



**Convention to Combat
Desertification**

Distr.: Limited
14 December 2024

Original: English

Conference of the Parties

Sixteenth session

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2–13 December 2024

Agenda item 4

Policy frameworks and thematic issues, including new emerging issues: grassland and rangeland

**Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues:
Drought**

**Draft decision submitted by the Chairperson of the Committee of the
Whole**

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 the progress made at COP 16 in Riyadh as contained in the Annex to this decision, with a view to adopting a decision in this regard in COP 17.

* Unofficial unedited copy for information purposes only.

Annex:

This Annex does not reflect consensus among Parties but reflects progress made in COP16.

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.

15. *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.

16. *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.

17. *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;
18. *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;
19. *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.
20. *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;
21. *Encourages* Parties to collaborate with the secretariat of the UNCCD to assess the effectiveness of strategic actions addressing drought;
22. *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.
23. *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;
24. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session.