

For immediate release

Media Advisory

Panama to host major UN meeting on desertification, land degradation and drought

**23rd Committee to Review the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC23) to convene in
Panama City, Panama, 1-5 December 2025**

CRIC23 emblem highlights Panama's Nature Pledge on land, climate, and biodiversity

Bonn/Panama City, 15 September 2025 – Representatives of 196 countries and the European Union will convene in Panama from 1-5 December 2025 to review their efforts against desertification, land degradation and drought as Parties to the only legally binding global treaty on the matter—one of the three Rio Conventions, alongside biodiversity and climate.

The 23rd session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 23) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) will bring together around 500 delegates from governments, civil society, and academia to assess progress in advancing the Convention's objectives.

A signatory to UNCCD since 1996, Panama has committed to achieve Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030, identified 31 critical hotspots, and is advancing reforestation and Dry Corridor adaptation programmes—underlining its role as regional host. In 2023, the country faced its driest year on record, when water shortages disrupted traffic through the Panama Canal and highlighted how local drought can trigger global consequences.

Juan Carlos Navarro, Minister of Environment of Panama, stated: “Never before has a country hosted, in the same year, the three major United Nations environmental conventions—on climate action, biodiversity, desertification, and sustainable land management. With this, Panama reaffirms its commitment to conserving nature and advancing sustainable development, while once again calling for the integrated management of these three pillars in order to confront the planetary crisis and build a resilient future for our communities.”

UNCCD Executive Secretary Yasmine Fouad said: “Severe droughts and the loss of fertile land are already straining food and energy production, uprooting rural communities, and threatening the livelihoods of millions. Nowhere is this more evident than in Latin America and the Caribbean, a region that is experiencing severe land degradation, affecting at least 20 per cent of its total area. By hosting CRIC23, Panama is placing itself at the center of collective response—from its national Nature Pledge to

the regional Dry Corridor Initiative — and helping to build the momentum for the urgent need for drought resilience and land restoration worldwide.”

This CRIC will also place particular emphasis on gender. Women are among the hardest hit by land degradation, facing the daily consequences of degraded soils and drought, while remaining at the forefront of sustaining families and providing food.

Recent UNCCD data show the urgency of taking action: the world is losing nearly 100 million hectares of healthy land annually and over 70% of land area has experienced increased aridity in the past 30 years, undermining the planet’s capacity to sustain a growing population. The world needs USD 1 billion daily between now and 2030 to meet global land restoration targets and combat desertification and drought -a fraction of what is destined to [perverse incentives](#) and investments.

CRIC23 will be held at the Panama Convention Center, Panama City. Parties will review progress and provide recommendations towards achieving global targets to prevent and reverse land degradation and to build drought resilience by 2030. Additionally, CRIC23 will discuss post-2030 strategic framework and convene key stakeholders, from women and youth to Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

The CRIC23 logo is inspired by the Dove flower (*Peristeria elata*), Panama’s national flower. At its center, the outline of a white dove in flight emerges—a universal symbol of peace and unity. Today, this delicate flower is increasingly threatened by desertification in its natural habitats, underscoring the urgent need to protect biodiversity and restore our soils. The CRIC23 emblem further highlights Panama’s Nature Pledge, which unites the country’s commitments on land, climate, and biodiversity in a single vision. The logo also honors Panama’s natural and cultural heritage and reflects the nation’s resolve to build a future that is resilient, sustainable, and in harmony with nature.

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Notes to Editors

Accredited media representatives are invited to attend and report on CRIC23 and associated events.

Daily highlights of CRIC23 will be provided by the IISD *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*

Side events schedule is available here: <https://www.unccd.int/cric23/side-events>

Visual assets about CRIC23 and the [UNCCD Data Dashboard](#) are available here: <https://trello.com/b/zq0kxTkK/unccd-cric23-panama-2025>

Online registration for representatives from the media will be available from 15 September 2025 here: <https://indico.un.org/e/unccd-cric23> (click on “Media Registration”).

To register, please provide the following documents:

- One recent passport-sized photograph;
- A valid press card;

- A copy (picture and signature pages) of the national passport (for foreign journalists) or national identity card (for local applicants);
- A letter of introduction on an official letterhead from the bureau chief, media house or publisher.
- Freelance journalists must submit a letter from the media organization assigning them to cover the conference.

After this date, on-site registration will take place at the Accreditation and Registration Centre at the Panama Convention Center (*Calle General Juan D. Perón, Amador, Panama City*) during official registration hours.

Journalists who register online will be able to collect their accreditation at the Panama Convention Center on presentation of a valid press card and an identity document.

For more information on the regulations governing visa applications and the introduction of reporting material into Panama please consult: <https://es.tourismpanama.com/planea-tus-vacaciones/requisitos-de-viaje/>

For inquiries about media accreditation or coverage of the event, please contact: press@unccd.int

A dedicated press and media working space will be available at the conference venue.

Additional information and media updates on the Convention and CRIC 23 will be available on the UNCCD website: <https://www.unccd.int/cric23>

About UNCCD

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the global vision and voice for land. We unite governments, scientists, policymakers, private sector and communities around a shared vision and global action to restore and manage the world's land for the sustainability of humanity and the planet. Much more than an international treaty signed by 197 Parties, UNCCD is a multilateral commitment to mitigating today's impacts of land degradation and advancing tomorrow's land stewardship in order to provide food, water, shelter and economic opportunity to all people in an equitable and inclusive manner.
