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## Conference of the Parties

### Sixteenth session

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2–13 December 2024

Item 5 (a) and (b) of the provisional agenda

### Special segment

### High-level segment

### High-level interactive dialogues

## Note on the high-level segment of the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session

### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

The special segment of the Conference of the Parties is structured around:

The **ministerial dialogues of the high-level segment of the Conference of the Parties**, which will take place on 2 and 3 December 2024. The topics for consideration for the ministerial dialogues are as follows:

- Ministerial Dialogue: From Geneva to Riyadh and beyond. Enhancing global and national policy instruments for proactive drought management. 2 December, 15:00–18:00.
- Ministerial Dialogue: Unlocking public and private finance for land restoration and Drought resilience. 3 December, 10:00–13:00.
- Ministerial Dialogue: Impacts of land degradation and drought on forced migration, security and prosperity. 3 December, 14:00–17:00.

**Other special events and high-level interactive dialogues**, which are aligned with the thematic days of the Riyadh Action Agenda to take place from 4 to 9 December 2024, include different high-level events, as follows:

- High-Level Interactive Dialogue of the Gender Caucus: HerLand: Women's leadership on sustainable land management. 4 December, 10:00–13:00.
- High-Level Interactive Dialogue: Enabling environment to catalyse the transformation towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive agrifood systems. 5 December, 13:00–15:00.
- High-Level Interactive Dialogue – Mayors' Forum: Local leadership and innovative governance for sustainable land management. 6 December, 13:00–15:00.



- Business for Land Forum. 4 December, 13:00–15:00.
- Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Dialogue. 7 December, 10:00–13:00.
- Youth Forum. 7 December, 15:00–18:00.
- Gender Caucus. 7 December, 15:00–18:00.
- High-Level Interactive Dialogue: Healing our land through science and Earth Intelligence. 9 December, 13:00–15:00.

The special segment will draw attention to the diverse pathways and opportunities to raise global ambition and accelerate action on land restoration and drought resilience as a key driver of economic growth, prosperity and well-being, and to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. It is anticipated that the special segment will generate strong political momentum to guide the deliberations of country Parties as well as increase the engagement of non-State actors to accelerate the implementation of the Convention.

## I. Background

1. By its decision 33/COP.15, paragraph 2, the Conference of the Parties (COP) decided to include interactive dialogue sessions with relevant stakeholders, including ministers, civil society organizations, the business community, the scientific community and members of parliament, on agenda items of relevance to them.
2. To assist country delegations in preparing for the special segment, the secretariat has prepared this information note outlining some of the topics that will be addressed in the different special segment events.

## II. Organization of the special segment

3. The special segment is structured around two main pillars, including (1) the high-level segment of the COP; and (2) special events and the high-level interactive dialogues of the thematic days.

### High-level segment

4. The high-level segment of the COP is organized at ministerial level on 2 and 3 December 2024 and includes three ministerial dialogues on drought resilience, finance and migration.
5. In addition to the ministerial dialogues, ministers, heads of delegation and other high-level representatives will have the opportunity to make formal statements in a separate room. Registration for a slot to make a formal statement will be opened in-session and further information will be provided in the daily Journal.

### Other special events and high-level interactive dialogues of the thematic days

6. Other special events and high-level interactive dialogues will be structured to coincide with the thematic days of the Riyadh Action Agenda. The high-level interactive dialogues include:
  - (a) Special events such as the Business for Land Forum on 4 December 2024 and the Gender Caucus on 7 December 2024;
  - (b) The Youth Forum and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Dialogue on 7 December 2024.

## III. Ministerial dialogues

7. The ministerial dialogues will take place on 2 and 3 December 2024 and will focus on raising global ambition and accelerating action on drought resilience and land restoration by addressing structural issues such as mobilization of public and private finance, understanding the implications of land degradation and drought on forced migration and security, and catalysing action to move from a reactive to a proactive approach when managing droughts.
8. The topics for consideration during the ministerial dialogues are:
  - (a) Ministerial Dialogue: From Geneva to Riyadh and beyond. Enhancing global and national policy instruments for proactive drought management. 2 December 2024, 15:00–18:00;
  - (b) Ministerial Dialogue: Unlocking public and private finance for land restoration and drought resilience. 3 December 2024, 10:00–13:00;
  - (c) Ministerial Dialogue: Impacts of land degradation and drought on forced migration, security and prosperity. 3 December 2024, 14:00–17:00.
9. The ministerial dialogues are open to all delegations accredited to the Blue Zone of the conference venue, as well as to observer organizations and institutions. The ministerial

dialogues are formal COP events and will be opened and closed by the President of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16) or their representative and will have interpretation in six official languages.

10. The dialogues will be facilitated by ministers representing different regional groups, who will guide the deliberations and ensure efficient use of time. During the dialogues the ministers, heads of delegations, and heads of observer entities will be encouraged to engage directly with and respond to the guiding questions that are included in this document. The co-facilitators might use icebreakers or invite keynote speakers as ways to generate an enabling environment for a candid exchange of views.

## **A. Ministerial Dialogue: From Geneva to Riyadh and beyond. Enhancing global and national policy instruments for proactive drought management**

### **1. Background**

11. Drought has received increased attention in major policy forums in recent years. International and regional initiatives have been launched that have changed the way drought is perceived and managed. This certainly includes the 2013 High-Level Meeting on National Drought Policy,<sup>1</sup> including the launch of the Integrated Drought Management Programme<sup>2</sup> that supported countries in developing proactive national drought policies and better drought forecasting tools and a UN-Water initiative to help countries develop national drought management policies.<sup>3</sup> More recent developments included the 2018 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Drought Initiative,<sup>4</sup> the establishment of two Intergovernmental Working Groups on Drought (for both COP 14<sup>5</sup> and COP 15<sup>6</sup>), and the launch of the International Drought Resilience Alliance<sup>7</sup> in 2022.

12. Drought is an issue of international concern that requires global solutions. The increasing intensity of drought affects the resilience and security of ecosystems and communities, especially the poorest, around the world. Droughts reduce agricultural production, cause food insecurity, loss of economies and livelihoods, destabilize ecosystems, disrupt cities, communities and societies, affect health, and contribute to displacement and conflict. These vulnerabilities are compounded by other major environmental challenges such as land degradation, loss of ecosystem services and climate change.

