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Improving the procedures for communication as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties

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quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the
Conference of the Parties**

Note by the secretariat

Summary

Decisions 11/COP.15 and 14/COP.15 endorsed an updated monitoring framework and new guidance documents for the 2022 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) reporting process. This document was thus prepared in response to these decisions.

The document introduces all components of the 2022 UNCCD reporting process and discusses tools and approaches used to improve the quality and format of submitted reports, including capacity-building activities and technical backstopping provided to Parties. While documents ICCD/CRIC(21)/2 to ICCD/CRIC(21)/6 present the preliminary analysis of the information received on progress towards the UNCCD strategic objectives, this document focuses on opportunities and challenges faced during the 2022 UNCCD reporting process and proposes improvements for future reporting processes.



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I. Introduction

1. This document provides insights into the opportunities provided and challenges faced by Parties during the 2022 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) reporting process, which was launched in November 2020 with the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS 4) going online and officially concluded on 28 February 2022. Agenda item 6 for the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 21) and this document offer Parties the possibility to further identify and submit comments and proposals and express opinions on how reporting modalities and procedures can be improved in the future.
2. The document responds to requests made by Parties in decisions 11/COP.15 and 14/COP.15, which endorsed, inter alia, an updated monitoring framework and new guidance documents for 2022 UNCCD reporting process. It introduces all components of the 2022 UNCCD reporting process and discusses tools and approaches used to improve the quality and format of submitted reports, including capacity-building activities and technical backstopping provided to Parties.
3. After the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15), the secretariat and the Global Mechanism (GM) finalized the work on the reporting tools, ensuring compliance with past decisions, especially those taken by Parties at COP 15. Special emphasis was given to the requirements for geospatial reporting and a reporting platform that remains current and relevant to Parties and is sustainable in the longer term. After the launch of PRAIS 4, which provided reporting tools and default data to Parties, capacity-building was provided through online services such as e-learning tutorials, webinars and the option to address problems using the assistance of international consultants.
4. A preliminary deadline for reporting was envisaged for December 2022. However, delays in the disbursement of funds for enabling activities and challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic prompted the Bureau of the CRIC, in consultation with the Executive Secretary, to shift the deadline for reporting to 2023. The Bureau of the CRIC and the Executive Secretary opted for splitting deadlines for the 2022 UNCCD reporting process into two. The first one was 23 January 2023 for the submission of information on strategic objective (SO) 1 (particularly Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 15.3.1, which was needed to inform the ongoing review of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development). The second was 28 February 2023 for the final submission of information on the remaining reporting elements. As can be gleaned from document ICCD/CRIC(21)/INF.2, 126 UNCCD Parties submitted their reports by the final deadline. All reports went through a quality assurance process completed by 24 March 2023. These reports form the basis for the analysis contained in documents ICCD/CRIC(21)/2 to ICCD/CRIC(21)/6.
5. The 2022 UNCCD reporting process outreach and capacity-building for Parties was hampered by the COVID 19 pandemic. As such, face-to-face regional training workshops could not be convened due to travel restrictions, a problem which was made worse by difficulties within countries to initiate the reporting process that is meant to be collaborative and inclusive. The 2022 UNCCD reporting process was exceptionally difficult for Parties due to the pandemic, coupled with delays in the disbursement of financial resources for national-level activities through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) enabling funding that was made available through United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) umbrella projects. However, despite those difficulties, 126 Parties did succeed to provide their national reports on time.

II. Substantive aspects of the reporting

A. Reporting on strategic objectives

1. Strategic objectives 1 to 4

6. Five indicators were used for the first time during the 2022 reporting process,¹ namely: Trends in the proportion of the population exposed to land degradation, disaggregated by sex (indicator SO 2-3); Trends in the proportion of land under drought over the total land area (indicator SO 3-1); Trends in the proportion of the total population exposed to drought (indicator SO 3-2); Trends in the degree of drought vulnerability (indicator SO 3-3); and Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type (with its metric: Average proportion of Terrestrial Key Biodiversity Areas covered by protected areas) (indicator SO 4-3). While indicators SO 3-1, SO 3-2, SO 3-3 were adopted in decision 11/COP.14, indicators SO 2-3 and SO 4-3 were provisionally adopted in decision 11/COP.15.

7. In line with decision 22/COP.11, the secretariat provided country Parties with default national estimates of each respective metric for all progress indicators, an improvement compared to the 2018 reporting process where there was default data only for SO 1. The sources of default data were considered the best at the global level for each indicator at the time of the selection.² In parallel, efforts were made to facilitate the use of national data to ensure full country ownership of the process.

8. Based on the preliminary analysis of information submitted by country Parties on SO 1 to SO 4,³ and through comparison with information submitted by country Parties during the 2018 reporting process,⁴ the following general observations can be made:

(a) Fewer countries reported on SO 1 in 2022 compared to 2018. In fact, in 2022, 116, 110, 109, and 115 country Parties reported on land cover, land productivity, soil organic carbon, and the proportion of land that is degraded over total land area (SDG indicator 15.3.1), respectively, down from 135, 128, 126, and 127 country Parties for the same indicators in 2018 (see table 1);

(b) A similar trend was observed for SO 2, despite the provision of default data from the United Nations Statistics Division SDG indicators database⁵ for poverty and access to safe drinking water and from the World Bank for income inequality (Gini index). In total, 46, 36 and 102 country Parties reported on poverty, income inequality and access to safe drinking water in 2022, against 83, 43 and 138⁶ country Parties in 2018 (see table 1);

(c) The SO 3 indicators were reported for the first time in 2022, with 106, 101 and 96 country Parties reporting on drought hazard, population exposure to drought, and drought vulnerability, respectively;

(d) Concerning SO 4, all 105 country Parties that reported on the Red List Index were able to provide quantitative data, compared to only 51 out of the 138 countries that reported in 2018. Furthermore, 105 country Parties reported data on this new provisionally adopted indicator and its metric (Average proportion of Terrestrial Key Biodiversity Areas covered by protected areas);

(e) Regarding indicators that were used for the first time during the 2022 reporting process, most country Parties reported with default data. This suggests that alternative data

¹ All other indicators used were mandated by decisions 7/COP.13, 9/COP.13 and 11/COP.14.

² For more information on sources of default data for each indicator, see documents ICCD/CRIC(21)/2, ICCD/CRIC(21)/3, ICCD/CRIC(21)/4, ICCD/CRIC(21)/5.

³ Documents ICCD/CRIC(21)/2, ICCD/CRIC(21)/3, ICCD/CRIC(21)/4 and ICCD/CRIC(21)/5.

⁴ Documents ICCD/CRIC(17)/2, ICCD/CRIC(17)/4, ICCD/CRIC(17)/5 and ICCD/CRIC(17)/6.

⁵ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal>.

⁶ Although 138 country Parties reported against this indicator in 2018, only 115 of these reports contained data suitable for analysis.

sources for these indicators are not yet available in most countries, and that more time and technical support are necessary to strengthen country capacities for data production and use;

(f) Whether through the direct use of default data or through analysis of other data sources within Trends.Earth, most countries reported on SO 1 and SO 3 in a methodologically harmonized way, aligned with the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1 and the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on UNCCD Strategic Objective 3. Trends.Earth helped country Parties to apply harmonized methods and evaluate alternative data options so that the most appropriate one could be used based on specific national circumstances. In fact, most country Parties that reported on land productivity and soil organic carbon used alternative data products available via Trends.Earth, national data or a nationally adapted version of the default data;

(g) This diverse mix of data sources has resulted in some inherent comparability issues and, in some cases, a lack of integrity between the spatial data and the submitted quantitative information, underscoring that spatially explicit reporting remains challenging for many countries. The submitted data, however, enabled the compilation of regional and global statistics reflecting country Party reporting;

(h) It is worth noting that quantitative data reported in 2018 could not be compared with those reported in 2022. Therefore, relevant estimates were recalculated to accommodate advances in methodologies and data availability, and to ensure comparability over time.

