

**Convention to Combat
Desertification**

Distr.: General
10 July 2026

Original: English

Conference of the Parties**Seventeenth session**

Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 17–28 August 2026

Item 9 of the provisional agenda

Report on the session**Draft decisions for consideration at the seventeenth session of
the Conference of the Parties****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 sixteenth session of the COP one document for each governing body (COP, 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.

Accordingly, document ICCD/COP(17)/12 includes all substantive draft decisions proposed by the secretariat that will serve as starting points for discussion and further negotiation in the Committee of the Whole contact groups.

* Unofficial copy for information purposes only.

** This document was scheduled for publication after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Updated financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies, and the Convention secretariat	3
II. Final report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention	4
III. Participation and involvement of civil society organizations in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.....	5
IV. Participation and involvement of the private sector in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.....	7
V. Promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies	10
VI. Programme and budget for the biennium 2027–2028	13
A. Programme budget for the biennium 2027–2028	13
B. Financial performance of the Convention trust funds.....	14
C. Evaluation reports.....	15
VII. 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	16
VIII. Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Gender, land tenure and sand and dust storms.....	18
A. Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Gender	18
B. Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Land tenure.....	19
C. Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Sand and dust storms	20
IX. Rangelands and pastoralists	22
X. Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Drought	24
XI. Programme of work for the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties	29

I. Updated financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies, and the Convention secretariat

The Conference of the Parties,

Considering the provisions of the Convention, particularly article 22, paragraph 2(e), stating that the Conference of the Parties shall adopt, at its first session, financial rules for itself and any subsidiary bodies,

Recalling decision 2/COP.1, by which Parties adopted the financial rules of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention secretariat,

Recalling also decisions 10/COP.13, 10/COP.14 and 10/COP.15, by which the financial rules were modified, as well as decisions 23/COP.7 and 3/COP.8 that presented developments relevant to the financial rules,

Further recalling decision 10/COP.16, by which the COP requested the Executive Secretary to carry out a review of the financial rules, 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,

Having reviewed document [ICCD/COP\(17\)/7](#),

Decides to adopt the updated financial rules, as contained in the annex to this decision.¹

¹ Annex to be included in the final report after the session.

II. Final report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 4/COP.16 by which it established the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention and defined its mandate to identify key elements for a post-2030 strategic framework of the Convention and to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the current indicators under the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework,

Noting that, at its ninth meeting on 5 December 2025, the Committee on the Review of the Implementation of the Convention decided, in line with rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties, to defer item 4, “Interim report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework”, and item 5 “Consideration of priorities for science–policy guidance” of the provisional agenda of the Committee on the Review of the Implementation of the Convention at its twenty-third session to the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties for further consideration and action by Parties,

Having reviewed document [ICCD/COP\(17\)/2](#),

1. *Welcomes* with appreciation the final report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention and the recommendations contained therein;
2. *Decides* to continue developing the Future Strategic Framework of the Convention.

III. 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, 5/COP.15 and 5/COP.16,

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 and the increased number of civil society organizations accredited as observers in the last biennium,

Welcoming the open dialogue sessions organized by civil society organizations as part of the official agenda of the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties, the organization of the Youth Forum and the Gender Caucus, and the convening of the Caucus for Indigenous Peoples and the Caucus for Local Communities,

Taking note of the terms of reference for the creation of the Caucus for Indigenous Peoples and the terms of reference for the creation of the Caucus for Local Communities,

Also taking note of the recommendations from the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues related to the creation of the Caucus for Indigenous Peoples,

Welcoming the Riyadh Action Agenda as an innovation and a legacy to the UNCCD process, and which serves as a strategic and programmatic effort to facilitate the engagement of non-Party stakeholders – including civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, the private sector, subnational governments, and parliamentarians – and as a vehicle to connect and align their voluntary initiatives, coalitions and programmes to the Convention process and objectives,

Underlining the importance of youth in the future of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and of the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Youth Engagement Strategy,

Taking into consideration the assessment presented on the rules of procedure for the engagement of civil society organizations within the Rio conventions,