13. In this respect, the message from the Drought Resilience +10 conference, held in Geneva from 30 September to 2 October 2024, was unambiguous: “The increasingly systemic nature of drought requires new approaches, policy instruments and the operationalization of national drought plans along the lines of proactive and integrated drought management.”<sup>8</sup>

14. In the light of these developments, this year marks an important turning point. It is expected that the negotiations among the world’s governments, culminating at COP 16 in December 2024, will result in robust commitments to strengthen community, national and international disaster preparedness and resilience to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of impending or ongoing droughts, building on the policy options presented by the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought established at COP 15.

15. Going forward, it is critical to identify and implement common enabling factors to ensure continued and concerted action to enhance drought resilience. These include the establishment of effective institutions and governance structures, the provision of adequate

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<sup>1</sup> <https://community.wmo.int/en/meetings/high-level-meeting-national-drought-policy-hmndp>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.droughtmanagement.info/>.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.droughtmanagement.info/literature/IDMP\\_NDMPG\\_en.pdf](https://www.droughtmanagement.info/literature/IDMP_NDMPG_en.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unccd.int/land-and-life/drought/drought-initiative>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.unccd.int/convention/governance/intergovernmental-working-group-drought>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unccd.int/convention/governance/intergovernmental-working-group-drought-2>.

<sup>7</sup> <https://idralliance.global/>.

<sup>8</sup> High-level Meeting on National Drought Policy, 2024. Drought Resilience +10 conference. Workstream 4: From policies into action. <https://www.droughtmanagement.info/portal/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/4-DR10-Workflows.pdf>.

financial resources, and increased investment in the development of national resilience plans and related regional strategies that integrate land and water management. These plans need to be risk-informed and gender-responsive and recognize the transboundary nature of drought impacts.

## 2. Objective and topics for discussion

16. The ministerial dialogue provides an important opportunity for ministers and relevant high-level stakeholders to reflect on possible ways in which the multilateral system, and the UNCCD in particular, can become more fit-for-purpose in delivering drought resilience, particularly for people and ecosystems in vulnerable countries and communities around the world.

17. The main objective of the ministerial dialogue is to discuss ways to accelerate drought resilience at all scales and levels and to provide impetus, momentum and commitment for ambitious action on drought resilience under the Convention process.

### *Guiding questions*

- What are some good practices or key enablers for national and regional action that should be scaled up to manage drought effectively in countries, cities and regions around the globe?
- What are some key political, technical and financial conditions that are required to enhance the global ecosystem on drought resilience and how can COP 16 contribute to that global effort?

## **B. Ministerial Dialogue: Unlocking public and private finance for land restoration and drought resilience**

### 1. Background

18. According to the Intergovernmental Science–Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services, it is estimated that desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD) costs the global economy approximately USD 10 trillion per year, equivalent to 10 per cent of global gross domestic product. Land management and restoration are critical components of sustainable development for addressing land degradation, enhancing biodiversity and supporting ecosystem services that are essential for human well-being and climate resilience. Effective land management practices ensure the optimal use of land resources, while restoration efforts aim to recover ecosystems that have been degraded, damaged or destroyed.

19. The UNCCD secretariat estimates that approximately USD 1 billion per day will be required to fully fund the implementation of the Convention. Financial investments and coordinated efforts from both the public and private sectors would avoid the economic losses and leverage gains from good land management and the full implementation of the Convention.

20. A paradigm shift in how funds are mobilized and deployed will be needed to meet the identified ambitions and needs of Parties.

21. Public finance plays a pivotal role in land management and restoration due to its capacity to mobilize substantial funds and direct them towards long-term environmental goals. Governments can leverage public resources to create and implement policies, regulations, and programmes that promote sustainable land use practices and restoration projects. Public financing mechanisms, such as grants, subsidies, and tax incentives, can encourage stakeholders to engage in activities that benefit the environment. Public investments are also crucial for initiating large-scale restoration projects that may not be immediately profitable but have significant ecological and social benefits. For example, restoration and soil conservation initiatives often require substantial upfront investments with returns realized over extended periods (such as via carbon markets). Public funding can also support research and development, capacity-building and the dissemination of best practices, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of land management and restoration efforts.

22. The involvement of private capital can introduce innovative financing models, such as impact investing, green bonds and conservation finance, which attract investments into projects that deliver both environmental and financial returns. The private sector's agility and efficiency in deploying resources can complement public efforts, driving progress in land management and restoration. Private investments can help bridge funding gaps, particularly in contexts where public resources are limited. By aligning corporate sustainability goals with land management and restoration projects, businesses can contribute to ecological preservation while enhancing their corporate social responsibility profiles. Furthermore, private finance can facilitate the development of market-based solutions, such as ecosystem services markets and carbon credits programmes, which create economic incentives for sustainable land use and restoration activities.

23. The synergy between public and private finance is essential for scaling up land management and restoration efforts. Collaborative frameworks that blend public and private funding can leverage the strengths of both sectors, resulting in more comprehensive and effective solutions. Public-private partnerships can enhance the implementation of large-scale projects by combining public oversight and private sector efficiency. Innovative financing mechanisms, such as blended finance, where public funds are used to de-risk private investments, can attract additional capital into land management and restoration. This approach not only increases the overall funding available but also fosters greater stakeholder engagement and accountability. Moreover, the integration of public and private finance can facilitate the development of resilient financing models that are adaptable to changing environmental and economic conditions.

24. The ministerial dialogue presents a significant opportunity for ministers and relevant high-level stakeholders and investors to discuss critical financial mechanisms, including taxes, subsidies and incentives, that can drive the economic transition towards a regenerative economy and a low-carbon future and explore options to repurpose incentives towards sustainable investments, especially those that prioritize job creation and rural development, and catalyse innovative national and international financing streams.

## 2. Objective and topics for discussion

25. The main objective of the ministerial dialogue is to discuss ways to accelerate finance for sustainable land management (SLM), land restoration and drought resilience at scale and innovative ideas to attract and leverage investment from all sources, public and private. The ministerial dialogue will be made up of two panel discussions. Ministers and other heads of delegation will be encouraged to engage directly and respond to questions and comments.