2. Strategic objective 5

9. Following decision 11/COP.14, the GM improved the reporting system by introducing a new reporting template that included both qualitative and quantitative reporting against the indicators. The new reporting template was introduced to Parties through an online methodological note titled “Accounting Framework to Report on UNCCD Strategic Objective 5 on Financial and non-financial Resources to Support the Implementation of the Convention.”⁷ Afterwards, online sessions were conducted to receive feedback from Parties on the updated reporting framework for SO 5.

10. Subsequent to decision 11/COP.14, a new indicator was introduced on technology transfer, while the indicators on ‘Trends in number of co-financing partners’ (SO 5-3) and ‘Resources mobilized from innovative sources of finance, including from the private sector’ (SO 5-4) were merged into one new indicator: ‘International and domestic private resources’ (SO 5-3). Furthermore, a new indicator ‘Future resources for activities related to the implementation of the Convention’ (SO 5-5) was introduced. COP 15, held in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire in May 2022, provisionally approved the three new indicators.

11. A two tier approach was introduced for reporting whereby under tier 1, Parties were requested to indicate trends and include some descriptive information against the progress indicators from SO 5-1 to SO 5-4. Under tier 2, Parties were asked to add the quantitative data, while the progress indicator SO 5-5 included only qualitative information.

12. Progress indicator SO 5-1 was populated with default data on desertification-related finance acquired from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Creditor Reporting System. However, this time the data was provided to provider and recipient countries both at the aggregated and disaggregated level. Countries were requested to review and verify or amend the pre-filled data with the national data, if available.

13. The default data was not provided for other indicators, and Parties were encouraged to use their national databases to populate the tables under tier 2.

⁷ Available at: https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/inline-files/Methodological_Note_Strategic%20Objective%205_clean%20-%20Final.pdf.

B. Reporting on the implementation framework

14. After COP 15, the implementation framework was reworked to enhance narrative reporting along key topics contained in the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework.⁸ According to decision 11/COP.15, paragraph 11 (d), particular focus was placed on enabling Parties to include, inter alia, reporting on gender dimensions of projects or activities implemented at national level. Other sections such as the one on financial and non-financial sources, as well as policy and planning, were also adapted to capture information on gender issues.

15. In order to make use of qualitative information submitted under the implementation framework, the secretariat extracted key messages from the implementation framework using natural language processing software based on artificial intelligence (AI) to create summaries of experiences provided. Those summaries can be found in the addendum to this document (document ICCD/CRIC(21)/7/Add.1).

III. Reporting platform and data analytics tools

A. Reporting platform

16. The PRAIS 4 platform was first used in the 2022 UNCCD reporting process. Parties were provided for the relevant indicators with default data pre-filled in the reporting forms as well as the supporting geospatial datasets pre-processed in Trends.Earth by Conservation International prior to integration into PRAIS 4. All other reporting fields were to be filled in manually by Parties via a series of input boxes, narrative text and dropdown menus within the online forms.

17. Globally, there were 485 active users registered on PRAIS 4 during the 2022 UNCCD reporting process, of which 188 were in Africa, 99 in Asia, 91 in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), 22 in the Northern Mediterranean (NMED) and 41 in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) (see figure 1).⁹

18. The PRAIS 4 platform's geospatial capability (consisting of a map interface and a management console) allowed for the visualization of geospatial data and the capturing of polygons (or points) of (i) false positive and false negative outcomes in cases where the degradation analysis of the subindicators of SDG indicator 15.3.1 may produce a counterintuitive outcome; (ii) 'hot spots' of land degradation and 'bright spots' of land improvement; and (iii) national voluntary targets and implemented actions to meet those targets. In total, 19 countries captured polygons of false positives/negatives, 22 countries captured hot spots of land degradation, 15 countries captured bright spots of land improvement, 10 countries captured voluntary targets and 9 countries implemented actions (see table 2). Of the 97 countries which included a custom vector layer of any type in their national report, 38 per cent were from Africa, 23 per cent from Asia, 21 per cent from LAC, and 9 per cent were from CEE or NMED.

19. For cartographic representation in the PRAIS 4 map interface, PRAIS 4 uses polygons of country boundaries taken from the United Nations Map 0 Geodata¹⁰ of the United Nations map database, which is suitable for 1:1 million scale representation and serves global mapping purposes. This is a worldwide harmonized geospatial database consisting of country and geographic name information on a global scale. However, Parties could change the default border provided and upload a national border to PRAIS 4. Twenty-two countries

⁸ Key topics are financial and non-financial sources, policy and planning, and action on the ground.

⁹ In this document, the terms "global" refers to the aggregation of data from all country Parties who took part in the 2022 reporting process, including those that do not belong to any UNCCD Regional Implementation Annexes.

¹⁰ The United Nations Geospatial Data, or Geodata, is a worldwide geospatial dataset of the United Nations.

replaced the default border with a national border in PRAIS 4 (see table 2 for a regional breakdown).

20. PRAIS 4 also displays the United Nations Clear Map¹¹ provided by the United Nations Geospatial Information Section, as well as other background map services as background reference in the spatial viewer.

21. The geospatial component of PRAIS 4 also supports the creation of templated maps and the inclusion of those maps as an annex to the submitted national report. These maps are based on 73 individual raster datasets describing national dynamics in land degradation, drought and people exposed, and these datasets were pre-populated in the national report working draft for each Party. This is an extremely rich data resource that Parties can also use outside the context of the UNCCD. Parties had the option to export these datasets from the platform as templated maps (image files) or in their native format (GeoTIFF) for further geospatial analysis.

22. PRAIS 4 allows Parties to replace each default spatial raster layer by uploading an alternative spatial dataset directly to the platform. However, Parties who uploaded one or more raster files directly to PRAIS 4 were instructed to manually change the corresponding reporting forms to avoid incoherence between the spatial data and the submitted quantitative information in the reporting forms. In total, 13 countries imported a custom raster file for land cover (SO 1-1), 9 countries for land productivity (SO 1-2), 7 countries for soil organic carbon (SO 1-3), and 8 countries for SDG indicator 15.3.1. This suggests that not all countries who modified the default SO1 subindicator datasets also uploaded a custom raster file for SDG indicator 15.3.1 (see table 3) highlighting a possible mismatch between the spatial layers and quantitative data reported. In terms of population exposed to land degradation (SO 2-3), 3 countries imported a custom raster file to PRAIS 4. For drought hazard (SO 3-1), exposure (SO 3-2) and vulnerability (SO 3-3), 4, 4 and 2 countries uploaded customized rasters to PRAIS 4, respectively.

23. Countries were requested to provide metadata for every spatial file uploaded in order to provide information on the source of the dataset and other relevant fields. Thirty-six countries provided metadata for one or more uploaded spatial files, of which 31 countries provided metadata for uploaded vector layers and 16 countries for uploaded raster layers.

