

Decision 4/COP.15

Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification communication plan

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 4/COP.14,

Noting that the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification recognizes awareness-raising as a key element that can play a central role in addressing desertification/land degradation and drought,

Recognizing the importance of promoting consistent and coordinated messages about the objective of the Convention as well as on land degradation neutrality and drought issues, including as an accelerator for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 62/195, in which the General Assembly declared 2010–2020 the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification,

Also recalling its resolution 64/201, in which the General Assembly designated the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification as the focal point for the Decade, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and other relevant bodies of the United Nations, including its Department of Global Communications,

Noting the report of the United Nations Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010–2020) and *expressing* its appreciation to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification secretariat, as the focal point for the Decade, for its successful outcomes,

Recognizing the additional opportunity for cooperation, coordination and synergies in the work related to ecosystem restoration among relevant United Nations entities through the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030),

Welcoming the development and implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification communication plan and strategic branding exercise, as reported in document ICCD/COP(14)/4,

1. *Calls for* Parties and *invites* civil society organizations, the media, the private sector and all other relevant stakeholders to leverage international awareness-raising opportunities, such as the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030), the United Nations Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and the Land for Life programme, for outreach, including to Indigenous peoples, local communities, women and youth, around actions to combat desertification/land degradation and drought and achieve a land degradation neutral and drought-resilient world on a voluntary basis;
2. *Invites* Parties to develop communication strategies for target audiences that include policymakers; institutions in charge of land-based sectors; civil society organizations; the private sector; farmers; and pastoralists, around actions to achieve a land degradation neutral and drought-resilient world;
3. *Also invites* Parties to continue to raise public awareness and promote youth engagement on Convention issues by (i) linking them to other sustainable development challenges; and (ii) underlining the pivotal role of sustainably managed land in implementing the Convention and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, while addressing gender equality and women's empowerment as an integral part of these messages;
4. *Further invites* Parties, civil society organizations and the private sector to continue to actively support the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification communication plan by providing the secretariat with success stories, people-

focused stories and photo/video footage from the field, giving a human face to the Convention and hence promoting its understanding, awareness and visibility among the public by adapting communications within local and national contexts;

5. *Invites* Parties and other United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stakeholders, which are in a position to do so, to make voluntary contributions in support of the implementation of the communication plan;

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

(a) Continue implementing the communication plan consistent with the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

(b) Ensure consistent and coherent messaging with the other Rio conventions in order to underline the importance of desertification/land degradation and drought and its links with biodiversity loss and climate change in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals;

(c) Engage with key audiences, such as policymakers, line ministries in charge of land-based sectors, the private sector, land owners and land managers, the farmer community and pastoralists, for the purposes of (i) increasing awareness about the objectives of the Convention; (ii) highlighting the economic and social benefits and other positive impacts of its implementation; and (iii) increasing awareness about the negative impacts of land degradation and desertification, taking into account particular national and regional conditions;

(d) Explore the development of communication products and activities linked to initiatives such as the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030) and, as appropriate, the Group of 20 Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats, which communicate the benefits and positive impacts of achieving land degradation neutrality, as appropriate;

(e) Enhance media engagement and develop partnerships with media and other relevant organizations to expand outreach to non-English speaking audiences—and achieve broader geographic reach and information dissemination;

(f) Raise the profile of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification outreach programmes and products, such as the Land for Life programme, the Land Ambassadors programme and the Rio Conventions Pavilion, in partnership and cooperation with the other Rio conventions and relevant stakeholders;

(g) Maximize the traditional and social media outreach potential by developing new multimedia content based on sources such as the Global Land Outlook series and other major scientific assessments, the Science-Policy Interface, the performance review and assessment of implementation reports submitted to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, as well as success stories and stories featuring the views and perspectives of beneficiaries of the Convention's work;

(h) Continue building communications capacity for staff of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism in order to strengthen support for communications activities;

(i) Provide key messages to national focal points and science and technology correspondents to support United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification advocacy efforts in order to bring Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3 to the forefront of policy platforms addressing the implementation of other Sustainable Development Goals;

(j) Continue improving and enhancing the online communications tools, including the website and library services, with a focus on the provision of knowledge and data tools that are relevant for United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stakeholders;

7. *Also requests* the secretariat, where appropriate, to report to the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session on progress made in implementing this decision.

*6th plenary meeting
20 May 2022*