### (a) Ministerial panel 1: *The Business Case for Land*

**Key question: What are the key challenges that the public and private sector need to collaborate on to scale up investments?**

26. The following aspects could be considered:

(a) Successful case studies that underline the business case for SLM and land restoration;

(b) The economic case to repurpose harmful taxes and subsidies towards incentives for regenerative investments, especially those that prioritize job creation and rural development, including the role of government guarantees in derisking investments;

(c) The adjustments needed in policy, regulatory and legal frameworks and institutional mandates and strategies;

(d) Other non-financial enabling environment conditions that would support public-private collaboration (tenure security, etc.).

### (b) Ministerial panel 2: *Delivering a Moonshot Moment for Land?*

**Key question: What concrete actions can be taken to ensure that there is new finance available to support SLM, land restoration and drought resilience?**

27. The following aspects could be considered:

- (a) Mainstreaming SLM, land restoration and drought resilience into national planning and budgeting;
- (b) The role of international finance systems, including multilateral development banks in financing land restoration projects;
- (c) The role for synergies between land, biodiversity and public climate finance;
- (d) Other innovative financial instruments.

## **C. Ministerial Dialogue: Impact of land degradation and drought on forced migration, security and prosperity**

### **1. Background**

28. Land has inherent values to humanity. In addition to providing food and shelter, land is an important economic asset and source of livelihoods for up to 80 per cent of the population in many countries. However, DLDD destabilizes lives and livelihoods and amplifies the impact of natural disasters such as floods, landslides, and sand and dust storms, triggering socioeconomic instability. Globally, land degradation and drought also undermine the well-being of two fifths of humanity – approximately 3.2 billion people. In addition, land degradation drives species extinction and intensifies climate change.

29. Land is increasingly threatened by the impacts of DLDD and climate change. These challenges exacerbate competition over resources, endanger livelihoods and deepen social inequalities and environmental fragility, all of which can lead to disputes and conflict. This further compromises human and societal stability and security, thereby accelerating rates of migration. Notably, up to 40 per cent of intrastate conflicts over the past six decades have been linked to disputes over natural resources, particularly land. Land degradation is a root cause of increased conflict over access to land-based natural resources such as pasture, forest and fresh water.

30. Human migration is among the consequences driven by these challenges, as natural resource-dependent communities are displaced due to resource scarcity, environmental degradation, and livelihood loss. Forced migration (or displacement) and involuntary migration is often triggered by conflicts or natural disasters exacerbated by land degradation, drought and climate change, and other drivers such as urbanization, generalized violence, and human rights violations. In 2024, the number of forcibly displaced people is soaring to unprecedented heights, a staggering 120 million globally.

31. SLM and drought resilience are essential building blocks to ensuring global stability, security, sustainability and prosperity. They offer transformative avenues for sustainable development, conflict prevention and inclusive peacebuilding, and help tackle forced migration and displacement. Drought resilience and conflict-sensitive approaches that embrace SLM can contribute to peace outcomes in post-conflict and fragile contexts, alleviating the pressure for forced displacement and conflict. Recognizing these critical interlinkages, which are especially relevant to migration, the Parties adopted several decisions, including decision 22/COP.15, on the positive role that measures taken under the Convention can play to address DLDD as one of the drivers that causes migration.

32. As the global community faces increasing instability due to multiple factors, SLM and drought resilience emerge as strategic priorities, underpinning food and water security, resilience, ecosystem services, and environmental sustainability, and serving as a cornerstone of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In a global system striving to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), land degradation neutrality (LDN) plays a key role, addressing multiple interconnected challenges across sectors. A general strength of LDN is that it emphasizes the importance of the human dimension – land-users, stakeholder groups and institutions – in land development and drought resilience.

33. Investing in land and drought resilience is a tool for peacebuilding and sustainable social cohesion that integrates nature-positive solutions. SLM and drought resilience solutions are a precursor, enhancer and accelerator to mitigate DLDD impact and climate risks, promote economic recovery, and enhance national and (sub)regional stability. They

serve as an additional key element of international security strategies. To maximize the peacebuilding potential of land restoration and drought resilience, the prioritization and implementation of strategies and projects that integrate conflict sensitivity, regional and cross-border collaboration, and inclusive governance is a critical entry point for ensuring the resilience of communities and ecosystems, as well as long-term peace and security, demonstrating the link between SDGs 15 (Life on land) and 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

## 2. Objective and topics for discussion

34. The main objective of the ministerial dialogue is to share ministers' perspectives and explore the transformative potential of SLM and drought resilience as catalysts to address the complex connections between land, security and peace, including forced migration, particularly through regional partnerships that promote the rehabilitation of ecosystems and strengthen the community's resilience in fragile and conflict-affected regions. It will stimulate discussions on how the integration of peace-positive strategies in land management and drought resilience programmes can effectively improve stabilizing efforts of regions that are susceptible to conflict and forced migration.

35. The dialogue will provide additional opportunity to brainstorm how cooperation on land restoration and drought resilience can contribute to nurturing political cooperation and social cohesion by harnessing partnerships and synergies with existing programmes and initiatives, such as the Peace Forest Initiative, the Great Green Wall Initiative and the Sustainability, Stability and Security Initiative in Africa.

### *Guiding questions*

- How can regional and/or cross-border cooperation on SLM and drought resilience contribute to stability, peace and security? What approaches within these cooperative efforts can effectively address the root causes of conflict and forced migration?
- What are the key opportunities for governments and international partners to collaborate on SLM and drought resilience to prevent conflict and forced migration and enhance long-term regional stability?

## IV. High-level interactive dialogues

36. The high-level interactive dialogues will take place from 4 to 9 December 2024. The topics for consideration during the high-level interactive dialogues are:

- High-Level Interactive Dialogue of the Gender Caucus – HerLand: Women's leadership on sustainable land management. 4 December 2024, 10:00–13:00;
- High-Level Interactive Dialogue: Enabling environment to catalyse the transformation towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive agrifood systems. 5 December 2024, 13:00–15:00;
- High-Level Interactive Dialogue – Mayors' Forum: Local leadership and innovative governance for sustainable land management. 6 December 2024, 13:00–15:00.
- High-Level Interactive Dialogue: Healing our land through science and Earth Intelligence 9 December 2024, 13:00–15:00.

