



**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Intergovernmental Working  
Group on Drought (IWG)**

<b>Date</b>	3-6 June 2024
<b>Venue</b>	Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)
<b>Working language</b>	English
<b>Working hours</b>	Monday, 3 June: 09:30-18:00 (GMT+2h) Tuesday, 4 June: 09:00 -18:00 Wednesday, 5 June: 09:00 -18:00 Thursday, 6 June: 09:00 -18:00

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**Item 1 Opening**

**1.1) Opening Remarks**

On behalf of the UNCCD, Deputy Executive Secretary Ms. Andrea Meza delivered the opening remarks to the 6<sup>th</sup> IWG meeting, followed by Mr. Ayman Ghulam, Chief Executive Officer, National Centre of Meteorology of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Mr. Michael Brüntrup (IDOS, Germany) addressed the working group on behalf of the co-chairs. Mr. Daniel Tsegai, Programme Officer at the UNCCD Secretariat, presented the progress made so far, recapped prior meetings and set the stage by outlining the status of the current draft report.

**1.2) Adoption of the Agenda**

All participants jointly adopted the agenda without alterations and agreed on the way forward for this final four-day meeting.



## Item 2 Discussion and fine tuning of all IWG report section:

During the 6<sup>th</sup> and final meeting of the IWG in Riyadh, in a four-day intensive meeting, the group deliberated on the following final set of options: (i.) Amendment to the Convention; (ii.) COP decision on the collaboration with the Global Environment Facility; (iii.) COP guidance to the Global Mechanism; (iv.) Global Framework on Drought Resilience; (v.) Political declaration; (vi.) Protocol and (vii.) Special and ambitious COP Decision on drought. These options are not mutually exclusive, and combinations of options may be envisaged at COP 16 in various ways, depending on the focus, ambition, time horizon, and other factors, guided by the overall aim to manage drought under the Convention more effectively, including supporting a shift from reactive to proactive drought management.

The group produced a draft report with a focus on the following policy options (in alphabetical order):

**Amendment to the Convention:** This option refers to the formal alteration of the provisions contained in the UNCCD, which is a legally binding agreement under international law. The amendment is therefore also legally binding.

**COP Decision on the collaboration with the Global Environment Facility:** This option implies adopting a COP decision on the collaboration with the GEF, aiming to strengthen the programmatic relevance of and the funding for building drought resilience.

**COP Guidance to the Global Mechanism:** This option implies adopting a COP decision providing guidance to the Global Mechanism, aiming to strengthen the capacity of affected Parties to access finance and implement their national drought plans, contributing to a more proactive drought management.

**Global Framework on Drought Resilience:** This option is an overarching strategic policy instrument which would imply setting a global goal, time-bound targets and indicators; proposed actions to achieve these targets; and monitoring and learning systems.

**Political Declaration:** This option is a formal statement, proclamation, or announcement of intent, generally signed by high-level representatives. In this case, the political declaration could be the outcome of a high-level segment of the UNCCD COP.

**Protocol:** This option is a legally binding instrument adopted under the Convention that can offer a broad and comprehensive legal approach to addressing drought at all levels. It outlines specific commitments for the Parties that ratify it, and includes provisions on principles, goal and targets, and institutional arrangements.

**Special and ambitious COP Decision on drought:** COP decisions are resolutions made by the UNCCD COP which offer a quick and continuous process for the implementation of the Convention. This option refers to a COP decision that would focus on drought and include special and ambitious clauses.



In addition, the group thoroughly discussed and re-drafted the *final remarks* section, leading to a structure that emphasizes the consensus of the group for strengthened actions at all levels and to raise political momentum to enhance integrated drought risk management and governance under the UNCCD. By encouraging all Parties to carefully read all presented options and critically reflect on the presented strengths and weaknesses, the group concluded the *final remarks* without stating any preference for one or a specific set of options.

Finally, the *executive summary* and the *introductory section* were rewritten in a combined effort to increase the readability and outline of the report. The draft report at the end of the meeting counts 8.500 words and is subject to proof-reading by IWG members and the UNCCD editing process.

## Item 6 Internal evaluation and reflections

An internal anonymous online self-evaluation was done by the IWG. The following four aspects were evaluated:

- How satisfied are you with the results of the IWG?
- How satisfied are you with the process and working modalities of the IWG?
- Which things did you not like?
- Do you have suggestions how to improve the work of such an IWG?

## Item 7 Wrap-up

The co-chair of the IWG, Hon. Alfred Prospere, who could not join the meeting in person, opened the wrap-up session. He expressed his full support and appreciation for the draft report as produced by the group, including the seven options.

### 7.1) Agreement on the Next Steps

- The substantial work of the IWG on drought is concluded.
- In line with the agreed timeline, the report will be shared with all IWG members by June 20<sup>th</sup> for proof-reading and July 15<sup>th</sup> for non-objection approval. IWG members refrain from proposing additional substantial input to the report.
- It was agreed that no additional IWG documents shall be prepared for the COP.
- It was recommended that the current pre-final materials should not be shared outside the IWG until the IWG report is formally finalized.
- Regional consultations/meetings will be held in September and October 2024, organised by the UNCCD regional groups, to inform the constituencies about the main outcomes of the IWG process and other input for the COP 16.
- The Secretariat will draft decisions for all policy options presented in the final report in preparation for the negotiations at the COP 16.
- July 20 is the deadline for the IWG report to be sent to UNOG among COP 16 documents.



<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>IWG REPORT</i></b>
<b><i>By 21 June</i></b>	<b><i>Draft report is disseminated to all members</i></b>
<b><i>By 03 July</i></b>	<b><i>Deadline for proof-reading</i></b>
<b><i>By 15 July</i></b>	<b><i>Final report is shared for non-objection approval</i></b>
<b><i>By 20 July</i></b>	<b><i>Submission to UNOG</i></b>

## 7.2) Closure of the Meeting

- The co-chair, Dr. Michael Brüntrup thanked the host country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the UNCCD Secretariat, for facilitating the meeting.
- Mr. Abdu Gasam Alsharif, the General Director of General Environment Conventions and Climate Change Directorate at the Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture on behalf of the host country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and member of the IWG, thanked all participants for their work and welcomed them to the COP 16 in December 2024.
- Mrs. Birguy Lamizana, Chief, Global Policy, Advocacy and Regional Cooperation, UNCCD, thanked all participants for their work and officially closed the meeting.