24. As the PRAIS 4 platform allows for the upload or creation of spatial datasets, Parties were then given the options to: (i) accept the default Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 2.0 Generic (CC BY-NC 2.0) licence;¹² (ii) select an alternative Creative Commons licence which applies additional restrictions on the use of the data; or (iii) use an existing licence of their own and describe the terms of use of their data using a form provided in PRAIS 4. The two alternative Creative Commons licences offered to Parties were the Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike (CC BY-NC-SA)¹³ and the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs (CC BY-NC-ND)¹⁴ licences. The user-specific licences described here are applicable to national data provided in PRAIS 4 and not the default data provided by the secretariat, which is already in the public domain. In total, seven countries opted for an alternative to the default CC BY-NC 2.0 license, five of which selected the CC BY-NC-SA license and one the CC BY-NC-ND license, and one restricted all use of any spatial data in their national report.

¹¹ The United Nations Clear Map can be used in any mapping application and can be accessed [here](#). Feedback is appreciated and should be sent directly to: Email: Clearmap@un.org or gis@un.org.

¹² The CC BY-NC 2.0 licence indicates that users of the data are free to: (i) share (i.e. copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format); and (ii) adapt (i.e. remix, transform and build upon the material). In return, users of that data must (i) attribute the data (i.e. give appropriate credit, provide a link to the licence and indicate whether changes were made); and (ii) not use the data for commercial purposes. For more information: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/>.

¹³ This licence allows others to remix, adapt and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as they credit and license their new creations under identical terms.

¹⁴ This licence is the most restrictive of the licences, only allowing others to download the data and share it with others as long as they credit the source. However, they are not authorized to change it in any way or use it commercially.

25. In response to decision 11/COP.14, PRAIS 4 facilitated reporting on SOs 1–4 by including additional data fields specific to affected areas in the reporting system. This was an additional and optional reporting item that used a specific set of forms that were clearly demarcated from the national reporting forms for this purpose. In opening this set of forms, countries were asked if they wished to report on affected areas in addition to national reporting. Fifteen countries answered yes to this question. Of those who stated they wished to report on affected areas, only one country provided an alternative definition to that of article 1 of the Convention, while the rest accepted it. Although 15 countries stated their intention to report on affected areas, only one country reported such quantitative information in addition to national reporting.

26. In the longer term, it is expected that PRAIS 4 will continue to be developed and improved as new requirements and issues emerge. Therefore, a formal requirements analysis for the platform will be conducted to ensure that the system meets the needs of Parties for 2026 reporting and into the future. Nevertheless, the current iteration of the PRAIS 4 platform acts as a foundation for future reporting processes, and while the same source code can be extended, there are limits to the depth and breadth of technical changes that can be made to the system.

27. A more extensive data visualization and data discovery interface has been developed for the display and analysis of reported data. This online platform provides access to key numbers on the status and trends in the indicators reported in the 2022 UNCCD reporting process. The initiative contributes to the vision of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Data Strategy for Action by Everyone, Everywhere.¹⁵ The secretariat has recognized that the user base for reporting data has expanded beyond Parties and includes, inter alia, the media and researchers. The UNCCD data dashboard, which will be launched prior to CRIC 21, is not intended to represent a comprehensive and accurate global and regional assessment of the topics presented, but rather a summary of the information contained in the 126 national reports submitted by Parties in the 2022 reporting process.

B. Trends.Earth and PRAIS 4 interoperability

28. Trends.Earth is a free and open source tool for monitoring indicators of land change and drought vulnerability. The enhanced version of Trends.Earth supports not only the calculation of SDG indicator 15.3.1 based on the latest analytical methods documented in version 2 of the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1, but also the analysis of geospatial data for the calculation of indicators used to track progress towards SOs 2 and 3 based on the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on UNCCD Strategic Objective 3. In addition, Trends.Earth supports the integration of globally available data with nationally or locally available data and allows Parties to customize the methods used to account for local conditions.

29. In line with decision 11/COP.14, Conservation International has further enhanced and expanded Trends.Earth to meet the needs of the 2022 UNCCD reporting process. Interoperability efforts have focused on:

(a) Preparing the default data for all geospatial indicators for 196 Parties and migrating it into PRAIS 4 to pre-populate the national reports with spatial and numerical data. In order to extract national datasets from the global default datasets, polygons of country boundaries were taken from the United Nations Map 0 Geodata;

(b) Establishing a standard data structure format for UNCCD national reporting that allows the default data and subsequent user-generated data to be automatically transferred to PRAIS 4. The core of this work was the development of a consistent and standardized data structure in the JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) file format so that the indicators and supporting spatial data could be packaged efficiently in a portable and open file format;

¹⁵ <https://www.un.org/en/content/datastrategy/index.shtml>.

(c) Creating a PRAIS 4 file upload tool so that the Trends.Earth JSON files could be uploaded to the platform in a single zipped file format;

(d) Enabling Parties to correct the default calculation of SDG indicator 15.3.1, both in PRAIS 4 and Trends.Earth, in cases where the results may be counterintuitive due to ‘false positive’ or ‘false negative’ outcomes. Parties were provided with a dedicated reporting table in PRAIS 4 to document these processes. Optionally, and if possible, Parties could use the PRAIS 4 spatial viewer and associated geospatial tools to delineate the areas of false positives or false negatives. With this spatial data and assuming Parties used only default data provided for SDG 15.3.1, they could request a Trends.Earth reanalysis based on the extents of the false positive or negative processes reported. Without the addition of spatial data, it is not possible to perform a recalculation of SDG indicator 15.3.1;

(e) Providing Parties with a tool to be able to define a national land cover legend for reporting on indicator SO 1-1 (Trends in land cover) and upload supporting spatial land cover datasets in order to accurately capture the key degradation processes defined in their national report and specify how this legend can be aggregated to the seven land cover classes required for UNCCD reporting.

30. Thirty-six countries uploaded an SO 1 Trends.Earth file to PRAIS 4, of which 15 were in Africa, 6 in Asia, 8 in LAC, 4 in NMED and 3 in CEE (see table 1 for the indicator code and table 3). In the Trends.Earth file, 36 countries included a custom raster file for land cover (SO 1-1), which also resulted in the same amount of custom soil organic carbon (SO 1-3) raster files, as these two indicators are interlinked (see table 3). Therefore those 36 countries also produced a customized SDG indicator 15.3.1 raster file (SO 1-4), as changes to any of the input rasters will result in a change to the SDG indicator 15.3.1.

31. Of the 36 countries that imported a Trends.Earth zip file package to PRAIS 4, only 10 countries imported a custom raster file for land productivity (SO 1-2) (see table 3).

32. In terms of population exposed to land degradation (SO 2-3), 32 countries imported a custom raster file to PRAIS 4 from Trends.Earth, all of which used the custom SDG indicator 15.3.1 raster file combined with default population data or an alternative national population dataset; the remaining four countries chose not to report on SO 2-3 (see table 3).

33. For drought hazard (SO 3-1), drought exposure (SO 3-2) and drought vulnerability (SO 3-3), 16, 15 and 0 countries, respectively, imported customized rasters from Trends.Earth, reflecting the increasing capacity challenges in the creation of national datasets for those new indicators (see table 3).

34. In total, four countries requested a PRAIS 4 reanalysis of the default SDG indicator 15.3.1 estimate by providing at least one polygon feature for the extent of a reported false positive or false negative area. Five other countries used similar functionality in Trends.Earth to delineate areas of false positive or false negative processes and recalculate the default SDG indicator 15.3.1 estimate. This amounted to nine Parties in total who recalculated the default SDG indicator 15.3.1 estimate using either PRAIS 4 or Trends.Earth based on reported false positives or false negatives.