37. The high-level interactive dialogues are open to all participants accredited to the Blue Zone of the conference venue. They will take place in either a panel or round-table format. During the sessions and deliberations, participants will be encouraged to engage directly and respond to questions and comments.



## A. High-Level Interactive Dialogue of the Gender Caucus – HerLand: Women’s leadership on sustainable land management

### 1. Background

38. DLDD, coupled with climate change, is one of the most serious threats facing the world. Up to 40 per cent of the world’s land area is already degraded. If left unchecked, the rate of land degradation will accelerate, with even greater impacts on our world, our economies and our societies.

39. Women comprise nearly half of the world’s agricultural workforce, producing 60–80 per cent of the food grown in developing countries,<sup>9</sup> and so are poised to lead on SLM practices while keeping their families and communities fed.

40. Despite their vital role, it is alarming to note that fewer than one in five landowners is female.<sup>10</sup> Without land rights, women are not fully engaged in decisions on land use and management. However, studies show that when women own the land they work on, this encourages their dedication to land stewardship to fight land degradation and cope with climate shocks.

41. DLDD affects everyone, but it is the world’s poorest and most vulnerable people, especially women and girls, who bear the brunt of environmental, economic and social shocks. When land is degraded and becomes scarce, women are uniquely impacted due to their role in agriculture, reliance on land resources, weaker social status and legal protection, and higher vulnerability to poverty. Likewise, when disasters hit – such as floods, wildfires, droughts and storms – women take on additional burdens, rescuing children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and other community members and informing local authorities and emergency teams.

42. Women are on the frontlines of numerous environmental crises and are uniquely positioned to act as agents of change. Their distinctive and unique knowledge, skills and perspectives are shaped by their daily interactions with land, forest and food systems.

43. The study titled Women-Led Solutions for Drought Resilience, recently published by UNCCD, provides compelling evidence that women are at the vanguard of initiatives exploring alternative and innovative avenues to address the impacts of drought and land degradation and improve the effectiveness of land restoration and SLM. Inspiring examples of women-led solutions to drought resilience are found all over the world in practices ranging from managing and conserving water made scarce by drought, strategically using drought-resistant seeds and crops, developing adaptations focused on innovative income-generating activities, devising alternatives to unsustainable soil management for recovery of drought-impacted soils, and leveraging climate information services.

44. However, to date, gender inequalities have not been adequately addressed in DLDD policies and actions, although there are some signs of progress. At the country, regional and international levels, policy and decision-making processes have not taken gender differences into account in a meaningful way, resulting in a widening gap in women’s and girls’ resilience to DLDD and a changing climate.

45. Urgent action is needed to close the gender gap in land access and ownership. In particular, it is crucial to secure women’s land tenure in order to effectively combat desertification and drought. Furthermore, this is a vital step in investing in drought mitigation measures such as SLM. This must be accompanied by ensuring access to training, financial services, and appropriate technology for women and girls. To achieve this, there is a need for more robust national gender and land tenure policies, which must be supported by reliable gender statistics.

46. Transformative and innovative approaches need to be identified and accelerated to unlock women’s potential and reverse persistent gender inequalities. Secure land rights support empowerment by increasing women’s economic security, helping women to escape

<sup>9</sup> UNCCD 2023. “[World leaders urged to prioritize women’s land rights at the UN](#)”. 16 June 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

the cycle of poverty, and improving their lives and the lives of their families, communities and the planet. This message must be at the heart of a just land transition approach with high ambitions to achieve LDN in a gender-responsive manner.

## 2. Objective and topics for discussion

47. The main objective of the high-level interactive dialogue is to highlight how women and girls on all continents are contributing as leaders and innovators in drought resilience and land restoration and identify bottlenecks that need to be addressed. Snapshots will also be shared of experiences from the field of women leading land restoration and how women's secure land tenure land enables their significantly greater dedication and effectiveness in land stewardship.

48. In response to overarching guiding questions, high-level participants will provide statements outlining their advances in empowering women in SLM and security of tenure, as well as bottlenecks and challenges faced.

49. Particular focus will be placed on advocacy for women's land rights as a critical lever for fully enabling their vital contributions to SLM.

### *Guiding questions*

- Which strategic resources is your country making available to women to empower them to be more effective in SLM and addressing DLDD?
- Which innovative policies and actions are being undertaken in your country to enable women's leadership toward building resilience?
- Which policy gaps or bottlenecks have been identified and how are these being overcome?

## **B. High-Level Interactive Dialogue: Enabling environment to catalyse the transformation towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive agrifood systems**

### 1. Background

50. In many respects, global agrifood systems are remarkable, providing food for a growing population and livelihoods for over four billion people. Food systems are the socioeconomic and cultural backbone of many communities and countries. They are context-specific and deeply enmeshed in peoples' history, culture, daily lives and livelihoods. Food is a fundamental human right, providing vital nutrients for health and wellbeing.

51. Yet agrifood systems face unprecedented and accelerating challenges. Over 738.9 million people faced hunger in 2022, and we are off-track in achieving SDG 2 (Zero hunger) by 2030. Many food environments make it difficult for consumers to access nutritious, affordable, diverse, and locally and sustainably produced food. Agrifood systems are also the single largest contributor to the ecological and climate crises, responsible for a third of global greenhouse gas emissions, 70 per cent of freshwater use and 80 per cent of biodiversity loss. They are also severely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and other shocks and stresses, undermining food security and adaptation.

52. One third of agricultural land is affected by some forms of human-induced land degradation and deterioration, putting global food security, environmental sustainability, and social stability at risk. Degraded agricultural land must be brought back to sustainable production to meet food, feed and biofuel needs, while also enriching biodiversity, sequestering carbon and providing other ecosystem services to support human well-being. Avoiding, reducing or reversing land degradation, especially on agricultural lands, will contribute to economic recovery and food security.

53. Transformed agrifood systems can provide solutions to many of the problems we face and help deliver on our goals for people (SDGs), nature (Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework), climate (Paris Agreement) and restoration of degraded lands (UNCCD) and strengthen food and nutrition security for current and future generations.

