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Convention to Combat Desertification

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

Draft decisions for consideration at the twenty-fourth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

Note by the secretariat

Summary

By its decision 36/COP.16, paragraph 5, the Conference of the Parties (COP) requested the secretariat to circulate, in all official languages at least six weeks prior to the seventeenth session of the COP, one document for each governing body with all draft decisions prepared for Parties for consideration at the COP and to ensure that draft decisions are clearly written and properly formatted.

Accordingly, this document includes all substantive draft decisions proposed by the secretariat that will serve as a starting point for discussion and further negotiation by the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) contact group. It is to be noted that the draft decision relating to document ICCD/CRIC(24)/4-ICCD/COP(17)/CST/7 titled “Improving procedures for the communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties” will be subject to negotiations in a joint contact group of the CRIC and the Committee on Science and Technology.



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I. Progress made in the mobilization of resources and financial flows for the implementation of the Convention and Sustainable Development Goal 15.3 matters

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 3/COP.15 on the integration of Sustainable Development Goal 15, related target 15.3 and land degradation neutrality and decision 13/COP.15 on progress made in the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention, as well as decisions 3/COP.16, 6/COP.16, 12/COP.16 and 27/COP.16 and the related decisions on the participation and involvement of the private sector in meetings and processes of the Convention and the business engagement strategy,

Concerned by the persistent and structural gap between the financial resources required to implement the Convention and those currently available, and *emphasizing* that the cost of inaction on desertification, land degradation and drought far exceeds the investment required to address them,

Welcoming the progress made under the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme 2.0, the development of a project preparation pipeline, the Business4Land Initiative, the Drought Resilience Investment Facility, the International Drought Resilience Alliance, the Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership, the Peace Forest Initiative, the development of a global implementation initiative on sand and dust storms, and the financing toolbox,

Noting with appreciation the work of country Parties participating in the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme 2.0 and the support provided by technical and financial partners, and *noting* that additional country Parties are ready to accelerate the refinement of their voluntary targets,

Underlining the need to mobilize additional, predictable and sustained financing from all sources, public and private, domestic and international, including through innovative financing mechanisms, in line with the UNCCD financial needs assessment,

Recognizing that a paradigm shift in financing is necessary, possible and already taking shape, but requires concerted political commitment, cross-sectoral policy coherence and the deployment of incentives-based, performance-linked and blended finance instruments at scale,

Concerned that demand from country Parties for technical assistance, project preparation support and resource mobilization guidance continues to outstrip the capacity currently available to meet it,

1. *Invites* Parties to consider a comprehensive and transformational approach to financing the implementation of the Convention, including through: the consideration of subsidy regimes and the adoption of incentive-based fiscal instruments; the integration of land degradation neutrality and drought-resilience objectives into national and subnational fiscal frameworks and development plans; the scaling of performance-based instruments, including sustainability-linked bonds and loans and debt-for-nature swaps; the expansion of blended finance to de-risk private investment; and the recognition of land and drought resilience as a strategic asset class by development finance institutions, building on the 2025 Multilateral Development Bank Common Nature Finance Taxonomy;
2. *Encourages* Parties that wish to do so to refine their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets to ensure that they are specific, time-bound, policy-coherent, quantitative, spatially explicit, gender-responsive and fully integrated into national and sub-national planning frameworks, including integrated land-use planning frameworks, and to seek complementarity with land-based sustainability targets set by private sector corporations;
3. *Also encourages* Parties' efforts to translate the recommendations contained in their national drought plans and other drought-related policy instruments into concrete investment plans, programmes and projects, and to integrate these into national development plans and budgetary frameworks;

4. *Invites* Parties to support the establishment and operationalization of the Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership, including its Readiness Facility, Investment Facility and Knowledge Platform, and to engage with the Partnership in the development of investable projects for drought resilience;
5. *Calls on* Parties to support the advancement of the second phase of the Peace Forest Initiative (2026–2030) and the development of its fragility financing mechanism for environmental restoration in fragile and conflict-affected contexts;
6. *Invites* Parties to consider the adoption of the global implementation initiative on sand and dust storms, focused on the Convention’s mandate of land and source management;
7. *Calls on* Parties in a position to do so to invest in Global Mechanism-developed initiatives and consider strengthening the operational capacity of the Global Mechanism to allow it to respond to growing demand from country Parties;

