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Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

Twenty-first session

Samarkand, Uzbekistan, 13–17 November 2023

Concept note

Samarkand High Level Event on Sand and Dust Storms

Silk Road Congress Center, Samarkand, Uzbekistan

Wednesday, 15 November 2023 – 10:30 to 13:00

This High Level Event on Sand and Dust Storms (SDS) is being organized by the Government of Uzbekistan under the aegis of the UNCCD's 21st meeting of the Committee to Review the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC21).

This event will bring together Ministers, leaders, policymakers, scientists, and stakeholders from across the globe to address the impacts of SDS and discuss strategies and measures for effectively managing this growing hazard.

All UNCCD Parties at the CRIC 21 Plenary are invited to attend the High Level Event on SDS.

Objectives

- **Raise political awareness** on the escalating threat posed by SDS, their causes, and potential consequences for food security, human health, the environment, and socio-economic development as well as the linkages to climate change, land degradation, and air pollution.
- **Explore collaboration** to develop and implement SDS policies, regulations, and action plans at national, regional, and global levels, including multilateral cooperation mechanisms to strengthen national capacities for SDS management and to foster regional collaboration at address this transboundary challenge.
- **Identify financing and capacity needs** to encourage financial institutions, development agencies, and relevant organizations to invest in capacity building as well as projects and programmes aimed at preventing and reducing the impact of SDS.

Main topics for interactive discussion

- ❖ How can we work together to elevate the political profile of Sand and Dust Storms agenda at the global scale?
- ❖ As many SDS events cross frontiers, what are the options for global and regional cooperation to reduce SDS impacts?
- ❖ What are the main technical and financial needs to mitigate and reduce the impacts of SDS?

Expected Outcomes

- The Chair's Summary of the Samarkand High Level Event on Sand and Dust Storms, which will include considerations regarding how to raise the political profile of SDS agenda and how to strengthen coordinated efforts in tackling SDS. The Chair's Summary will be presented by the Government of Uzbekistan to the Parties of the Convention.
- The Government of Uzbekistan in its pursuit to generate political impetus to SDS agenda within UNCCD process may wish to request that the following is included in the CRIC Report: the acknowledgement of the HLE on SDS and of the Chair's Summary and the exploration of possibilities to elaborate the Samarkand Declaration on SDS to be eventually adopted at UNCCD Conference of Parties (COP16) in December 2023 in Saudi Arabia.
- Enhancement of collaborative partnerships, knowledge networks, and joint initiatives among participating countries and organizations to better address SDS challenges.

Format

The High Level Event on SDS chaired by H. E. Aziz Abdukhakimov, Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan will be organically integrated in the Plenary meeting and will last from 10.30 am to 13.30 pm on 15 November 2023.

It will consist of two parts: the Ministerial segment and the moderated Interactive Dialogue with participation of Governments representatives, UN agencies, International Organizations. The Parties are invited to make brief interventions and pose questions in the end of the event during the Q&A section.

Agenda

1. Ministerial Segment	
<i>Chair:</i> H. E. Aziz Abdulkhakimov, Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan	
<i>Moderator:</i> Dr. Akmal Akramkhodjaev, Senior Scientist, ICARDA Uzbekistan	
10:30-11:00	<p>Opening Statements <i>Participants will be invited to the podium and consecutively deliver their speeches.</i></p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Aziz Abdulkhakimov, Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan • H.E. Mr. Alfred Prospere, Minister of Agriculture, Fishery, Food Security and Rural Development of St. Lucia • H.E. Alain-Richard Donwahi, UNCCD COP15 President • H.E. Dr. Osama Ibrahim Faqeeha, Deputy Minister of Environment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Incoming UNCCD COP 16 Presidency • H.E. Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, UNCCD Executive Secretary <p><i>Participants will be asked to return to their seats at the Plenary.</i></p>
2. Interactive Dialogue with participation of Governments representatives, UN agencies, International Organizations.	
11:00-12:30	<p><i>Participants will be invited to their podium to deliver their speeches in an interactive format.</i></p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Feras Ziadat, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Chair of the United Nations Coalition on Combatting Sand and Dust Storms (<i>keynote speaker</i>) • Dr. Yong-Kwon Lee, Deputy Director-General, Global Forest Resources Division, Korea Forest Service • Mr. Mavlodod Abdulkadyrkhon, Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan • Ms. Sylvie Goyet, Deputy Co-ordinator and Head of Environmental Activities, OSCE • Mr. Asferachew Abate, Senior Environmental Specialist at the World Bank • Mr. Bakhriddin Nishonov, First Deputy Director General of Scientific Research Hydrometeorological Institute of the Republic of Uzbekistan
12:30-12:50	<p>Q&A</p> <p><i>Questions to the participants by the Parties and brief reflections are welcome.</i></p>
12:50-13:00	Closing Remarks by H.E. Aziz Abdulkhakimov, Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change of the Republic of Uzbekistan