35. The analysis presented in table 3 shows that more countries imported custom raster files to PRAIS 4 via Trends.Earth than via a direct upload to PRAIS 4. This reflects the added convenience in the Trends.Earth zip file upload method as it auto-populates the national report with the custom spatial datasets and the associated tabular data, thereby ensuring integrity in the reported data. This was the case for population exposed to land degradation (SO 2-3), where 32 countries used the Trends.Earth tools before importing their data to PRAIS 4, while only 3 countries directly uploaded their custom raster datasets to PRAIS 4. This suggests that few countries were able to calculate this indicator without the support of Trends.Earth. However, for land productivity (SO 1-2), almost the same number of countries used each method, with 9 countries directly uploading a custom dataset to PRAIS 4 and 10 countries importing them via Trends.Earth. While the Trends.Earth zip file upload method proved useful, it involves the interaction of two complex software systems (PRAIS 4 and Trends.Earth), increasing the rate of human error and time taken to solve technical issues.

IV. Capacity-building for reporting

36. Capacity-building for reporting has always been part of the core services provided by the Convention institutions and was generously funded by the GEF as part of the Global Support Programme aimed at strengthening capacity of country Parties for UNCCD monitoring and reporting.

37. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face regional meetings for capacity development could not be undertaken during the 2022 reporting process. Thus, the Convention institutions, in consultation with the Bureau of the CRIC, decided to design and implement online capacity development activities. The services provided can be broken down into five categories:

- (a) Reporting manual and other guidance documents;
- (b) E-learning video tutorials;
- (c) Technical backstopping;
- (d) Help desk;
- (e) Technical review of national reports.

A. Reporting manual and other guidance documents

38. In line with decision 11/COP.14, which requested the secretariat to further improve methodological guidelines and tools for the next reporting process, the secretariat and the GM have made available to Parties a series of methodological documents, most notably:

- (a) The Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1, whose second version was published in 2021 and endorsed by the COP in decision 11/COP.15;¹⁶ and
- (b) The Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on UNCCD Strategic Objective 3, also published in 2021 and endorsed by the COP in decision 11/COP.15.¹⁷

39. The methodological guidance contained in these technical documents is summarized in the reporting manual, which has been made available to Parties in all United Nations languages.¹⁸ The reporting manual covers all SOs and associated indicators/metrics and provides step-by-step methodological guidance for the preparation of national reports.

B. E-learning video tutorials

40. A series of 16 e-learning video tutorials on the SOs of the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework were produced in all United Nations languages.¹⁹ The e-learning tutorials in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish have been disseminated through the UNCCD Capacity Building Marketplace YouTube channel. The e-learning tutorials provide guidance on how to report in the PRAIS 4 reporting platform, indicator by indicator. Two additional tutorials on the use of Trends.Earth were also made available in English only in collaboration with Conservation International.

41. The view count of the e-learning video tutorials was the highest for the English version, with 3,849 views against a total of 1,542 views for the other four language versions disseminated via YouTube (see table 4 for regional breakdown). However, it is important to note that the English versions were available for a longer period than the translations in other languages.

¹⁶ <https://www.unccd.int/resources/manuals-and-guides/good-practice-guidance-sdg-indicator-1531-proportion-land-degraded>.

¹⁷ <https://www.unccd.int/resources/manuals-and-guides/good-practice-guidance-national-reporting-unccd-strategic-objective-3>.

¹⁸ <https://prais4-reporting-manual.readthedocs.io/en/latest/index.html>.

¹⁹ Available at: <https://support.unccd.int/knowledgebase.php?article=10>.

42. The most popular video across all languages was the ‘Introduction to the 2022 UNCCD Reporting Process’ with 1,104 views out of a total of 5,391 views, followed by the ‘Overview of the PRAIS 4 Platform’ video with 836 views and by the ‘Geospatial reporting in PRAIS 4’ video with 578 views (see table 4). In terms of SOs, the most popular videos were those related to SO 1 with a total of 1,365 views, out of which 547 views were recorded for the video on the ‘Trends in land cover’ indicator.

43. The total watch time was approximately 504 hours across the Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish versions, with 367.6 hours for the English version, 57.3 hours for the French version, 40.5 hours for the Arabic version, 25.3 hours for the Spanish version and 13.4 hours for the Russian version (see table 4). Both the view count and the total watch time indicate that countries found the translation of capacity-building materials useful and engaging.

44. The two Trends.Earth tutorials recorded a total of 369 views via the YouTube channel of the UNCCD Capacity Building Marketplace, for a total watch time of 42 hours.

C. Technical backstopping

45. Experience from the last reporting process has shown that while face-to-face regional meetings were considered helpful, reporting issues encountered by Parties required the sustained involvement of technical experts provided through online interactions even in the 2018 reporting process.

46. Therefore, the Convention institutions hired and trained a team of 11 international technical experts that provided a tight network of assistance to Parties throughout the 2022 reporting process via the help desk system, e-mail exchanges, bilateral virtual meetings, and the PRAIS 4 in-built revision and review system for the technical review of national reports.

47. The technical backstopping experts have also organized a series of subregional webinars targeted primarily at national focal points and reporting officers, but also opened to other national technical experts.

48. The first series of subregional webinars held in July 2022 was mainly focused on national reporting on SO 1 and SDG target 15.3 using default data. This was followed in October and November 2022 by another series of subregional webinars aimed at demonstrating how to integrate national data and assumptions in the indicators’ calculations. This webinar series demonstrated how to use Trends.Earth to map and monitor land degradation in the context of SDG indicator 15.3.1, how to select the most appropriate data sources for reporting, and how to integrate national data in the indicators’ calculation. One of the webinars specifically focused on the use of national land cover datasets and legends.

49. Additional webinars were organized on the use of geospatial data in PRAIS 4, SO 2, SO 4 and SO 5 in July–August 2022, and on SO 3 in December 2022.

50. A total of 83 and 82 country Parties were represented at the first and second series of webinars on SO 1, respectively, while the webinar on SO 3 was attended by 63 countries (see figure 2). While approximately 60 per cent of the countries attending each webinar were represented only by one attendee, the remaining countries took the opportunity to bring two or more technical experts to each webinar (see figure 3).

D. Help desk

51. As per the last reporting process, the secretariat implemented a help desk feature that assisted country Parties in communicating their requests and inquiries about reporting to the secretariat. Globally, 328 tickets by country Parties were registered on the help desk (see table 5).

52. Most questions related to technical and login issues (132), followed by questions related to PRAIS 4 (78), Trends.Earth (49), SO 1 (26) and SO 5 (8) (see table 5). Twenty-nine questions were also received on other unspecified issues. Finally, two questions each

were received on SO 4 and the implementation framework, and one question each on SO 2 and SO 3.

53. Despite the secretariat's promotion of this help desk feature, many country Parties instead opted to send their inquiries via e-mail or other communication channels. The technical backstopping experts reported working with country Parties on Trends.Earth and PRAIS 4 technical issues mainly in bilateral calls where they could reproduce the issues and walk the user through solutions.

E. Technical review of national reports

54. National reports submitted before and by the reporting deadline were screened and checked by the technical backstopping experts following the guidelines for the technical review of national reports contained in document ICCD/CRIC(20)/INF.1 and endorsed by the COP in decision 11/COP.15.

55. The technical review of national reports was conducted in PRAIS 4, leveraging its in-built revision and review system. PRAIS 4 supports an audit trail of the progression of the national report, from the working draft to the revisions required prior to the submission of the final report. Users were able to submit revisions for review by the experts at any moment during the reporting process. The in-built comments system allowed the experts to add comments and suggestions for improvements to the forms for consideration by the users. Conversely, the comments system also allowed users to add comments for consideration by the experts, thereby enabling a confidential dialogue and collaboration for the review of national reports.

