



Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

Twenty-second session

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 3–11 December 2024

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

**Draft decisions for consideration at the twenty-second session
of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the
Convention**

Note by the secretariat

Summary

By its decision 33/COP.15, paragraph 5, the Conference of the Parties (COP) requested the secretariat to circulate in all official languages at least six weeks prior to the sixteenth session of the COP a single document for each governing body with all draft decisions prepared for Parties for consideration at the COP and to ensure that draft decisions are clearly written and properly formatted.

Accordingly, document ICCD/CRIC(22)/8 includes all substantive draft decisions proposed by the secretariat that will serve as a starting point for discussion and further negotiation in the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention contact group. It is to be noted that the draft decisions relating to document ICCD/CRIC(22)/7-ICCD/COP(16)/CST/8 titled “Improving procedures for the communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties” will be subject to negotiations in a joint contact group of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and the Committee on Science and Technology.



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1. Assessment of implementation of the Convention against strategic objectives 1–4 of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 22/COP.11, 7/COP.13, 15/COP.13, 11/COP.14 and 11/COP.15,

Having reviewed document ICCD/CRIC(21)/11,

Welcoming with great appreciation the efforts made by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to respond to the requests made by Parties to simplify and update reporting tools for the 2022 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting process,

Noting with concern that efforts to improve the living conditions of affected populations are not yet sufficient. Overexploitation of resources and land use intensification continues to negatively impact ecosystem health and the well-being of communities,

Acknowledging that the legitimate land tenure rights of all land users and for different land tenure types, particularly of vulnerable and marginalized groups, is imperative, as well as their meaningful participation in decision-making,

Also acknowledging that drought is not limited to dryland areas and hence requires global action, solidarity and mutual assistance,

Noting with concern that the intensity, frequency and duration of droughts is increasing due to climate change, and that their impacts are further exacerbated by regional climate phenomena such as El Niño and La Niña,

Calling for immediate action to halt the grave consequences of worsening land degradation and deteriorating living conditions of affected populations, which are leading to, among other things, food insecurity, forced migration and conflict,

Strategic objective 1

1. *Urges Parties, while implementing the Convention, to:*

(a) *Halt the conversion of natural areas and stop or at least significantly reduce land take and soil sealing to ensure the rapid expansion observed in artificial surfaces does not come at the expense of natural vegetated lands and fertile soil in future;*

(b) *Preserve existing tree-covered areas, scale up efforts to halt deforestation, and expand initiatives which promote:*

(i) *Increased tree cover to reverse the reported declining trends; and*

(ii) *The conservation of natural grasslands;*

(c) *Step up their efforts to firstly avoid, guided by analyses of return on investment, and then reduce and reverse land degradation to meet the Sustainable Development Goal target of ensuring a land degradation neutral world by 2030, within the scope of the Convention;*

(d) *Enhance the national relevance of the land degradation assessment by maximizing the use of national and regional data where possible and including additional indicators, such as erosion, beyond the three land-based progress indicators to better reflect national and subnational conditions on a voluntary basis;*

(e) *Consider, where suitable, (i) including agroecological and other sustainable land management approaches for achieving voluntary land degradation neutrality targets; and (ii) in the case of agroecology, drawing on the principles and elements as outlined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to guide the transition to sustainable food and agricultural systems;*

For continued work towards reporting of spatial data

2. *Calls on* Parties that have already set voluntary land degradation neutrality targets to:

(a) Raise their level of ambition with regard to having new and more developed targets;

(b) Report their targets and associated interventions aimed at avoiding, reducing and reversing land degradation, while respecting the land degradation neutrality hierarchy, in the fourth generation of the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS 4) to enable a periodic stocktake of progress towards achieving land degradation neutrality;

3. *Also calls on* all eligible Parties receiving enabling activity funds from the Global Environment Facility to allocate commensurate resources for data collection, in particular for soil organic carbon inventories, using the guidelines published by the Science-Policy Interface,¹ and report to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention at its next intersessional session on whether additional resources would be required to adequately address the perceived data gap;

Strategic objective 2

4. *Urges* Parties to use gender-responsive land governance for achieving social equality, reducing poverty and decreasing the exposure of their populations to land degradation;

Strategic objective 3

5. *Calls on* Parties to emphasize the importance of:

(a) Setting genuine targets and developing proactive and integrated national drought policies and plans for integrated risk management in a participatory manner;

(b) Fostering a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach; and

(c) Recognizing the drought link with climate change, water, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction approaches;

6. *Also calls on* all eligible Parties receiving enabling activity funds from the Global Environment Facility to allocate commensurate resources to improve assessment, prediction and forecasting of, as well as interventions on, drought and report to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention at its next intersessional session on whether additional resources would be required to adequately address the perceived data gap;

Strategic objective 4

7. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of financial resources, in collaboration with relevant partners, to explore options to import geospatial data on terrestrial Key Biodiversity Areas and/or protected areas into the fourth generation of the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS 4) for improved understanding of the linkages between land use change, land degradation and biodiversity.

