



Convention to Combat Desertification

Distr.: General
20 December 2024

Original: English

Conference of the Parties

Report of the Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session, held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 2 to 13 December 2024

Part two: Action taken by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session

Addendum

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Decision 1/COP.16

Multi-year workplan for the Convention institutions (2025–2028)

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling [decision 1/COP.15](#) and [decision 10/COP.15](#),

Having reviewed documents [ICCD/COP\(16\)/6-ICCD/CRIC\(22\)/2](#) and [ICCD/CRIC\(22\)/3](#),

Underlining the importance of the efficient and coordinated functioning of the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies in supporting Parties in their implementation of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

1. *Approves* the strategic orientation of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, as contained in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification results framework for 2025–2028 in the annex to this decision;
2. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to utilize the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification results framework for 2025–2028 in the annex to this decision, organizing their work in a manner that is consistent with the provisions of the Convention and the decisions taken at the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, and in line with the guidance outlined in the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
3. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to prepare a multi-year workplan for the Convention for the 2027–2030 period, utilizing the results-based management approach, to be considered at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

9th plenary meeting

14 December 2024

Annex

Results framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification for 2025–2028

<i>2025–2028 main outcomes</i>	<i>Outcome indicators</i>
1. Improved enabling environment to reduce desertification and land degradation	<p>Number of countries supported in setting voluntary land degradation neutrality targets</p> <p>Number of countries supported in implementing the second phase of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme</p> <p>Number of operational Peace Forest Initiative programmes</p>
2. Improved preparedness for and resilience to the impacts of drought	<p>Extent of partnerships supporting the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) drought agenda</p> <p>Number of information products and tools concerning drought that are produced or upgraded</p> <p>Number of users of the Communities of Learning and Practice on drought in all regions</p> <p>Number of countries supported in translating drought plans into a prioritized investment strategy</p>
3. Gender equality integrated into UNCCD implementation	<p>Cumulative number of transformative projects, developed with support from the UNCCD, that include interventions promoting gender equality</p> <p>Number of information products and tools concerning gender equality that are produced or upgraded</p> <p>Number of male and female staff in the secretariat and the Global Mechanism (GM)</p>
4. Secure tenure integrated into UNCCD implementation	<p>Cumulative number of transformative projects, developed with support from the UNCCD, that include interventions promoting secure tenure</p> <p>Number of information products and tools concerning secure tenure that are produced or upgraded</p>
5. The UNCCD is an active partner in global collaboration on sand and dust storms (SDS)	<p>Number of inputs into the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (2025–2034) involving the UNCCD</p> <p>Number of information products and tools concerning SDS that are produced or upgraded</p> <p>Number of countries supported in developing SDS assessments</p>
6. UNCCD decision-making and implementation guided by up-to-date science-policy information	<p>Extent of the Science-Policy Interface work programme implemented</p> <p>Number of UNCCD guides, reports and policy briefs</p>
7. An updated UNCCD performance review and assessment of implementation system	<p>Extent of updates made to the reporting platform</p> <p>Number of capacity-building events and individuals trained in reporting modalities</p> <p>Number of new or upgraded data sets, information products and tools for reporting that are made available to countries</p>

<i>2025–2028 main outcomes</i>	<i>Outcome indicators</i>
8. A bigger profile for the UNCCD on the global agenda through strategic communication	<p>Number of media reports referencing land and drought issues and the UNCCD</p> <p>Engagement on UNCCD digital channels (number of website visits, downloads and social media followers)</p>
9. Growth in strategic partnerships and stakeholder engagement in support of the UNCCD	<p>Number of accreditations to the Conference of the Parties (COP)</p> <p>Number of new strategic partnerships/collaborations per year</p>
10. Enhanced resource mobilization by the secretariat and the GM	<p>Extrabudgetary resources received per year for the implementation of the UNCCD workplan</p> <p>Total funds raised by the secretariat and the GM and their partners for projects and initiatives addressing desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD)</p> <p>Number of donor countries/organizations engaged by the secretariat and/or the GM</p>
11. An accelerated pipeline of flagship programmes and projects to mobilize financing for DLDD	<p>Cumulative success rate of proposals approved versus proposals supported</p> <p>Cumulative total budget of proposals approved</p> <p>Cumulative number of proposals supported that contribute to the implementation of country commitments to the three Rio conventions (UNCCD, Convention on Biological Diversity and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change)</p> <p>Cumulative number of partners engaged to support project preparation, piloting and execution through the Partnership for Project Preparation</p> <p>Cumulative number of multi-country/regional project design capacity-building workshops convened with multisector focal points</p>
12. Enhanced private sector engagement with the UNCCD and on land issues	<p>Cumulative number of private sector entities mainstreaming land/drought in a recognized environmental, social and governance framework/reporting process</p> <p>Cumulative number of partnerships established with private sector entities</p> <p>Cumulative amount of private and innovative finance leveraged</p> <p>Number of dialogue meetings organized with the private sector or philanthropic foundations</p>
13. The secretariat and the GM operate effectively	<p>Per cent of COP decisions targeting the secretariat and/or GM implemented</p> <p>Number of official UNCCD meetings, including those of the Bureaux, organized in a timely and efficient manner</p> <p>Per cent of staff having participated in training</p>
14. The administration of the secretariat and the GM functions efficiently and in accordance with United Nations rules	<p>Per cent of budget spent</p> <p>Extent of improvements recommended by auditors</p>

Decision 2/COP.16

Promotion of capacity-building to further the implementation of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 19 of the Convention,

Also recalling decisions 3/COP.8, 1/COP.9, 1/COP.10, 22/COP.10, 1/COP.11, 3/COP.12, 13/COP.12, 7/COP.13, 8/COP.13, 2/COP.14 and 2/COP.15,

Restating the importance of capacity-building for the effective implementation of the Convention and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals,

Having considered document ICCD/CRIC/(22)/6 and its conclusions and recommendations,

Acknowledging the work done by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to facilitate and implement targeted capacity-building to further the implementation of the Convention,

Highlighting the need for further collaboration among Convention institutions, including specific programmes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and associated partners, to increase the availability of information and opportunities for capacity development within the framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Welcoming the efforts of Parties, international organizations and institutions, civil society organizations and other Convention stakeholders in support of capacity-building for the implementation of the Convention,

1. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with the Group of Twenty Global Land Initiative and other related initiatives as well as external partners, to continue to respond to capacity needs expressed by Parties;

2. *Invites* developed countries, other Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations and private sector institutions, to:

(a) Provide support for capacity-building activities that assist Parties in the implementation of the Convention at national, subregional and regional level;

(b) Support investments in training, capacity-building and technical support in developing countries to reduce reporting gaps and ensure more accurate and complete information on the implementation of the Convention in the 2026 reporting process of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

3. *Encourages* Parties to make full use of tools developed to mitigate the impact of drought and sand and dust storms;

General support for targeted capacity-building

4. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of financial resources, in collaboration with the Global Mechanism and other relevant initiatives to:

(a) Develop a capacity-building strategy to mainstream capacity-building across the Convention institutions and any other associated initiatives while emphasizing innovative approaches to help make access to capacity-building easier for Parties and practitioners;

(b) Maintain an annual work programme for capacity development activities undertaken by Convention institutions, the Group of Twenty Global Land Initiative and other related initiatives, as well as by external partners for monitoring purposes, and to assess needs for additional resources;

(c) Make public all efforts undertaken in capacity-building by Convention institutions, and other related initiatives, throughout the biennium to ensure easy access for Parties and civil society to opportunities, training tools and products relating to capacity-building;

(d) Reconceptualize and redesign the Capacity Building Marketplace to become a vehicle to showcase and offer those products and tools;

(e) Coordinate and identify joint actions on capacity-building activities implemented by Convention institutions, and between other Rio conventions within their respective mandates, as well as with other relevant initiatives, to enable expansion in synergies with project and/or programme implementation at all levels;

(f) Expand, within available resources and in all United Nations languages, online training and e-learning opportunities for Parties, while continuing with in-person capacity-building, where needed;

(g) Pursue efforts directed at an innovation-driven United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, making full use of technological advances such as artificial intelligence;

Targeted capacity-building to support implementation

5. *Also requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of financial resources, to: (agreed)

(a) Expand activities to support the empowerment of all women and girls in the implementation of the Convention at country level and at the level of Convention institutions, in line with the Gender Action Plan;

(b) Continue to provide on-demand media training activities for journalists and expand these to other regions and subregions with due regard to the specific needs of regional implementation annexes and other United Nations interest groups;

(c) Develop an early and mid-career fellowship programme targeted at youth and especially women from the most vulnerable local communities, especially small island developing States and least developed countries;

(d) Continue cooperation with Parties, relevant organizations and other stakeholders on capacity-building to address the impact of sand and dust storms;

6. *Further requests*, subject to the availability of financial resources, the secretariat, together with data providers, financial and technical partners and the Earth Observation community, including the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative, to:

(a) Provide capacity development support to developing Parties, especially small island developing States and least developed countries, to undertake participatory mapping of degraded land, voluntary national land degradation neutrality targets and associated interventions, as well as quantitative assessments of drought hazard, exposure and vulnerability;

(b) Facilitate blended learning for national reporting that includes both e-learning training and face-to face capacity development activities at regional or subregional level;

(c) Facilitate South–South, North-South and Triangular cooperation to share experiences, challenges and lessons learned related to national reporting;

(d) Enhance collaboration with regional institutions, initiatives and organizations to provide data and technical support to Parties, especially developing countries, small island developing States and least developed countries during the 2026 reporting process of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

(e) Provide technical and financial assistance to developing countries, especially small island developing States and least developed countries, to maximize the use of national data for reporting;

(f) Make available guidelines to standardize mapping approaches for the relevant geospatial indicators;

7. *Requests* the secretariat to report on the implementation of this decision at the next session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention held in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties.

*8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024*

Decision 3/COP.1

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 has created strong momentum for the implementation of the Convention and that the setting of voluntary land degradation neutrality targets supports countries in achieving synergies with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, contributing to the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030), and mobilizing funding in this regard.

Acknowledging the need to mobilize additional funding from all sources, including the use of innovative financing mechanisms 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, s

1. *Invites* Parties that 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. *Also 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, including sand and dust storms, are prioritized in national development plans and other relevant sectoral plans;
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 Parties and other Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations, and private sector institutions to provide substantial financial and non-financial resources to strengthen Convention implementation activities related to the 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. *Also invites* the Global Mechanism to enhance its collaboration with regional organizations in resource mobilization for the development of multi-country, large-scale projects addressing desertification, land degradation and drought as well as sand and dust storms;
7. *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, 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 and on financing strategies, sources and mechanisms;

(c) Contribute to building the capacities of Parties in project development, programme design and 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 (i) facilitate the implementation of national drought plans or other policies and frameworks related to drought; (ii) forge specific partnerships to mobilize technical and financial support for projects and programmes on drought; and (iii) collaborate with relevant institutions such as The Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, among other entities, to support Parties in leveraging finance through relevant mechanisms;

(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 project implementation initiative;

(g) Contribute to developing the capacities of country Parties to improve, in their national context, 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;

(i) Further focus on large-scale, high-impact, multi-country flagship initiatives, projects and programmes and scale up the Global Mechanism's capacity-building to countries and relevant stakeholders, including local authorities, civil society and the private sector, where applicable, to help in accessing funding from a variety of sources (e.g. through the Green Climate Fund regional development banks, different Global Environment Facility focal areas, philanthropies, private sector and innovative funding sources);

8. *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, to accelerate efforts to support private sector engagement and promote innovation as outlined in documents ICCD/CRIC(21)/5 and ICCD/COP(16)/13, while ensuring that the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification national focal points are informed once the projects have been selected and appropriate information is provided to the national focal points on the status of the project;

9. *Further requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to strengthen the transparency of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms to track the progress of resource mobilization efforts and the implementation of large-scale projects;

10. *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 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.

8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024

Decision 4/COP.16

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 vision of the Secretary-General of the United Nations of a UN 2.0,¹ 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) in the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to help measure progress towards achieving Target 2 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as the ongoing work under the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2018–2030 to facilitate the 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 activities of the Global Environment Facility,

Noting with appreciation the coordination efforts made by the secretariat to achieve better synchronization between United Nations agencies involved in the reporting process of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Parties that receive funding from the enabling activities of the Global Environment Facility,

Acknowledging with appreciation the support provided by technical partners² 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 (i) land degradation and drought monitoring; as well as (ii) 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 the monitoring of and reporting on land and ecosystem 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 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting process, taking into

¹ See https://www.un.org/two-zero/sites/default/files/2023-09/UN-2.0_Policy-Brief_EN.pdf.

² Technical partners include, inter alia: Centre for Development and Environment – University of Bern, Conservation International, Committee on Earth Observation Satellites, European Space Agency, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative, International Research Center of Big Data for Sustainable Development Goals, International Soil Reference and Information Centre, Joint Research Center of the European Commission, Open Geospatial Consortium, OpenGeoHub Foundation, School of Geography and Environmental Sciences of University of Southampton, United Nations Environment Programme, University of Maryland, World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies, World Resources Institute.

consideration the conclusions and recommendations made by Parties in document ICCD/CRIC(21)/11;

3. *Invites* Conservation International to continue enhancing Trends.Earth by (i) addressing the critical technical issues raised during the 2022 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting process as a priority; and (ii) conducting a formal requirements analysis for enhancements to make the software sustainable for future United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting processes;

4. *Decides* that the following indicators will be 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”;

(d) “Technology transfer”; and

(e) “Future resources for activities related to the implementation of the Convention”;

5. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to available financial resources, to assess the feasibility of a digital transformation initiative to align the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification with the vision for a UN 2.0, while exploring practical ways to reduce costs using digital solutions;

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 Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative, to:

(a) Ensure that default data are accurate, complete, consistent, scientifically reviewed, documented and, where feasible and optimal, based on continuously available high-resolution data products for the land surface, especially for small island developing States and developing countries without adequate data;

(b) Follow international standards, where applicable, for data-sharing and application interoperability;

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 secretariat to (i) continue exploring different reporting frameworks and systems to identify possibilities to ease the current data collection and verification tasks of Parties; and (ii) further develop capacity-building for national reporting;

9. *Decides* to establish an Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention, within the scope and mandate of the Convention, to:

(a) Identify key elements for a post-2030 strategic framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, building on lessons learned, as contained, inter alia, in the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group to Oversee the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework Midterm Evaluation Process, and its follow-up;

(b) Conduct a thorough analysis of 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 strategic framework of the Convention, while ensuring that future methodologies are feasible, simple to understand and within the capacities of Parties;

10. *Also decides* that the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention will take into consideration the following:

(a) The text of the Convention;

(b) The 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

(c) The midterm review of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the outcomes of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought;

(d) The role of a multi-year strategy which provides an effective framework to guide the implementation of the Convention at national level;

(e) The relevant aspects of Sustainable Development Goal 15 and its target 15.3 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(f) Relevant decisions taken by the Conference of the Parties;

(g) Developments under the Rio conventions;

(h) The limitations of Parties in terms of their ability to increase financial resources provided to the Convention;

(i) The work of the Science-Policy Interface;

11. *Requests* the secretariat, under the guidance of the Bureaux of the Committee on Science and Technology and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, to prepare the terms of reference and mandate of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention, approved by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, no later than four months after the end of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, with the aim of producing a post-2030 strategic framework of the Convention;

12. *Decides* that the terms of reference of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention should ensure adequate participation of regional representatives, supported by technical experts, taking into account geographical and gender balance;

13. *Requests* the secretariat to prepare: (i) a preliminary scoping paper for the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention to inform its work, (ii) terms of reference for the first meeting of the Bureaux of the Committee on Science and Technology and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, for their approval;

14. *Also requests* the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention to:

(a) Present an interim report for consultation to Parties, intergovernmental organizations and regional groups at the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention; and

(b) Present a final report to Parties for their consideration and action at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties;

15. *Invites* developed country Parties and other Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations, private sector institutions and global alliances, such as the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative, to provide financial and non-financial resources for data collection and the preparation of national reports;

16. *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;

17. *Urges* eligible Parties that have yet to initiate the process of accessing enabling funds for the 2026 Convention reporting process to do so at their earliest convenience to allow national-level activities to align with the tentative timeline for reporting, as contained in document ICCD/CRIC(22)/7;

18. *Also urges* Parties to consult subregional and regional institutions to identify those suitable to assist in either facilitating access to enabling funds from the Global Environment Facility and/or becoming a partner in capacity-building for reporting, and notify the secretariat accordingly;

19. *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 of using enabling funding made available by the Global Environment Facility;

20. *Requests* the secretariat to present a report on the implementation of this decision at the twenty-third and 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.