54. The urgency and importance of holistic, integrated actions and inclusive approaches to transform agrifood systems and meet these global goals was recognized by governments and non-state actors at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – an unprecedented groundswell of commitments to action. Delivering on these requires context-specific strategies and action plans, finance and investment plans, and other enabling conditions for transformative change.

## 2. Objectives

55. The high-level interactive dialogue on the enabling environment to catalyse the transformation towards sustainable, resilient and inclusive agrifood systems is an occasion to bring together all the stakeholders in the agrifood systems, from decisions-makers to farmers, as well as the private sector, research and academia, and financial institutions.

56. Through a specific focus given to agricultural land restoration, this event will aim to discuss the enabling environment to catalyse the transformation, foster dialogue among the stakeholders and highlight the crucial need of coordination between actors that are often acting in separate fields.

57. This high-level, interactive, multistakeholder dialogue will detail the actions and contributions governments, farmers, business, civil society, investors, researchers, philanthropy and others can take to contribute to the UNCCD's LDN commitments and its global goal of restoring 1.5 billion hectares of degraded land and 250 million hectares of farmland by 2030. The dialogue will focus on how agricultural land restoration can achieve multiple co-benefits (food security, LDN, water storage, carbon storage, among other things).

58. The specific objectives are:

(a) Raise awareness of the importance of restoring agricultural land to build resilient and sustainable agrifood systems and combating land degradation processes;

(b) Foster dialogue among stakeholders to reach a common understanding and highlight the crucial need for coordination between actors that are often operating in separate fields;

(c) Build a common understanding of priority actions and steps to accelerate action and track and measure progress.

## 3. Target audience

59. The target audience is cross-sectoral policymakers from ministries of agriculture, ministries of environment, ministries of rural development as well as local authorities from developing countries such as farmers' representatives, farmers' cooperatives and farmers' unions, the private sector (value chain development, commodities, agricultural services providers, etc.), research centres, academia, international organizations and financial institutions (multilateral development banks and private banks).

## 4. Key questions/key topics

### *Common understandings*

- What is the role of government in understanding the farmers' needs relating to land security, access to markets, access to reliable and affordable agricultural services (including financial services)? What are the mechanisms in place? What is at stake?
- How can government interests, farmers' interests and environmental sustainability be harmonized? What are the existing tools and how are they implemented among the different stakeholders?

### *Coordination*

- What are the different models to enhance interministerial coordination to contribute to agricultural land restoration (i.e. interministerial committees, lead

ministry, etc.)? How are countries organizing themselves in this regard and what are the results?

- The win-win situation: How can everyone's interests be met without jeopardizing nature?

#### *Solution*

- How can the range of available tools (scientific, technical, educational, financial) best be used to support the enhancement of sustainable, resilient and inclusive agrifood systems?
- What are inspiring examples of the integrated and successful transformation of agrifood systems?

### **C. High-Level Interactive Dialogue – Mayors' Forum: Local leadership and innovative governance for sustainable land management**

#### **1. Background**

60. As the world continues to urbanize, the achievement of the SDGs demands a focus on accelerating progress in cities, towns and peri-urban areas while recognizing the social, economic and environmental linkages with rural and natural areas. By 2050, 68 per cent of the world's population is projected to be residing in urban areas. SDG localization is the process of transforming SDG implementation into a reality at the local level, in coherence with national development frameworks and in line with local communities' priorities.

61. Cities play a leading role in national economic development and the global sustainability agenda, contributing as much as 80 per cent to the global gross domestic product. However, the current trends in urbanization are often accompanied by significant social and environmental challenges, such as the growing number of citizens who must contend with rising inequality and exclusion, unemployment, food insecurity, and extreme poverty.

62. Urbanization and globalization are intensifying relations between cities and their hinterlands. The rapid growth of cities is accompanied by a drastic increase in land and resource consumption. At around 40 per cent, the immigration of rural populations contributes significantly to urbanization, especially to the growth of peri-urban areas. Cities are turning into urban regions and are increasingly influencing surrounding rural areas and lifestyles. This is particularly true in developing countries, where 95 per cent of urban expansion will take place over the next decades.

63. Unsustainable patterns of consumption and production are concentrated in cities and peri-urban areas, which are driving and accelerating climate change and environmental degradation. Cities account for 60–80 per cent of global energy consumption and generate as much as 75 per cent of the total greenhouse gas emissions. Despite the proximity of local governments to the needs and realities of sustainable development, mayors and local authorities too often have limited financial and human resources at their disposal to fully achieve the SDGs.

64. Greater financial resources, capacity and innovation are required through strengthened national to local coordination and multi-level governance. This can only be achieved through the substantial involvement of local actors, hence the need for localizing the SDGs, by which local governments and stakeholders play an essential role in accelerating progress towards many SDG targets.

65. Local governments and authorities, especially in urban areas, are key actors in addressing DLDD in the wider region, which is exacerbated by climate change and threatens biodiversity, food security and livelihoods. DLDD in rural areas can lead to conflict and insecurity, which results in a lack of economic opportunities and forced migration to cities. This urban growth puts immense pressure on land resources, necessitating innovative governance and planning strategies to manage land sustainably, reduce environmental

degradation and pollution, and enhance the resilience of the rural lands and communities to climate impacts.

66. Mayors and local authorities can play a pivotal role in financing and implementing policies and practices that address the growing impact of urban-rural linkages and efforts being made to combat DLDD at the national level. Their proximity to the affected communities allows them to assess entry points and tailor solutions for local contexts, making planning and governance at the city level a critical component of national sustainable development.

67. Land-use planning, an essential component of the New Urban Agenda, and the sustainable use of land and nature-based solutions in cities are key determining factors for the quality of life in both urban and rural areas, recognizing that cities often serve as hubs for innovation by providing opportunities to pilot and scale up successful interventions that protect vulnerable and marginalized communities and increase the health and productivity of land resources.

## 2. Objective

68. The Mayors' Forum titled "Local leadership and innovative governance for sustainable land management" provides a unique platform for policy dialogue and knowledge-sharing (e.g. lessons learned and good practices) on key aspects related to the implementation of the SDGs and the Convention.