56. A total of 425 national report revisions were submitted from 116 countries with an average of 3.7 revisions submitted per country for review prior to final report submission (see table 6). Africa had the highest average of all the regions, with 5 revisions submitted per country compared to NMED, which had 2.7 revisions per country.

57. In terms of the usage of the PRAIS 4 commenting system, 16 countries submitted a total of 105 comments on the revision of their national report: 7 in Africa, 5 in Asia and 3 in LAC, while there were no comments received via the PRAIS 4 system from Parties in NMED or CEE (see table 6). This does not preclude the possibility of communications between the reporting officer and the technical expert via email or another medium. In contrast, 65 countries received a total of 701 review comments by the team of technical experts: 29 in Africa, 11 in Asia, 10 in LAC, 3 in NMED and 7 in CEE. This implies that a successful review dialogue was not always established between the reviewer and reporting officer within the PRAIS 4 system. Indeed, at the global level only a quarter of the countries that did receive comments from the technical experts on the revision of their national report replied. This mismatch suggests that non-responsive Parties either preferred an alternative method of communication, submitted a revision based on the comments received without responding to the comments, or they did not give due consideration to the reviewer's comments due to time or other constraints. A lack of response to the experts' comments may have resulted in reduced quality of the submitted national reports.

58. Of the three regions where there was a technical review dialogue between national reporting officers and technical experts, Asia had the highest response rate with 8.7 expert comments per country on average compared to 6.8 reporting officer comments, whereas LAC had the lowest response rate with 6.6 expert comments per country on average compared to 3 reporting officer comments (see table 6).

59. In comparing the number of submitted revisions to the number of countries that received expert comments on those revisions, 65 of the 116 countries (56 per cent) received expert comments for at least one revision of their national report. Regionally, this rate ranged from 39 per cent in Asia to 74 per cent in Africa.

60. Not all national reports could be reviewed on time because of: (i) the late submission of national reports; (ii) the time needed for the review of a single national report; and (iii) the requirement to proceed with a preliminary analysis for the preparation of official documentation.

V. **Enabling funding from the Global Environment Facility for United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting**

61. The GM led the formulation of a GEF Enabling Activity project to support UNCCD reporting in partnership with UNEP and in close collaboration with the UNCCD secretariat. This project, the Global Support Programme, aims to support country Parties in developing their national reports while enhancing technical and institutional capacity for land degradation monitoring and reporting through technical assistance and the availability of an online help desk system. It also provided support in updating methodological guidance and upgrading the reporting tools relevant for this reporting round. This project is a continuation of the support that the GM and the secretariat have provided in previous reporting processes.

62. The Convention institutions also liaised with Parties on GEF support for the 2022 UNCCD reporting process, which was provided through several UNEP umbrella projects. With support from the UNCCD Regional Liaison Offices, UNEP developed the GEF Enabling Activity projects based on the number of expressions of interest received, while funds were disbursed by UNEP to the Parties in support of national activities to comply with the obligations of UNCCD reporting.

63. The intended outcome of the UNEP umbrella projects is to establish national-level enabling conditions for reporting and support UNCCD reporting through the following outputs: (a) national-level trainings for the domestication of standardized tools, data collection and quality assurance of reported data; and (b) the 2022 national report to UNCCD, which is compiled and validated with the participation of key stakeholders and submitted by the deadline. A total of 122 countries participated in the project and 6 umbrella projects were developed for the 2022 UNCCD reporting process, with total funding of USD 11,443,778.

64. A total of 122 countries participated in the umbrella projects by submitting an expression of interest. The process of disbursing the funds experienced a serious delay and was still ongoing after the reporting deadline had passed. Several countries, including the Bureau of the CRIC, repeatedly raised the point of the delay in the disbursement of funds, which hampered the process of reporting at national level and emphasized the need to expedite the release of funds in the future.

VI. **Conclusions and recommendations**

65. **The reporting rate during the 2022 reporting process was slightly lower compared to the previous one, with a total of 126 country Parties submitting a national report in 2022, down from 141 in 2018. The pandemic called for adjustments at national level and necessitated a shift to online capacity-building, which put severe constraints on Parties to comply with the reporting obligations.**

66. **Another factor that impacted the reporting rate in 2022 was the late disbursement of GEF Enabling Activity funds in support of national activities to comply with the obligations of UNCCD reporting.**

67. **Besides the above-mentioned external constraints, the 2022 UNCCD reporting process was also far more complex with the following elements to be considered:**

(a) **Eight new indicators to report on, out of which three were adopted in decision 11/COP.14 and five provisionally adopted in decision 11/COP.15;**

(b) **The added requirement of reporting against a progress period (2016–2019) as well as a recalculated baseline period (2000–2015);**

(c) **New modalities of reporting such as the customization of spatial datasets and their inclusion in the national report;**

(d) **The introduction of new interoperability features between Trends.Earth and PRAIS 4, which required a careful study and understanding of how changes to the**

indicator calculation parameters and/or the addition of custom spatial datasets lead to changes in quantitative information reported.

68. The reporting rate for those indicators under SO 2, 3 and 4 that were used for the first time during the 2022 reporting process was quite high, ranging from 96 country Parties who reported on the proportion of the population exposed to land degradation disaggregated by sex and on drought vulnerability, to 106 countries who reported on drought hazard. Most country Parties opted for the default data to report on these indicators. This suggests that alternative data sources for these indicators are not yet available in most countries, and that more time and technical support are necessary to strengthen country capacities for data production and use.

69. Trends.Earth was significantly enhanced to accommodate the new indicators and the addition of a progress period relative the baseline, but Parties experienced technical challenges, especially when using national data.

70. The upgrade of the PRAIS 4 system from PRAIS 3, while welcomed, entailed a steep learning curve both for Parties and technical backstopping experts. The challenge was exacerbated by the inability to sensitize Parties to the new modalities of reporting through face-to-face training.

71. The benefits of open data, as espoused by the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), have been demonstrated in this reporting process with Parties having access to over 70 spatial default datasets spanning 20 years and collated from the best available open data sources. Such a rich data resource can also be used by Parties beyond the scope of this reporting exercise.

72. Experience from this reporting process has shown that in-person and online training could be considered as complementary modalities for capacity development on reporting.

73. Most Parties used the revision and review features built into PRAIS 4, but many did not use the commenting feature associated with those revisions. It can be assumed that the lack of an auditable direct dialogue with experts on the review of national reports may have impacted the quality of submitted reports, notwithstanding the possibility that much of the communication around the revision of national reports may have been conducted via other channels whose usage could not be tracked.

74. The solidity of the global/regional analysis presented in official documentation at sessions of the CRIC is dependent on the number of reports submitted, the coverage of national territory of submitted data and the balance of reports submitted by regions. The 2022 UNCCD reporting process has shown that it is difficult to produce a global analysis unless default data for countries that did not submit reports can fill gaps in the analysis.

75. Parties at CRIC 21 may wish to consider the recommendations contained in this document with a view to initiating early consultations on draft decisions to be forwarded to the COP at its sixteenth session.