¹ See [191016_EN_UNCCD_SPI_2019_Report_1_1_Web.pdf](#).

2. Assessment of financial flows

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling Article 6 of the Convention,

Recalling decision 11/COP.14 and its elements related to options to collaborate with partner organizations and continue developing a more integrated financial monitoring framework for tracking and better monitoring the resources for interventions under the Convention,

Also recalling decision 11/COP.15 on provisionally adopting the new optional indicators related to strategic objective 5 regarding private resources, technology transfer and future support for activities related to the implementation of the Convention,

Further recalling decision 13/COP.15 and its elements related to conducting a needs assessment to determine the financial requirements for the implementation of the Convention and developing a time-bound strategy to increase fund mobilization based on this needs assessment to support Parties in the achievement of the objectives of the Convention,

Having reviewed documents ICCD/CRIC(21)/11 and ICCD/CRIC(21)/6 and the conclusions and recommendations therein on improving reporting on strategic objective 5 and conducting the needs assessment developed by the Global Mechanism,

Emphasizing the need to have robust and comprehensive financial data sets available for adequate assessment of financial flows for the implementation of the Convention and to guide investment decisions,

Acknowledging the efforts made by the Global Mechanism for the development of an enhanced reporting framework with the inclusion of quantitative information,

Welcoming the efforts made by Parties and international financial mechanisms, including the Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund, for strengthening collaboration with the Global Mechanism and supporting country Parties in making resources available to address land and drought resilience issues,

Acknowledging the key findings of the needs assessments conducted by the Global Mechanism, which highlight critical gaps in the availability of funding and the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention,

Recognizing the importance of further mobilizing substantial additional resources to close the existing financing gap and enhance the effectiveness of desertification/land degradation and drought mitigation efforts,

1. *Requests* the Global Mechanism to continue improving the tracking of financial flows through:

(a) Integrating a good practice guide on tracking financial flows, including the identification of improved financial data sources, into the enhanced reporting template on strategic objective 5 for future reporting rounds;

(b) Developing harmonized definitions, methodologies and data collection options that provide country Parties with more information with the aim of having a more comprehensive overview of financial resources targeting desertification/land degradation and drought and of increasing comparability between the sets of national data provided by Parties;

(c) Supporting Parties to track financial flows related to the implementation of the Convention through stakeholder engagement, including technical advice and enhanced cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and other international partners;

2. *Also requests* the Global Mechanism to revise and update the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification needs assessment, as required, based on the submission of additional and refined targets and plans, to further guide resource mobilization;

3. *Encourages* Parties in a position to do so to provide financial and non-financial resources, including transfer of technology, to affected country Parties to support their efforts in the implementation of the Convention;
4. *Invites* Parties to develop national financing strategies to help guide efforts to bridge the financing gap wherever needed and implement activities related to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
5. *Also invites* developed country Parties to report on strategic objective 5, in the upcoming Convention reporting cycle, detailing their financial needs and sharing lessons learned about closing the financing gap;
6. *Further invites* Global Environment Facility implementing agencies to include a specific output related to strategic objective 5 in the project titled “Strengthening national-level institutional and professional capacities of country Parties towards enhanced UNCCD monitoring and reporting”;
7. *Requests* the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism to report to future sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, held in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties, on progress made in the mobilization of resources and financial flows for the implementation of the Convention.

3. Progress made in the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention and Sustainable Development Goal 15.3 matters

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 3/COP.15 on the integration of Sustainable Development Goal 15 and related target 15.3 into the implementation of the Convention and land degradation neutrality, decision 13/COP.15 on the progress made in the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, as well as decisions 12/COP.15, 6/COP.15, 9/COP.15, 11/COP.15, 23/COP.15, 26/COP.15 and 27/COP.15,

Recognizing that Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3 supports the implementation of the Convention and that the setting of bolder and refined land degradation neutrality targets supports countries in achieving both drought resilience and synergies with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; contributes to food security, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030) and the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (2025–2034); and establishes the level of ambition for resource mobilization activities,

Acknowledging the need to mobilize additional funding from all sources in this regard in line with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification needs assessment,

Noting the elements contained in documents ICCD/CRIC(21)/2, ICCD/CRIC(21)/8, ICCD/CRIC(21)/11, ICCD/COP(16)/13, ICCD/CRIC(22)/5 and ICCD/COP(16)/22 and their recommendations,