69. The Mayors' Forum will foster dialogue, build networks and boost the capacity of local governments to strengthen urban-rural linkages and support their efforts to apply integrated land-use planning to scale up SLM and land restoration activities that will enhance the implementation of the Convention. A special emphasis will be given to building up high-impact coalitions led by local and regional governments as transformative and multisectoral partnerships that drive progress and are future-oriented.

## 3. Target audience

70. Mayors and officials from local authorities and subnational government entities, as well as key ministerial representatives from developed and developing countries, including least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, and middle-income countries form the main target audience. Representatives of United Nations entities, international experts, and other stakeholders will also be invited to attend the Mayors' Forum.

## 4. Key questions

- How can cities, local authorities and subnational governments contribute to the growing efforts to address DLDD (i.e. balance urban development with the need to protect and restore healthy working and natural landscapes)?
- What are some good practices at the local level to strengthen bottom-up planning and participatory budgeting for improved multi-level governance and sectoral coordination that targets nature-based solutions and green/blue infrastructure?
- What traditional and innovative financial instruments and mechanisms are available to local governments to overcome financial challenges and enhance their capacity to fund SLM and land restoration initiatives?
- How can national governments, policies and regulatory frameworks better support local and regional authorities in their efforts to combat DLDD and improve local livelihoods?
- How can innovative planning tools, information technologies and partnerships strengthen multi-level governance, territorial planning, tenure security, and finance for SLM and land restoration?

## D. High-Level Interactive Dialogue: Healing our land through science and Earth Intelligence

### 1. Background

71. Land is fundamental for addressing multiple global challenges, including combating degradation and drought, halting biodiversity loss, as well as mitigating and adapting to climate change. Despite special reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and Intergovernmental Science–Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services on the connection between land, climate and biodiversity, there is still a lack of recognition that halting land degradation is crucial to finding land-based solutions to these interlinked challenges. Large-scale initiatives still address these challenges in silos, thereby exacerbating other challenges. This high-level interactive dialogue titled “Healing our land through science and Earth Intelligence” aims to establish a way forward to scale up science and data on healing our land, linking land stewardship and restoration with climate and biodiversity goals and aspirations for improved human well-being.

72. It does so by involving stakeholders from diverse fields, including science and academia, data providers and users of Earth observation, governments, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations, as well as the United Nations. It consists of a session on science gaps, a session on data gaps and a concluding session on launching an action agenda to scale up science and Earth Intelligence to address the global environmental crises.

### 2. Objectives of the high-level interactive dialogue

- Highlighting the need for new and additional science on land, considering the crucial role that land has for human well-being, and identifying ways to scale up science for SLM by addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation goals as well as biodiversity conservation goals simultaneously;
- Identifying data gaps and new and emerging data sets for SDG 15.3.1 reporting, LDN planning and implementation, and their potential to support the goals of all three Rio conventions, including for challenging environments such as small island developing States and hyperarid areas;
- Identifying enablers and barriers based on good practice examples to improve policy and institutional and funding mechanisms to scale up science and Earth Intelligence to reverse the current upward trend in land degradation;
- Launch an action agenda to initiate progress.

(a) *High-level interactive dialogue 1: Science agenda to connect land stewardship and restoration with climate, biodiversity and human well-being goals*

#### **Key questions:**

- How do we scale up science on land to achieve multiple goals?
- How can we move towards strategic land restoration that addresses multiple goals?
- What kind of financing mechanisms are available and needed to do this?

(b) *High-level interactive dialogue 2: Earth Intelligence for sustainable land use: Harmonizing national and global actions through data*

73. This dialogue will bring together data users and data providers to fill data gaps in SDG 15.3.1 reporting and LDN planning and implementation on the ground, notably for small island developing States and hyperarid areas, showcasing that new and emerging data sets can support decision-making for healthy lands and contribute to the achievement of multiple SDGs and the goals of all three Rio conventions.

#### **Key questions:**

- What innovative approaches can data providers adopt to effectively address critical data gaps in regions facing severe land degradation and climate change impacts? How can we ensure these initiatives lead to effective and actionable solutions on the ground?
- As we confront the escalating challenges of land degradation, how has data informed and enhanced the coherence of national and global actions under the Rio conventions? Are we genuinely integrating our efforts, or are we at risk of reinforcing existing silos that undermine our collective objectives?

## V. Special events

74. In order to ensure a broad and inclusive participation of all stakeholders, the following special events will be organized as part of the special segment of COP 16:

- Business for Land Forum. 4 December 2024; 13:00-15:00;
- Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Dialogue. 7 December 2024; 10:00–13:00;
- Youth Forum. 7 December; 15:00–18:00;
- Gender Caucus. 7 December; 15:00–18:00.

### A. Business for Land Forum

#### 1. Background

75. The Business 4 Land Initiative (B4L) was launched at COP 15 during the Business Forum to catalyse private sector actions towards LDN. The initiative aims to bring together private sector entities across the globe to achieve the following objectives:

- Improve soil health;
- Preserve land quality by implementing sustainable management practices;
- Restore or rehabilitate degraded land;
- Strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and communities experiencing drought risk through the mitigation of, adaptation to and management of the effects of drought.

76. The Global Mechanism at UNCCD has been developing B4L to promote collaboration with the private sector in seizing opportunities and managing risks associated with DLDD.

77. B4L works around three pillars, namely:

- Environmental, social and governance approaches that promotes sustainable business operations;
- Financing LDN through sustainable financing solutions and philanthropic contributions; and
- Advocacy for the adoption of a positive enabling environment towards LDN to leverage the private sector's expertise, skills and resources to encourage commitments to and efforts in combating desertification and land degradation by organizing advocacy events, online and offline consultations, and workshops and trainings at national, regional and sectoral levels in collaboration with like-minded partners.

78. In particular, UNCCD has been collaborating closely with relevant financial disclosure frameworks and initiatives to create a level playing field regarding business impact on land, highlighting an LDN target for companies.

## 2. Objectives and topics for discussion

79. A special session of the Business 4 Land Forum will take place during Land Day at COP 16 on 4 December 2024. The forum will bring together chief executive officers and other business leaders, politicians, policymakers, government representatives, opinion leaders, experts and other stakeholders from across the globe to exchange views on the initiatives undertaken by business and industry entities to achieve LDN.