1. *Encourages* Parties to continue engaging 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 to facilitate 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;
3. *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;
4. *Requests* the secretariat to continue working with the key stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples, local community organizations, youth, pastoralists organizations, women's organizations and local governments;
5. *Also requests* the secretariat to include an agenda item at the next session of the Conference of the Parties to address the engagement of young and future generations in the implementation of the Convention and the Youth Engagement Strategy and provide guidance

on how accelerate their meaningful participation in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

6. *Further requests* the secretariat to present to the next session of the Conference of the Parties a draft decision to define the procedure under which observers may participate in United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification contact groups;

7. *Requests* the secretariat to support the creation of the Caucus for Indigenous Peoples and the Caucus for Local Communities according to the terms of reference presented to the Conference of the Parties, including the selection modalities for the representatives of both Caucuses;

8. *Encourages* Parties, subject to the availability of funds, to make efforts to enhance the participation of accredited youth and Indigenous Peoples representatives in United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification meetings and processes;

9. *Also encourages* current and incoming Presidents of the Conference of the Parties to coordinate with the secretariat to promote synergies between the land, climate and biodiversity action agendas, and to organize a high-level event to present the progress made under the Action Agenda, which serves as a strategic vehicle to engage non-Party stakeholders to accelerate action and collaboration to achieve land degradation neutrality and scale up drought resilience efforts globally.

10. *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 seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties, in accordance with previous decisions;

11. *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, youth representatives, Indigenous Peoples as well as members of local communities 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;

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

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

IV. 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 decisions 5/COP.10 on the procedures for the participation of representatives of business and industry entities in the meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, 6/COP.15 on the establishment of the Business4Land Initiative as the principal vehicle for private sector engagement under the Convention, 6/COP.16 on private sector participation and the business and private sector engagement strategy, and 19/COP.16 on guidance for the sustainable management of agricultural lands,

Recalling also decisions 3/COP.16 and 12/COP.16 on the mobilization of resources, the engagement of the private sector and progress made in the mobilization of resources for the implementation of the Convention and Sustainable Development Goal 15.3 matters,

Recognizing that the private sector is historically a driver of land degradation, and that the estimated annual global cost of land degradation in the order of USD 880 billion underlines the urgency of mobilizing private sector resources, capacities and partnerships at the speed and scale required,

Acknowledging the devastating impacts of droughts on economies, generating at least USD 300 billion in annual losses, with cascading impacts on global food systems, supply chains and livelihoods,

Recognizing the work of the International Drought Resilience Alliance in supporting the mobilization of strategic financial resources to catalyse the creation of innovative financial instruments and facilitating the engagement of the private sector,

Welcoming the creation of the Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership as a strategic investment initiative to unlock public and private investments for drought resilience at the national level,

Noting with appreciation the launch of the Drought Resilience Investment Facility as a blended finance vehicle aimed at mobilizing private investment to build drought-resilience,

Recognizing the critical role of the private sector as a stakeholder group in the achievement of land degradation neutrality,

Welcoming the continued development of the Business4Land Initiative as the main vehicle for private sector engagement in the implementation of the Convention,

Also welcoming the convening of the eighth Sustainable Land Management Business Forum, meeting as the Business4Land Forum, the first Rangeland Investment Forum and the Fashion4Land Forum on the sidelines of the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties, and the work of the Business4Land Champions' Council in driving senior business leadership for land degradation neutrality and drought resilience,

Further welcoming the partnerships established with the Science Based Targets Network and the Global Reporting Initiative to align corporate land target-setting and disclosure with the framework of the Convention, and the cooperation with the Economics of Land Degradation Initiative on private sector capacity-building,

Acknowledging the work of the Group of 20 Global Land Initiative in promoting a restoration economy,

Noting the progress made in advancing sustainable land management-linked insurance,

Welcoming (i) the consultations with leading agrifood businesses and civil society organizations facilitated by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, which have produced the private sector recommendations titled "Policies for Regenerative Landscape Action: A Business Perspective", contained in the annex to document

ICCD/COP(17)/4; and (ii) the work of the Global Future Council on Healthy Soils and Land of the World Economic Forum and its white paper to make the business case for private sector investment in activities relating to healthy lands and soils,

Expressing concern that despite growing momentum, innovative financial tools for private sector engagement remain constrained by high perceived and systemic risks, limited project bankability, insufficient data and methodologies to measure land health and resilience, weak enabling environments, and persistent gaps in standards and metrics,