1. *Invites* Parties who wish to do so to refine their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets by ensuring that land degradation neutrality targets are specific, time-bound, policy-coherent, quantitative, spatially explicit, gender-responsive and adequately integrated into planning frameworks;
2. *Further invites* Parties to translate the recommendations in their national drought plans and other policy instruments related to drought into concrete programmes and projects;
3. *Welcomes* efforts by Parties to strengthen intersectoral collaboration at (sub)national, national and regional levels to ensure that the impacts/effects of desertification/land degradation and drought are prioritized in national development plans and other relevant sectoral plans (such as finance and planning, biodiversity, climate change, agriculture, energy, water, infrastructure development and disaster risk reduction, among other things);
4. *Encourages* Parties to further strengthen internal coordination with national focal points responsible for endorsing projects (such as finance and planning officials, Global Environment Facility operational focal points, Green Climate Fund national designated authorities as well as focal points for bilateral funding);
5. *Invites* developed countries and other Parties in a position to do so to provide substantial financial and non-financial resources to strengthen Convention implementation activities related to roll out of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme 2.0 process, the provision of technical assistance for project and programme preparation and private sector engagement;
6. *Requests* the Global Mechanism and the secretariat, 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:
 - (a) Support the implementation of the resource mobilization strategy, based on the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification needs assessment, to support Parties in achieving the objectives of the Convention;
 - (b) Develop and deploy a financing toolbox for resource mobilization, including guidelines on national needs assessments, financing strategies, sources and mechanisms;

(c) Contribute to building the capacity of Parties in project development and programme design and in access to finance;

(d) Support and roll out, through effective partnerships, the process of setting and/or refining voluntary land degradation neutrality targets beyond the 18 pilot countries participating in the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme 2.0, streamlining the process with other Conventions and associated processes integrating the targets into (sub)national integrated land-use planning frameworks and national development plans in those country Parties that may wish to engage in this process, and supporting relevant knowledge-sharing efforts on land degradation neutrality target-setting and implementation;

(e) Support country Parties in creating an enabling environment at the national level to facilitate the implementation of national drought plans or other policies and frameworks related to drought and forge specific partnerships to mobilize technical and financial support for projects and programmes on drought;

(f) Support the capacity-building of affected countries in the development and implementation of policies and plans related to sand and dust storms and structure a global sand and dust storms implementation initiative;

(g) Contribute to develop the capacity of country Parties to improve synergies with biodiversity and climate change processes and intersectoral coordination with relevant sectors, policies and plans, such as those relating to finance and planning, agriculture, energy, water, infrastructure development, and disaster risk management, among other things;

(h) Continue to strengthen partnerships to grow the geographically balanced project preparation pipeline, through a partnership model, to (i) facilitate gender-responsive, large-scale, integrated landscape investment programmes; and (ii) scope and nurture additional geographic and thematic flagship initiatives, including through the Peace Forest Initiative;

7. *Also requests* the Global Mechanism, within its mandate and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with relevant financial and technical partners in a position to do so, to accelerate efforts to support private sector engagement and promote innovation as outlined in ICCD/CRIC(21)/5 and ICCD/COP(16)/13;

8. *Further requests* the Global Mechanism to report to future sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, held in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties, on progress made in the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention and in efforts to ensure the integration of Sustainable Development Goal 15 and related target 15.3 into the implementation of the Convention as well as the on the measures taken to facilitate and encourage the participation and involvement of the private sector in the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

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

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 22/COP.11, 7/COP.13, 15/COP.13, 11/COP.14 and 11/COP.15,

Having reviewed documents ICCD/CRIC(21)/11, ICCD/CRIC(22)/6 and ICCD/COP(16)/2,

Noting with appreciation the United Nations Secretary-General's vision of a "UN 2.0",² empowered by cutting-edge skills in data, digital, innovation, foresight and behavioural science,

Welcoming the inclusion of Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.3.1 (proportion of land that is degraded over total land area), the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to help measure progress towards achieving Target 2, as well as the ongoing work under the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2018–2030 to facilitate exchange and interoperability of data on restoration targets and associated interventions,

Also welcoming the increase in funding made available by the Global Environment Facility for the forthcoming 2026 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting process under the enabling funding portfolio of the Global Environment Facility,

Noting with appreciation the coordination efforts the secretariat has put in place to achieve better synchronization between United Nations agencies involved in the reporting process and Parties that receive funding from the enabling activity portfolio,

Acknowledging with appreciation the support provided by technical partners to national reporting under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification through the provision of a growing array of data and analytical tools that can support land degradation and drought monitoring, as well as decision-making to achieve land degradation neutrality,