80. The B4L Forum aims to serve as a platform and provide guidance to the private sector in seizing opportunities and managing risks associated with DLDD by:

(a) Showcasing best practices for actions and reporting towards LDN, working in close collaboration with relevant disclosure frameworks and initiatives to create a level playing field regarding business impact on LDN;

(b) Encouraging funding (private capital and philanthropic donations) shifts from harmful land management practices to sustainable ones that will support businesses of all sizes to seize economic opportunities related to SLM and drought resilience;

(c) Facilitating both peer learning and public-private dialogue to create more resilient and efficient businesses, including throughout complex supply chains.

## B. Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Dialogue

### 1. Background

81. Indigenous Peoples have unique characteristics that make them key agents in land conservation. Their dependence on natural resources and ecosystems, as well as their exceptional traditions and ancestral knowledge, constitute real assets for the sustainable management of our land and natural resources.

82. Being at the forefront of safeguarding our environment, they play a pivotal role in the preservation and restoration of degraded land, thereby preventing desertification and securing an increasingly crucial resource. The traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and their centuries-long adaptation practices, utilizing agroecological and regenerative techniques, are vital for maintaining land health and ensuring agricultural productivity. Just as nature presents a diverse ecology, Indigenous Peoples have developed a variety of cultures and systems tailored to their environments, while nurturing and conserving them.

83. The COP has recognized the need to partner with and support Indigenous Peoples, who are considered as being simultaneously in situations of vulnerability but also having an exceptionally outstanding resilience and ability to implement environmental solutions. It also requested the secretariat, in decision 5/COP.15, to work specifically with them in the present biennium. The dialogue foreseen for 7 December 2024 during the celebration of Peoples' Day is part of the response to this request from Parties.

### 2. Objectives and topics for discussion

84. For the first time ever, the UNCCD will facilitate a dialogue with Indigenous Peoples within the session of the COP. The main objective will be to develop recommendations and mechanisms that would ensure that Indigenous Peoples and local communities have a voice in the implementation of the UNCCD. In addition, in view of their engagement in the protection of rangelands and the forthcoming International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, there will be a high-level event addressing the protection and restoration of this vulnerable ecosystem.

85. A stronger engagement of Indigenous Peoples at COP 16 will ensure, like its sister Rio conventions, that the UNCCD creates a framework for consolidated collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and that enabling environments are created for Indigenous Peoples to support their contributions to land restoration and facilitate collaboration with the UNCCD and their governments to achieve common goals. While Indigenous Peoples and their organizations plan to contribute to COP 16 by hosting in-kind events at the at the People's



Day and negotiations, Indigenous Peoples are seeking partners to support their full and effective participation in negotiations, including those at the high level.

86. The objectives of the Indigenous Peoples' participation are to:

(a) **Facilitate** the exchange of knowledge and experiences among Indigenous Peoples from all United Nations sociocultural regions while ensuring a highly visible Indigenous Peoples presence;

(b) **Facilitate** the participation of a global audience, enabling an exchange between Indigenous Peoples, key dignitaries (e.g. Presidency, national delegates, supportive organizations) and representatives from different nationalities and backgrounds;

(c) **Support and amplify** Indigenous-led solutions, calling out the root cause of the land degradation, facilitating greater involvement of States and national delegates in Indigenous-led solutions, and enabling direct contact with the international press;

(d) **Facilitate** greater involvement of States and national delegates in Indigenous-led governance processes to strengthen collaboration at the national level, including developing recommendations arising from various events;

(e) **Provide** concrete recommendations to the UNCCD and Parties to facilitate engagement with Indigenous Peoples at international and national levels, including through projects and programmes;

(f) **Strengthen** capacity-building at local and national levels to facilitate Indigenous Peoples' direct participation in decision-making, including direct access finance, and in governance at local and regional levels with the aim of advancing self-determination and rights-based engagement.

87. The Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Dialogue to be held during COP 16 will address the following topics:

(a) *Establishment of a comprehensive framework for engaging Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the UNCCD*: This session will look at facilitating the sharing of traditional knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and their best practices in SLM, conservation, and regenerative agriculture and promote dialogue between Indigenous communities and other stakeholders, including local communities, scientists, policymakers, and non-governmental organizations. The aim is to blend traditional wisdom with modern techniques, ensuring their knowledge and practices are valued and integrated into global strategies. It will also advocate for the recognition and inclusion of the knowledge and practices of Indigenous Peoples in national and international policies related to DLDD;

(b) *Restoration of global rangelands for people, nature and human well-being and development*: The challenges faced by rangelands are complex and often interconnected. Overgrazing, resulting from growing livestock numbers and inadequate management, causes soil erosion, loss of plant cover, and diminished land productivity. Climate change worsens these issues by disrupting rainfall patterns and increasing the occurrence of extreme weather, such as droughts. Furthermore, the spread of invasive species and the conversion of land for agricultural or urban use pose additional threats to rangeland ecosystems, pushing Indigenous Peoples and local communities that rely on these ecosystems into a very difficult situation. Tackling these challenges requires a comprehensive management strategy that harmonizes environmental health, economic interests, and community well-being.

## C. Youth Forum

### 1. Background

88. The UNCCD recognizes that youth can bring positive energy and enthusiasm that motivates diverse stakeholders to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought. Youth have been increasingly engaged in the implementation of the UNCCD and have taken a more active role since COP 13, where the first youth conference was organized.

89. Youth is playing a fundamental role in raising awareness and advocating around the world on the importance of protecting the environment and ensuring a sustainable future for all. Through energy, talent and creativity, youth can play a significant and valuable role in shaping the sustainable development agenda and supporting other stakeholders, including Parties, in their efforts to address DLDD. This is the reason why Parties at COP 15 requested the secretariat to finalize a Youth Engagement Strategy (YES) to ensure the active meaningful involvement of youth and future generations in the implementation of the Convention.

90. After a consultative process that lasted more than a year and included the participation of youth-led and youth-based organizations, intergovernmental organizations, youth leaders and Parties to the Convention, the YES was launched on 17 June 2024. The YES envisions a future in which each successive generation of young people is aware, capacitated and empowered to fully engage with policies and integrated approaches to land restoration that can support multistakeholder action and positive outcomes for livelihoods, communities, nature, biodiversity and climate.

