

Decision 23/COP.15

Policy advocacy on drought

The Conference of the Parties,

Reaffirming the objective of the Convention in article 2, which is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa,

Recalling that the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification recognizes that drought, land degradation and desertification are challenges of a global dimension and contribute to and aggravate economic, social and environmental problems such as poverty, poor health, lack of food security, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, reduced resilience to climate change and forced migration,

Noting the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Special Report on Drought 2021 and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on Climate Change and Land 2019, both of which assessed information on the change in the frequency and intensity of drought in some regions and the role of land-based interventions to mitigate and adapt to drought,

Recognizing that droughts are becoming more common, intense, severe and extended, with dire impacts on livelihoods, ecosystems and economies,

Recalling decision 7/COP. 13, decision 29/COP. 13 and decision 23/COP.14,

Deeply concerned about the combined, devastating impacts of drought and the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the most vulnerable communities,

Noting with appreciation the active involvement of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the World Meteorological Organization and numerous other partners in the measures to address drought under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Commending the secretariat, the Global Mechanism and their partners on the results achieved in implementing the Drought Initiative,

Welcoming with appreciation the report by the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought on effective policy and implementation measures for addressing drought under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification as contained in document ICCD/COP/15/20,

1. *Invites* Parties to increase their commitment to pursue effective policies and partnerships on drought, with relevant sectors and stakeholders, particularly Indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth, civil society and the private sector, as appropriate, to enhance the implementation of a wider holistic and integrated approach for improved resilience of communities and ecosystems;
2. *Also invites* Parties, with the assistance of regional institutions, as relevant, in conjunction with relevant stakeholders, to support and increase the utilization of information from monitoring, early warning and action systems for decision-making at national, subnational and local levels to enhance the drought resilience of ecosystems, societies and economies;
3. *Further invites* the secretariat to support, upon request, the affected country Parties to enhance their capacity to assess the effectiveness of strategic actions addressing drought, subject to the availability of resources;
4. *Encourages* Parties, regional organizations and other stakeholders working on drought to share their knowledge of and experiences with relevant, innovative and transformative tools for inclusion in the Drought Toolbox, and *requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources and in cooperation with partner organizations, to further update and enhance the functionality of the Drought Toolbox, as well as continue related capacity-building;

5. *Invites* all Parties, multilateral and bilateral partners, and international financing mechanisms to scale up and facilitate effective financing for the implementation of drought risk reduction and resilience-building measures at all levels;
6. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, in collaboration with partners and regional institutions, to continue to assist Parties in preparing and implementing gender-responsive national drought plans or other policy instruments related to drought and promoting regional collaboration on drought policies and strategies as a cost-effective means to support national action;
7. *Also requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, in consultation with relevant partners and processes, to identify activities to foster high-level global awareness of, and commitment to, enhancing drought resilience, which could include the participation in or co-organization of a ten-year follow-up to the 2013 High Level Meeting on National Drought Policy;
8. *Further requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to encourage, support and facilitate communities of learning and practice to pursue co-learning and collaboration for drought risk reduction and resilience capacity-building issues;
9. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, to continue to connect, strengthen, enhance as well as forge new strategic partnerships at all levels, across sectors and with different public, private and civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders;
10. *Invites* the secretariat to continue consulting with its partners on the potential aims, specific areas and added value of enhancing current coordination and collaboration platforms, with a focus on clarifying the mandate of each partner in order to enhance global-level drought monitoring and assessment, and for increased reach and effectiveness in building capacities for drought risk reduction and resilience-building;
11. *Also invites* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to continue exploring the requirements and potential modalities for strengthening and, as appropriate, the creation of new networks of institutions and experts for capacity-building and knowledge exchange on drought;
12. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, and building on the report requested in paragraph 5 of decision 23/COP.14, to provide additional technical knowledge and support for the development of national capacities and to examine and identify at global level the financing needs and opportunities for drought risk reduction and resilience-building activities in relation to those already existing, including partnerships with the private sector;
13. Building upon the work of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought conducted over the biennium 2020–2021, *decides* to establish a new Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought during the triennium 2022–2024, subject to the availability of resources, tasked with identifying and evaluating all options, including, inter alia, global policy instruments and regional policy frameworks, and linking, where relevant, to national plans, as appropriate, to effectively manage drought under the Convention, including supporting a shift from reactive to proactive drought management;
14. *Also decides* that the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought will have the following terms of reference:
 - (a) Review and analyse all the reports which came out of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought, as well as other relevant documents and Conference of the Parties decisions related to drought;
 - (b) Identify and evaluate all options, including, inter alia, global policy instruments and regional policy frameworks, and linking, where relevant, to national plans, as appropriate, to effectively manage drought under the Convention, including supporting a shift from reactive to proactive drought management;
 - (c) Prepare justifications and outline possible elements, processes, institutional arrangements and mechanisms for establishment for each policy option;

15. *Further decides* that the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought for the triennium 2022–2024 will be composed as follows:

- (a) Three representatives from the Regional Implementation Annex I;
- (b) Three representatives from the Regional Implementation Annex II;
- (c) Three representatives from the Regional Implementation Annex III;
- (d) Three representatives from the Regional Implementation Annex IV;
- (e) Three representatives from the Regional Implementation Annex V;
- (f) Three representatives from the European Union and its Member States;
- (g) Three representatives from JUSCANZ;
- (h) Two representatives from civil society organizations (as observers);
- (i) Two representatives from international organizations that work on drought;
- (j) Two independent experts;

16. *Requests* the secretariat to launch a call for membership to enable the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought to commence its work no later than three months after the adoption of this decision and *urges* the regions to make nominations in a timely fashion to allow this schedule to be followed;

17. *Also requests* the secretariat to support and facilitate the effective functioning of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought, subject to the availability of resources;

18. *Decides* that the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, will nominate the representatives mentioned in subparagraphs 15 (h)–(j) above;

19. *Also decides* that the composition of the group will encourage gender balance and membership with specific policy knowledge and adequate experience;

20. *Encourages* the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought to conduct its proceedings both through in-person meetings and virtual engagement, as necessary;

21. *Requests* the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought to prepare a progress report for consultation with Parties at the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;

22. *Also requests* that the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought prepare a final report for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session, including its findings.

23. *Further requests* the secretariat to report on the implementation of this decision at future sessions of the Conference of the Parties.

6th plenary meeting
20 May 2022