desertification/land degradation and drought and achieve land degradation neutrality, as appropriate, including:

(a) Strengthening integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management policy instruments, using them as a means to better coordinate different sectoral policies and institutional arrangements for enhancing land governance;

(b) Building capacity on the integration of integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management into policies and planning instruments and the application of the multiple tools and approaches to support integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management processes,

(c) Pursuing initiatives for education and awareness-raising of what integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management tools and approaches offer for land degradation neutrality implementation;

6. *Also encourages* Parties to incentivize collaboration between academic/research practitioner communities specializing in land use planning to develop new or tailor existing tools and approaches in order to:

(a) Facilitate the integration of integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management processes into interventions designed to address desertification/land degradation and drought and contribute to the achievement of land degradation neutrality;

(b) Facilitate the combination of existing land use planning approaches and tools;

(c) Ensure the tools can cater to the specific conditions of a country's planning process;

(d) Facilitate the optimization of land use decisions to achieve land degradation neutrality across multiple objectives;

(e) Advance inclusive and gender-equitable integrated land use planning and design;

7. *Calls upon* Parties to promote knowledge generation and sharing of approaches and tools to support integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management to achieve land degradation neutrality by:

(a) Ensuring significantly more opportunities are made available for stakeholders to appreciate and understand the relevance of integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management by investing more in capacity development on the use of integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management tools and approaches;

(b) Identifying opportunities for building evidence-based knowledge within national institutions to strongly base integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management processes on science and traditional and local knowledge;

(c) Facilitating cooperation among existing national integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management communities of practice to encourage knowledge-sharing on technologies and best practices;

(d) Encouraging the further development, modification and sharing of integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management open-source tools and software code among existing national repositories and platforms;

8. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism and *invites* relevant technical and scientific partners as well as development partners, acting within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of resources, to:

(a) Develop guidance for projects contributing to land degradation neutrality implementation on properly documenting integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management approaches and tools used, the outcomes, benefits of their use, and challenges experienced with using those tools;

(b) Promote collaboration at different levels of governance, opening up opportunities for academics, practitioners, civil society organizations and land managers to share best practices of integrated land use planning and integrated landscape management that can support the achievement of land degradation neutrality targets;

(c) Promote two-way knowledge sharing among scientists, practitioners and land managers engaged in integrated land use planning processes;

(d) Ensure that the compilation and dissemination of lessons learned is fostered via the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification website knowledge management features and similar mechanisms of knowledge exchange to inform the design of future transformative projects and programmes.

*3<sup>rd</sup> plenary meeting*  
*13 May 2022*