91. By empowering young leaders and fostering collaboration, they can make significant strides in addressing land degradation and desertification, thereby contributing to global efforts to achieve the SDGs and UNCCD objectives.

## 2. Objectives and topics for discussion

92. The Global Youth Caucus on Land and Desertification (UNCCD Youth Caucus), together with the UNCCD secretariat, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, UNEP, UN Women, UNDP, AGFUND, IOM, ILO, Aeon collective, GIZ, LANDESA and the Misk Foundation, is taking advantage of the momentum generated by the YES, the celebration of 17 June focusing on the intergenerational dialogue and recognizing the critical role of young people in addressing the challenges of land degradation and desertification by organizing a three-day forum aiming to empower young leaders, facilitate knowledge exchange, and catalyse action towards restoring and protecting our lands for future generations.

93. Building on the momentum generated by the launch of the YES, the Global Youth Caucus on Land and Desertification (UNCCD Youth Caucus), together with the UNCCD secretariat, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Nations Environment Programme, UN-Women, the United Nations Development Programme, AGFUND, the International Organization for Migration, the International Labour Organization, the Aeon Collective, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Landesa and the Misk Foundation, is organizing a three-day forum. The aim of the forum is to empower young leaders, facilitate knowledge exchange and catalyse action to restore and protect our lands for future generations.

94. This forum will serve as a platform for youth to exchange ideas, build skills and mobilize action towards a sustainable future for our lands.

95. This COP 16 Youth Forum will focus on the following topics:

(a) **Identification of opportunities for young people in the implementation of the UNCCD:** Young people are facing challenges in participating in governance and policymaking, accessing markets and value chains, ensuring financial support to engage in entrepreneurship, and having appropriate knowledge, information, and capacity on DLDD. Some of the relevant solutions already highlighted are the creation of green, land-based and decent jobs for youth and the development and implementation of educational programmes to raise awareness about DLDD and its impacts, focusing on empowering young people with the knowledge and skills to drive change in their communities;

(b) **Accelerate action and empowerment on land:** All members of society need to be fully involved in the implementation of the Convention if we want to achieve LDN. Only through collaboration between governments and all sectors of society can efforts be successful to ensure healthy land and livelihoods. This initiative could form the basis for a people-centred agenda that highlights areas of action (awareness-raising, capacity-building, innovation, land restoration, land protection, cooperation) and the stakeholders that will be

involved (youth, women, local governments, Indigenous Peoples, producers, the private sector, government);

(c) **Intergenerational collaboration and partnerships:** UNCCD recognizes the critical importance of intergenerational partnerships and multistakeholder approaches for the success of long-term and integrated development strategies to combat DLDD and scale up SLM and restoration activities. This recognition calls upon stakeholders to create formal and informal mechanisms whereby young people can engage with each other, adults and society more broadly.

96. The Youth Forum’s objectives are:

(a) **Empower** youth to become advocates for SLM while amplifying youth voices and perspectives to increase the visibility of youth, building upon YES, the outcomes of the workshop United for Land – Youth Voices towards UNCCD COP 16, and the Youth Caucus Call to Action;

(b) **Encourage** the different stakeholders to implement the YES and the activities identified to ensure the meaningful engagement of youth;

(c) **Foster** collaboration and networking among young leaders working on land-related issues;

(d) **Provide** a platform for knowledge exchange and capacity-building on effective land restoration and conservation strategies that foster education and capacity-building, especially for youth, on DLDD;

(e) **Generate** innovative solutions and actionable recommendations to address land degradation and desertification;

(f) **Provide** recommendations to Parties to ensure the stronger, effective and meaningful participation of youth in meetings and process of the Convention;

(g) **Promote** solutions and provide opportunities to young people, especially in the creation and establishment of green, decent and land-based jobs for youth.

97. The Youth Forum will close on the occasion of **People’s Day on 7 December 2024** with a two-hour high-level event with the participation of ministers, high-ranking government officials and youth representatives to present the outcomes of the conference and commitments for ensuring the meaningful engagement of youth.

## D. Gender Caucus

### 1. Background

98. The Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC), in its official statement from its nineteenth session in 2021, noted that “the Gender Caucus has proven to be an excellent tool to increase gender-responsive action among delegates and should be continued”. Subsequently, at COP 15 in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, Parties endorsed the Gender Roadmap for the implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and requested the Secretariat to convene annual meetings of the Gender Caucus “to provide guidance, advice and address bottlenecks for gender-responsive programmes”.

99. The fourth edition of the Gender Caucus will take place on the sidelines of COP 16 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on 7 December 2024. COP 16 will be a critical moment both to report on progress to date under the GAP and its roadmap for accelerated implementation, and to secure further commitments from Parties to advance gender equality at multiple levels.

### 2. Objectives and topics for discussion

100. Two technical sessions of the Gender Caucus will be organized, building on previous COP decisions and CRIC recommendations and contributing to the implementation of the GAP and its roadmap, as adopted by the Parties.

101. The COP 16 Gender Caucus technical session presents and discusses the following topics:

(a) *Emerging best practices on the collection of sex-disaggregated data and gender-responsive indicators for DLDD initiatives.* What is not measured cannot be counted, analysed or addressed. At CRIC 21, Parties recommended that UNCCD should move forward on defining the most suitable gender-responsive indicators to measure the ways in which women and men are affected by DLDD. This session shares some examples of best practices in data-based gender-responsive indicators for participants to consider and to pave the way for the UNCCD process of refining its indicators for the next strategic framework;

(b) *Women-led solutions for drought resilience and adaptation: key findings and conversation with selected country-based women champions.* While data reveals that women are most impacted by drought due to pervasive and structural gender inequalities, at the same time many women are exercising leadership and resourcefulness in undertaking actions to adapt to drought and increase drought resilience in their communities. This session will present the key findings of a new research study commissioned by UNCCD and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to detect and highlight the most innovative and effective examples of women champions tackling drought in all corners of the world, and these champions will share their own perspectives.

## **VI. Expected results**

102. The outcomes of the ministerial dialogues, the high-level interactive dialogue sessions and the special events will be presented by the President of COP 16 in plenary for further consideration.

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