76. Parties may wish to:

For improved coordination among country stakeholders in the national reporting process

(a) Call upon Parties to:

(i) Ensure closer cooperation among key stakeholders in the national reporting process (acknowledging that a multidisciplinary and multiagency response is required for a comprehensive national report), including, but not limited to, the relevant SDG focal points from national statistical offices, national representatives in GEO and national representatives in the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management network for joint decisions on the production and use of geospatial information in the context of UNCCD national reporting;

(ii) Employ as far as possible the full set of geospatial default data in PRAIS 4, not only for national reporting to the UNCCD but also to inform decision-

making and action on the ground, thereby realizing the full potential of open data sharing of global Earth observations;

(iii) Delegate, in consultation with the national focal point, the critical role of the national reporting officer based on the required technical competence well in advance of the commencement of the reporting process so the nominated reporting officers can take advantage of all relevant training opportunities and coordinate internal efforts in preparing the national report;

(iv) Engage in and help support efforts to create a community-of-practice at regional level to ensure continuous information exchange on all aspects relating to national reporting, thereby safeguarding, as far as possible, institutional knowledge retention;

(v) Expedite formal processes at national level to obtain enabling funding and revisit the modalities for the disbursement of such funds by the GEF during CRIC 21;

For reporting under SO 1–4

(b) Request the secretariat, in collaboration with data providers, technical partners and the Earth observation community, including the GEO Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship, to:

(i) Continue providing country Parties with national estimates of each respective metric of the progress indicators through the PRAIS 4 portal, based on the best available data sources;

(ii) Support efforts to create a community-of-practice at regional level with interested partners to ensure ongoing engagement on issues related to national reporting;

For reporting under SO 5

(c) Request the GM to:

(i) Explore partnerships with the OECD, national and international statistical offices and other data collection agencies in order to continue developing a more comprehensive and systemic approach to tracking financial flows for the implementation of the Convention and also provide more accurate default data to country Parties;

(ii) Given the increasing funding assistance from the non-Development Assistance Committee (DAC) OECD member countries, work closely with non-DAC OECD countries, national and international institutions, and data collection agencies to develop approaches consistent with Rio markers and other methodologies in order to systematically identify financing related to UNCCD implementation;

(iii) Explore a quantitative approach to the collection of data from countries on the financing of UNCCD implementation and seek ways to leverage existing national processes, such as national expenditure reviews or other national budget analyses;

(iv) Continue periodically updating a global analysis of financial flows for UNCCD implementation;

For the analyses contained in official documents presented to the CRIC

(d) Request the secretariat, while ensuring appropriate to include default data, where appropriate, of Parties that did not submit a national report in the official documentation presented at CRIC for a sound global analysis;

For reporting under the implementation framework

(e) Request the Convention institutions to make relevant narratives under the key topics of the implementation framework available, including through the UNCCD Knowledge Hub and/or alternative knowledge management websites of the UNCCD,

and assess ways and means of further disseminating submitted information through the Bureau of the CRIC;

For the PRAIS 4 reporting platform and data analytics tools

(f) Call upon Parties to engage with the Second Administrative Level Boundaries (SALB) programme of the United Nations Geospatial Information Section & Statistics Division when opting to use their own national boundary for national reporting;²⁰

(g) Request the secretariat and the GM, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with relevant technical partners, including the GEO Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship, to:

(i) Conduct a formal requirements analysis for improvements and enhancements to PRAIS 4 in preparation for the 2026 reporting process as well as extension and enhancement of the UNCCD Data Dashboard;

(ii) Facilitate the process of publicly documenting the data structure of the Trends.Earth UNCCD reporting data package so that it can be established as a standard in order to enable a more open ecosystem of tools for countries to use for national reporting in 2026;

(h) Invite Conservation International to continue enhancing Trends.Earth by:

(i) Addressing the critical technical issues raised during the 2022 reporting process as a priority;

(ii) Conducting a formal requirements analysis for improvements and enhancements to make the software sustainable for future reporting;

(iii) Integrating the software, in so far as possible, with other relevant third party applications to enable improved data sharing;

For capacity development and quality assurance

(i) Request the secretariat and the GM, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with relevant financial and technical partners in position to do so, to:

(i) Keep the momentum of reporting by organizing, well in advance of the 2026 reporting process, further capacity development activities using a combination of in-person and e-learning courses in order to strengthen countries' capacity for data production and use;

(ii) Consider the implementation of automatic quality assurance checks in PRAIS 4 so that the submitted data is subject to basic validation and logical checks before the technical review is carried out by trained experts;

(iii) Ensure that a dedicated period of time (e.g. two months) is allocated to the technical review and quality assurance process and that Parties have sufficient time to submit amended versions of their reports;

(j) Encourage Parties to utilize the in-built revision and review system of PRAIS 4 for the expert review of national reports and to enable a confidential and secure communication with the secretariat in the review process.

²⁰ The programme's objective is to promote accessible, interoperable and global data and information on subnational units and boundaries. Participation in the programme will ensure Member States of the United Nations will avail of a global repository of authoritative information and geospatial data about the administrative unit structure of countries down to the second subnational level, and through time. Parties should engage with the SALB programme directly by sending an email to salb@un.org.

Annex

[English only]

Tables and figures

I. Introduction

1. This annex contains the tables and figures relevant to the parent document “Improving the procedures for communication as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties” prepared for the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention.
2. The tables and figures herein are presented under section headings that mirror those found in the main document and are numbered according to their appearance in the main document.

II. Substantive aspects of the reporting

Table 1
Number of country Parties that reported on each indicator under strategic objective 1 to 4 during the 2018 and 2022 UNCCD reporting processes

<i>Indicator code</i>	<i>Indicator name</i>	<i>Metrics/proxies</i>	<i>Number of countries reporting in 2018</i>	<i>Number of countries reporting in 2022</i>
SO 1-1	Trends in land cover	Land cover change	135	116
SO 1-2	Trends in land productivity or functioning of the land	Land productivity dynamics	128	110
SO 1-3	Trends in carbon stocks above and below ground	Soil organic carbon stock	126	109
SO 1-4	Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area	-	127	105
SO 2-1	Trends in population living below the relative poverty line and/or income inequality in affected areas	Proportion of the population below the international poverty line	83	46
		Income inequality (Gini index)	43	36
SO 2-2	Trends in access to safe drinking water in affected areas	Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services	138 ¹	102
SO 2-3	Trends in the proportion of the population exposed to land degradation, disaggregated by sex	Proportion of the population exposed to land degradation, disaggregated by sex	-	96
SO 3-1	Trends in the proportion of land under drought over the total land area	Proportion of land in each drought intensity class as defined by the Standardized Precipitation Index	-	106
SO 3-2	Trends in the proportion of the total population exposed to drought	Proportion of the population exposed to drought, disaggregated by sex	-	101
SO 3-3	Trends in the degree of drought vulnerability	Drought Vulnerability Index	-	96
SO 4-1	Trends in carbon stocks above and below ground	Soil organic carbon stock	See SO 1-3	See SO 1-3
SO 4-2	Trends in abundance and distribution of selected species	Red List Index	138 ²	105
SO 4-3	Trends in protected area coverage of important biodiversity areas	Average proportion of Terrestrial Key Biodiversity Areas covered by protected areas	-	105