Action by the Global Mechanism

8. *Requests* the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of financial resources, to support the roll-out of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme 2.0 to additional country Parties, giving priority to those currently on the waiting list;
9. *Invites* the Global Mechanism to intensify its collaboration with bilateral partners, regional organizations and multilateral development banks with a view to developing multi-country, large-scale projects and programmes addressing (i) desertification, land degradation and drought; (ii) the Peace Forest Initiative in fragile and conflict-affected contexts; and (iii) sand and dust storms, and to expand its geographic and thematic flagship portfolio;
10. *Requests* the Global Mechanism, 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 and deploy and enhance its financing toolbox, including guidance on national needs assessments, innovative financial instruments, de-risking mechanisms, and blended finance approaches;
 - (b) Incorporate the results of the 2026 reporting cycle and related case studies into the financing toolbox;
 - (c) Support country Parties in forging targeted partnerships to mobilize technical and financial support for projects and programmes on drought resilience, and to leverage finance through relevant mechanisms and initiatives, including the Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership and the International Drought Resilience Alliance;
 - (d) Advance innovative financing mechanisms for land restoration and drought resilience, including the Drought Resilience Investment Facility, resilience credits, parametric and index-based insurance products, and performance-based financing instruments, and explore additional opportunities for emerging thematic priorities;
 - (e) Contribute to building country Parties’ capacities to strengthen, in their national context, synergies and coordination across relevant sectors, including finance and planning, agriculture, energy, water, infrastructure development and disaster-risk management;
 - (f) Promote increased coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of UNCCD enabling activities through a more programmatic approach, in collaboration with country Parties, the Global Environment Facility Secretariat and the Global Environment Facility agencies;
 - (g) Continue to (i) strengthen partnerships in order to grow a geographically balanced project preparation pipeline through a partnership model, facilitating gender-responsive, large-scale integrated landscape investment programmes; and (ii) scope additional geographic and thematic flagships, including for rangelands and food security, the global implementation initiative on sand and dust storms and the Peace Forest Initiative;
 - (h) Demonstrate integrated decision-support tools that link land degradation neutrality target-setting and drought resilience with investment decision-making;

(i) Accelerate efforts to support private sector engagement and promote innovation, including through the implementation of the Private Sector Engagement Strategy 2021–2030 and the further development of the Business4Land Initiative;

(j) Continue the development and operationalization of the global implementation initiative on sand and dust storms, working with the secretariat and interested Parties and partners, through support for land-focused monitoring, source stabilization, science–policy integration, and coordination and capacity-building, including transboundary cooperation, in support of the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (2025–2034);

(k) Advance the second phase of the Peace Forest Initiative (2026–2030), including the development of a fragility financing mechanism for environmental restoration in fragile and conflict-affected contexts and the expansion of pilots, in collaboration with relevant partners.

11. *Also 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 (i) progress made in mobilizing resources for the implementation of the Convention; (ii) integrating Sustainable Development Goal 15, related target 15.3 and land degradation neutrality; and (iii) measures taken to facilitate private sector participation.

II. 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, 2/COP.15 and 2/COP.16,

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

Having considered document ICCD/CRIC(24)/3 and its conclusions and recommendations,

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

Highlighting the need for continued collaboration among Convention institutions, initiatives such as the Group of 20 Global Land Initiative and the International Drought Resilience Alliance, relevant United Nations entities, the Rio conventions, regional institutions and other partners to increase the availability of information, tools and opportunities for capacity development under the Convention,

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

Taking note of the recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors concerning the role of the Convention as a bridge between science and policy, including the importance of capacity-building, knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation, partnerships and innovation,

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 20 Global Land Initiative, other related initiatives and external partners, to continue:

(a) Responding to capacity needs expressed by Parties;

(b) Operationalizing the capacity-building strategy, with a view to mainstreaming capacity-building across Convention institutions and associated initiatives, strengthening coordination, monitoring and impact-oriented delivery, and supporting alignment, as appropriate, with the post-2030 strategic framework of the Convention;