1. *Requests* the secretariat to continue working with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations under the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2018–2030 to facilitate data exchange, tool interoperability and joint capacity-building on monitoring and reporting of land and ecosystems degradation and restoration;
2. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, to enhance the functionality of the performance review and assessment of implementation system for the upcoming 2026 reporting process, taking into consideration the conclusions and recommendations made by Parties in document ICCD/CRIC(21)/11;
3. *Invites* Conservation International to continue enhancing Trends.Earth by addressing the critical technical issues raised during the 2022 reporting process as a priority, and conducting a formal requirements analysis for enhancements to make the software sustainable for future reporting processes;
4. *Maintain* the following indicators, provisionally adopted in decision 11/COP.14, as optional in reporting:
 - (a) "Trends in the proportion of population exposed to land degradation disaggregated by sex";
 - (b) "Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type" and its metric "Average proportion of terrestrial key biodiversity areas covered by protected areas";
 - (c) "International and domestic private resources";

² https://www.un.org/two-zero/sites/default/files/2023-09/UN-2.0_Policy-Brief_EN.pdf.

- (d) “Technology transfer”; and
 - (e) “Future resources for activities related to the implementation of the Convention”;
5. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to continue pursuing partnerships while exploring practical ways and assessing financial resources necessary in order to initiate a digital transformation initiative to be launched at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties, which will align the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification with the vision for a “UN 2.0” and provide enhanced data, digital, behavioural science, strategic foresight and innovation services to Parties;
6. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with data providers, financial and technical partners and the Earth observation community, including the Group on Earth Observation Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative, to:
- (a) Ensure that default data are accurate, complete, scientifically reviewed, and documented, and, where feasible, based on continuously available high-resolution data products for the land surface, especially for small island developing States;
 - (b) Develop internationally agreed standards for United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification’s geospatial reporting indicators;
7. *Further requests* the secretariat to allocate sufficient time for the preparation of national reports by country Parties, as well as for the quality assurance of the reports;
8. *Requests* the Committee on Science and Technology, in preparation for a post-2030 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification strategic framework and corresponding monitoring framework, to use a theory of change approach to:
- (a) Conduct a thorough analysis of the current indicators for national reporting on the strategic objectives of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, with a view to making them more responsive for a post-2030 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification strategic framework, while ensuring that future methodologies are feasible, simple to understand and within the capacities of Parties;
 - (b) Provide guidance on future indicators, including process indicators, that could be used to track progress in the implementation of the Convention, taking into account default data availability and ongoing initiatives at the global, regional and national level, as well as indicators that are currently being developed within the context of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
9. *Invites* developed country Parties and those in a position to do so, as well as technical and financial institutions, to mobilize additional technical and financial support for data collection and for the preparation of national reports;
10. *Endorses* the timeline for the 2026 Convention reporting process as contained in document ICCD/CRIC(22)/7, while cognizant that the Bureau of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention will monitor progress made throughout the 2026 Convention reporting process to decide on adjustments, if needed;
11. *Urges* eligible Parties that have yet to initiate the process of accessing enabling funds for the 2026 UNCCD reporting process to do so at their earliest to allow national-level activities to align with the tentative timeline for reporting as contained in document ICCD/CRIC(22)/7;
12. *Also urges* Parties to consult subregional and regional institutions to identify those that are suitable to assist in either facilitating access to the enabling funds from Global Environment Facility and/or becoming a partner in capacity-building for reporting, and notify the secretariat accordingly;
13. *Encourages* Parties to assess well in advance their approach for engaging national stakeholders, including civil society organizations, to respond to the multidisciplinary nature

of Convention reporting as a way to use enabling funding made available by the Global Environment Facility;

14. *Request* the secretariat to present a report on the implementation of this decision at the twenty-third and the twenty-fourth sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, in line with its terms of reference as contained in the annex of decision 13/COP.13.

5. Programme of work for the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling articles 22 and 23 of the Convention,

Also recalling decision 13/COP.13 and its annex containing the terms of reference of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention,

Highlighting the importance of engaging development partners, such as United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations and other groups, as appropriate, in the interactive sessions of the intersessional session,

Recognizing that regional meetings play an important role in reviewing progress and make a useful contribution to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

1. *Decides* to include the following items on the agenda of the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention for the Parties to review and discuss:

(a) Inputs from regional meetings in preparation for the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;

(b) Update on the implementation of voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and related implementation efforts;

(c) Development and promotion of activities for targeted capacity-building to further the implementation of the Convention;

(d) Procedures for the communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties, as follows:

(i) Reporting tools, including reporting templates and the reporting portal;

(ii) Default data for strategic objectives;

(e) Progress in reporting on strategic objective 3;

(f) Reporting on strategic objective 5;

(g) Timelines and modalities for reporting;

(h) Follow-up on policy frameworks identified by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session;

2. *Requests* the secretariat to circulate in all United Nations languages, at least six weeks prior to the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, a provisional annotated agenda and appropriate documentation for that session, reflecting the items contained in paragraph 1 above, as well as any additional items necessitated by decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session.
