

PRESS RELEASE

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Global Alliance for Drought Resilience Builds Momentum with New Members

***IDRA co-chairs Senegal and Spain hold a high-level event at COP28
Australia, Colombia, Comoros, Italy and the Commonwealth are latest to join***

Dubai, 1 December 2023—As 2023 is ending as the warmest year on record, the global platform to prepare the world for harsher droughts, the International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) , welcomes eight new members, signaling a growing political will to act against one of most deadly and costly natural disasters in the face of climate change. The addition of six countries and several major intergovernmental and research organizations, announced at the UN Climate Summit COP28 in Dubai, brings the total membership of IDRA to 36 countries and 28 organizations.

The countries joining the alliance this year are Australia, Colombia, Jordan, Italy, Uruguay and the Union of the Comoros, which currently chairs the African-Union. In addition, the Commonwealth Secretariat, as well as three other organizations-- the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region (CCRS), the Central American Commission for Climate and the Environment (CCAD) and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), member of the global research partnership CGIAR – were also announced as joining IDRA. Together, they represent efforts to build evidence-based resilience at the country, regional and global level.

Launched at UN Climate Summit COP27 by the leaders of Spain and Senegal, IDRA is the first global coalition creating political momentum and mobilizing financial and technical resources for a drought-resilient future. The alliance devoted 2023 to building awareness at the highest political level. From 2024, IDRA will draw on the collective strengths of its expanding membership to advance concrete policies, actions, and capacity-building initiatives for drought preparedness, acknowledging we are only as resilient to drought and climate change as our land is. The IDRA secretariat is hosted by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

United in action

IDRA co-chairs emphasized the urgency of building drought resilience as global freshwater demand is projected to outstrip supply by 40% by 2030, and they commended new members for their commitment to changing the way the world addresses drought.

“Drought knows now borders, meaning we need common action and solidarity to face the emergency,” said President of Senegal, H.E. Macky Sall, who noted that droughts affect 1.84 billion people throughout the world, 85 percent of them in low- and middle-income countries. Central to that action, he said, is the transfer of technologies, sharing of experiences, and exchange of best practices, as well as a just energy transition.

Prime Minister of Spain, H.E. Pedro Sánchez, summed up the achievements of IDRA in its first year, from mobilizing countries and global organizations, to outlining a common framework for action with priority investments for drought resilience, to supporting affected countries to develop their strategies in areas like the Central American Dry Corridor.

“Drought is a global phenomenon. For those of you who are not yet members of IDRA, I invite you to join this Alliance to leverage individual efforts and transform them into collective action,” said Sánchez. “Let us build on the political momentum of this COP28 to increase resilience to extreme events.”

In turn, Secretary General of the Commonwealth, H. E. Patricia Scotland said: “Many of the 56 Commonwealth countries experiencing extreme weather events will welcome IDRA as a timely opportunity to promote mutual learning and collaborative action on drought resilience. By working together, our countries will be much better placed to implement effective solutions and protect the most vulnerable communities.”

The UNCCD Executive Secretary, Ibrahim Thiaw, concluded: “Droughts are a natural phenomenon, but we are making them worse through poor land use, deforestation, and the disruption of the planet’s natural systems, including the climate. What humanity did through neglect, must and can fix through concerted action—or face an increasingly harsh future.

Drought resilience at COP28

The latest IDRA members were announced during a high-level event ‘From awareness to action: united for drought resilience in a changing climate’ at COP28. The event brought together the IDRA co-chairs—Senegal and Spain—and members of the alliance to take stock of IDRA’s first year and usher in a next phase focused on action.

During the event, UNCCD launched its ‘Global Drought Snapshot’ report, an authoritative compendium of drought-related information and data looking to inform negotiators at COP28, as well as decision-makers and practitioners from around the world.

A second high-level IDRA event, scheduled for 9 December and focused on nature-based solutions and financing for drought resilience, will bring together leaders from different countries and agencies to exchange on practical ways to accelerate action.

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Notes to editors

For interviews and enquires please contact: press@unccd.int and/or unccd@portland-communications.com

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<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rNhWAFqQxc5ZoDK1QdlSbRhaRszoONaF?usp=sharing>

Social Media

Twitter: @UNCCD / Instagram: @unccd

For information about IDRA and UNCCD events at COP28 visit: <https://idralliance.global> and <https://www.unccd.int/cop28pavilion>

About IDRA

The International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) is the first global coalition creating political momentum and mobilizing financial and technical resources for a drought-resilient future. As a growing platform of more than 30 countries and 20 institutions, IDRA draws on the collective strengths of its members to advance policies, actions, and capacity-building for drought preparedness, acknowledging we are only as resilient to drought and climate change as our land is. The work of IDRA is aligned with, and supportive of, the mandate of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), which hosts the IDRA Secretariat. For more information: <https://idralliance.global>.

About UNCCD

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the global vision and voice for land. We unite governments, scientists, policymakers, private sector and communities around a shared vision and global action to restore and manage the world's land for the sustainability of humanity and the planet. Much more than an international treaty signed by 197 parties, UNCCD is a multilateral commitment to mitigating today's impacts of land degradation and advancing tomorrow's land stewardship in order to provide food, water, shelter and economic opportunity to all people in an equitable and inclusive manner.