8th plenary meeting

13 December 2024

Decision 5/COP.16

Participation and involvement of civil society organizations in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling articles 3, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21 and 22 of the Convention,

Also recalling decisions 5/COP.9, 5/COP.10, 5/COP.11, 5/COP.12, 5/COP.13, 5/COP.14 and 5/COP.15,

Recognizing the importance of engaging civil society organizations that are most affected by desertification, land degradation and drought in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Welcoming the open dialogue sessions organized by the civil society organizations as part of the official agenda of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties,

Also welcoming the organization of the youth forum, the Gender Caucus, and the convening of the first Indigenous Peoples' Forum organized during the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties,

Taking note of the Youth Engagement Strategy prepared by secretariat to ensure stronger, effective and meaningful participation of youth in meetings and processes of the Convention and ongoing initiatives, such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Youth Caucus, the Land Heroes campaign and the Land Youth Negotiators Programme,

Expressing appreciation to the Government of Germany for hosting the global observance of Desertification and Drought Day 2024, with a focus on intergenerational land stewardship and youth engagement as part of the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention,

Taking note of the increasing work carried out by the Parties to the Convention and the secretariat to give visibility to the voice of youth within the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

1. *Encourages* Parties to engage with civil society organizations, as appropriate, in United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification meetings and processes, and to consider fostering partnerships and collaboration among relevant national stakeholders to leverage their collective expertise, resources and networks;
2. *Requests* the secretariat, including its regional offices, to enhance effective communication and outreach globally to different stakeholder groups that are active and influential in matters concerning desertification, land degradation and drought, with a view to progressively involving these groups in the implementation of the Convention;
3. *Also requests* the secretariat to facilitate (i) the involvement of accredited civil society organizations, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties, in meetings and processes under the Convention; and (ii) the provision of capacity-building that also targets civil society organizations;
4. *Encourages* countries with no or few civil society organizations accredited to the Conference of the Parties to facilitate and promote the involvement of their organizations in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification process at the international level to ensure more balanced and equitable representation of civil society organizations in the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, particularly civil society organizations working with people in vulnerable situations, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, people living in rural areas, women, youth, and persons with disabilities;
5. *Requests* the secretariat to continue working with the key stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples, local community organizations, youth, farmer organizations, pastoral

organizations, women's organizations, persons with disabilities, local governments and parliamentarians;

6. *Requests* the secretariat to support and guide Parties and other stakeholders to implement, as appropriate, the Youth Engagement Strategy, including by supporting the convening of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Youth Caucus, the Land Heroes campaign and other youth-led initiatives such as the Land Youth Negotiators Programme, within available financial resources;

7. *Also requests* the secretariat to include in the report called for in paragraph 15 an assessment of the engagement of youth in the implementation of the Convention and provide best practices on how to accelerate their meaningful participation in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

8. *Encourages* Parties, subject to the availability of funds, to make efforts to enhance accredited youth representation in United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification decision-making processes;

9. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to:

(a) Facilitate consultations among Parties, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification institutions and bodies, United Nations entities, and civil society, in particular Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities, prior to the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties, on strengthening participation of Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

(b) Support, as appropriate, the development of relevant terms of reference for the creation of a Caucus for Indigenous Peoples and a Caucus for Local Communities, ensuring an approach that guarantees its representativeness and the unique perspectives and priorities of Indigenous Peoples as well as of local communities, and in alignment with the principles of the Convention;

(c) Report on the implementation of these efforts in the report called for in paragraph 15, including recommendations for future actions;

10. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to facilitate the renewal of membership to the Civil Society Organization Panel until the next Conference of the Parties starting immediately after sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, in accordance with previous decisions;

11. *Invites* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to compile rules of procedure and practices related to the participation of civil society organizations in multilateral environmental agreements and United Nations bodies for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session;

12. *Requests* the secretariat to continue using information and communication technologies, subject to the availability of financial resources, to facilitate interaction with civil society organizations and ensure the active involvement of civil society in United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification meetings and processes;

13. *Invites* developed country Parties and other Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations, civil society organizations and private sector institutions to consider contributing substantially and promptly to the Supplementary Fund and Special Fund of the Convention with the aim of ensuring wider, more balanced and more equitable geographical representation of civil society organizations in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification as well as in the work undertaken by the Civil Society Organization Panel;

14. *Requests* the Civil Society Organization Panel, through the secretariat, to report on its activities to the Conference of the Parties at its next session;

15. *Also requests* the secretariat to report at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties on the implementation of this decision.

9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024

Decision 6/COP.16

Participation and involvement of the private sector in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling articles 6, 17 and 20 of the Convention,

Also recalling decisions 6/COP.12, 6/COP.13, 6/COP.14 and 6/COP.15,

Stressing the importance of the involvement of the private sector in the implementation of the Convention and the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Noting the outcomes of the Sustainable Land Management Business Forum and the information provided in document ICCD/COP(16)/13 related to the initiatives undertaken by the secretariat and Global Mechanism,

1. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to collaborate with Parties, the private sector and partners on the development and improvement of best practices and guidelines that are relevant to addressing desertification, land degradation and drought;
2. *Also requests* the Global Mechanism to further develop the private sector engagement strategy for protecting, restoring and sustainably managing land and for building resilience to desertification, land degradation and drought to encourage private sector support, finance flows and technology transfer;
3. *Further requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with relevant financial and technical partners, to accelerate efforts to support private sector engagement and promote innovation by:
 - (a) Implementing the Business4Land Strategy with a focus on integrating sustainable land and water use decision-making into environmental, social and governance standards;
 - (b) Continuing to develop the Business4Land Initiative as the main vehicle for private sector engagement in the implementation of the Convention;
 - (c) Identifying and promoting impact investment opportunities, including through fostering public–private partnerships, technology transfer on voluntary and mutually agreed terms, and innovative financial schemes to address resilience to desertification, land degradation and drought and promote sustainable land management;
 - (d) Nurturing innovative projects and their attractiveness to the private sector;
 - (e) Developing pilot projects to evaluate the viability and usefulness of innovative financing mechanisms, notably in new and emerging areas of interest and concern such as sand and dust storms, among others;
 - (f) Exploring options to scale out models developed or piloted by the Global Mechanism to other regions;
 - (g) Collaborating with the Group of 20 Global Land Initiative on the development of the land restoration industry;
 - (h) Facilitating, in collaboration with relevant partners and representatives of the private sector, the organization of the eighth Sustainable Land Management Business Forum on the sidelines of the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties;
4. *Invites* Parties and business and industry entities to support the Business4Land Initiative and present specific commitments, on a voluntary basis, for sustainable land management and contributions to the achievement of land degradation neutrality;

5. *Requests* the Global Mechanism to include in its report on the mobilization of resources, to be submitted at future sessions of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention held in conjunction with sessions of the Conference of the Parties, the measures taken to facilitate and encourage the participation and involvement of the private sector in the implementation of the Convention;

6. *Also requests* the secretariat to report to future sessions of the Conference of the Parties on the measures taken to facilitate and encourage the participation and involvement of the private sector in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

9th plenary meeting

14 December 2024

Decision 7/COP.16

Enhancing the implementation of the Convention and the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The Conference of the Parties,

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

Welcoming with appreciation the work of the Intergovernmental Working Group to Oversee the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework Midterm Evaluation Process in overseeing as well as conducting the midterm evaluation process of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Having reviewed document ICCD/COP(16)/2,

Commending the progress made by Parties, the Convention institutions and bodies, and numerous partners and collaborators in the implementation of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, most notably in advancing land degradation neutrality, developing the basis for effective action on drought, and increasing the visibility of land and drought issues in the global agenda, among other achievements,

Underlining the importance of further enhancing and expanding measures and global and regional cooperation to avoid, reduce and reverse desertification and land degradation, and mitigate, adapt to and manage the effects of drought worldwide, and *recognizing* the importance of further mobilizing substantial, adequate, timely and predictable additional resources from developed country Parties and other Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations, and private sector institutions,

Recognizing the importance of translating the provisions of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the decisions made and the guidance provided in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification process into effective integrated, coherent, multi-stakeholder and large-scale implementation, in accordance with national circumstances,

Also recognizing the potential of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to become an effective catalyst for such large-scale, multi-stakeholder implementation,

1. *Invites* Parties and relevant stakeholders to enhance national information-sharing and coordination on the preparation for and follow-up to United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification meetings and on the topics discussed in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification process, with a view to integrating the implementation of the Convention into national policies, planning and budgeting systems, and cooperation and partnership arrangements;
2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary and *invites* relevant regional and international organizations and United Nations bodies to support the capacity of national focal points and science and technology correspondents, as well as their respective offices, subject to availability of resources, to enhance national information-sharing and coordination on United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification matters;
3. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to translate the land degradation neutrality concept and methodology, in consultation with the Conference of the Parties, as appropriate, into a concrete tool that is simple, concise and easily understandable by policymakers and the general public, and *supports* the development of transformative projects to address desertification, land degradation and drought;
4. *Further requests* the secretariat to prepare recommendations for the national focal points and science and technology correspondents, as well as their respective offices, to assist

in national efforts to effectively coordinate and share information concerning the Convention at the national and local levels with a view to supporting its implementation;

5. *Invites* Parties to develop and implement measures to advance the implementation of the Convention at the national, subregional and regional levels, including projects/initiatives promoting sustainable land and water management, land restoration, the building of resilience to drought, expert training, capacity-building, the recognition of achievements, and the development, improvement, demonstration and promotion of best practices, including innovative approaches; and *requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to availability of resources, and *invites* developed country Parties and other Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations, and private sector institutions to assist Parties in identifying and using such measures;

6. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to continue developing, defining and promoting the use of sustainable land and water management practices and approaches with high potential for combined environmental and socio-economic gains, such as nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches, schemes for payment for ecosystem services, agroecology, agroforestry and other sustainable agricultural practices, and to collaborate on projects that contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals relevant to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

7. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to collaborate with Parties, the private sector and partners on the development and improvement of best practices and guidelines that are relevant to addressing desertification, land degradation and drought;

8. *Further requests* the Global Mechanism to further develop the private sector engagement strategy for protecting, restoring and sustainably managing land and for building resilience to desertification, land degradation and drought to encourage private sector support, finance flows and technology transfer;

9. *Recognizes* that desertification, land degradation and drought impacts everyone and that observed and projected trends demonstrate increasing aridity, *encourages* Parties categorized as non-affected to enhance their implementation of the Convention and the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, including setting their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and submitting national reports, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to consult with Parties categorized as non-affected on how best to integrate their national circumstances, aims, actions and needs within the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification process and participate in the next reporting cycles in the framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

10. *Reaffirms* that all Parties, while striving to achieve voluntary land degradation neutrality targets at national and subnational levels, noting that a significant proportion of land degradation occurs beyond arid, semiarid and dry subhumid areas, can use the tools of the Convention to address desertification, land degradation and drought, as well as their negative global impacts;

11. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, to initiate an overall comprehensive discussion among Parties on how to best to reaffirm the global role and importance of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in deepening political commitment and cooperation to address desertification, land degradation and drought, taking into account new trends and recognizing that desertification, land degradation and drought impacts everyone, and *also requests* the secretariat to present the recommendations stemming from this process in the report requested in paragraph 28;

12. *Encourages* Parties, as appropriate, to leverage synergies at the national level in the planning and implementation processes of the three Rio conventions through integrated actions and approaches;

13. *Invites* Parties to prioritize holistic and integrated action to tackle desertification, land degradation and drought and their interlinkages with climate change and biodiversity loss, especially through accelerating and scaling up implementation of nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches;

14. *Also invites* Parties, as appropriate, to engage at the national level to explore opportunities to foster cooperation among the national focal points of the Rio conventions and other relevant international processes to minimize policy fragmentation;
15. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to promote the sharing of data collected under each convention, initiate joint science–policy publications, improve countries’ access to case studies and lessons learned from projects, pilot projects and programmes linking the objectives of the three Rio conventions, consider building interoperability of information management systems, and promote workshops and awareness-raising efforts for synergies;
16. *Also requests* the Global Mechanism to continue to establish, strengthen and evaluate partnerships to design flagship initiatives and projects that promote and integrate gender equality and women’s empowerment in establishing land tenure, addressing desertification, land degradation and drought, and achieving land degradation neutrality;
17. *Further requests* the secretariat to continue collaboration with the other Rio conventions and relevant conventions and international organizations, subject to the availability of resources on advocacy for the recognition and expansion of women’s land rights, as appropriate, in particular for Indigenous Peoples, as well as local communities, building on the high-level advocacy and global visibility achieved by the “Her Land. Her Rights.” campaign, as well as the collaborative momentum generated by recent workshops focused on leveraging synergies between Rio conventions and other key actors on women’s land rights;
18. *Requests* the secretariat and the relevant bodies of the Convention, within their respective mandates, and in collaboration with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies, as appropriate, and subject to availability of funding, to develop effective and meaningful gender-specific indicators for (i) the next United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification strategic framework, following the current 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; and (ii) the monitoring and reporting process associated with the next strategy, in order to close the gender data gap in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and work towards a better assessment of the differentiated impact of desertification, land degradation and drought on men, women, boys and girls;
19. *Welcomes* the renewal of the mandate of the Science-Policy Interface to enhance the responsiveness of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification science-policy guidance to the needs of countries and the guidance provided to the secretariat for further promoting information on scientific findings and their practical applications for decision-makers, in accordance with decision 20/COP.16 (on the future functioning of the Science-Policy Interface);
20. *Requests* the secretariat to (i) continue exploring different reporting frameworks and systems to identify possibilities to ease the current data collection and verification tasks of Parties; and (ii) further develop capacity-building for national reporting;
21. *Welcomes* the establishment of an Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention, within the scope and mandate of the Convention, in accordance with the process set out in decision 4/COP.16 (on 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), to: (i) identify key elements, which could include goals and targets, for a post-2030 strategic framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, building on lessons learned, as contained, inter alia, in the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group to Oversee the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework Midterm Evaluation Process and its follow-up; and (ii) conduct a thorough analysis of 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 strategic framework of the Convention, while ensuring that future methodologies are feasible, simple to understand and within the capacities of Parties;

22. *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, to further focus on large-scale, high-impact, multi-country flagship initiatives, projects and programmes and scale up the Global Mechanism's capacity-building to countries and relevant stakeholders, including local authorities, civil society and the private sector, where applicable, to help in accessing funding from a variety of sources (e.g. through the Green Climate Fund, regional development banks, different Global Environment Facility focal areas, philanthropies, the private sector and innovative funding sources);

23. *Invites* the Global Mechanism to enhance its collaboration with regional organizations in resource mobilization for the development of multi-country, large-scale projects addressing desertification, land degradation and drought as well as sand and dust storms;

24. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to strengthen the transparency of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms to track the progress of resource mobilization efforts and the implementation of large-scale projects;

25. *Encourages* Parties to engage with civil society organizations, as appropriate, in United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification meetings and processes, and to consider fostering partnerships and collaboration among relevant national stakeholders to leverage their collective expertise, resources and networks;

26. *Requests* the secretariat, including its regional offices, to enhance effective communication and outreach globally to different stakeholder groups that are active and influential in matters concerning desertification, land degradation and drought, with a view to progressively involving these groups in the implementation of the Convention;

27. *Also requests* the secretariat to facilitate (i) the involvement of accredited civil society organizations, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties, in meetings and processes under the Convention; and (ii) the provision of capacity-building that also targets civil society organizations;

Further requests the secretariat to present a report on the implementation of this decision at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

*9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024*

Decision 8/COP.16

Promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 9/COP.13, 8/COP.14 and 8/COP.15,

Acknowledging the interdependence and interlinkages amongst desertification, land degradation and drought, climate change and biodiversity loss, and the need for policies, actions and comprehensive approaches to tackle these issues in an effective, integrated and coherent way,

Also acknowledging that the implementation of the Convention benefits from strong and effective collaborations to leverage synergies with relevant organizations and international instruments, including, inter alia, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement,

Welcoming the progress made in enhancing existing and establishing new partnerships, such as the Group of Twenty Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats and the International Drought Resilience Alliance, as well as the renewed efforts to coordinate activities with the other Rio conventions through the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions to support the implementation of the Convention's objectives,

Also welcoming ongoing efforts by the successive Presidencies of the three Rio conventions in exploring greater synergies across the climate, biodiversity and land agendas,

Taking note of the findings and recommendations of the midterm evaluation of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification which highlighted the importance of synergies in the implementation of the three Rio conventions,

Underlining the need to elevate the role of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification as addressing desertification, land degradation and drought and achieving land degradation neutrality will make a fundamental contribution to the objectives concerning climate change and biodiversity,

Recalling that the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative was established in response to decision 9/COP.13, and *acknowledging with appreciation* the important contribution of the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative to the development of data quality standards, educational programmes and practical tools for the planning for, implementation and monitoring of, and reporting on land degradation neutrality,

Taking note of the outcomes of the Bern III Conference on Cooperation among the Biodiversity-related Conventions for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;

1. *Encourages* Parties, as appropriate, to leverage synergies at the national level in the planning and implementation processes of the three Rio conventions through integrated actions and approaches;
2. *Invites* Parties to prioritize holistic and integrated action to tackle desertification, land degradation and drought, and their interlinkages with climate change and biodiversity loss, especially through accelerating and scaling up the implementation of nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches;