(c) Expanding accessible and user-oriented capacity-building opportunities, including online training, e-learning, blended learning, training of trainers, fellowships, communities of practice, gender-responsive programmes, youth engagement and practical knowledge products tailored to national and regional contexts;

(d) Continuing to support capacity-building for drought resilience and sand and dust storms, including through communities of learning and practice, the Drought Toolbox, the Sand and Dust Storms Toolbox, e-learning modules, case studies, regional exchanges and technical guidance;

2. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with initiatives such as the Group of 20 Global Land Initiative and the International Drought Resilience Alliance, relevant United Nations entities, regional institutions, scientific and technical partners and other stakeholders, to continue strengthening partnership-based capacity-building and technical cooperation, including through South–South, North–South and triangular cooperation, regional and subregional platforms, knowledge exchange, technology transfer, restoration-related training, stakeholder engagement and the dissemination of practical tools and approaches in support of the country-driven implementation of the Convention;

3. *Further requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of financial resources, together with data providers, financial and technical partners, regional institutions and the Earth observation community, to:

(a) Continue supporting Parties in strengthening capacities for national reporting, the implementation of land degradation neutrality, integrated land-use planning, monitoring and evaluation, resource mobilization, and the use of national data, Earth observation, and geospatial information, with particular attention to the needs of developing country Parties, especially small island developing States and least developed countries;

(b) Strengthen the responsible use of innovation and digital transformation in capacity-building, including Earth observation, geospatial tools, data platforms, artificial intelligence and early warning systems, while supporting digital literacy, access to data, and technical assistance to address capacity and technology gaps;

4. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of financial resources and in collaboration with relevant regional and technical partners, to assess lessons learned from the regional support architecture established for the 2026 reporting process and, as appropriate, explore options for defining the possible future role, scope and modalities of regional hubs or centres of excellence in supporting inclusive, context-specific and decentralized capacity-building, while ensuring complementarity with Convention institutions and partners and avoiding the creation of parallel structures;

5. *Also requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of financial resources, to take into account the recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors relating to the Convention's role as a bridge between science and policy when further developing and operationalizing capacity-building activities, including through strengthened knowledge management, support for monitoring and evaluation, engagement of relevant expert networks and more systematic use of partnerships and innovation;

6. *Invites* the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative, subject to the availability of financial resources, to continue strengthening its support to Parties in the implementation of land degradation neutrality through Earth observation and integrated land-use planning, including by promoting youth and early-career engagement through targeted capacity development activities and by fostering youth-inclusive knowledge exchange and multi-stakeholder dialogue through its dialogue forums and related platforms;

7. *Encourages* Parties to make full use of tools, guidance and capacity-building opportunities developed under the Convention and associated initiatives, including those related to national reporting, land degradation neutrality, drought resilience, sand and dust storms, sustainable land management and land restoration;

8. *Invites* developed country Parties, other Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations, regional institutions, civil society, academia and private sector institutions to provide technical and financial support, as appropriate, for capacity-building activities that assist Parties in the implementation of the Convention at national, subregional and regional levels;

9. *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.

III. 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, 11/COP.15 and 4/COP.16,

Having reviewed documents ICCD/CRIC(23)/8 and ICCD/CRIC(24)/4-ICCD/COP(17)/CST/7,

Welcoming the progress made in preparing for and supporting country Parties throughout the 2026 reporting process, including enhancements to the performance review and assessment of implementation system reporting platform and associated data analytics tools, updated guidance materials, the provision of new high-resolution data sets, the establishment of regional Support Hubs, strengthened collaboration with technical partners and data providers, and the delivery of targeted capacity-building activities,

Noting with appreciation the support provided by the Global Environment Facility, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, regional Support Hubs, and technical advisory institutions to country Parties for capacity-building and the strengthening of monitoring and reporting capacities,

Recognizing the enhanced support architecture, comprising regional Support Hubs, and technical advisory institutions, under the coordination of the secretariat, as a significant advancement in providing coordinated, regionally tailored and technically robust support to country Parties,

Also recognizing the substantial progress made in national reporting on land degradation and drought, as well as the unique value of nationally reported data for assessing global and regional status and trends,

