

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 website¹ 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;

¹ 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