3. *Also invites* Parties, as appropriate, to engage at the national level to explore opportunities to foster cooperation among the national focal points of the Rio conventions and other relevant international processes to minimize policy fragmentation;
4. *Invites* the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative to (i) continue facilitating the uptake and use of Earth Observation data, enhancing interoperability among analytical tools, and developing national and local capacity for planning, monitoring, reporting and decision-making processes to achieve land degradation neutrality, including national reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.3.1, in full collaboration with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification secretariat; (ii) consider fostering partnerships with initiatives complementing spatial data with economic and sustainable land management data;
5. *Also invites* developed country Parties and other Parties, international financial organizations, civil society organizations and private sector institutions to consider contributing, financially or in-kind, to global partnerships, alliances and coalitions as well as to regional and bilateral cooperation to address desertification, land degradation and drought;
6. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to promote the sharing of data collected under each convention, initiate joint science-policy publications, improve countries' access to case studies and lessons learned from projects, pilot projects and programmes linking the objectives of the three Rio conventions, consider building interoperability of information management systems, and promote workshops and awareness-raising efforts for synergies;
7. *Requests* the secretariat and appropriate Convention bodies and institutions, within their respective mandates and existing resources, to:
 - (a) Continue to strengthen existing and seek new partnerships that enhance the implementation of the Convention, address desertification, land degradation and drought, and help achieve voluntary national land degradation neutrality targets, collaborating notably with the Group of Twenty Global Land Initiative, the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030, the Changwon Initiative, the International Drought Resilience Alliance, the Peace Forest Initiative and other complementary initiatives;
 - (b) Continue to strengthen collaboration with the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, within their respective mandates, including by exploring common work through the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions as well as with other multilateral environmental agreements, relevant United Nations entities and other partners to provide best practices and practical tools, technical guidance and capacity-building related to the implementation of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification policy frameworks;
 - (c) Continue to support Parties in enhancing coordination among the offices of the national focal points and other key stakeholders, as well as develop and implement, in partnership with relevant organizations and networks, stakeholder engagement plans, including awareness-raising and information dissemination strategies, for policymakers in the public sector, as well as relevant stakeholders, including women, youth, civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, land owners and land managers, the farmer community and pastoralists, the media and the private sector;
 - (d) Continue to intensify efforts to strengthen the interlinking of the scientific bodies associated with the Rio conventions within their respective mandates (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Science-Policy Interface) and with other relevant data-providing initiatives in order to create the scientific basis for joint target achievement across the conventions;
8. *Also requests* the secretariat to present a report on the implementation of this decision at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024

Decision 9/COP.16

Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling articles 5, 6, 20 and 21 of the Convention,

Also recalling decision 9/COP.15,

Welcoming the continuous support for United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification implementation provided through the Global Environment Facility,

Noting with concern the fact that the rate at which healthy and productive land continues to degrade will prevent country Parties from achieving Sustainable Development Goal 15 by 2030,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session on the activities of the Global Environment Facility as they relate to sustainable land management for the period 1 January 2022 to 30 June 2024, as published on the Global Environment Facility website³ and referred to in document [ICCD/CRIC\(22\)/4](#);
2. *Welcomes* the increased focus on land-based actions implemented through the Global Environment Facility's integrated programmes, and the Land Degradation Focal Area Strategy's emphasis on people in vulnerable situations such as women, children, youth, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and traditional communities, and *calls on* the Global Environment Facility to continue to provide opportunities for enhanced synergies among all focal areas through multifocal area programming;
3. *Notes with appreciation* the implementation of Multi-Trust Fund projects to achieve a higher impact and co-benefits;
4. *Encourages* the Global Environment Facility and the Global Mechanism to mobilize new and additional financial resources by further collaborating with multilateral funds, including the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund and the Climate Investment Funds, thereby addressing issues of joint interest for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
5. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to strengthen its support for countries in programming Land Degradation Focal Area resources to combat desertification, land degradation and drought and achieve their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, including in the context of land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes;
6. *Requests* the Global Environment Facility and *invites* its implementing agencies to support Parties in meeting their reporting obligations in a timely manner;
7. *Welcomes with appreciation* the efforts of the Global Environment Facility to streamline its project cycle and progress made in this regard, which aims to further simplify and accelerate the access of developing countries, especially small island developing States and least developed countries, to the resources of the Global Environment Facility, and *encourages* the Global Environment Facility to pursue these efforts so as to improve its operational effectiveness;
8. *Recognizing* the role of the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative in supporting countries to improve national reporting, access necessary data sets and tools to prioritize interventions, and monitor outcomes so as to better manage land; *noting* the need and potential for scaling up requests to the Global Environment Facility to support the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative in their efforts; and *encourages* the Global Environment Facility to look into further support;

³ See <https://www.thegef.org/documents/gef-report-unccd-cop16>.

9. *Welcomes with appreciation* the Global Environment Facility's encouragement to project implementing and executing agencies to use the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification-designated World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies database, as appropriate, especially in projects applying sustainable land management practices, and *invites* the Global Environment Facility to enhance knowledge-sharing, capacity-building and the dissemination of sustainable land management best practices;
10. *Notes with appreciation* the Global Environment Facility's support for the Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, and *requests* continued Global Environment Facility support and partnership engagement;
11. *Also notes with appreciation* the Global Environment Facility's upstream engagement with key partners, including the Southern African Development Community in support of the Southern Africa Great Green Wall Initiative, and *requests* continued Global Environment Facility support and partnership engagement;
12. *Takes note* of (i) the Global Environment Facility's efforts to align the Land Degradation Focal Area Strategy under the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility with the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; and (ii) the Global Environment Facility's enhanced attention to drought mitigation and adaptation, and *invites* the Global Environment Facility to strengthen its efforts in this regard to enable countries to address their desertification, land degradation and drought priorities, in particular through sustainable land management, integrated and transboundary water resource management, drought resilience and the restoration of degraded lands;
13. *Notes* that the Land Degradation Focal Area Strategy under the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, continues to give countries the opportunity to implement their national drought plans and other drought-related policies, and *requests* the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to continue to support the implementation of the national drought plans and other drought-related policies, especially strengthening early warning, preparedness, mitigation and recovery, rehabilitation and monitoring systems, and capacity-building;
14. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility, under its ninth replenishment, considering the increased frequency and severity of drought, which poses a global challenge in the context of climate change, to prioritize the allocation of resources to proactive drought management to support Parties in the implementation of their actions;
15. *Encourages* the Global Environment Facility to continue its efforts to harness opportunities for leveraging synergies (i) among the Rio conventions and other relevant environmental agreements, observing their respective mandates and goals; as well as (ii) with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, at the implementation level, including by encouraging collaboration among the national focal points of the Global Environment Facility, as well as of the Rio conventions and other relevant environmental agreements;
16. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies to continue to promote and take into account the co-benefits of sustainable land and water management approaches, in particular innovative practices such as agroecology and agroforestry;
17. *Commends* the continued attention paid by the Global Environment Facility to policy coherence in the field of desertification, land degradation and drought, and *invites* the Global Environment Facility to continue to track progress on policy coherence;
18. *Encourages* the Global Environment Facility to consider, upon request, projects that support Parties in reviewing public expenditures, incentives and investments, and to support public policies and investments that decrease land degradation, combat desertification, and build resilience to drought, in a nationally determined manner;
19. *Calls for* a robust ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility with an increase in the allocation dedicated to desertification, land degradation and drought;
20. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to report on the implementation of this decision as part of its next report to the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session.

8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024

Decision 10/COP.16

Programme and budget for the biennium 2025–2026

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling the financial rules for the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and its amendments,¹

Also recalling [decision 1/COP.15](#) and [decision 10/COP.15](#),

Noting the continued zero nominal growth of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification budget and the steady increase in salary costs, which have affected the sustainability of finances for the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to carry out the work assigned to them by the Conference of the Parties,

Noting with appreciation the measures taken by the secretariat for early engagement of Parties in the consideration of the 2025–2026 budget,

Having considered the information contained in the documents prepared by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism on the programme and budget,²

A. Programme budget for the biennium 2025–2026

1. *Approves* the programme budget for the biennium 2025–2026 in the amount of EUR 17,744,748 for the purposes specified in table 1 below;
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Government of Germany for its biennial voluntary contribution to the core budget of EUR 1,022,584 and its special contribution of EUR 1,022,584 (Bonn Fund) as the host Government to the secretariat;
3. *Approves* the staffing table for the programme budget, as contained in table 2 below;
4. *Decides* to maintain the level of the working capital reserve at 12 per cent of the estimated annual expenditure in the Trust Fund for the Core Budget of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
5. *Adopts* the indicative scale of contributions for 2025–2026 contained in the annex to this decision; once adopted by the General Assembly, the revised scale of assessments for the triennium 2025–2027 will be applied to calculate the assessed contributions for 2026;
6. *Urges* all Parties to the Convention to note paragraph 14 (a) of the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, and to promptly pay their contributions to the core budget;
7. *Authorizes* the Executive Secretary to make transfers between each of the main appropriation lines, as set out in table 1 below, up to an aggregate limit of 20 per cent of the total estimated expenditure for those appropriation lines, provided that a further limitation of up to minus 25 per cent of each such appropriation line shall apply, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties on any such transfers;
8. *Also authorizes* the Executive Secretary to establish lower-level positions in addition to the approved staffing table, as set out in table 2 below, within a budget for staff costs not to exceed EUR 12 666 038; and *requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties on the positions established and filled;
9. *Invites* the General Assembly to include, in the calendar of conferences and meetings for the years 2025 and 2026, the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies envisaged for the biennium;

¹ See [decision 2/COP.1](#), annex; [decision 10/COP.13](#); [decision 10/COP.14](#); and [decision 10/COP.15](#).

² See documents [ICCD/COP\(16\)/5](#); [ICCD/COP\(16\)/6-ICCD/CRIC\(22\)/2](#); [ICCD/CRIC\(22\)/3](#); [ICCD/COP\(16\)/7](#); [ICCD/COP\(16\)/8](#); [ICCD/COP\(16\)/9](#); and [ICCD/COP\(16\)/10](#).

10. *Approves* a contingency budget as set out in table 3 below, amounting to EUR 2,252,090 for conference servicing, to be added to the programme budget for the biennium 2025–2026 in the event that the General Assembly decides not to provide resources for these activities in the United Nations regular budget;
11. *Decides* that, to the extent that offsetting voluntary contributions for the purpose expressed in paragraph 11 does not reach this amount, the balance will be covered from the contingency budget for conference servicing;
12. *Takes note of* the estimated additional costs of up to EUR 1,624,830, as set out in table 4 below, in the event that the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties is held in Bonn, Germany;
13. *Also takes note of* the estimated additional costs of up to EUR 736,420, as set out in table 5 below, in the event that the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention is held in Bonn, Germany;
14. *Further takes note*, with profound alarm, of the unfunded liability in the form of an estimated USD 25.8 million in after-service health insurance obligations, which challenges the continued functioning of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to continue exploring options to fully fund the after-service health insurance liability, taking into account the annual finance and interest costs of after-service health insurance; and also to continue monitoring related developments within the United Nations system;
15. *Recalls* that, at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, the Executive Secretary was authorized to set aside funds for after-service health insurance, not exceeding the amount of EUR 500,000, and *takes note* of the intention of the secretariat to use those funds to cover the after-service health insurance costs that may occur during the biennium 2025–2026;
16. *Takes note of* the funding estimates for the Special Trust Fund specified by the Executive Secretary in table 6 below, and *invites* Parties to make contributions to this Fund;
17. *Encourages* Parties to facilitate engagement by the secretariat with potential alternative donors to the Special Trust Fund, including private bodies, to assist in funding the participation of developing country Parties in sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies;
18. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, to continue to monitor and report the availability of voluntary contributions to the Special Trust Fund;
19. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session on the status of income and expenditure and budget performance, using a results-based approach;
20. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to prepare an integrated, results-based budget and work programme for the biennium 2027–2028, presenting three budget scenarios and a work programme based on the projected needs for the biennium in (a) a zero nominal growth scenario; (b) a zero real growth scenario; and (c) a scenario based on further recommended adjustments to the first scenario and the added costs, and also report on any unspent balances;
21. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to carry out a review of the financial rules for the Conference of the Parties, with a view to identifying any need for updates deriving from (a) the development of the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules and related policies since the adoption of the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties; (b) proposed modifications needed for an effective integrated budget approach; and (c) options for approaches concerning the payment of contributions for those countries whose financial year does not correspond with the deadline of 1 January; and to present a draft revised set of financial rules of the Conference of the Parties for consideration at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties;

B. Financial performance of the Convention trust funds

22. *Takes note* of the audited financial statements for the secretariat and Global Mechanism for 2021 and 2022, and of the report on financial performance and the reports on the implementation of the work programme of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism for the triennium 2022–2024, and the status of contributions as at 31 July 2024;
23. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to inform Parties on the latest audit reports as soon as they are available and to implement recommendations therein; and report on the implementation status at sessions of the Conference of the Parties;
24. *Authorizes* the Executive Secretary, on an exceptional basis and without setting a precedent, to draw upon available uncommitted balances to:
- (a) Cover expenditures concerning contractual services, travel, equipment, vehicles and furniture, and operating and other direct costs, in an amount not exceeding EUR 1,161,949, on an exceptional basis;
 - (b) Support the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention, including temporary support staff, in an amount not exceeding EUR 280,000, on an exceptional basis;
 - (c) Cover the expenditures concerning a feasibility study to identify ways of ensuring adequate technical support for the Science-Policy Interface, including the possible use of an external technical support unit(s), as outlined in decision (CST L2), in an amount not exceeding EUR 60,000, also on an exceptional basis;
 - (d) Cover the programme support costs related to the above, in an amount not exceeding EUR 195,253, on an exceptional basis;
25. *Expresses appreciation* to Parties that have paid their contributions to the core budget; *and calls upon* Parties that have not yet done so to pay without delay their contributions to the core budget, bearing in mind that contributions are expected on or before 1 January of each year;
26. *Requests* the secretariat to notify Parties of the amounts of their contributions to the core budget as early as possible in the year preceding the year in which they are due and to publish and keep up to date the information on the status of contributions to the Convention Trust Funds, and to keep the Parties updated;
27. *Urges* Parties that have not yet paid their contributions to the core budget for 2024 and prior years to do so without delay or conditionalities, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to publish and keep up to date the information on the status of contributions to the Convention Trust Funds, and to keep the members of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties updated, so that they can provide information on unpaid contributions and their consequences at the regional meetings;
28. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to continue engaging Parties with outstanding contributions from past years with a view to the Parties entering into a voluntary plan to pay the outstanding contribution and to continue to report on the implementation of any arrangements regarding outstanding contributions;
29. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report on core budget contributions made by Parties for prior financial periods that have been received during the biennium 2025–2026;
30. *Expresses appreciation* for the contributions received from Parties to the Supplementary Fund, the Special Fund and the extrabudgetary funds of the Global Mechanism, as presented in document ICCD/COP(16)/10;

C. Evaluation reports

31. *Welcomes* the recommendations of the independent evaluations and assessments summarized in document ICCD/COP(16)/11, and *requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to use these recommendations in planning and conducting their work;

32. *Takes note* of the proposed 2025–2026 workplan of the Evaluation Office and *requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session on the outcomes of the evaluations that will be conducted during this biennium and on the action taken to meet the pending recommendations of earlier evaluations.

Table 1
Resource Requirements by subprogramme
(euros)

	2025	2026	Total proposed budget
<i>I. Secretariat programmes</i>			
A. Executive Office	1 008 407	1 008 407	2 016 814
B. Governing Bodies and Legal Affairs	392 612	392 612	785 224
C. Global Policy Advocacy and Regional Cooperation	1 479 201	1 479 201	2 958 402
D. Communications, External Relations and Partnerships	885 868	885 868	1 771 736
E. Science, Technology and Innovation	1 291 106	1 291 106	2 582 212
F. Administrative Services	697 483	697 483	1 394 966
<i>II. Global Mechanism</i>			
G. Global Mechanism	2 096 982	2 096 982	4 193 964
Subtotal (A-G)	7 851 659	7 851 659	15 703 318
III. Programme support costs (13%)	1 020 715	1 020 715	2 041 430
IV. Working capital reserve	-	-	-
TOTAL (I-IV)	8 872 374	8 872 374	17 744 748
Income			
Contributions from the host Government	511 292	511 292	1 022 584
Indicative contributions	8 361 082	8 361 082	16 722 164
Total income	8 872 374	8 872 374	17 744 748

Table 2
Staffing requirements

	Approved budget 2022–2024			Proposed budget 2025–2026		
	<i>Global</i>			<i>Global</i>		
	<i>Secretariat</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Secretariat</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>	<i>Total</i>
Professional category and above						
USG	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00
D-2	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00
D-1	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00
P-5	7.00	1.00	8.00	7.00	1.00	8.00
P-4	7.00	2.00	9.00	7.00	2.00	9.00
P-3	4.00	4.00	8.00	4.00	4.00	8.00
P-2	1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00
Subtotal Professional category and above	21.00	10.00	31.00	21.00	10.00	31.00
Subtotal General Services category	10.00	4.00	14.00	10.00	4.00	14.00
TOTAL	31.00	14.00	45.00	31.00	14.00	45.00

Table 3
Contingency budget for conference servicing (euros)

<i>Object of expenditure</i>	<i>2025–2026</i>
United Nations meetings services	1 993 000
Programme support costs	259 090
TOTAL	2 252 090

Table 4
Resource requirements for hosting the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties (euros)

<i>Object of expenditure</i>	<i>2025–2026</i>
Incremental costs	1 307 180
Contingencies	130 720
Subtotal	1 437 900
Programme support costs	186 930
TOTAL	1 624 830

Table 5
Resource requirements for hosting the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (euros)

<i>Object of expenditure</i>	<i>2025–2026</i>
Incremental costs	592 450
Contingencies	59 250
Subtotal	651 700
Programme support costs	84 720
TOTAL	736 420

Table 6
Estimated resource requirements for participation in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification process for the biennium 2025–2026 (euros)

<i>Sessions</i>	<i>Estimated cost</i>
Twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention	963 000
Seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties	1 391 000
TOTAL	2 354 000

*9th plenary meeting
 14 December 2024*

Annex

Indicative scale of assessment for the core budget of the Convention for 2025–2026

