



Midterm evaluation of the 2018-2030 UNCCD Strategic Framework

Update – March 2023

The midterm evaluation of the 2018-2030 UNCCD Strategic Framework was launched by COP 15, with the aim to prepare a good basis for COP 16 in 2024 to decide on measures to enhance the implementation of the UNCCD by 2030. The midterm evaluation will assess the progress made in implementing the Strategic Framework and, on that basis, present conclusions and recommendations for the consideration of Parties at COP 16.

The key components of the midterm evaluation are

- An intergovernmental working group (IWG-MTE) that oversees the evaluation process, consisting of fifteen regionally nominated members and seven observers (list in annex 1),
- An independent external assessment that will provide evidence-based, factual findings against the evaluation criteria, for further consideration of IWG-MTE. The assessment is prepared by a team of independent evaluation experts and managed by the secretariat,
- A participatory process to provide views on the conclusions and recommendations of the independent assessment,
- A report of the IWG-MTE that will be built on the findings of the independent assessment and present the recommendations of the Group for the effective implementation of the Strategic Framework by 2030. This report, accompanied by a draft decision, will be submitted to COP 16 as an official document.

The focus of the midterm evaluation is on the five strategic objectives of the Strategic Framework on improving affected ecosystems, improving the living conditions of people in affected areas, increasing drought resilience, generating global benefits and mobilization of resources. The midterm evaluation will consider the action taken and achievements under each strategic objective, building on the results of the national reporting in 2018 and 2023, and relevant reports and documents within and outside the UNCCD. In addition, Parties and different stakeholder groups will be asked to participate in surveys and interviews, in order to receive their direct feedback.

The above-mentioned data collection and analysis and the resulting factual findings will be the main content of the independent assessment, which is prepared by the external evaluators. The assessment report will also include conclusions and recommendations of the evaluators, based on the findings. This report is likely to be a long and detailed description of the progress made and challenges faced in the implementation of the Strategic Framework.

The IWG-MTE will use the independent assessment as a key source of information for its own report to COP 16. In this report, the Group will present the main findings of the independent assessment, as well as its own conclusions and recommendations for the consideration of Parties at COP 16. This report will be considerably shorter and more focused than the independent assessment. It will present a more strategic and “political” approach to the next steps in implementing the Strategic Framework, as a results of discussions among the IWG-MTE members.



First meeting of the IWG-MTE

The IWG-MTE held its first meeting from 13 to 15 February 2023 in Bonn, Germany. The purpose of this meeting was to set the basis for the midterm evaluation and to consider the programme of work of the IWG-MTE. The group considered the content, implementation and monitoring of the Strategic Framework and discussed on the scope, focus and methodology of the independent assessment. The secretariat and the Global Mechanism, as well as the team of external evaluators that will prepare the independent assessment, made several presentations on these topics. Information was provided also on a variety of other processes that are interlinked with the midterm evaluation, such as the IWG on drought and the review of the Science-Policy Interface.

The IWG-MTE considered its own tasks and work programme and agreed on a schedule for its work. Its first task is to ensure that the independent assessment is responsive to the objectives and criteria of the evaluation and conducted according to high evaluation standards, and many related measures were considered at the first meeting.

The group also discussed in detail its task of advising the secretariat on the organisation of the participatory consultations on the conclusions and recommendations of the independent assessment. According to the COP decision on the terms of reference of the midterm evaluation, these consultations are to be organised during the CRIC, but they are not included in the programme of work for the CRIC. This leaves room for differing interpretations on how and when the consultations would be organised. The matter is now with the CRIC Bureau, and it will provide its recommendation for the consideration of the COP Bureau.

Next steps

In the coming weeks, the IWG MTE members and observers will provide further feedback to the preparation of the independent assessment. By the end of March, the planning of the assessment will be completed and the team of evaluators will start the data collection. In April-May, the UNCCD national focal points, science-technology correspondents, accredited civil society organisations and other key stakeholders will be invited to participate in a survey, and some targeted interviews will be organised as well.

The IWG-MTE will discuss on the emerging findings of the independent assessment in an online meeting of the group before the end of June. Its next in-person meeting will be held immediately after the CRIC session in October. That meeting will start the consideration of the report of the group, building on the independent assessment.



Annex: IWG MTE members and observers

Group, country	Name, position
Africa: Algeria	Mme. Saliha Fortas, UNCCD Focal Point, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, General Directorate of Forests
Africa: Angola IWG co-chair	Mr. Luis Domingos Constantino, Head of Department, Ministry of Environment
Africa: Namibia	Ms. Kauna B Schroder, Principal Project Coordinator, Ministry of Environment and Tourism
Asia: China	Ms. WANG Hua, Director, UNCCD Implementation of International Cooperation, National Forestry and Grassland Administration
Asia: Republic of Korea	Mr. Jungyo Lee, Program Officer, Korea Forest Service
Asia: Cook Islands	Ms. Hayley Weeks, Environmental Partnerships Manager, National Environment Service
LAC: Mexico	Ms. Valeria Cruz- Directora de medioambiente y cambio climático Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
LAC: Peru	Ms. Cristina Rodriguez -Directora de Adaptación al Cambio Climático y Desertificación, Ministerio del ambiente
LAC: Argentina	Mr. Pablo Viegas -Asesor Tecnico, Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible
CEE: Czech Republic	Mr. Premysl Stepanek, Head of Multilateral Relations Unit Department of International Relations, Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic
CEE: Montenegro	Ms. Biljana Kilibarda, Adviser, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism
CEE: Slovakia	Ms. Beata Houskova, Senior scientific worker, National Agricultural and Food Centre, Soil Science and Conservation Research Institute/ Department of Soil Science and Pedogeography
WEOG: Australia	Ms. Fleur Downard, Director, International Environment Policy Section, Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
WEOG: EU IWG Co-Chair	Mr. Daniel Van Assche, International Relations Officer, Directorate General for Environment at European Commission
WEOG: USA	Mr. Patrick Reilly, Foreign Affairs Officer Office of Conservation and Water, Department of State Bureau of Oceans, Environment, and Scientific Affairs

Observers

Affiliation	Name, position
IGO: FAO	Ms Vera Boerger, Senior Land and Water Officer in the Land and Water Division
IGO: GEF	Mr. Ulrich Apel, Senior Environmental Specialist
IGO: IUCN	Mr. Chris Magero, Senior Programme Officer, Forest and Grassland Team
SPI	Prof. Ahmed Abd El-Ati Ahmed, Professor of Agronomy, Desert Research Center (DRC), Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
SPI	Prof. Hamid Čustović, Professor, Faculty of Agriculture and Food Science Institute of Soil Science, University of Sarajevo
CSO	Ms. Manon Albagnac, Chargée de projet Sahel - Désertification, Coordinatrice du ReSaD, Centre d'actions et de réalisations internationales (CARI)
CSO	Mr. Charles Oyeoussi Balogoun, President, Afrique Esperance