Action by Parties

1. *Calls upon* Parties to engage actively with the private sector in the implementation of the Convention, including by establishing or strengthening national platforms for public–private dialogue and by integrating private sector perspectives into national land degradation neutrality target-setting, integrated land use planning processes, and drought resilience planning processes;
2. *Encourages* Parties to strengthen the regulatory enabling conditions necessary for substantive private sector contributions to land degradation neutrality, including secure land tenure, transparent and harmonized standards and metrics, and policy coherence across agriculture, environment, finance, trade and land use planning;
3. *Invites* Parties to consider, together with interested national businesses and partners, how the private sector recommendations on agricultural lands, contained in the annex to document ICCD/COP(17)/4, may be operationalized at the national and subnational levels, with a view to scaling private sector contributions to land degradation neutrality on agricultural lands and aligning incentives, accountability frameworks and policy signals;
4. *Also invites* Parties to support the establishment of Business4Land Hubs at national or regional level, hosted by qualified organizations such as business councils, governmental bodies/national initiatives for private sector engagement, and public and impact investments funds, to mobilize business participation, facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration and advance activities aligned with the priorities of the Convention;
5. *Encourages* Parties to facilitate the participation of representatives of business and industry entities in the meetings and processes of the Convention, including through the procedures established in decision 5/COP.10 and through their integration into delegations of accredited umbrella organizations and national institutions;
6. *Invites* parties to promote, at the national level, the engagement of private companies and entities in the Business4Land Initiative;
7. *Calls upon* Parties, in line with related decision XX/COP.17 on resource mobilization, to expand the use of blended finance approaches and de-risking instruments and to recognize land and drought resilience as a strategic asset class, in order to mobilize private capital for the implementation of the Convention;

Action by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism

8. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates and subject to the availability of financial resources, to continue implementing the Private Sector Engagement Strategy 2021–2030 and to further develop the Business4Land Initiative as the principal vehicle for private sector engagement under the Convention, thereby advancing Business4Land Initiative’s three pillars: (1) business operations and value chains; (2) finance; and (3) advocacy; and to generate a report, including case studies, that showcase the use of different innovative financial mechanisms to support the mobilization of private capital in land restoration and drought resilience activities, which can support the development and delivery of a post-2030 strategic framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
9. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, in collaboration with relevant partners, and subject to the availability of financial resources, to:
 - (a) Continue the work on corporate disclosure and land-related target-setting, including through partnerships with the Science Based Targets Network and the Global Reporting Initiative and through the corporate disclosures and target-setting expert group,

with a view to aligning corporate land targets with land degradation neutrality targets and to developing a monitoring methodology that recognizes corporate contributions to land degradation neutrality;

(b) Continue to expand the drought resilience components of the Business4Land Initiative;

(c) Continue the collaboration with partnerships to support corporate capacities to include land, water and drought management in their environmental, social and governance standards and reports;

(d) Continue to support the Business4Land Champions' Council as a high-level platform for senior business leadership on land degradation neutrality and drought resilience, and to support its members in translating corporate sustainability commitments into concrete land-positive and drought-resilient action across supply chains;

(e) Establish and progressively expand the network of Business4Land Hubs at national and regional level, in cooperation with interested host organizations and Parties, and document lessons learned and best practices for replication;

(f) Continue the engagement of specific land-intensive value chain sectors, such as agrifood, mining, fashion and other sectors critical to achieving the objectives of the Convention;

(g) Develop additional pathways for private sector entities to contribute to flagship initiatives, transformative projects and programmes, and other land degradation neutrality-related landscape initiatives and drought resilience programmes;

(h) Continue to build on blended finance approaches and innovative financial instruments in coordination with the actions on innovative finance set out in the report by the Global Mechanism [ICCD/CRIC\(24\)/2](#) on the mobilization of resources and financing flows;

(i) Continue to engage with relevant partners, including the Group of 20 Global Land Initiative, the International Drought Resilience Alliance, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Economic Forum, to consolidate private sector recommendations on the enabling conditions that allow the scaling of private sector-led sustainable land and soil management and drought practices;

(j) Facilitate the organization of the Sustainable Land Management and Drought Resilience Business Forum and related forums at future sessions of the Conference of the Parties, in collaboration with host countries, accredited business and industry entities, and other relevant partners;

10. *Further requests* the secretariat to continue facilitating the participation of representatives of business and industry entities in the meetings and processes of the Convention, including through the accreditation procedure established in decision 5/COP.10, and to recommend additional entities for accreditation by the Conference of the Parties at its eighteenth session;

11. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to report jointly to the twenty-sixth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, held in conjunction with the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, on progress made in the implementation of the present decision, including measurable outputs of the Business4Land Initiative and the engagement of accredited entities.