<i>Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification^a</i>	<i>United Nations scale of assessment^b</i>	<i>Indicative scale of assessment for 2025–2026</i>	<i>2025 indicative contributions (euros)</i>	<i>2026 indicative contributions (euros)^c</i>	<i>Total amount payable (euros)</i>
Afghanistan	0.006	0.006	489	489	978
Albania	0.008	0.008	652	652	1 304
Algeria	0.109	0.106	8 884	8 884	17 768
Andorra	0.005	0.005	408	408	816
Angola	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630
Antigua and Barbuda	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Argentina	0.719	0.701	58 605	58 605	117 210
Armenia	0.007	0.007	571	571	1 142
Australia	2.111	2.058	172 066	172 066	344 132
Austria	0.679	0.662	55 345	55 345	110 690
Azerbaijan	0.030	0.029	2 445	2 445	4 890
Bahamas	0.019	0.019	1 549	1 549	3 098
Bahrain	0.054	0.053	4 401	4 401	8 802
Bangladesh	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630
Barbados	0.008	0.008	652	652	1 304
Belarus	0.041	0.040	3 342	3 342	6 684
Belgium	0.828	0.807	67 490	67 490	134 980
Belize	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Benin	0.005	0.005	408	408	816
Bhutan	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	0.019	0.019	1 549	1 549	3 098
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.012	0.012	978	978	1 956
Botswana	0.015	0.015	1 223	1 223	2 446
Brazil	2.013	1.962	164 078	164 078	328 156
Brunei Darussalam	0.021	0.020	1 712	1 712	3 424
Bulgaria	0.056	0.055	4 565	4 565	9 130
Burkina Faso	0.004	0.004	326	326	652
Burundi	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Cabo Verde	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Cambodia	0.007	0.007	571	571	1 142
Cameroon	0.013	0.013	1 060	1 060	2 120

<i>Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification^a</i>	<i>United Nations scale of assessment^b</i>	<i>Indicative scale of assessment for 2025–2026</i>	<i>2025 indicative contributions (euros)</i>	<i>2026 indicative contributions (euros)^c</i>	<i>Total amount payable (euros)</i>
Canada	2.628	2.562	214 206	214 206	428 412
Central African Republic	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Chad	0.003	0.003	245	245	490
Chile	0.420	0.409	34 234	34 234	68 468
China	15.254	14.871	1 243 340	1 243 340	2 486 680
Colombia	0.246	0.240	20 051	20 051	40 102
Comoros	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Congo	0.005	0.005	408	408	816
Cook Islands	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Costa Rica	0.069	0.067	5 624	5 624	11 248
Côte d'Ivoire	0.022	0.021	1 793	1 793	3 586
Croatia	0.091	0.089	7 417	7 417	14 834
Cuba	0.095	0.093	7 743	7 743	15 486
Cyprus	0.036	0.035	2 934	2 934	5 868
Czechia	0.340	0.331	27 713	27 713	55 426
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	0.005	0.005	408	408	816
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630
Denmark	0.553	0.539	45 075	45 075	90 150
Djibouti	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Dominica	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Dominican Republic	0.067	0.065	5 461	5 461	10 922
Ecuador	0.077	0.075	6 276	6 276	12 552
Egypt	0.139	0.136	11 330	11 330	22 660
El Salvador	0.013	0.013	1 060	1 060	2 120
Equatorial Guinea	0.012	0.012	978	978	1 956
Eritrea	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Estonia	0.044	0.043	3 586	3 586	7 172
Eswatini	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Ethiopia	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630
European Union	2.500	2.500	209 027	209 027	418 054
Fiji	0.004	0.004	326	326	652
Finland	0.417	0.407	33 989	33 989	67 978
France	4.318	4.209	351 956	351 956	703 912
Gabon	0.013	0.013	1 060	1 060	2 120
Gambia	0.001	0.001	84	84	168

<i>Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification^a</i>	<i>United Nations scale of assessment^b</i>	<i>Indicative scale of assessment for 2025–2026</i>	<i>2025 indicative contributions (euros)</i>	<i>2026 indicative contributions (euros)^c</i>	<i>Total amount payable (euros)</i>
Georgia	0.008	0.008	652	652	1 304
Germany	6.111	5.957	498 102	498 102	996 204
Ghana	0.024	0.023	1 956	1 956	3 912
Greece	0.325	0.317	26 490	26 490	52 980
Grenada	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Guatemala	0.041	0.040	3 342	3 342	6 684
Guinea	0.003	0.003	245	245	490
Guinea-Bissau	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Guyana	0.004	0.004	326	326	652
Haiti	0.006	0.006	489	489	978
Honduras	0.009	0.009	734	734	1 468
Hungary	0.228	0.222	18 584	18 584	37 168
Iceland	0.036	0.035	2 934	2 934	5 868
India	1.044	1.018	85 096	85 096	170 192
Indonesia	0.549	0.535	44 748	44 748	89 496
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	0.371	0.362	30 240	30 240	60 480
Iraq	0.128	0.125	10 433	10 433	20 866
Ireland	0.439	0.428	35 782	35 782	71 564
Israel	0.561	0.547	45 727	45 727	91 454
Italy	3.189	3.109	259 933	259 933	519 866
Jamaica	0.008	0.008	652	652	1 304
Japan	8.033	7.831	654 763	654 763	1 309 526
Jordan	0.022	0.021	1 793	1 793	3 586
Kazakhstan	0.133	0.130	10 841	10 841	21 682
Kenya	0.030	0.029	2 445	2 445	4 890
Kiribati	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Kuwait	0.234	0.228	19 073	19 073	38 146
Kyrgyzstan	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0.007	0.007	571	571	1 142
Latvia	0.050	0.049	4 075	4 075	8 150
Lebanon	0.036	0.035	2 934	2 934	5 868
Lesotho	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Liberia	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Libya	0.018	0.018	1 467	1 467	2 934
Liechtenstein	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630

<i>Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification^a</i>	<i>United Nations scale of assessment^b</i>	<i>Indicative scale of assessment for 2025–2026</i>	<i>2025 indicative contributions (euros)</i>	<i>2026 indicative contributions (euros)^c</i>	<i>Total amount payable (euros)</i>
Lithuania	0.077	0.075	6 276	6 276	12 552
Luxembourg	0.068	0.066	5 543	5 543	11 086
Madagascar	0.004	0.004	326	326	652
Malawi	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Malaysia	0.348	0.339	28 365	28 365	56 730
Maldives	0.004	0.004	326	326	652
Mali	0.005	0.005	408	408	816
Malta	0.019	0.019	1 549	1 549	3 098
Marshall Islands	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Mauritania	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Mauritius	0.019	0.019	1 549	1 549	3 098
Mexico	1.221	1.190	99 523	99 523	199 046
Micronesia (Federated States of)	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Monaco	0.011	0.011	897	897	1 794
Mongolia	0.004	0.004	326	326	652
Montenegro	0.004	0.004	326	326	652
Morocco	0.055	0.054	4 483	4 483	8 966
Mozambique	0.004	0.004	326	326	652
Myanmar	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630
Namibia	0.009	0.009	734	734	1 468
Nauru	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Nepal	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630
Netherlands	1.377	1.342	112 238	112 238	224 476
New Zealand	0.309	0.301	25 186	25 186	50 372
Nicaragua	0.005	0.005	408	408	816
Niger	0.003	0.003	245	245	490
Nigeria	0.182	0.177	14 835	14 835	29 670
Niue	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
North Macedonia	0.007	0.007	571	571	1 142
Norway	0.679	0.662	55 345	55 345	110 690
Oman	0.111	0.108	9 048	9 048	18 096
Pakistan	0.114	0.111	9 292	9 292	18 584
Palau	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Panama	0.090	0.088	7 336	7 336	14 672
Papua New Guinea	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630

<i>Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification^a</i>	<i>Indicative</i>		<i>2025 indicative contributions (euros)</i>	<i>2026 indicative contributions (euros)^c</i>	<i>Total amount payable (euros)</i>
	<i>United Nations scale of assessment^b</i>	<i>scale of assessment for 2025–2026</i>			
Paraguay	0.026	0.025	2 119	2 119	4 238
Peru	0.163	0.159	13 286	13 286	26 572
Philippines	0.212	0.207	17 280	17 280	34 560
Poland	0.837	0.816	68 223	68 223	136 446
Portugal	0.353	0.344	28 773	28 773	57 546
Qatar	0.269	0.262	21 926	21 926	43 852
Republic of Korea	2.574	2.509	209 804	209 804	419 608
Republic of Moldova	0.005	0.005	408	408	816
Romania	0.312	0.304	25 431	25 431	50 862
Russian Federation	1.866	1.819	152 096	152 096	304 192
Rwanda	0.003	0.003	245	245	490
Saint Kitts and Nevis	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Saint Lucia	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Samoa	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
San Marino	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Sao Tome and Principe	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Saudi Arabia	1.184	1.154	96 507	96 507	193 014
Senegal	0.007	0.007	571	571	1 142
Serbia	0.032	0.031	2 608	2 608	5 216
Seychelles	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Sierra Leone	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Singapore	0.504	0.491	41 081	41 081	82 162
Slovakia	0.155	0.151	12 634	12 634	25 268
Slovenia	0.079	0.077	6 439	6 439	12 878
Solomon Islands	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Somalia	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
South Africa	0.244	0.238	19 888	19 888	39 776
South Sudan	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Spain	2.134	2.080	173 940	173 940	347 880
Sri Lanka	0.045	0.044	3 668	3 668	7 336
State of Palestine	0.011	0.011	897	897	1 794
Sudan	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630
Suriname	0.003	0.003	245	245	490
Sweden	0.871	0.849	70 994	70 994	141 988

<i>Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification^a</i>	<i>United Nations scale of assessment^b</i>	<i>Indicative scale of assessment for 2025–2026</i>	<i>2025 indicative contributions (euros)</i>	<i>2026 indicative contributions (euros)^c</i>	<i>Total amount payable (euros)</i>
Switzerland	1.134	1.105	92 431	92 431	184 862
Syrian Arab Republic	0.009	0.009	734	734	1 468
Tajikistan	0.003	0.003	245	245	490
Thailand	0.368	0.359	29 995	29 995	59 990
Timor-Leste	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Togo	0.002	0.002	163	163	326
Tonga	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Trinidad and Tobago	0.037	0.036	3 016	3 016	6 032
Tunisia	0.019	0.019	1 549	1 549	3 098
Türkiye	0.845	0.824	68 875	68 875	137 750
Turkmenistan	0.034	0.033	2 771	2 771	5 542
Tuvalu	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Uganda	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630
Ukraine	0.056	0.055	4 565	4 565	9 130
United Arab Emirates	0.635	0.619	51 758	51 758	103 516
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	4.375	4.265	356 602	356 602	713 204
United Republic of Tanzania	0.010	0.010	815	815	1 630
United States of America	22.000	21.447	1 793 200	1 793 200	3 586 400
Uruguay	0.092	0.090	7 499	7 499	14 998
Uzbekistan	0.027	0.026	2 201	2 201	4 402
Vanuatu	0.001	0.001	84	84	168
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	0.175	0.171	14 264	14 264	28 528
Viet Nam	0.093	0.091	7 580	7 580	15 160
Yemen	0.008	0.008	652	652	1 304
Zambia	0.008	0.008	652	652	1 304
Zimbabwe	0.007	0.007	571	571	1 142
Total	102.513	100.000	8 361 082	8 361 082	16 722 164

^a Parties include States and regional economic integration organizations that are Parties as of 31 December 2023.

^b In accordance with General Assembly resolution 76/238.

^c Once adopted by the General Assembly, the revised scale of assessments for the triennium 2025–2027 will be applied to calculate the assessed contributions for 2026.

Note: The United States of America views its funding to the core budget of the Convention as a voluntary contribution.

Decision 11/COP.16

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, 26/COP.14 and 11/COP.15,

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

Welcoming 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. Unsustainable land and natural resources management continues to negatively impact ecosystem health and the well-being of communities,

Acknowledging the importance of securing land tenure rights and ensuring meaningful participation in decision-making and in the implementation of the Convention for all, in particular for people in vulnerable situations, for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, and youth,

Also acknowledging that drought is not limited to dryland areas, and its impact on global food security hence requires global action, solidarity and mutual cooperation,

Noting with concern that the intensity, frequency and duration of drought are increasing, and that their impacts are exacerbated by unsustainable human activities related to land and water resources management and by climate change,

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

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) Conserve natural tree-covered areas, scale up efforts to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation, and expand initiatives which promote:
 - (i) Reforestation, where appropriate, through scientific planning and consideration of the local environment and ecosystem, in line with the United Nations Forum on Forests principles of sustainable forest management, to reverse the reported declining trends;
 - (ii) The conservation and sustainable management of natural grasslands and other non-woody ecosystems;
 - (iii) Sustainable forest, savannah and shrubland management;
 - (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, salinization, and soil compaction, beyond the three land-based progress indicators to better reflect national and subnational conditions on a voluntary basis;

(e) Consider, where suitable, (i) sustainable land management approaches for achieving voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, including agroecological approaches and other sustainable land management approaches; 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 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,³ 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. *Decides* that, while implementing the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, all United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stakeholders and partners should take into account the need for gender-responsive policies and measures; they will strive to ensure the full and effective participation of both men and women in planning, decision-making and implementation at all levels, and enhance the empowerment of women, girls and youth in the affected areas;

Strategic objective 3

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

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

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

(c) Recognizing the drought link described in the Drought Resilience, Adaptation and Management Policy;

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 to collaborate with the secretariats of the other Rio Conventions on the organization of a technical information exchange and *encourages* Parties and observers to submit views to be compiled by the secretariat for the attention of the Joint

³ See [19I016_EN_UNCCD_SPI_2019_Report_1_1_Web.pdf](#).

Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions and to engage in the technical information exchange on options for minimizing the reporting burden, including by identifying relevant existing indicators connecting desertification, land degradation and drought, loss of biodiversity, and climate change.

8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024

Decision 12/COP.16

Assessment of financial flows

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 6 of the Convention,

Also 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,

Further 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,

Recalling decision 13/COP.15 and its elements related to (i) conducting a needs assessment to determine the financial requirements for the implementation of the Convention; and (ii) 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, in strengthening collaboration with the Global Mechanism and supporting country Parties in efforts to make resources available to address desertification and land degradation and enhance drought resilience,

Taking note of the key findings of the financial needs assessments conducted by the Global Mechanism, and *acknowledging* substantial gaps in the availability of funding and the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention,

Acknowledging the current lean structure of the Global Mechanism in meeting the demands from the Parties for the implementation of the Convention, and that there could be additional impact if financing to support project preparation and resources to ensure long-term sustainability of the partnership model were made available,

Recognizing the importance of further mobilizing substantial additional resources from all sources, including the use of innovative financing mechanisms to close the existing financing gap and enhance the effectiveness of the efforts to address desertification and land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought, particularly in affected areas and regions most vulnerable to these challenges, including small island developing States,

Also recognizing the importance of making the best possible use of resources and of monitoring the linkages between resources and their impact in order to maximize effectiveness,

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 comparable definitions, methodologies and data collection options that support country Parties to provide a more comprehensive overview of (i) financial resources targeting desertification, land degradation and drought; and (ii) increasing comparability between the sets of national data provided by Parties;

(c) Supporting the Parties to track public and private financial flows related to the implementation of the Convention through stakeholder engagement, including technical advice and enhanced cooperation with 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 and using tools to overcome data gaps to further inform the Global Mechanism's resource mobilization;

3. *Invites* developed country Parties and other Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations, and private sector institutions to provide financial and non-financial resources, including transfer of technology on voluntary and mutually agreed terms, to affected country Parties to support their efforts in the implementation of the Convention;

4. *Encourages* 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. *Invites* Parties to report on strategic objective 5 in the upcoming Convention reporting cycle, including estimations of their financial needs and sharing the methodology used and lessons learned about closing the financing gap;

6. *Further invites* Global Environment Facility implementing agencies to continue to include a specific output related to strategic objective 5 in its 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.

*8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024*

Decision 13/COP.16

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 the strategic objectives;

(iii) Progress in reporting on strategic objectives 1 to 4;

(iv) Reporting on strategic objective 5;

(v) Timelines and modalities for reporting;

(e) 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.

*8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024*

Decision 14/COP.16

Date and venue of the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 22, paragraph 2 (a) and (c) 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,

Further recalling General Assembly resolutions 40/243 of 18 December 1985,

1. *Accepts* with gratitude the generous offer of the Government of Panama to host the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and to meet the additional costs;
2. *Decides* that the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention shall be held in Panama in the last quarter of 2025;
3. Requests the Executive Secretary to consult with the Government of Panama to prepare for the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, including the conclusion of a legally binding agreement at the international level with the Government of Panama.

8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024

Decision 15/COP.16

Science-policy recommendations on sustainable land use systems

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions [23/COP.11](#), [19/COP.12](#) and [18/COP.15](#),

Also recalling decisions [3/COP.13](#), [18/COP.13](#), [16/COP.14](#) and [16/COP.15](#),

Further recalling the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, its vision for a future that minimizes and reverses desertification, land degradation and mitigates the effects of drought in affected areas at all levels, and strives to achieve a land degradation-neutral world consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, within the scope of the Convention and, in particular, strategic objective 1 to improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification, land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality,

Acknowledging the work conducted by the Science-Policy Interface in implementing its work programme for the triennium 2022–2024,

Recalling article 2 of the Convention stating that achieving the objective of the Convention will involve long-term integrated strategies that focus, inter alia, on the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources, leading to improved living conditions, in particular at the community level,

Acknowledging that the scientific conceptual framework for land degradation neutrality¹ provides guidance for planning, financing, implementing and monitoring land degradation neutrality,

Recognizing that creating an enabling environment for land degradation neutrality is fundamental to realizing the potential contribution of land degradation neutrality to enhancing the well-being and livelihoods of people affected by desertification, land degradation and drought,

Also recognizing the importance of the effective implementation of integrated land use planning in (i) applying the land degradation neutrality response hierarchy to measures to avoid, reduce and/or reverse land degradation; and (ii) establishing the full integration of a neutrality framework to counterbalance assessed losses with equal or greater gains,

Having considered document [ICCD/COP\(16\)/CST/2](#) and the conclusions contained therein,

1. *Encourages* Parties to refine current approaches to land degradation neutrality planning and implementation by incorporating elements of sustainable land use system approaches to focus efforts on transformative programmes and projects that enhance land productivity and maintain equitable livelihoods while ensuring the long-term effective provision of ecosystem services and community well-being thereby addressing land degradation proactively through sustainable land management practices and strategic restoration/rehabilitation to avoid, reduce and/or reverse land degradation processes in order to achieve land degradation neutrality targets;
2. *Also encourages* Parties to integrate multistakeholder planning for sustainable land use systems into existing national and local land management systems and processes, and to refine these systems while considering national development priorities in order to deliver multiple objectives efficiently at multiple scales;

¹ See [Decision 18/COP.13](#).