Acknowledging that challenges remain, including timely disbursement of funds, disparities in national capacities, long processing times for large data sets, and limited access to high-quality and high-resolution data, due to gaps in Earth observation imagery,

1. *Invites* Parties to actively engage with available support mechanisms and encourages Support Hubs and technical advisory institutions to ensure that support remains responsive to regional and national circumstances and aligned with reporting needs;
2. *Also invites* Parties, as appropriate and in line with national circumstances, to involve a broad range of stakeholders, including civil society organizations, women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and the private sector, in the national reporting process, and to make full use of the existing features of the performance review and assessment of implementation system that enable more inclusive and narrative reporting, in order to support the meaningful participation of these stakeholders;
3. *Urges* Parties to submit national reports in a timely manner in order to enable a comprehensive and credible global assessment of progress towards achieving land degradation neutrality by 2030 and, more broadly, the objectives of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, based on nationally reported data;
4. *Encourages* Parties to make nationally reported data openly available under appropriate open licensing arrangements, where feasible and in accordance with national legislation and circumstances, with a view to maximizing the interoperability, accessibility and impact of such data and enabling the secretariat to generate regional and global aggregate analyses from national reports;
5. *Invites* developed countries, other Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations and private sector institutions to support the strengthening of national spatial data infrastructures and the shared United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting infrastructure, including the performance

review and assessment of implementation system and interoperable reporting tools, in light of the growing demand for high-resolution and long-time-series data sets for national reporting on land degradation and drought, in order to ensure their sustainable operation and capacity to manage increasing data volumes and complexity, including through cloud-hosted technologies and artificial intelligence, where appropriate;

6. *Requests* the secretariat to continue strengthening coordination across the reporting support architecture, including Support Hubs and technical advisory institutions, through to the final reporting deadline and thereafter, as needed and subject to the availability of financial resources, in order to ensure the coherence of technical guidance, avoid duplication of effort and enhance synergies across initiatives;

7. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, and in collaboration with financial and technical partners, to:

(a) Further formalize and operationalize the roles and functions of regional Support Hubs and technical advisory institutions for the next reporting process, including through the Global Environment Facility-funded Global Support Programme and Umbrella Projects for Enabling Activities;

(b) Explore options for the further evolution of regional support hubs and technical advisory institutions beyond national reporting and into longer-term centres of excellence for the implementation of the post-2030 strategic framework of the Convention;

(c) Further strengthen and expand peer-driven, South–South, North–South and triangular learning modalities within regional capacity-building efforts by fostering the systematic exchange of practical experiences, challenges and tailored solutions among Parties at different stages of report preparation;

(d) Promote the continuity and sustainability of capacity-building efforts and enabling support beyond the 2026 reporting process, including by aligning investments with longer-term national planning, monitoring and decision-making processes, and by facilitating the continued use of data, tools and institutional capacities developed through reporting;

8. *Invites* the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative, subject to the availability of financial resources, to facilitate structured dialogue and continued collaboration among the Earth observation community, relevant data providers and end users, with a view to identifying and addressing gaps in the quality, spatial resolution and temporal coverage of default data sets used for national reporting, including, as appropriate, through dedicated dialogue forums with the data community.

9. *Requests* the secretariat to present a report on the implementation of this decision at the twenty-fifth and the twenty-sixth 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.

IV. Programme of work for the twenty-fifth 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 useful contributions 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-fifth 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-fifth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;
- (b) Implementation of the Convention using the indicators adopted to track progress towards the strategic objectives contained in the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
- (c) Update on the implementation of voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and related implementation efforts;
- (d) Financial flows for the implementation of the Convention;
- (e) Procedures for the communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties;
- (f) Exchange of information through interactive dialogues on actions on the ground related to the implementation of sustainable land management practices, restoration and rehabilitation practices, the promotion of alternative livelihoods, and the development of drought risk management, monitoring and early warning systems;
- (g) Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues such as sand and dust storms and other policy frameworks as identified by the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session;
- (h) Consideration of priorities for science–policy guidance;
- (i) Special segment: Gender Caucus.

2. *Requests* the secretariat to circulate in all United Nations languages, at least six weeks prior to the twenty-fifth 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 seventeenth session.