V. 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, 8/COP.15, 2/COP.16, 3/COP.16, 8/COP.16, 9/COP.16, 15/COP.16, 16/COP.16 and 28/COP.16,

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 Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction,

Further acknowledging the important contribution of the Convention towards the implementation of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030, the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development 2018–2028, and the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms 2025–2034,

Welcoming the progress made in enhancing existing and establishing new partnerships, such as the Group of 20 Global Land Initiative 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 the ongoing efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Colombia and Brazil as current presidencies and of Mongolia, Armenia, Australia and Türkiye as incoming presidencies of their respective Conferences of the Parties of the three Rio conventions, in exploring greater synergies across the climate, biodiversity and land action agendas, and the efforts led by Türkiye to foster integrated approaches to climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation within the priorities of the Action Agenda of the thirty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, with the support of existing initiatives such as the Group of 20 Global Land Initiative.

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,

Recognizing that restoration and the integrated sustainable management of land and water are key building blocks to food security and the health of human beings and ecosystems,

Underlining the critical role that the activities to combat desertification, land degradation and drought play as fundamental contributors to achieve climate change and biodiversity goals as well as the broader sustainable development agenda,

1. *Urges* Parties, as appropriate, to leverage synergies at the national level in the planning and implementation processes of the three Rio conventions, within their respective mandates and the established Convention bodies and institutions to enhance consistency of targets, plans and policies, and to prioritize projects with synergistic and multiple impacts and approaches;
2. *Encourages* Parties to prioritize holistic and integrated action to tackle desertification, land degradation and drought and the interlinkages with climate change, water, and biodiversity agendas, especially by accelerating and scaling up the implementation of nature-

based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches and the transition to sustainable food systems;

3. *Invites* Parties, as appropriate, to engage at the national level to strengthen coordination and integrated planning among national focal points, sectorial ministries, and relevant institutions involved in the implementation of the Rio conventions, to minimize fragmentation and enhance policy coherence;

4. *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;

5. *Requests* the secretariat and appropriate Convention bodies and institutions, subject to the availability of resources, and within their respective mandates, to:

(a) Continue to strengthen existing partnerships and seek new ones that enhance the implementation of the Convention; address desertification, land degradation and drought; and help achieve voluntary national land degradation neutrality targets and the implementation of national drought plans, considering, when appropriate, synergy approaches of the Rio conventions, and continue collaborations, notably with the Group of 20 Global Land Initiative, the Changwon Initiative, the International Drought Resilience Alliance, 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 and their respective bodies and institutions, 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, financial institutions, and other partners to provide best practices and practical tools, technical guidance, capacity-building; and support resource mobilization considering the Rio Convention's synergies approaches.

(c) Continue 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, to consider building interoperability of information management systems, and to promote workshops and awareness-raising efforts for synergies;

(d) Continue to support Parties in enhancing coordination among the offices of the national focal points, strategic sectoral policymakers, and other key stakeholders of the Action Agenda, 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, as well as develop and implement, in partnership with relevant organizations and networks, stakeholder engagement plans and awareness-raising and information dissemination strategies to accelerate the implementation of the objectives of the Convention, the voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, and the drought resilience-building process;

(e) Continue to support efforts undertaken by current and incoming Rio Convention presidencies to enhance synergies and foster integrated approaches and Action Agendas to climate change, biodiversity loss, and desertification, land degradation and drought, including through existing coordination mechanisms and initiatives such as the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions, the Group of 20 Global Land Initiative and the International Drought Resilience Alliance;

(f) Request the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, within their respective mandates, to develop strategic guidance and support countries in developing projects and programmes which include integrated action to tackle desertification, land degradation and drought and their interlinkages with climate change, water, and biodiversity loss, particularly in areas related to the transition of sustainable food systems and the restoration of agricultural lands;