3. *Emphasizes* the need for Parties, as appropriate, and in line with national circumstances and capabilities, to ensure the consistency of policies and policy-related initiatives through the mainstreaming of sustainable land use systems planning;
4. *Recommends* that Parties base land use planning and land management on an understanding of the land potential of land types in the target region, and the key processes and drivers of the socioecological system in which the land is situated;
5. *Encourages* Parties, with support from partners, to continue building technical capacity to assess land potential, track the state and trend of land use systems and identify key areas for intervention at the appropriate scale;
6. *Also encourages* Parties, as appropriate, and in line with national circumstances, needs and priorities, to create an enabling environment for sustainable land use systems by:
 - (a) Fostering multistakeholder partnerships by encouraging collaborations between government, the private sector, Indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as other relevant stakeholders, in order to develop and implement comprehensive land use and land management plans prioritizing sustainable land use and incorporating Indigenous and traditional knowledge and science-based knowledge;
 - (b) Implementing participatory governance in planning, executing, monitoring and evaluating the outcome of sustainable land use system policies in order to ensure the engagement of all legitimate tenure rights holders and land users in participatory land use planning and land management;
 - (c) Fostering multisectoral coordination at all levels to ensure synergies and the harmonization of agricultural, environmental, social, economic and development policies, integrating sustainable land use systems principles and approaches wherever relevant, thus avoiding contradictory or duplicated efforts;
 - (d) Creating and promoting incentives that encourage long-term investments in transdisciplinary research, collaborative monitoring and the provision of data and tools in order to support the development and implementation of sustainable land use systems, and investment in on-ground demonstrations of sustainable land use systems;
 - (e) Identifying and supporting community leaders and/or representatives who will adaptively sustain the sustainable land use systems into the future;
 - (f) Facilitating transformative multistakeholder learning to cope with uncertainty, barriers and change;
 - (g) Sharing local experience and knowledge to support the upscaling and achievement of national land degradation neutrality targets.

*8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024*

Decision 16/COP.16

Science-policy recommendations on aridity trends, projections and impacts

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions [18/COP.15](#) and [17/COP.15](#),

Also recalling articles 1, 2 and 10 of the Convention, which reference combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought in affected areas and on their populations, where ‘affected areas’ means arid, semi-arid and/or dry sub-humid areas affected or threatened by desertification,

Mindful of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s Special Report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems¹ which indicates that large-scale aridity trends may contribute to expanding drylands and affected populations in some regions,

Acknowledging the work conducted by the Science-Policy Interface in implementing its work programme for the triennium 2022–2024,

Recognizing the need to enhance the responsiveness and applicability of the science–policy guidance of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification at the national and subnational level,

Having considered document [ICCD/COP\(16\)/CST/3](#) and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

1. *Invites* the World Meteorological Organization, the Global Water Partnership and other technical and scientific partners, working within their respective mandates, to integrate aridity information into existing drought monitoring and early warning systems, with the aim of developing a comprehensive monitoring approach that would:

(a) Enhance local, regional and global forecasting, monitoring and evaluation for land and water resource sectors;

(b) Explore the establishment of a standardized approach for robust aridity assessments which identify critical, science-based ecological, environmental and socio-economic thresholds, enabling adaptation and timely responses to critical water stress and drought conditions;

(c) Foster collaboration through the systematic sharing of interoperable data, lessons learned and best practices;

(d) Explore how to leverage advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence which draws upon diverse data sources for predictive analysis;

2. *Also invites* the Integrated Drought Management Programme, its cooperating partners and other technical and scientific partners, acting within their respective mandates, to facilitate, as appropriate, and in line with national circumstances, needs and priorities, the development of science-based standards and guidelines for assessing the socio-economic and environmental impacts of increasing aridity and drought that would:

(a) Facilitate consistent, cross-regional monitoring and analysis to promote adaptive responses to climatic, environmental and socioeconomic changes;

(b) Enable effective adaptation strategies that promote resilience among vulnerable communities, particularly in shared river basins and watersheds;

¹ See <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/>.

(c) Promote community-based monitoring and help to ensure inclusivity in assessing and addressing aridity and drought impacts by integrating Indigenous and traditional knowledge, as well as grassroots innovations into the process; and

(d) Support efforts to address and prioritize actions to combat/cope with aridity and drought and their impacts through knowledge-sharing and capacity-building initiatives;

3. *Requests* the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology, with the support of the secretariat, to engage, as appropriate, with relevant constituted bodies, including but not limited to those under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and, acting within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of resources, explore the way forward to develop a supplement to the National Adaptation Plan technical guidelines that supports aridity adaptation and drought planning, while suggesting an approach for integration into activities of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification at global and national levels, taking into account national circumstances, needs and priorities;

4. *Calls upon* Parties to develop and implement comprehensive and integrative sustainable land and water management approaches and technologies to combat desertification and land degradation and thereby enhance resilience to drought, and mitigate the effects of and adapt to aridity;

5. *Invites* the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies, acting within its mandate and in cooperation with Parties, to identify the sustainable land and water management best practices that have effectively taken aridity trends, projections and impacts into account in order to support knowledge-sharing and, as appropriate, the adoption of successful integrative approaches;

6. *Requests* financial and technical partners to support Parties in their efforts to incorporate the analysis of aridity trends and the assessment of aridity impacts, including interlinkages with drought, into environmental policy development, integrated land use planning processes, land degradation neutrality target-setting and the development of transformative projects and programmes;

7. *Also requests* the secretariat to work with the secretariats of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and Convention on Biological Diversity to integrate the assessing and addressing of both aridity and drought risks and their impacts into relevant collaborative frameworks and initiatives, as appropriate, while taking into account Parties' national circumstances, needs, and priorities, with the aim of:

(a) Harnessing and maximizing the synergies among relevant multilateral agreements, goals and targets;

(b) Encouraging comprehensive and coordinated action on land;

(c) Quantitatively aligning assessment and monitoring, where possible; and

(d) Reducing transaction costs;

8. *Further requests* the secretariat to present a report on the implementation of this decision at the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology.

8th plenary meeting

13 December 2024

Decision 17/COP.16

Science–policy recommendations emanating from the Science-Policy Interface analysis of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions [23/COP.11](#), [19/COP.12](#) and [18/COP.15](#),

Also recalling decisions [19/COP.13](#), [22/COP.13](#), [20/COP.14](#) and [20/COP.15](#),

Further recalling the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, its vision for a future that minimizes and reverses desertification, land degradation and mitigates the effects of drought in affected areas at all levels, and strives to achieve a land degradation-neutral world consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, within the scope of the Convention and, in particular, strategic objective 1 to improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification, land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality, and strategic objective 3 to mitigate, adapt to, and manage the effects of drought in order to enhance resilience of vulnerable populations and ecosystems,

Noting with appreciation the work conducted by the Science-Policy Interface in implementing the coordination activities included in its work programme for the triennium 2022–2024,

Welcoming the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Reports, “Climate Change 2022: Impact Adaptation and Vulnerability” and “Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change”,

Mindful of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change decisions [IPCC-LV-3](#) and [IPCC-LVI-3](#),

Recognizing the contribution of the Science-Policy Interface to all six of its coordination activities with other scientific mechanisms, and *welcoming* the positive and productive collaboration of the partner organizations involved in each,

Also recognizing the service of both current and former Science-Policy Interface members of the Intergovernmental Working Group on effective policy and implementation measures for addressing drought under the Convention,

Further recognizing the contribution of the Science-Policy Interface to the quality assurance and scientific review of the second edition of the Global Land Outlook and the Global Land Outlook working papers,

Having considered document [ICCD/COP\(16\)/CST/4](#) and the conclusions contained therein,

1. *Encourages* Parties to enhance land use efficiency and restoration, especially on less productive, degraded or marginal lands, while also considering the promotion of ecosystem services and the conservation of biodiversity;
2. *Also encourages* Parties to adopt the ecosystem approach and other integrated landscape approaches to seek to optimize environmental and socioeconomic objectives;
3. *Recommends* that Parties strengthen integrated land management strategies to reduce losses from climate hazards in landscapes where degradation has increased vulnerability;
4. *Also recommends* that Parties strengthen institutional and governance frameworks to prioritize policies for integrated land use planning and management aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and land degradation neutrality;
5. *Encourages* Parties and *invites* scientific, financial and technical partners, and civil society organizations working at local, national and regional levels to strengthen collaboration on the development of transdisciplinary Communities of Learning and Practice

on the nexus of land, climate and drought to focus on the inclusion of traditionally underrepresented knowledge and practitioner groups.

8th plenary meeting

13 December 2024

Decision 18/COP.16

Knowledge sharing, technology transfer and innovation

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 23/COP.11, 19/COP.12, 19/COP.13, 19/COP.14 and 19/COP.15 on the mandate and working modalities of the Science-Policy Interface,

Also recalling decisions 20/COP.12, 20/COP.13, 19/COP.14 and 19/COP.15 on knowledge sharing tools as well as decision 20/COP.15 on knowledge and technology transfer,

Further recalling decisions 9/COP.15, 11/COP.15, 15/COP.15, 20/COP.15 and 24/COP.15 on the collaboration between the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies,

Noting with appreciation the support provided by Parties to the activities of the Science-Policy Interface,

Acknowledging the achievement of gender parity across the membership of the Science-Policy Interface and *noting* the development of a gender policy and implementation plan,

Noting the work done by the secretariat on developing tools for knowledge and technology transfer, inter alia, the knowledge hubs developed by the Global Mechanism for the Great Green Wall initiative and by the Group of 20 Global Land Initiative, the further development of the Drought Toolbox and the Sand and Dust Storms Toolbox, the Model Framework for Technology Transfer and the pilots conducted with DeserTech for the Great Green Wall initiative, as well as the Communities of Learning and Practice on Drought Management established in collaboration with the Global Water Partnership and the International Drought Resilience Alliance,

Also noting three guidance reports developed by the United Nations University in support of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification:

- (a) “The contribution of land and water management approaches to sustainable land management and achieving land degradation neutrality”;
- (b) “Promoting synergies between land degradation neutrality and climate change adaptation: A supplement to the National Adaptation Plan technical guidelines”;
- (c) “Harmony in action for land restoration: Linking social protection, financial inclusion and disaster risk finance”;

Acknowledging the continuing efforts by the secretariat and the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies in promoting the analysis, dissemination and accessibility of sustainable land management best practices, and in developing tools relevant to United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stakeholders,

Welcoming the various projects implemented by the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies in collaboration with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stakeholders globally,

Also welcoming the continued collaboration between the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies aimed at implementing the renewed World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies strategy (WOCAT 2020+) in line with the knowledge needs of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stakeholders and the development of the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies Multi-Donor Basket Fund,

Having considered documents ICCD/COP(16)/CST/5 and ICCD/COP(16)/15 and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

1. *Encourages* the Science-Policy Interface to continue to foster partnerships with scientific bodies and institutions, international organizations, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders, and invite the representatives of these entities to its meetings as external observers when feasible, as appropriate, with a view to strengthening and formalizing collaboration;
2. *Invites* the Economics of Land Degradation Initiative to collaborate with the Science-Policy Interface and the Global Mechanism;
3. *Also invites* the science and technology correspondents, national focal points and current and past Science-Policy Interface members to continue to increase awareness of the work of the Science-Policy Interface;
4. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, to continue exploring options for knowledge and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms with relevant partners in the academic and private sectors;
5. *Encourages* Parties to implement projects on knowledge and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms with the aim of fostering innovation and facilitating access to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how;
6. *Invites* developed country Parties and other Parties, as well as international bodies and the private sector, as mutually agreed and in accordance with their respective national legislations and/or policies, to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and technology on voluntary and mutually agreed upon terms to developing country Parties, supporting the sustainable and efficient use of land and water resources, thereby contributing to enhanced resilience;
7. *Encourages* Parties, while taking into account the specific needs and circumstances of developing country Parties, to support, by means of voluntary technology transfer, organizations and practitioners of agroecology and other sustainable agricultural approaches in achieving sustainable land management and land degradation neutrality;
8. *Also encourages* the organizations and practitioners implementing sustainable land projects, while taking into account the specific needs and circumstances of developing countries, to continue to work towards ensuring that the core criteria and principles behind sustainable land management and land degradation neutrality are addressed in practice, and any identified gaps are met with appropriate supplementary actions¹ as appropriate, in line with national circumstances, needs and priorities;
9. *Invites* Parties, according to their national circumstances, to coordinate and harmonize land degradation neutrality planning and practices with climate change adaptation planning and implementation² at the national level, as well as biodiversity planning and actions as appropriate;
10. *Encourages* Parties to realize the synergies between land restoration, social protection, financial inclusion and disaster risk finance³ by designing coherent, context-appropriate policy instruments and transformative projects and programmes that facilitate land restoration outcomes which improve and protect human well-being and ensure that the environmental, economic and social co-benefits are more equitable and available to all;
11. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to continue the collaboration with the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies, thus

¹ See “The contribution of land and water management approaches to Sustainable Land Management and achieving Land Degradation Neutrality” https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2024-06/Align_LDN_-_Webpdf.pdf.

² Taking into account the report “Promoting synergies between land degradation neutrality and climate change adaptation: A supplement to the National Adaptation Plan technical guidelines” <https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2024-12/LDN%20climate%20synergies.pdf>.

³ See “Harmony in action for land restoration: Linking social protection, financial inclusion and disaster risk finance” https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2024-12/P235777-04_UNU%20FISPER_WEB.pdf.

facilitating an exchange of knowledge on sustainable land management between United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stakeholders globally;

12. *Encourages* Parties and *invites* other stakeholders to continue to submit cases of relevant best practices in order to increase the knowledge base on sustainable land management;

13. *Invites* developed country Parties and other Parties as well as other institutions to support the activities of the Science-Policy Interface;

14. *Also invites* developed country Parties and other Parties as well as other institutions to support the implementation of the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies strategy (WOCAT 2020+) through the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies Multi-donor Basket Fund;

15. *Requests* the secretariat to report at the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology on the implementation of this decision.

8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024

Decision 19/COP.16

Avoiding, reducing and reversing land and soil degradation of agricultural lands

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 2 of the Convention stating that achieving the objective of the Convention will involve long-term integrated strategies that focus, inter alia, on the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources, leading to improved living conditions, in particular at the community level,

Also recalling article 18 of the Convention,

Further recalling the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, its vision for a future that minimizes and reverses desertification, land degradation and mitigates the effects of drought in affected areas at all levels, and strives to achieve a land degradation-neutral world consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, within the scope of the Convention and, in particular, strategic objective 1 to improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification, land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality,

Also mindful of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Special Report on Climate Change, Desertification, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Food Security, and Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Terrestrial Ecosystems¹ conclusions that climate change creates additional stresses on land, exacerbating existing risks to livelihoods, biodiversity, human and ecosystem health, infrastructure, and food systems, and that many land-related responses that contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation, such as agroforestry and other agroecological and ecosystem-based adaptation practices, among others, can also combat desertification, land degradation and drought and enhance food security,

Highlighting that farmers, including smallholders and pastoralists, are stewards of the land and are inclined to apply sustainable land management approaches, and *acknowledging* that their vulnerability to climate change presents a challenge in fulfilling this important role and that policy responses in agriculture are more likely to succeed if they consider the role of farmers as key agents of change,

Recalling decision 18/COP.13, where Parties endorsed the scientific conceptual framework for land degradation neutrality, which emphasizes that agriculture, food systems, and land management are interdependent, and that sustainable agricultural practices are essential to achieving land degradation neutrality while ensuring food security,

Also recalling decision 26/COP.14 on land tenure, where Parties recognized that responsible land governance is a fundamental component of sustainable land management and is important to addressing desertification, land degradation and drought,

Recognizing that sustainable, socioeconomically viable and resilient agriculture and food systems are grounded in healthy and fertile soils, nutritious, locally adapted and diverse crops, and biodiversity friendly and resilient cropping systems,

Also recognizing that efforts to sustainably enhance the productivity of agricultural lands and that avoiding, reducing and reversing land and soil degradation on existing agricultural lands reduces pressure to convert non-agricultural lands to agriculture,

Further recognizing the value of locally led, contextually relevant, and holistic approaches to sustainable land and soil management that considers where to plant, where not to plant, as well as what to plant; how to manage agricultural lands; and the value of diverse

¹ See <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/>.

cropping systems and crop diversification for simultaneously addressing land degradation and drought resilience,

Acknowledging that the integration of responsible land governance, in line with the Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, in the implementation of activities to combat desertification, land degradation and drought and achieve land degradation neutrality is important for sustainable land management and the achievement of food security,

1. *Encourages* Parties to invest in the development of innovative science-based sustainable solutions and partnerships and in the promotion of nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches, where applicable, in conjunction with local and traditional practices, to avoid, reduce and reverse degradation of agricultural lands to contribute to the achievement of land degradation neutrality;
2. *Also encourages* Parties to make full use of opportunities to improve the health of agricultural lands and soils as a means to simultaneously reduce the degradation of land resources and increase drought resilience, taking into account Target 10 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
3. *Further encourages* Parties to (i) promote integrated water resources management in agriculture to address water stress; (ii) adapt, inter alia, agricultural systems to promote overall water-use efficiency and resilience to water stress; as well as (iii) transition to sustainable food systems;
4. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, and *invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other relevant partners, working within their respective mandates and procedures, to collaborate to provide guidance to Parties on promoting sustainable land use and responsible governance to prevent and reverse the degradation of agricultural lands and soils, and on promoting sustainable and diverse cropping systems and crops to improve food security and nutrition in the context of climate change and environmental degradation;
5. *Decides* that the development of any future approaches to land degradation monitoring and assessment will consider how to more effectively reflect changes in the health of agricultural lands and soils, while avoiding duplication of monitoring and assessment efforts, in collaboration with other relevant entities, as appropriate;
6. *Requests* the secretariat to present a brief report on the implementation of this decision at the seventeenth session of the Committee for Science and Technology.