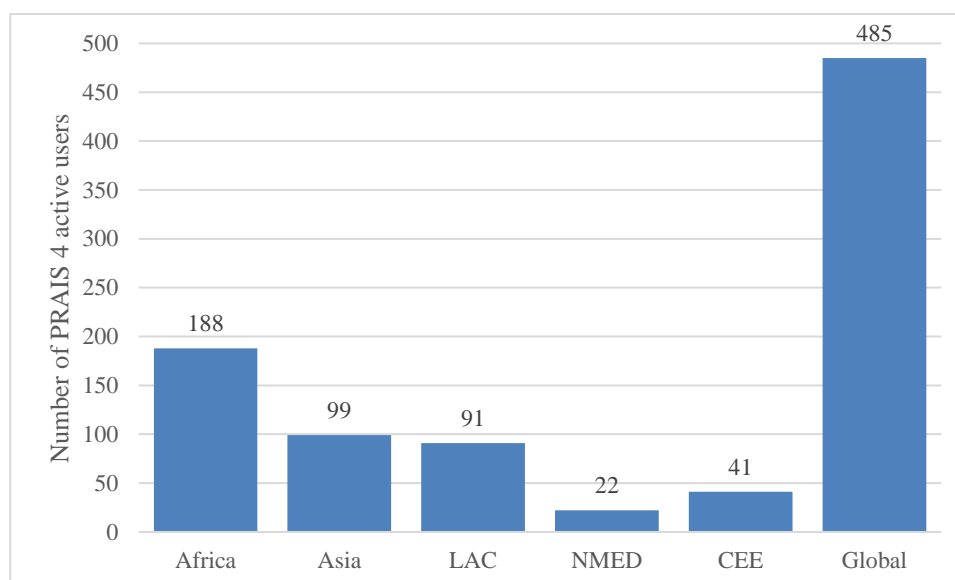
Notes:

¹ Although 138 country Parties reported against this indicator in 2018, only 115 of these reports contained data suitable for analysis.

² Out of 138 country Parties reporting on this indicator in 2018, 51 reported numeric Red List Index values.

III. Reporting platform and data analytics tools

Figure 1
Number of active PRAIS 4 users per region



Notes: Users who never logged into PRAIS 4 were considered inactive and are excluded from this analysis.

Abbreviations: CEE = Central and Eastern Europe, LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean, NMED = Northern Mediterranean, PRAIS 4 = performance review and assessment of implementation system (ver. 4).

Table 2

Number of countries which have reported spatial layers in vector format in PRAIS 4 disaggregated by the type of vector layer as well as the number of Trends.Earth files imported into PRAIS 4

<i>Region</i>	<i>National border</i>	<i>Bright-spots</i>	<i>Hotspots</i>	<i>False positives/negatives</i>	<i>Voluntary targets</i>	<i>Implemented actions</i>	<i>Total vector layers</i>	<i>Trends.Earth zip file</i>
Africa	5	6	8	6	7	5	37	15
Asia	7	4	5	4	1	1	22	6
LAC	3	2	6	7	1	1	20	8
NMED	4	1	1	1	1	1	9	4
CEE	3	2	2	1	0	1	9	3
Global	22	15	22	19	10	9	97	36

Abbreviations: CEE = Central and Eastern Europe, LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean, NMED = Northern Mediterranean.

Table 3

Number of countries which have reported spatial layers in raster format in PRAIS 4 disaggregated by the indicator as well as the source

<i>Region</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>SO 1-1</i>	<i>SO 1-2</i>	<i>SO 1-3</i>	<i>SO 1-4</i>	<i>SO 2-3</i>	<i>SO 3-1</i>	<i>SO 3-2</i>	<i>SO 3-3</i>
Africa	PRAIS 4 upload	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Trends.Earth import	15	3	15	15	14	6	6	-
Asia	PRAIS 4 upload	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	-
	Trends.Earth import	6	-	6	6	6	1	-	-
LAC	PRAIS 4 upload	4	3	3	3	1	1	1	1
	Trends.Earth import	8	3	8	8	5	5	5	-
NMED	PRAIS 4 upload	3	1	1	1	-	1	1	-
	Trends.Earth import	4	3	4	4	4	1	1	-
CEE	PRAIS 4 upload	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
	Trends.Earth import	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	-
Global	PRAIS 4 upload	13	9	7	8	3	4	4	2
	Trends.Earth import	36	10	36	36	32	16	15	-
Total		49	19	43	44	34	20	19	2

Abbreviations: CEE = Central and Eastern Europe, LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean, NMED = Northern Mediterranean, PRAIS 4 = performance review and assessment of implementation system (ver. 4).

Notes: Source of the spatial layer can be described as user uploaded to PRAIS 4 or via import from Trends.Earth archive file. See table 1 in this annex for the codes for the indicators .

IV. Capacity-building for reporting

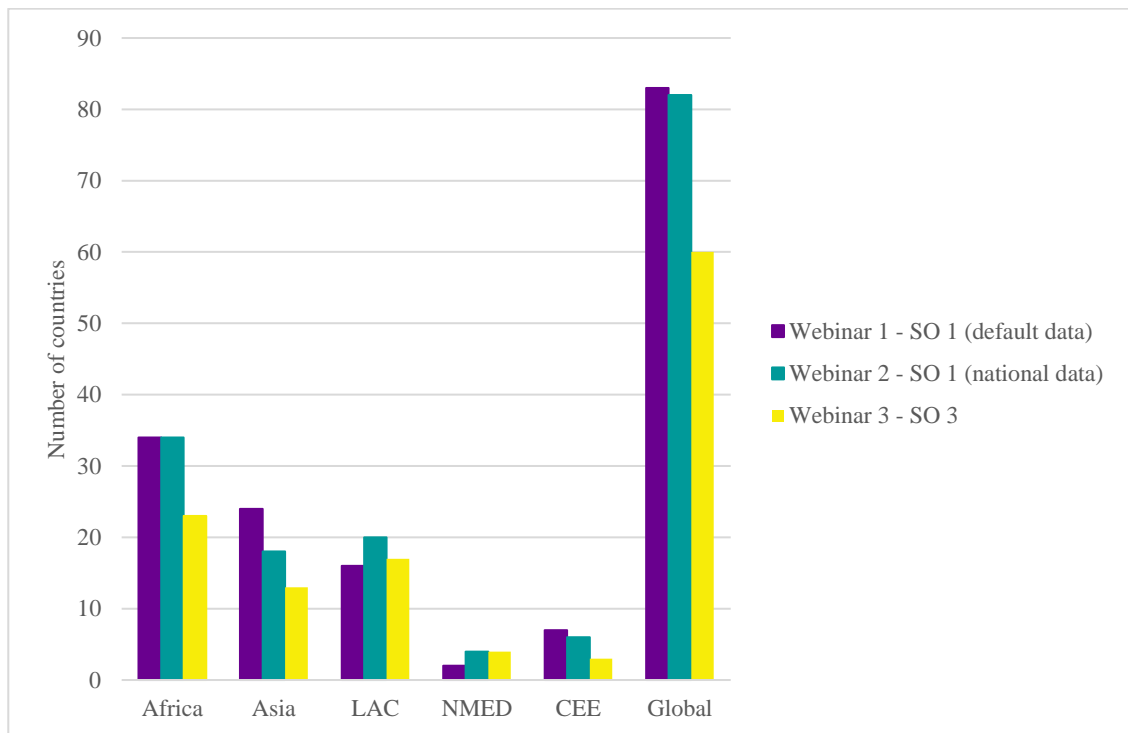
Table 4

Total views, total watch time and average duration per view across each capacity-building topic for e-learning video tutorials