(g) Continue to strengthen the interlinkages among the scientific bodies associated with the Rio conventions (i.e. the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Science-Policy Interface), within their respective mandates, and among other relevant initiatives and partners providing data, tools and technical approaches, such as the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality Flagship initiative, in order to create the scientific basis for joint target achievement across the conventions;

(h) Continue to strengthen collaboration with the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030, the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development 2018–2028, and the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms 2025–2034 in order to promote awareness and advance collective action towards the achievement of their goals;

6. *Also requests* the secretariat to present a report on the implementation of this decision at the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

VI. Programme and budget for the biennium 2027–2028

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,²

Also recalling decisions 1/COP.16 and 10/COP.16,

Noting the action started by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth session to address 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,

Highly concerned about the amount of outstanding contributions to the core budget during the biennium 2025–2026,

Noting with appreciation the measures taken by the secretariat for early engagement of Parties in the consideration of the 2027–2028 budget,

Welcoming with appreciation the integrated results-based budget approach proposed by the secretariat, with a view to enhancing the transparency of the financial management of the secretariat,

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

A. Programme budget for the biennium 2027–2028

1. *Approves* the programme budget for the biennium 2027–2028 in the amount of EUR 21,797,918 for the purposes specified in table 1 below;
2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Government of Germany for its biennial 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 set the level of the working capital reserve to 8.3 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 2027–2028 contained in the annex to this decision;
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 16 399 368; and *requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties on the positions established and filled;

² See decision 2/COP.1, annex; decision 10/COP.13; decision 10/COP.14; decision 10/COP.15 and decision 10/COP.16.

9. *Invites* the General Assembly to include, in the calendar of conferences and meetings for the years 2027 and 2028, the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies envisaged for the biennium;
10. *Approves* a contingency budget as set out in table 3 below, amounting to EUR 2 477 300 for conference servicing, to be added to the programme budget for the biennium 2027–2028 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 10 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 1 772 540, as set out in table 4 below, in the event that the eighteenth 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 803 430, as set out in table 5 below, in the event that the twenty-fifth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention is held in Bonn, Germany;
14. *Further 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;
15. *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;
16. *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;
17. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties at its eighteenth session on the status of income and expenditure and budget performance, using a results-based approach;
18. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to prepare an integrated, results-based budget and work programme for the biennium 2028–2029, 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;

B. Financial performance of the Convention trust funds

19. *Takes note of* the audited financial statements for the secretariat and Global Mechanism for 2022, 2023 and 2024, 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 biennium 2025–2026, and the status of contributions as at 31 May 2026;
20. *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;
21. *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;
22. *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;

23. *Urges* Parties that have not yet paid their contributions to the core budget for 2026 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;

24. *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;

25. *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 2027–2028;

26. *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\(17\)/INF.7](#).

C. Evaluation reports

27. *Welcomes* the recommendations of the independent evaluations and assessments summarized in document [ICCD/COP\(17\)/INF.2](#); and *requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to use these recommendations in planning and conducting their work;

28. *Takes note* of the proposed 2027–2028 workplan of the Evaluation Office and *requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of the Parties at its eighteenth 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.

VII. 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 Parties,

Recalling decisions 28/COP.13, 22/COP.14, 22/COP.15 and 23/COP.16, the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the provisions in the Convention text and its annexes as they pertain to migration,

Recognizing that desertification, land degradation and drought are systemic environmental, economic and social challenges of global concern that pose increasing risks to ecosystems, livelihoods, food and water security and economic stability, thereby contributing to the underlying drivers of migration, displacement and other forms of human mobility, particularly among people whose livelihoods depend directly on healthy land, soils and ecosystem services,

Recognizing that desertification, land degradation and drought can act as multipliers of security risks by exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and pressures and contributing to migration and displacement, with implications for stability and security,

Noting that the co-signers of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration recognize that desertification, land degradation and drought form one of the drivers/structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin and that the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification is one of the instruments upon which the Compact rests,