*8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024*

Decision 20/COP.16

Future functioning of the Science-Policy Interface

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 23/COP.11, 19/COP.13, 19/COP.14, 19/COP.15 and 21/COP.15,

Commending the Science-Policy Interface for its achievements, which have significantly improved the consideration of science-based information at the meetings of the Conference of the Parties and increased the visibility of the priorities of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification within and beyond the Convention stakeholders,

Recognizing the need to enhance the responsiveness and applicability of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification science-policy guidance at the national level,

Also recognizing the importance of further engaging global, regional and national scientific institutions and networks in science-policy work contributing to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Welcoming with appreciation the findings and recommendations of the external assessment of the Science-Policy Interface and the midterm evaluation of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification relevant to the review of the Science-Policy Interface,

Also welcoming with appreciation the outcomes of the high-level interactive dialogue titled “Healing our land through science and Earth Intelligence”, which was held during Science, Technology and Innovation Day as part of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties,

Having reviewed document ICCD/COP(16)/CST/6,

1. *Decides* to establish a standing Science-Policy Interface of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to ensure the delivery of policy-relevant information, knowledge and advice, in a manner that is equitable and transparent, to support the implementation of the Convention, building on the mandate outlined in decisions 23/COP.11 and 19/COP.13 and refined in decisions 19/COP.14 and 19/COP.15, as long as it operates within the approved administrative budget;
2. *Also decides* that the Science-Policy Interface will take the scientific lead in the production of the Global Land Outlook products and similar high-profile science-based flagship reports and *requests* the secretariat to continue to ensure that these products are supported by a comprehensive and innovative communication strategy;
3. *Further decides* that the Science-Policy Interface will support the secretariat and the Global Mechanism in ensuring that other United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification communications products are based on sound science, as appropriate;
4. *Decides* that the Science-Policy Interface will coordinate with other intergovernmental science-policy bodies, including, but not limited to, within their respective mandates, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and with relevant scientific institutions and networks, and *encourages* the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to make available, as appropriate, scientific information to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
5. *Also decides* that, starting at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties in 2026, the future work programmes of the Science-Policy Interface will be fixed for a duration of two intersessional periods (usually four years) and that the 2025–2026 work programme will serve as a transition programme as decided in decision 21/COP.16;
6. *Requests* the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology, with the support of the secretariat and within available resources, to develop and submit, for the consideration of the Committee on Science and Technology at its seventeenth session:

(a) The procedure for receiving and prioritizing requests put to the Science-Policy Interface for its work programme, including thematic assessments forming the basis of Global Land Outlook products or similar flagship reports;

(b) Procedures for the preparation of flagship reports, including scoping of report outlines, which should include provisions for considering Parties' views, thematic assessments of scientific as well as Indigenous and traditional knowledge, independent scientific reviews, and the preparation and approval by the Committee on Science and Technology of summaries for policymakers;

(c) Procedures for the development of fast-track assessments, information products and advice in response to requests from the Bureaux of the Conference of the Parties, the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and the Committee on Science and Technology as well as from the secretariat and the Global Mechanism;

7. *Also requests* the secretariat to provide estimates of the financial implications associated with implementing the procedures listed in paragraph 6 (a)–(c) above;

8. *Further requests* the secretariat to include in the agenda of each intersessional meeting of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention an item for the consideration of priorities for science–policy guidance, with the aim of enabling Parties to provide initiative to and feedback on the work of the Science-Policy Interface, with particular attention to contributing to the content of each flagship report;

9. *Calls upon* the regional groups and Regional Implementation Annexes to support and strengthen existing or newly established regional scientific networks/institutions, and *requests* the secretariat to support the interaction of such regional scientific networks/institutions with the Science-Policy Interface for the provision of scientific advice stemming from its work;

10. *Encourages* Parties to ensure desertification, land degradation and drought issues are integrated into existing or newly established national science-policy committees and to promote their interaction with the regional scientific networks/institutions described in paragraph 9 above;

11. *Requests* the secretariat to identify and organize opportunities for information-sharing and exchanges on the work of the Science-Policy Interface among the members of the Science-Policy Interface, Parties, the scientific community and/or other key stakeholders, which may include informal regional and subregional intersessional dialogues, online briefings, social media posts, and side events on suitable occasions, subject to the availability of resources;

12. *Decides* to renew the Science-Policy Interface membership to comprise thirty members and five observers, taking into account gender and regional and disciplinary balance, subject to the availability of financial resources, which will consist of the following:

(a) Five members of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology;

(b) Fifteen independent scientists, selected through an open call;

(c) Five independent early-career scientists selected from the same open call;

(d) One independent scientist nominated from the same open call by each of the five United Nations regional groups; and

(e) Five observers: four representing the United Nations system organizations and other international organizations selected from an open call, and one representing civil society organizations nominated by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Civil Society Organizations Panel;

13. *Also decides* that, from the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties onwards, all Science-Policy Interface members and observers will be nominated for four years, with the exception of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Committee on Science and Technology, whose election should be performed in line with the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties (decision 1/COP.1) and its amendment (decision 25/COP.10,

paragraph 2, which amended rule 31 of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties);

14. *Further decides* that the Science-Policy Interface will be co-chaired by the Chair of the Committee on Science and Technology and by an independent scientist elected by the independent scientists serving on the Science-Policy Interface one year prior to the end of that independent scientist's four-year membership term, thus allowing the incoming Co-Chair to 'shadow' the outgoing Co-Chair, thereby ensuring continuity in leadership for the next four-year term;

15. *Requests* the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology, with the support of the secretariat, to update the terms of reference for members and observers of the Science-Policy Interface, taking into account the objectives and mandate of the Science-Policy Interface, the purpose, scope and organization of its substantive work, the modalities for the nomination and selection of its members and observers, the organization of its meetings, and any other provisions that may be needed for the effective functioning of the Science-Policy Interface in order to fulfil its mandate under the governance of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology, within the available resources;

16. *Also requests* the secretariat to continue mobilizing voluntary contributions, partnership arrangements and in-kind contributions to support the work of the Science-Policy Interface, and to consider how this external resource mobilization could be further enhanced for the future four-year work programmes of the Science-Policy Interface;

17. *Encourages* Parties, international and financial organizations, private sector entities, scientific institutions and funds, and civil society organizations to consider contributing financially to enable the Science-Policy Interface to carry out its work in an optimal, effective manner;

18. *Requests* the secretariat to prepare a feasibility study to identify ways of ensuring adequate technical support for the Science-Policy Interface, including the possible use of an external technical support unit(s) provided by partners, similar to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and to report the findings of the study to the Committee on Science and Technology at its seventeenth session;

19. *Decides* that the twenty-first session of the Committee on Science and Technology should focus on, inter alia, the review of the procedures and work conducted by the Science-Policy Interface, including its overall achievements since the last review completed at the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties;

20. *Requests* the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology, with the support of the secretariat and input from the Science-Policy Interface, to collaborate with appropriate secretariats of other scientific bodies and panels, acting within their respective mandates, to explore the creation of a Global Science-Policy Alliance on Land;

21. *Also requests* the secretariat to present a report on the implementation of this decision at the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology.

*8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024*

Decision 21/COP.16

Work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2025–2026

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions [23/COP.11](#) and [19/COP.12](#),

Also recalling decision [20/COP.16](#) on improving the efficiency of the Science-Policy Interface,

Further recalling decision [19/COP.13](#) on improving the efficiency of the Science-Policy Interface and decisions [22/COP.13](#) and [20/COP.15](#) on cooperation with other intergovernmental scientific panels and bodies,

Noting with appreciation the work conducted by the Science-Policy Interface in addressing its objectives and implementing the coordination activities included in its work programme for the triennium 2022–2024,

Having considered documents [ICCD/COP\(16\)/CST/6](#) and [ICCD/COP\(16\)/CST/7](#),

1. *Provisionally adopts* the Science-Policy Interface work programme for the biennium 2025–2026, as contained in the annex to this decision, pending its update by the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology with the assistance of the secretariat, according to decision [20/COP.16](#) on the future functioning of the Science-Policy Interface, and following these priorities:

(a) The Science-Policy Interface scientifically leads the third edition of the Global Land Outlook, including the scoping;

(b) The Science-Policy Interface supports the communication products; and

(c) The Science-Policy Interface cooperates with other scientific bodies;

2. *Invites* Parties and technical and scientific institutions to provide, on a voluntary basis, data, expertise, knowledge and technical assistance to support the activities of the Science-Policy Interface for this biennium;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to:

(a) Present a synthesis report on the third edition of the Global Land Outlook at the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology;

(b) Present a list and, where relevant and appropriate, links to fast-track assessments and information products, including, when appropriate, a concise set of policy-oriented recommendations, at the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology;

(c) Present a synthesis report of the Science-Policy Interface coordination activities, including, when appropriate, a summary of key messages relevant to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification drawn from the assessment reports approved in the processes of other intergovernmental science bodies during the 2025–2026 biennium, at the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology.

8th plenary meeting

13 December 2024

Annex

Work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2025–2026

Table 1
Objectives and deliverables of the Science-Policy Interface work programme 2025–2026

<i>Objective/Deliverable</i>	<i>Activities</i>
1. Contribute to the third edition of the Global Land Outlook (GLO 3).	<p>The Science-Policy Interface will, inter alia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Assume a primary role in the quality assurance of GLO 3; (b) Serve on its steering committee; (c) Contribute to the development of GLO procedures; (d) Assist in the GLO costing analysis; (e) Collaborate on GLO communications planning; (f) Contribute, as appropriate, to the GLO 3 as authors; (g) Serve as the GLO 3 review editor; and (h) Contribute to GLO 3 communications and promotion.
2. Produce fast-track assessments and information products in response to requests resulting from the work of the Bureaux of the Conference of the Parties, Committee on Science and Technology and Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention as well as the secretariat and the Global Mechanism.	<p>The Science-Policy Interface will, inter alia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Contribute to the design of procedures for rapid response assessments and the development of information products, including quality assurance; (b) Pilot the development of rapid response information products; and (c) Contribute to communications and promotion.

Table 2
Coordination activities of the Science-Policy Interface work programme 2025–2026

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Sub-activities</i>
1. Cooperate with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) within the framework of its rolling work programme up to 2030 and in accordance with the procedures established in the Memorandum of Cooperation with the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).	<p>The Science-Policy Interface (SPI) will follow up on developments relevant to the UNCCD regarding the IPBES rolling work programme up to 2030, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) A thematic assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food, and health (nexus assessment); (b) A thematic assessment of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformative change and options for achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity (transformative change assessment); and (c) A methodological assessment of integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning and ecological connectivity (spatial planning assessment). <p>The SPI will summarize the key messages relevant to the UNCCD in the nexus and transformative change assessment reports. The SPI will also contribute to the scientific review of the spatial planning assessment if a draft of this report becomes available in time for the SPI to complete the review.</p>

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Sub-activities</i>
2. Cooperate with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) within the framework of its agenda, particularly regarding its seventh assessment cycle (AR7).	The SPI will follow up on developments regarding the IPCC seventh assessment cycle working group assessment reports and special reports. If drafts of AR7 reports relevant to the UNCCD become available in time during the biennium 2025–2026, the SPI will consider contributing to their scientific review.
3. Cooperate with the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils (ITPS) within the framework of its work programme.	The SPI will cooperate with the ITPS on topics to be jointly agreed by the SPI and the ITPS. The SPI should explore with the ITPS potential participation in future symposia relevant to the UNCCD, including the Global Symposium on Soil Sealing and Urban Soils and the Global Symposium on Soil Compaction and Physical Degradation.
4. Cooperate with the International Resource Panel of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-IRP) within the framework of its mission.	The SPI will cooperate with the UNEP-IRP on topics to be jointly agreed by the SPI and the UNEP-IRP, within the framework of its mission to provide independent, coherent and authoritative scientific assessments of policy relevance on the sustainable use of natural resources and, in particular, their environmental impacts over the full life cycle, and to contribute to a better understanding of how to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation.
5. Cooperate with the Global Land Indicators Initiative (GLII) of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, which aims to achieve globally comparable monitoring of land governance by 2030.	The SPI will provide inputs to GLII and UNCCD efforts to ensure harmonization of land governance indicators and land degradation indicators, as relevant to both GLII and the UNCCD.
6. Cooperate with the Integrated Drought Management Programme (IDMP), a joint initiative of the World Meteorological Organization and the Global Water Partnership, on scientific issues related to drought.	The SPI will collaborate with the IDMP, on topics to be jointly agreed by the SPI and the IDMP, on efforts to support governments and other stakeholders at all levels with implementing integrated drought management, by providing technical and management guidance and by sharing scientific knowledge and best practices.

Decision 22/COP.16

Programme of work for the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling articles 23 and 24 of the Convention,

Also recalling decisions 13/COP.8 and 21/COP.11 on reshaping the operations of the Committee on Science and Technology,

Further recalling decision 19/COP.12 on improving the efficiency of the Committee on Science and Technology, particularly paragraph 4 on the organization of its future sessions,

Recalling decision 20/COP.16 on improving the efficiency of the Science-Policy Interface,

Bearing in mind the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, in particular the implementation framework for the Committee on Science and Technology,

Having reviewed the proposed work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2025–2026, as contained in the annex to decision 21/COP.16,

1. *Decides* that the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology should focus, inter alia, on the operationalization of the Science-Policy Interface processes and mechanisms developed and, where requested, tested in the biennium 2025–2026, as well as the objectives and coordination activities identified in the work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2025–2026;
2. *Also decides* that the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology should be organized in such a way as to facilitate a thematic dialogue between the Parties and the Science-Policy Interface regarding the policy implications of the scientific outputs and to enable the formulation of concise policy-relevant recommendations;
3. *Requests* the secretariat to circulate a provisional annotated agenda and appropriate documentation, including a set of clear and concise recommendations and a separate document with draft decisions for consideration by Parties in all six official languages of the United Nations, at least six weeks prior to the seventeenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology.

*8th plenary meeting
13 December 2024*

Decision 23/COP.16

The positive role that measures taken under the Convention can play to address desertification, land degradation and drought as one of the drivers that causes migration

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions [19/COP.13](#), [22/COP.14](#) and [22/COP.15](#),

Also recalling that the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification recognizes that desertification, land degradation and drought are challenges of a global dimension which contribute to and aggravate, inter alia, economic, social and environmental problems, and forced migration and displacement,

Acknowledging that all forms of migration and displacement due to desertification, land degradation and drought are factors to be considered when strengthening urban–rural linkages, as appropriate,

Recognizing that the degradation of all terrestrial ecosystems, which are fundamental for food security and water availability, especially for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, youth, women and any other people whose livelihoods depend on them, can contribute to migration,

Acknowledging the severe impact of forced migration and displacement due to desertification, land degradation and drought, particularly on Indigenous Peoples, local communities and women, as well as children and youth, the elderly, people with disabilities and other people in vulnerable situations,

Noting the progress made to operationalize the Sustainability, Stability and Security (3S) Initiative through the partnership between the Global Mechanism and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, which aims to harness the potential of remittances and diaspora investments to foster climate resilience and sustainable land use in rural Africa,

Welcoming the support from the secretariat and the Global Mechanism for initiatives aimed at addressing desertification, land degradation and drought as one of the drivers of forced migration and displacement,

Also welcoming the collaboration established by the secretariat with United Nations entities and other organizations, including the International Organization for Migration and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat),

1. *Encourages* Parties, in line with national circumstances and priorities, to:

(a) Promote sustainable territorial development, including multilevel, integrated and inclusive governance and planning mechanisms, as appropriate, to strengthen urban–rural linkages, address desertification, land degradation and drought, including sand and dust storms, and create social and economic opportunities, including by supporting sustainable land management, that increase rural resilience and livelihood stability;

(b) Review development policies, including on integrated land use planning, land tenure, agricultural practices, water management, and sustainable and resilient infrastructure, with a view to promoting the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems and land restoration, while respecting social and environmental safeguards;

(c) Implement, including with international support when available, land use planning that integrates sustainable land and ecosystem management, including land restoration, as an essential part of combating desertification, land degradation and drought, including sand and dust storms, at national and subnational levels, by enhancing the understanding of how changing rural–urban interactions affect the livelihoods of low-income people and people in vulnerable situations in both urban and rural contexts;

(d) Support, as appropriate, the implementation of initiatives that address the impact of desertification, land degradation and drought as one of the drivers of migration,

including by restoring degraded land and ecosystems and facilitating access to land tenure, in order to contribute to employment creation in rural areas and support the empowerment of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, people with disabilities, youth and other people in vulnerable situations;

2. *Requests* the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, to:

(a) Continue supporting resource mobilization for integrated initiatives that address the impacts of desertification, land degradation and drought as one of the drivers of migration in order to provide economic opportunities for youth and livelihoods for people in vulnerable situations, including those living in rural areas, and support the empowerment of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and people with disabilities;

(b) Continue assessing and supporting country Parties to implement recommendations and facilitate resource mobilization to leverage expatriate communities and new private sources of investment for desertification, land degradation, land restoration, and drought resilience projects and programmes;

3. *Also requests* the secretariat, in matters pertaining to the Convention, and subject to the availability of resources, to:

(a) Assist Parties, upon request, in strengthening urban-rural linkages through territorial governance systems by utilizing the objectives and guidance from existing frameworks set out in the Primer on Urban-Rural Linkages and Land as a way to scale up sustainable land management and restoration activities and more effective land use planning in order to achieve voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and enhance the implementation of the Convention;

(b) Continue to support subregional, regional and international cooperation and initiatives that aim to promote sustainable land and water management and drought resilience as a means to help mitigate one of the drivers of forced migration and displacement;

(c) Continue to strengthen cooperation with other United Nations agencies and programmes, regional and international organizations, and other stakeholders to support initiatives on the matter, and collaborate and share information in order to foster a better understanding of urban-rural linkages, with a special focus on achieving land degradation neutrality and drought resilience to address the multiple drivers of forced migration and displacement;

(d) Support the scaling up and dissemination of good practices on sustainable land and water management and drought resilience, including through training and capacity-building, identified at the local and subnational levels;

4. *Further requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to present for consideration at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties a report on progress made in implementing this decision.