<i>E-learning video tutorial</i>	<i>Arabic</i>		<i>French</i>		<i>English</i>		<i>Spanish</i>		<i>Russian</i>	
	<i>Views</i>	<i>Watch time (hours)</i>	<i>Views</i>	<i>Watch time (hours)</i>	<i>Views</i>	<i>Watch time (hours)</i>	<i>Views</i>	<i>Watch time (hours)</i>	<i>Views</i>	<i>Watch time (hours)</i>
Introduction to the 2022 UNCCD Reporting Process	115	6.1	87	6.6	843	47.5	31	1.2	28	2.1
Overview of the PRAIS 4 Platform	59	5.1	126	10.3	533	48.5	92	4.9	26	2.3
Geospatial reporting in PRAIS 4	24	3.3	48	5.1	460	38.4	30	1.6	16	0.9
National Voluntary Targets	15	1.8	47	4.6	283	30.9	35	2.7	21	2.0
SO 1, indicator 1: Trends in land cover	42	6.3	76	8.6	357	48.8	52	5.6	20	2.1
SO 1, indicator 2: Trends in land productivity	70	5.6	5	0.5	256	26.9	15	1.5	7	0.6
SO 1, indicator 3: Trends in carbon stocks above and below ground	20	2.1	34	3.0	183	20.5	19	1.5	2	0.3
SO 1, indicator 4: Proportion of degraded land over the total land area	6	0.7	28	3.4	149	19.0	22	3.0	2	0.3
SO 2, indicators 1 and 2: Trends in poverty/inequality, and trends in access to safe drinking water	12	1.2	21	1.9	183	19.1	13	0.7	-	-
SO 2, indicator 3: Trends in population exposed to land degradation	6	0.4	16	1.3	100	8.1	9	0.3	-	-
SO 3, indicator 1: Trends in the proportion of land under drought	23	3.1	25	2.6	105	10.7	6	0.1	8	0.9
SO 3, indicator 2: Trends in the population exposed to drought	11	1.4	15	1.4	78	7.7	4	0.0	5	0.1
SO 3, indicator 3: Trends in the degree of drought vulnerability	16	2.2	16	1.8	92	9.9	8	0.2	3	0.2
SO 4, indicators 2 and 3: Red List Index, and average proportion of key biodiversity areas covered by protected areas	4	0.4	15	1.9	89	12.4	5	0.1	2	0.3
Strategic Objective 5, indicators 1 and 2	6	0.3	17	2.5	95	12.0	18	1.3	2	0.3
Strategic Objective 5, indicators 3, 4 and 5	3	0.5	15	1.8	43	7.2	12	0.6	6	1.0
Total	432	40.5	591	57.3	3849	367.6	371	25.3	148	13.4

Abbreviations: PRAIS 4 = performance review and assessment of implementation system (ver. 4), SO = strategic objective.

Figure 2
Number of countries represented by at least one attendee at each workshop, by region and globally



Abbreviations: CEE = Central and Eastern Europe, LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean, NMED = Northern Mediterranean, SO = strategic objective.

Figure 3
Number of countries represented by 1, 2, 3 or more than 4 attendees at each webinar

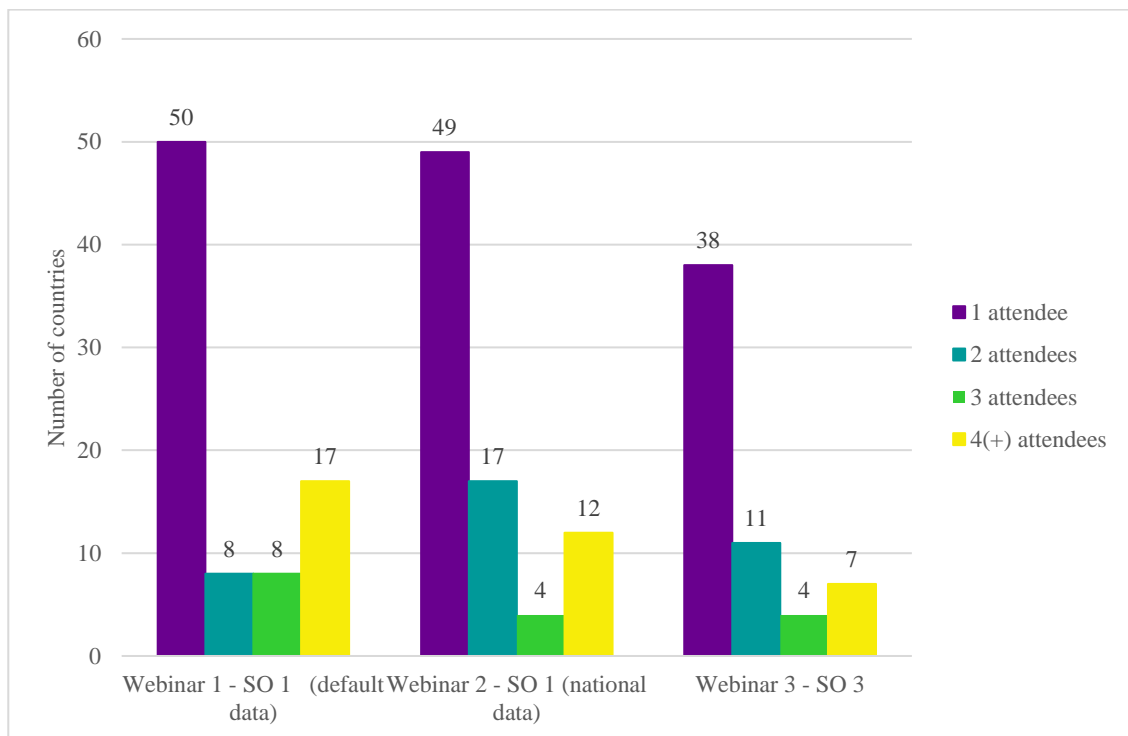


Table 5
Summary of main topics of help desk questions by region and globally

<i>Topic of help desk questions</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Asia</i>	<i>LAC</i>	<i>NMED</i>	<i>CEE</i>	<i>Global</i>
Technical/login issues	44	26	31	7	13	132
PRAIS 4	18	25	11	6	8	78
Trends.Earth	23	14	3	4	2	49
Strategic objective 1	6	9	3	1	7	26
Strategic objective 2	-	-	-	-	1	1
Strategic objective 3	1	-	-	-	-	1
Strategic objective 4	-	-	-	-	-	2
Strategic objective 5	-	1	1	-	2	8
Implementation framework	-	-	-	-	-	2
Other	2	6	7	2	7	29
Total	94	81	56	20	40	328

Abbreviations: CEE = Central and Eastern Europe, LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean, NMED = Northern Mediterranean, PRAIS 4 = performance review and assessment of implementation system.

Notes: Questions from country Parties that do not belong to a UNCCD Regional Implementation Annex are included under "global".

Table 6
Number of countries which submitted a comment on their national report revision, number of countries which received comments from technical experts during the technical review process, and number of countries which submitted a revision

<i>Region</i>	<i>No. of countries which submitted a comment</i>	<i>No. of comments submitted</i>	<i>Average no. of comments submitted per country</i>	<i>No. of countries which received a comment</i>	<i>No. of comments received</i>	<i>Average no. of comments received per country</i>	<i>No. of countries that submitted a revision</i>	<i>Total no. of revisions submitted</i>	<i>Average no. of revisions submitted per country</i>
Africa	7	54	7.7	29	380	13.1	39	196	5.0
Asia	5	34	6.8	11	96	8.7	28	98	3.5
LAC	3	9	3	10	100	10	21	63	3.0
NMED	-	-	-	3	20	6.6	6	16	2.7
CEE	-	-	-	7	71	10.1	11	38	3.5
Global	16	105	6.5	65	701	10.8	116	425	3.7

Abbreviations: CEE = Central and Eastern Europe, LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean, NMED = Northern Mediterranean.