Welcoming the recent Group of 7 declaration recognizing that desertification, land degradation and drought are systemic environmental, economic, social and security challenges that can exacerbate fragility, instability, migration and displacement; *emphasizing* the importance of integrated, coordinated and forward-looking action to promote protection, conservation, sustainable management and restoration; and *promoting* resilience-building in affected landscapes as critical investments in peace, long-term prosperity, food and water security and improved livelihoods,

Welcoming the space provided by the 2026 Antalya Diplomacy Forum to address the challenges of food insecurity, land degradation, desertification and drought as drivers of instability and conflict,

Acknowledging the Initiative on Sustainability, Stability and Security, which aims to address the drivers of migration related to desertification, land degradation and drought,

Recognizing that addressing desertification, land degradation and drought can contribute to reducing risks that may exacerbate vulnerability, instability and human mobility,

1. *Invites* Parties, as appropriate, to:

(a) Review their development policies and governance frameworks, including those related to land use planning, land administration, urban–rural linkages, agricultural practices, drought resilience, and infrastructure and services, with a view to promoting land restoration initiatives and drought resilience approaches that contribute to employment creation and livelihood stability and resilience in rural communities, thereby helping to address drivers of internal displacement and human mobility;

(b) Encourage responsible and sustained investments by the private sector in sustainable land and water management practices that avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation and thus contribute to more stable and resilient rural livelihoods through the use of, inter alia, public funding to facilitate increased private investment while respecting social and environmental safeguards;

(c) Promote sustainable and integrated rural development by expanding renewable energy models that include innovative finance mechanisms and partnerships, as a means of

scaling up sustainable land, soil and water management practices alongside the development of rural enterprise by, inter alia, creating sustainable value chains for local products, reducing pre-harvest and post-harvest agricultural losses and investing in clean rural industries, with particular attention to ensuring food security and freshwater availability for people in vulnerable situations, thereby contributing to resilience and stability;

(d) Integrate considerations of displacement and other forms of human mobility into national action programmes to combat desertification, land degradation and drought, prioritizing measures that strengthen the resilience of communities and their livelihoods and their right to remain in the places where they choose to do so;

(e) Strengthen early warning systems, drought preparedness and anticipatory action frameworks to identify areas at risk of vulnerabilities and migration and to support timely interventions and investments that reduce these risks and vulnerabilities and enhance food and water security through sustainable land and soil management and drought resilience practices;

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

(a) Strengthen cooperation with other United Nations agencies and programmes, regional and international organizations, and other relevant partners to enhance coherence in addressing the linkages between desertification, land degradation, drought, migration and human mobility;

(b) Strengthen cooperation with other United Nations agencies and programmes, regional and international organizations, and other relevant partners and stakeholders to support the Sustainability, Stability and Security Initiative, building on existing efforts, and to promote the positive role that sustainable land and water management can play in addressing desertification, land degradation and drought as one of the drivers of migration, displacement and other forms of human mobility, while contributing to stability, security and resilience;

(c) Continue supporting regional and international collaboration to share data and information on the linkages between desertification, land degradation, drought and human mobility, including migration and displacement, and to promote land restoration and drought resilience as a means of addressing potential drivers of migration and displacement;

(d) Promote integrated approaches that strengthen resilience, livelihood security and sustainable land and water management in fragile and vulnerable contexts, recognizing that such efforts may contribute to stability;

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

VIII. Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Gender, land tenure and sand and dust storms

A. Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Gender

The Conference of Parties,

Recalling decisions 9/COP.10, 9/COP.11, 7/COP.12, 30/COP.13, 24/COP.14, 24/COP.15 and 25/COP.16,

Reaffirming that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, particularly those in vulnerable situations, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities, will make an important contribution to the effective implementation of the Convention,

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

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,

Recognizing that 2026 has been declared as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists and the International Year of the Woman Farmer, and *acknowledging* the global contributions of women to resilient livestock care, food security, and rangeland stewardship,

Noting the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and its adoption of its Agreed Conclusions in 2026, which include strengthening access to justice for all women and girls,

Welcoming the work done by the secretariat and the Global Mechanism on promoting gender-responsive approaches in the statutory processes and implementation of the Convention,