*9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024*

Decision 24/COP.16

Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Drought

The Conference of the Parties,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought and the options contained therein;
2. *Decides* to continue discussions on the basis of the progress made at the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties in Riyadh, as contained in the annex to this decision, with a view to adopting a decision in this regard at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

Annex

[English Only]

This annex does not reflect consensus among Parties but reflects progress made at COP 16.

Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Drought

The Conference of the Parties,

Deeply concerned about the increase in the intensity, frequency, duration and spatial extent of drought, and that their impacts are exacerbated by unsustainable human activities related to land and water resources management and by climate change, contributing directly and indirectly to large-scale devastating impacts on every continent of the planet over the last decade;

Recognizing the need for decisive action to urgently build drought resilience and the need for proactive integrated and holistic approaches and coordinated action to prevent immense human suffering and ecological damage;

Acknowledging that droughts are closely linked to other environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, desertification, deforestation, and land degradation and sand and dust storms, and that synergistic and integrated action is key to tackling all of them in an effective and efficient manner,

Recognizing that sustainable land management, sustainable integrated water resources management, climate change adaptation, nature-based-solutions and / or ecosystem based approaches are key to building resilience to drought,

Recognizing the need for proactive and integrated drought management approaches including strengthening resilience and enhance adaptation to drought,

Commending the Secretariat, the Global Mechanism and their partners for their efforts to advance policy development, global cooperation, resource mobilization and transformative projects to address drought in the context of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Noting with appreciation the report by the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought, for consideration & decision by Parties as contained in document ICCD/COP/16/20,

Highlighting the political value of UNGA and UNEA resolutions that promote proactive drought management;

1. *Welcomes* the Riyadh Political Declaration of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification at its 16th Session, and its messages on drought and encourages Parties to enhance their measures to proactively mitigate the effects of drought and to integrate measures to address drought in all relevant policies in line with the Riyadh Political Declaration of COP16 of the UNCCD;

2. *Decides* to launch the process of the [global framework] [protocol] [XX] on proactive drought management, and to that end establishes an ad hoc open ended Intergovernmental Working Group under the auspices of the Conference of the Parties to negotiate [XX] with the aim of adopting a [legally binding] [non legally binding] international instrument at the 18th session of the Conference of the Parties.

3. *Decides* that the ad hoc open ended Intergovernmental working group shall be open to all Parties to the UNCCD, international organizations, Civil Society Organizations and other key stakeholders in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties.

4. *Decides* that at its first meeting, the ad hoc open ended working group shall elect 2 Co Chairs, one from a developing country and one from a developed country from amongst its members.

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to convene the first meeting of the ad hoc open ended Intergovernmental working group in the first half of 2025 to prepare for the work of the working group and to discuss in particular timetable and organization of the work.
6. The Executive Secretary shall, at the request of the Co-Chairs, convene five to six in-person meetings of the ad hoc open ended Intergovernmental Working Group, as well as virtual consultations as appropriate, with the ambition of completion three months before COP 18.
7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD to ensure the necessary support of the Secretariat and the Global Mechanism to the ad-hoc open ended intergovernmental working group.
8. Also *decides* that the ad-hoc open ended Intergovernmental Working Group is to develop [XX] on Drought under the UNCCD, which could contain provisions on the following elements, inter alia:
 - (a) To specify the objectives of the [XX]; (, pending [XX])
 - (b) To promote national, regional and international cooperative measures to enhance proactive drought management, especially in developing countries;
 - (c) To develop, update, and implement national drought plans, encompassing the three pillars of integrated drought management, reflecting country- driven approaches to contribute to the objectives of the [XX]; (, pending [XX])
 - (d) To specify national reporting, as appropriate;
 - (e) To periodically assess the progress of the implementation of the [XX], as well as the effectiveness of the [XX] in achieving its objectives; (, pending [XX])
 - (f) To promote scientific and socio-economic assessments related to drought;
 - (g) To increase knowledge through awareness-raising, education and information exchange;
 - (h) To promote cooperation and coordination with relevant regional and international conventions, instruments and organizations, while recognizing their respective mandates, avoiding duplication, and promoting complementarity of action;
 - (i) To encourage action on drought by all stakeholders, including the private sector, and to promote cooperation at the global, regional, national and local levels;
 - (j) To outline potential arrangements for capacity-building and technical cooperation, technology transfer,
 - (k) Arrangements for resource mobilisation and allocation, (Agreed)(l) To promote research and development of sustainable, affordable, innovative and cost-efficient approaches;
 - (m) [[Facilitate implementation and [address] [compliance] with the provision of the [XX].]] (Pending [XX])
[Alt (m) Facilitate implementation of the [XX]] (Pending [XX])
 - (n) To consider any other aspects that the ad hoc open ended Intergovernmental Working Group may consider relevant;
9. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD as a priority action to provide the necessary support to developing countries to allow for effective and meaningful participation in the work of the ad-hoc open-ended Intergovernmental working group meeting
10. *Invites* governments and other stakeholders to provide extra budgetary resources to support the implementation of the present decision;
11. *Calls* on Parties to promote the integration of proactive drought management within the work under the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Environment Assembly and other relevant fora and processes;

12. *Encourages* Parties to adopt integrated, proactive, whole-of-government, whole-of-society approaches, especially inclusive of Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, for the development and implementation of all drought management policies and actions which draws upon the best available science.

13. *Encourages* Parties to take into account the need for gender-responsive drought management policies and measures, strive to ensure the full and effective participation of both women and men in planning, decision-making and implementation at all levels, and enhance the empowerment of women, girls and youth in areas affected by drought.

14. *Invites* regional and multilateral financial institutions, multilateral environmental funds, donor countries and agencies, private sector institutions and all stakeholders, to mobilize and allocate financial resources and enhance capacity building in line with relevant provisions of the UNCCD and technical cooperation for African countries without neglecting other affected developing countries in other regions, to proactively address and mitigate against drought and enhance resilience to its adverse effects.

15. *Encourages* the Global Environment Facility, to enhance efforts to enable United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Parties to implement their national drought plans and drought resilience initiatives, including by:

(a) Request an expansion in GEF-9 (2026-2030) of the objective of GEF-8 land degradation focal area strategy (2022-2026) that focuses on the impacts of drought, and to develop it in a way that supports a more proactive management of drought by beneficiary countries;

(b) Substantial and additional financial resources allocated to the land degradation focal area objective focused on drought to support programming for the proactive management of drought, enhance global and regional cooperation and harness the synergetic potential of addressing drought;

(c) Taking into consideration drought resilience as an element in the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR)

(d) Consider renaming the 'Land Degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation' Focal Area to 'Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought' to better reflect the growing environmental and socioeconomic impacts of drought and the importance of funding for addressing drought.

(e) Consider adding relevant drought-related core indicators to the Global Environmental Benefits of the GEF-9.

16. *Encourages* Parties, with the support of the Global Mechanism, the GEF and other financial institutions, to increase their efforts in national coordination to ensure appropriate allocation of funding towards proactive drought management to secure optimal flows towards existing and future projects.

17. *Also requests* the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, to:

(a) Increase its efforts to support the Parties to implement their national drought plans, in particular by mobilising adequate, predictable and timely financial resources and enhancing their access to finance, notably by supporting the development of tailored financing proposals, at regional and national levels, and through capacity-building, technical assistance and knowledge-sharing.

(b) Collaborate with the Adaptation Fund, the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund and other relevant sources of funding to identify opportunities to mainstream proactive drought management into their project pipeline and achieve synergies with existing and emerging funding streams.

(c) Support the identification of financing needs and opportunities for drought risk reduction and resilience-building activities, notably in line with the article 20 of the Convention.

18. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, to promote regional collaboration on drought policies and strategies to support national action;
19. *Encourages* Parties, with the support of regional and international institutions and other relevant stakeholders, depending on available resources, to establish accessible, inclusive and effective monitoring, early warning and action systems that support drought-resilient ecosystems, societies and economies;
20. *Also requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to continue developing refining and promoting the tools for tracking drought impacts and the communities of learning and practice, including by exploring a feasibility of a merger with other similar communities of learning and practice to advance the co-learning as well as support intra and inter-regional cooperation for drought management; and encourages Parties and other stakeholders to make use of these tools and communities.
21. *Encourages* Parties, regional organizations and other stakeholders working on drought to share their knowledge and experiences of relevant, innovative and transformative tools for inclusion in the Drought Toolbox, and requests the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to further update and enhance the functionality and dissemination of the Drought Toolbox as well as continue related capacity-building;
22. *Encourages* Parties to collaborate with the secretariat of the UNCCD to assess the effectiveness of strategic actions addressing drought;
23. *Requests* the secretariat, in cooperation with relevant partners and processes, to continue to foster global high-level awareness of, and commitment to, enhancing drought resilience.
24. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to leverage synergies with the other Rio Conventions, including through the Rio Convention Joint Liaison Group, and other relevant multilateral agreements aiming to foster solutions to enhance drought resilience;
25. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session on progress made in implementing this decision.

*9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024*

Decision 25/COP.16

Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Gender

The Conference of Parties,

Recalling decisions 7/COP.12, 9/COP.10, 9/COP.11, 30/COP.13, 24/COP.14 and 24/COP.15,

Reaffirming that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, particularly those affected by poverty and vulnerable situations, including Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, will make an important contribution to the effective implementation of the Convention, including the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and to the achievement of the goals and targets contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3 on land degradation neutrality and Sustainable Development Goal targets 5.5 and 5.a,

Also reaffirming that securing women's tenure rights and women's access to and rights to land and other natural resources will be critical for the effective implementation of the Convention,

Recognizing that the active involvement of women and girls in land management is essential for addressing desertification, land degradation and drought and achieving land degradation neutrality,

Reiterating our commitment to the effective implementation of the Gender Action Plan and its associated Roadmap, as well as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Gender Caucus, as appropriate,

Welcoming with appreciation the work done by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism,

Having considered document ICCD/COP(16)/17 and the conclusions contained therein,

Recalling the recommendations contained in paragraphs 185, 186 and 187 of document ICCD/CRIC(21)/11,

1. *Requests* the secretariat to continue to monitor and promote full and effective gender parity across the Convention, and report on this data at every session of the Conference of the Parties, with a view to promoting at least 40 per cent women in each constitutive body and the total delegates to each session of the Conference of the Parties, the Committee on Science and Technology and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;
2. *Invites* Parties to tackle the gender data gap by collecting sex-disaggregated data, through their national statistics offices and systems, on income, poverty levels, land ownership, migration, school enrolment, prevalence of illnesses and other types of relevant data, which may provide a basis for future indicators which will reflect the actual differences in how men and women are affected by drought and land degradation;
3. *Encourages* Parties, in the implementation of the Gender Action Plan, as appropriate, to pay special attention to all forms of discrimination faced by women and girls when planning, designing and implementing gender-responsive policy and programming related to desertification, land degradation and drought, and to submit, on a voluntary basis, reports on the implementation of key national-level activities contained in the Roadmap;
4. *Requests* the secretariat and relevant bodies of the Convention, within their respective mandates, and in collaboration with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies, as appropriate, and subject to availability of funding, to develop effective and meaningful gender-specific indicators for (i) the future Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, following the current 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat

Desertification; and (ii) the monitoring and reporting process associated with the next Strategic Framework in order to close the gender data gap in the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and work towards a better assessment of the differentiated impact of desertification, land degradation and drought on men, women, boys and girls;

5. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, in consultation with potential contributors and partners, to identify and apply, according to the rules of procedure of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, means of further facilitating the capacity-building and effective participation of women delegates, as appropriate, including from Indigenous Peoples, local communities and civil society organizations, including through voluntary earmarked funds under the Special Trust Fund for Participation of Representatives of Eligible Parties in the Sessions of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification for the purpose of increasing the number of women delegates attending and effectively participating in the meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; and *invites* Parties to support such initiatives;

6. *Further requests* the secretariat to continue collaborating with the other Rio conventions and relevant conventions and international organizations, such as the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), to support the implementation of the Gender Action Plan and its Roadmap, as well as on critical issues for advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment, including, but not limited to, access to resources, capacity-building and technologies for sustainable land management and women’s economic empowerment;

7. *Requests* the secretariat to continue collaborating with the other Rio conventions and relevant conventions and international organizations, subject to the availability of resources, on advocacy for the recognition and expansion of women’s land rights, as appropriate, in particular for Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, building on the high-level advocacy and global visibility achieved by the “Her Land. Her Rights.” campaign, as well as the collaborative momentum generated by recent workshops focused on leveraging synergies between the Rio conventions and other key actors on women’s land rights;

8. *Also requests* the secretariat to facilitate the convening of the Gender Caucus as part of the official programme of work of the Conference of the Parties and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention on an annual basis, as well as informal sessions, as a vehicle for identifying bottlenecks in the implementation of the Gender Action Plan and for sharing best practices in advancing gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment, and encouraging the participation and engagement of women and girls from Indigenous Peoples, local communities, youth and civil society organizations;

9. *Further requests* the Global Mechanism to continue to establish, strengthen and evaluate partnerships to design flagship initiatives and projects that promote and integrate gender equality and women’s empowerment in the establishment of land tenure, addressing of desertification, land degradation and drought, and achievement of land degradation neutrality;

10. *Requests* the secretariat to report on the progress made in implementing this decision to the Conference of Parties at its seventeenth session.

*9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024*

Decision 26/COP.16

Report from the Gender Caucus

The Conference of the Parties,

1. *Takes note* of the report from the Gender Caucus and its contributions to the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties;
2. *Decides* to include the report from the Gender Caucus as an annex to the proceedings (part one) of the report of the Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session.

