

Decision 22/COP.15

The positive role that measures taken under the Convention can play to address desertification/land degradation and drought as one of the drivers that causes migration

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling that the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification recognizes that desertification/land degradation and drought are challenges of a global dimension and contribute to and aggravate economic, social and environmental problems and forced migration and displacement, among other things,

Noting that the co-signers of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration recognize that desertification/land degradation and drought is one of the drivers/structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin and that the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification was mentioned among the international instruments upon which the Compact rests,

Recalling decision 19/COP.13 and decision 22/COP.14,

Acknowledging that all forms of migration and displacement forced by desertification/land degradation and drought are factors to be considered when strengthening urban–rural linkages, as appropriate;

Recognizing that the degradation of all ecosystems, such as peatlands, grasslands and savannas, which are fundamental for food and freshwater security, especially for Indigenous peoples and local communities, youth and women and any other vulnerable people whose livelihoods depend on these ecosystems, may contribute to forced migration and displacement;

Welcoming the Trust Fund for the International Fund for Agricultural Development Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme to implement the Sustainability, Stability and Security Initiative established within the Rural Resilience Programme at the International Fund for Agricultural Development,

Also welcoming the continued collaboration with the International Organization for Migration,

Further welcoming the support by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism for initiatives aimed at addressing desertification/land degradation and drought as one of the drivers that cause migration,

Welcoming the studies on Central Asia and the Western Balkans prepared by the secretariat upon the request of the concerned Parties and the partnership between the secretariat and UN-Habitat established to produce a technical guide on urban–rural linkages and land,

1. *Invites* Parties, to:

(a) Promote sustainable territorial development, including multi-level governance and planning mechanisms, as appropriate, to strengthen urban–rural linkages, address desertification/land degradation and drought, including sand and dust storms, and create social and economic opportunities that reduce forced migration and displacement and increase rural resilience and livelihood stability;

(b) Review development policies, including on integrated land-use planning, land tenure, agricultural practices, water management, and sustainable and resilient infrastructure, with a view to promoting the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems and land restoration, respecting social and environmental safeguards;

(c) Implement land and ecosystem restoration as an essential part of land-use planning at national and subnational level by enhancing understanding of how changing

rural–urban interactions affect the livelihoods of low-income and vulnerable people in both urban and rural contexts;

(d) Support the implementation of the Sustainability, Stability and Security Initiative in Africa, and similar initiatives in other regions, which contribute to employment creation for people in vulnerable situations in rural areas by restoring degraded land and supporting the empowerment of Indigenous peoples and local communities, women, people with disabilities and youth by facilitating access to secure land tenure;

2. *Requests* the Global Mechanism to:

(a) Continue supporting resource mobilization for the Sustainability, Stability and Security Initiative along with developing other projects and initiatives that prioritize decent work, including green jobs, and livelihoods for people in vulnerable situations, including those living in rural areas, Indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth, and people with disabilities;

(b) Assess and make recommendations about the feasibility of facilitating resource mobilization to leverage diaspora or new private sources of investments for desertification/land degradation and drought projects and programmes;

(c) Continue supporting the development of new initiatives, subject to the availability of resources, for the sustainable management and restoration of all degraded lands, such as peatlands, grasslands and savannas, to safeguard these threatened ecosystems and to ensure food and freshwater security for people in vulnerable situations;

3. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to:

(a) Assist Parties, upon request, to strengthen urban–rural linkages through territorial governance systems by utilizing principles and guidance from existing frameworks, including the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security and urban–rural linkages guiding principles, as a way to scale up land restoration activities to achieve voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and enhance the implementation of the Convention;

(b) Continue to support regional and international cooperation and initiatives that aim to promote sustainable land and water management as a means to help mitigate the drivers that cause migration and displacement;

(c) Continue to strengthen cooperation with other United Nations agencies and programmes, regional and international organizations, and stakeholders to share information to foster a better understanding of urban-rural linkages, with a special focus on achieving land degradation neutrality and addressing the multiple drivers of forced migration and displacement;

(d) Share and support the scaling up of good practices identified at the local and subnational levels, which pursue sustainable land management and land restoration in the urban-rural interface, such as peri-urban green belts, urban agriculture, urban forestry, and soil de-sealing, with a view to encouraging the adoption of similar practices, if necessary, and promote training and capacity-building;

(e) Present for consideration at the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties a report on progress made in implementing this decision.

6th plenary meeting
20 May 2022