9th plenary meeting

14 December 2024

Decision 27/COP.16

Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Sand and dust storms

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 26/COP.15, 25/COP.14 and 31/COP.13,

Also recalling the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, United Nations Environment Assembly resolutions 2/21, 4/10 and 6/7, and United Nations General Assembly resolutions 70/195, 71/219, 72/225, 73/237, 74/226, 75/222, 76/211, 77/171 and 78/158,

Noting that sand and dust storms are a global challenge with impacts on, inter alia, infrastructure, transport, communications, agriculture, ecosystems and human health, and transboundary impacts that require institutional, technical and scientific responses,

Recognizing that desertification, land degradation and drought, exacerbated by climate change, as well as unsustainable land and water management practices, among other factors, have increased the frequency, intensity and duration of sand and dust storms over the last decade, and that effective sand and dust storm management responses must address both (i) natural sources, in terms of risk mitigation, adaptation, response and recovery for affected communities, ecosystems and economic sectors; and (ii) anthropogenic sources, where source prevention and reduction are key strategic priorities,

Acknowledging that sustainable land and water management, agroforestry, reforestation and land restoration practices, as well as nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches and other activities for combatting desertification, land degradation and drought, are a key component of proactive efforts to mitigate the negative effects of sand and dust storms, and adapt and build resilience to them,

Underscoring that efforts to combat the negative impacts of sand and dust storms could be strengthened by enhancing international cooperation, i.e. leveraging synergies amongst relevant international agreements and mechanisms, as appropriate, as well as national and regional coordination tools and instruments developed to implement them,

Welcoming the United Nations General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/78/314) declaring the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (2025–2034) with the aim of enhancing international and regional cooperation and supporting and scaling up efforts to prevent, halt and mitigate the negative effects of sand and dust storms, especially on affected countries,

Also welcoming the United Nations General Assembly resolution 77/294, in which 12 July was proclaimed as International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms to further raise global awareness of sand and dust storms,

Taking note of the Samarkand Declaration on Sand and Dust Storms presented during the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from 13 to 17 November 2023, and *inviting* Parties to consider joining this Declaration,

Noting the convening and contribution of the second International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, held in Tehran, Iran, between 9 and 10 September 2023,

Acknowledging that a proactive approach to enhancing cooperation and coordination at global, regional and subregional levels is required to address the causes and negative impacts of sand and dust storms while promoting and supporting initiatives to streamline comprehensive sand and dust storm preparedness that reduces the risks and boosts the resilience of affected and vulnerable communities and ecosystems,

Stressing the importance of science–policy dialogues and knowledge-based approaches and policies to contribute to the development of further guidance and policies to

address sand and dust storms, including through the strengthening and enhancement of early warning systems,

Welcoming the Guideline on the Integration of Sand and Dust Storm Management into Key Policy Areas, the Technical Brief on the Global Sand and Dust Storm Source Base-map, and the publication of relevant data sets for sand and dust storm source identification,

1. *Urges* Parties to:

(a) Enhance the integration and coherence of sand and dust storm impact mitigation measures, including those addressing anthropogenic sources, in related policy areas, at national and subnational levels, with a view to advancing integrated land use planning and landscape management through resource mobilization as well as through the development of projects and programmes financed by multilateral and bilateral donors;

(b) Strengthen multi-stakeholder platforms and regional initiatives that contribute to addressing sand and dust storms linked to desertification, land degradation and drought, including through enhanced mitigation of their negative impacts and source area monitoring, taking note of the regional and subregional nature of the impacts and with particular attention paid to involving Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, youth and others in vulnerable situations, as well as landowners and land users;

(c) Make use of available knowledge, tools and resources, including the Sand and Dust Storms Compendium: Information and Guidance on Assessing and Addressing the Risks, the Sand and Dust Storms Toolbox, the Global Sand and Dust Storm Source Base-map and Visualization Tool, and the Guideline on the Integration of Sand and Dust Storm Management into Key Policy Areas;

2. *Invites* the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms and other relevant entities to continue their collaboration to assist affected country Parties in developing and implementing national and regional policies and action plans on sand and dust storms, including early warning, risk and vulnerability assessments, and source mitigation;

3. *Also invites* regional and multilateral financial institutions, technical agencies and organizations, institutions and other relevant stakeholders to provide technical and financial support to source and affected country Parties to design and implement national and regional policies and action plans, including early warning systems, in order to cope with sand and dust storms linked to desertification, land degradation and drought, and achieve their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets;

4. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, in matters pertaining to the Convention, and subject to the availability of resources, to continue:

(a) Actively participating in the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms to enhance cooperation and collaboration with United Nations agencies, organizations and treaties, address sand and dust storm source mitigation, including in the work of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, and develop a global implementation initiative on sand and dust storms to define and address, in particular, anthropogenic sand and dust storm sources and data information gaps as well as engage in advocacy, awareness-raising and other activities for the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (2025–2034);

(b) Promoting and refining the Sand and Dust Storms Toolbox, including the Global Sand and Dust Storm Source Base-map and other geographic information system platforms, data and tools, where feasible, and supporting the capacity of country Parties to use these resources;

(c) Continue developing a comprehensive inventory of existing sand and dust storm-related tools, technologies, and best practice guidelines, making this information readily available to Parties through the Sand and Dust Storms Toolbox, and supporting its broad dissemination;

(d) Supporting countries, regions and subregions to develop sand and dust storm strategies and action plans as well as implement and finance sand and dust storm-related

projects and programmes, including the in-depth technical studies to support knowledge and the science-based management of sand and dust storms in clear terms and procedures;

5. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to:

(a) Present a report on the implementation efforts relevant to this decision at future sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;

(b) Present a report on policy issues relevant to this decision to the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session.

9th plenary meeting

14 December 2024

Decision 28/COP.16

Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Land tenure

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 16/COP.14, 26/COP.14 and 27/COP.15, which stress the importance of land tenure security within the framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Also recalling targets on responsible land governance, secure land tenure and access to natural resources, specifically for women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, contained in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted by the fifteenth session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,

Recognizing that tenure insecurity remains a significant development challenge for many countries and requires policy and operational frameworks that mobilize stakeholders and finance, create enduring partnerships, and harness synergies that support a more sustainable, equitable and virtuous cycle of land governance, use and management,

Also recognizing that tenure security empowers land users to be agents of change by incentivizing their adoption of and investment in long-term sustainable land and water management, drought resilience-building, and restoration practices, and supports smallholder farmers, pastoralists and other rural groups in accessing knowledge and technologies, extension services, credit and markets,

Noting that responsible and inclusive land governance and improved land tenure security are among the key enabling factors to leverage synergies and cooperation to support the implementation of the Rio conventions, within their respective mandates and, as relevant, with a view to accelerating progress of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals,

Taking note of the findings and recommendations of the midterm evaluation of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, which highlighted the importance of women’s economic empowerment and equal land use rights as critical enablers for land degradation neutrality and gender equality,

Also taking note of the findings and recommendations of the midterm evaluation of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, which highlighted the importance of integrating decisions by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification into national implementation,

Further taking note that the Gender Action Plan of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification highlights the strengthening of women’s land rights and access to natural resources as a priority for action,

Welcoming the work of the Global Mechanism in developing the business case for responsible and sustainable public and private investments in land tenure, and the checklist to guide the integration of land tenure into projects and programmes, where appropriate,

Acknowledging that additional work needs to be carried out, either within policy or programming efforts, to integrate land tenure into the implementation of the Convention, such as land degradation neutrality target-setting efforts, and land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes, where appropriate,

1. *Encourages* Parties to continue integrating land tenure security in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security into the implementation of the Convention;
2. *Invites* Parties to integrate land tenure into their plans and activities to combat desertification, land degradation and drought with the aim of proactively collecting data on legitimate land tenure rights in priority areas of voluntary land degradation neutrality;

3. *Also invites* Parties to consider nominating a focal point for land tenure to coordinate the integration of land tenure into their plans and activities, where applicable, subject to national legislation and the availability of financial resources of the secretariat, and without prejudice to existing focal point frameworks within the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
4. *Encourages* Parties to promote inclusive and participatory national-level dialogues, including partnering with civil society organizations and relevant actors, to enhance the implementation of decisions 26/COP.14 and 27/COP.15, building on all forms of available knowledge, with the aim of improving the livelihoods of people in vulnerable situations, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, those living in rural areas, women, youth and people with disabilities;
5. *Calls upon* the secretariat and Parties to use the lessons learned from past consultations to refine the methodology to design future national consultations, as requested, that, whenever possible, (i) build on existing multi-stakeholder formats, (ii) include a series of dialogues at different levels from local to national, and (iii) discuss the concept of legitimate land tenure rights, including customary rights, in the respective national context, and in accordance with national legal frameworks;
6. *Urges* Parties to explore ways and means to effectively integrate land tenure information into their capacity development efforts and data analytic tools for evidence-based decision-making to support land degradation neutrality implementation through integrated land-use planning;
7. *Invites* the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality initiative, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Committee on World Food Security and other relevant stakeholders to support these efforts from Parties by providing relevant data, tools, approaches and capacity development for evidence-based decision-making support, including, where appropriate, innovative digital approaches to map legitimate land tenure rights, including customary rights consistent with national legal frameworks, and upon request for support from Parties;
8. *Also invites* developed country Parties and other Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations, and private sector institutions to support (i) the design and implementation of land tenure administration systems to improve responsible governance of tenure, taking into account the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, and (ii) the delivery of requested national consultations for integrating land tenure into land degradation neutrality;
9. *Reiterates the request* to the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, pursuant to decision 27/COP.15, and subject to the availability of resources, to continue their efforts to support Parties that wish to integrate land tenure considerations into the implementation of the Convention and land degradation neutrality initiatives, and specifically to:
 - (a) Use the lessons learned from the first phase of national consultations to organize and deliver further consultations to assist Parties with the ways and means to integrate land tenure into land degradation neutrality and related targets, plans, projects and programmes;
 - (b) Build on the business case and implement the tenure checklist to identify financing opportunities and sustainable public and private investments to strengthen land governance and land tenure within the context of activities to combat desertification, land degradation and drought, in collaboration with relevant partners and financing institutions, in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, and social and environmental safeguards, with the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and youth, and communicate these financing opportunities to Parties;
 - (c) Communicate the business case, the checklist and these financing opportunities to parties, with the aim of, inter alia, providing specific guidance to requesting Parties on how to use these documents when updating their national land degradation neutrality plans, considering land tenure issues and following a do-no harm approach that safeguards people's legitimate land tenure rights, consistent with national legal frameworks;

(d) Conduct awareness-raising actions on responsible land governance for combating desertification, land degradation and drought, and engage with Parties, other relevant United Nations organizations, civil society organizations, and other key partners, taking into account cultural circumstances, where appropriate, to reach stakeholders from global to local level with the aim of improving the livelihoods of people in vulnerable situations, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, those living in rural areas, women, youth and people with disabilities;

(e) Explore existing global indicators and data sets relevant to land governance, including data on Indigenous Peoples, local communities and women's land rights and, when appropriate, engage with relevant partners and institutions to pilot options to include potential indicators in future United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting processes, with a view to avoiding duplication of efforts and ensuring the widest reach among different national contexts;

(f) Make available relevant documents on land tenure and desertification, land degradation and drought in a land tenure toolbox on the website of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to provide easy access for stakeholders to, inter alia, decisions by the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the technical guide on the integration of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security into the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the mapping of financing institutions, the business case, the tenure checklist, policy briefs and other relevant documents;

10. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism and invites the implementing agencies of the Global Environment Facility to carry out awareness-raising actions on their existing accountability and grievance mechanisms related to land tenure to have the widest reach among all stakeholders concerned by their activities in order to combat desertification, land degradation and drought and achieve land degradation neutrality, and *invites* Parties to consider establishing and/or strengthening their respective mechanisms within the national and subnational jurisdictions for their national activities to combat desertification, land degradation and drought as appropriate;

11. *Also requests* the secretariat to:

(a) Present a report on the implementation efforts relevant to this decision at the twenty-third session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;

(b) Present a report on policy issues relevant to this decision to the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session.

9th plenary meeting

14 December 2024

Decision 29/COP.16

Rangelands and pastoralists

The Conference of the Parties:

Recognizing that rangelands cover over half of the Earth's terrestrial surface, are the dominant land use in the world's drylands, and operate as complex social-ecological systems, which are being significantly threatened by drought, land use change and unsustainable land management as a result of underinvestment and a lack of understanding of their extent, functioning, value, and diversity,

Also recognizing that rangelands provide crucial ecosystem goods and services, especially soil and water conservation, that are essential for the livelihoods, resilience and cultural identity of millions of pastoralists and countless rangeland communities that depend on them for livestock production as well as the provision of global benefits, such as biodiversity habitat and climate change adaptation and mitigation,

Acknowledging the multifaceted importance of rangelands for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, youth and other people in vulnerable situations, emphasizing the need for sustainable land and water management practices to support their livelihoods, cultures and resilience,

Welcoming the Global Land Outlook: Thematic Report on Rangelands and Pastoralists, launched on 21 May 2024 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, which highlights the importance of healthy rangelands for environmental sustainability and socio-economic development,

Recalling the United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 4/15 titled "Innovations in sustainable rangelands and pastoralism",

Also recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 76/253, which declared 2026 the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists with the aim of raising awareness of and drawing attention to the relevance of the sustainable management of rangelands and pastoralism and its contribution to achieving sustainable development,

Appreciating the potential synergies with the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030) and multilateral frameworks and processes relevant to rangelands and pastoralism,

1. *Invites* Parties to prioritize policies and investments for the sustainable management of rangelands, recognizing their essential role in addressing key challenges related to food insecurity, desertification, land degradation and drought, biodiversity loss and climate change;
2. *Also invites* Parties to foster an enabling environment for responsible and inclusive governance that promotes the sustainable land management, restoration and conservation of rangelands as part of their efforts to achieve sustainable development and land degradation neutrality;
3. *Further invites* Parties to improve tenure security in rangelands in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security;
4. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, to strengthen and contribute to public–private partnerships with a view to implementing transformative projects and programmes that engage with relevant stakeholders and ongoing initiatives that support rangeland health and pastoralist resilience;
5. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to support Parties with awareness-raising, capacity-building and resource mobilization through inclusive, community-based and participatory approaches that meaningfully engage pastoralist and other rangeland communities, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities;
6. *Further requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, and in cooperation with relevant intergovernmental organizations, to contribute

to the development of initiatives for sustainable rangeland management, restoration and conservation through, *inter alia*, multi-stakeholder dialogues and national consultations;

7. *Requests* the secretariat to report on progress made to the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session.

9th plenary meeting

14 December 2024

Decision 30/COP.16

Special segment

The Conference of the Parties,

Welcoming the organization of the high-level ministerial dialogues on 2 and 3 December 2024,

Also welcoming the organization of the high-level interactive dialogues on 5, 6 and 9 December 2024,

Further welcoming the announcement by the President of the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session on the launch of the Riyadh Action Agenda, the legacy titled Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership, and the generous contribution of the Arab Coordination Group,

1. *Takes note* of the Chairpersons' summaries with appreciation and gratitude;
2. *Decides* to include the Chairpersons' summaries as annexes to the proceedings (part one) of the report of the Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session.

9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024

Decision 31/COP.16

Riyadh Political Declaration

The Conference of the Parties,

1. *Welcomes* the “Riyadh Political Declaration of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification at its sixteenth session” with appreciation;
2. *Decides* to include the “Riyadh Political Declaration of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification at its sixteenth session” as an annex to the proceedings (part one) of the report of the Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session.

*9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024*

Decision 32/COP.16

Declaration of civil society organizations attending the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties

The Conference of the Parties,

Having heard the presentation of the Declaration made by the representative of the civil society organizations attending the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties,

Recalling the discussions held during the two Open Dialogue Sessions with civil society organizations on 5 December 2024 and 9 December 2024,

1. *Takes note* with appreciation of the Declaration;
2. *Decides* to include the Declaration as an annex to the proceedings (part one) of the report of the Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session.

*9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024*

Decision 33/COP.16

Declaration of the Youth Forum

The Conference of the Parties,

1. *Welcomes* the organization of the Youth Forum, which took place from 5–7 December 2024, as a way to foster the involvement of future generations in the implementation of the Convention;
2. *Also welcomes* the organization of Peoples’ Day and the events focusing on youth, including the high-level event “Youth Action for Land: Working for Resilient and Sustainable Futures”;
3. *Takes note* of the Declaration of the Youth Forum with appreciation;
4. *Decides* to include the Declaration of the Youth Forum as an annex to the proceedings (part one) of the report of the Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session.

*9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024*

Decision 34/COP.16

Declaration of the Indigenous Peoples

The Conference of the Parties,

1. *Welcomes* the organization of Peoples' Day and the relevant events focusing on Indigenous Peoples, including the high-level event titled "Indigenous Peoples for Land";
2. *Takes note* of the Declaration of the Indigenous Peoples with appreciation;
3. *Decides* to include the Declaration of the Indigenous Peoples as an annex to the proceedings (part one) of the report of the Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session.

9th plenary meeting

14 December 2024

Decision 35/COP.16

Report from the Business for Land Forum

The Conference of the Parties,

1. *Welcomes* the contributions from the Business for Land Forum and *takes note* of its report with appreciation;
2. *Decides* to include the report from the Business for Land Forum as an annex to the proceedings (part one) of the report of the Conference of the Parties on its sixteenth session.

9th plenary meeting

14 December 2024

Decision 36/COP.16

Programme of work for the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 22 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification,

Also recalling decisions 9/COP.1, 2/COP.2, 4/COP.3, 5/COP.4, 5/COP.5, 29/COP.6, 30/COP.7, 27/COP.8, 35/COP.9, 38/COP.10, 39/COP.11, 34/COP.12, 35/COP.13, 32/COP.14 and 33/COP.15 on its programme of work,

Taking into consideration the relevant decisions taken by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session,

1. *Decides* to include the following items on the agenda of its seventeenth session and, if necessary, its eighteenth session:

(a) 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification:

(i) Report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and its recommendations to the Conference of the Parties;

(ii) Enhancing the implementation of the Convention and its 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

(iii) Review of the report of the Committee on Science and Technology and its recommendations to the Conference of the Parties;

(b) Promoting and strengthening relationships with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies;

(c) Policy frameworks and thematic issues;

(d) Programme and budget for the biennium 2027–2028;

(e) Procedural matters:

(i) Participation and involvement of civil society organizations in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

(ii) Participation and involvement of the private sector in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and business engagement strategy;

2. *Also decides* to include interactive dialogue sessions with relevant stakeholders, including ministers, civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, the business community, the scientific community and members of parliament, on agenda items of relevance to them;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to prepare an annotated provisional agenda, in agreement with the President of the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session, taking into consideration provisions contained in the relevant decisions taken during that session;

4. *Also requests* the secretariat to circulate, in all official languages at least six weeks prior to the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties, appropriate documentation for that session, reflecting the decisions contained in operative paragraphs 1 and 2 above;

5. *Further requests* the secretariat to circulate, in all official languages at least six weeks prior to the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties, one document for each governing body (Conference of the Parties, Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, Committee on Science and Technology) with all respective draft decisions prepared for Parties' consideration and further adoption and to ensure that the draft decisions are clearly written and properly formatted.

9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024

Decision 37/COP.16

Credentials of delegations

The Conference of the Parties,

Having considered document [ICCD/COP\(16\)/23](#) on the credentials of delegations and the recommendation contained therein,

Decides to approve the report.

8th plenary meeting

13 December 2024

Resolution 1/COP.16

Expression of gratitude to the Government and People of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The Conference of the Parties,

Having met in Riyadh, from 2 to 13 December 2024, at the invitation of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,

1. *Expresses* its profound gratitude to the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for having made it possible for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to be held in Riyadh and for the excellent facilities placed at its disposal;
2. *Requests* the Government to convey to the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia the profound gratitude of the Parties to the Convention for the hospitality and warm welcome extended to the participants.

9th plenary meeting
14 December 2024