1. *Encourages* Parties to continue their efforts to implement the Gender Action Plan and the concrete actions contained in its Roadmap, with special attention to addressing all forms of discrimination faced by women and girls when planning, designing and implementing gender-responsive policy, projects and programming related to desertification, land degradation and drought, and submit, on a voluntary basis, reports on the implementation of key national-level activities contained in the Gender Action Plan Roadmap;
2. *Invites* Parties to increase their efforts to reduce gender data gaps 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 relevant criteria, which may provide a basis for future indicators that more accurately reflect the differences in how men and women are affected by desertification, land degradation and drought;
3. *Urges* Parties to guarantee the active participation of women and girls as part of their delegations, facilitate their engagement in formal forums, bodies and processes related to the Convention, and request donor countries to give additional and specific support to the secretariat to guarantee the participation of women and girls in sessions of the Conference of the Parties and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;
4. *Invites* countries Parties with rangelands to facilitate the active engagement of women of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and women pastoralists in the stewardship, management, conservation and restoration of rangelands, grasslands and savannas, through specific policies, programmes and projects, and to share their experiences, success stories, and lessons learned in the Gender Caucus of the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties;
5. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to continue:

(a) Facilitating 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, and as a vehicle for identifying bottlenecks in the implementation of the Gender Action Plan and its Roadmap, 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, pastoralist groups, youth organizations and civil society organizations;

(b) Promoting full and effective gender parity across the Convention;

(c) Exploring the use of gender-specific indicators for the reporting processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and its post-2030 strategic framework;

(d) Facilitating the capacity-building and effective participation of women and girl delegates, including from Indigenous Peoples, local communities and civil society organizations, 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;

(e) 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, 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 through, inter alia, increased land rights and access to resources for women, women's capacity-building, and gender-responsive technologies for sustainable land and water management and women's economic empowerment;

(f) Collaborating with other United Nations entities and international non-governmental organizations on advocacy and awareness-raising activities for the expansion of women's land rights, building on the "Her Land. Her Rights." and other global campaigns;

(g) Strengthening partnerships to mobilize resources for initiatives that promote gender equality and empower women to contribute fully to efforts to combat desertification, land degradation and drought and achieve land degradation neutrality by, inter alia, strengthening women's land rights and ensuring more equitable access to natural resources;

6. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to report on the progress made in implementing this decision to the Conference of Parties at its eighteenth session.

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

The Conference of Parties,

Recalling decisions 26/COP.14, 27/COP.15 and 28/COP.16,

Also recalling that the Gender Action Plan of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and its Roadmap highlight the strengthening of women's land rights and access to natural resources as a priority for action,

Further recalling the 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,

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,

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 other land restoration practices, and supports smallholder farmers, pastoralists and other rural groups in accessing knowledge and technologies, extension services, credit and markets,

Welcomes the launch of the Land Tenure Toolbox, which provides easy access to relevant documents and resources on land tenure and desertification, land degradation and drought, including information and case studies on accountability and grievance mechanisms related to land tenure,

1. *Encourages* Parties to continue integrating land tenure considerations into their plans and activities to combat desertification, land degradation and drought, in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security;
2. *Also encourages* Parties to support inclusive and participatory national-level dialogues on land tenure, including partnering with civil society organizations and 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;
3. *Invites* Parties, relevant United Nations entities, international financial organizations and private sector institutions to support (i) the design and implementation of land administration systems to improve the responsible governance of tenure; and (ii) the delivery of requested national-level consultations on integrating land tenure into land degradation neutrality and other land restoration initiatives;
4. *Requests* the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to continue:
 - (a) Exploring the ways and means, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other key partners, to support Parties that wish to integrate land tenure considerations, including women's land rights, into the implementation of the Convention and land degradation neutrality initiatives;
 - (b) Raising awareness on the importance of (i) responsible and inclusive land governance for combating desertification, land degradation and drought; and (ii) engaging with Parties, United Nations entities, 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, women, youth, and people with disabilities;
 - (c) Assessing the use of global indicators and data sets relevant to land governance and tenure security, including data on Indigenous Peoples, local communities and women's land rights, for future United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting processes as well as the development of its post-2030 strategic framework;
5. *Also requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to report on the progress made in implementing this decision to the Conference of Parties at its eighteenth session.

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

The Conference of Parties,

Recalling decisions 31/COP.13, 25/COP.14, 26/COP.15 and 27/COP.16,

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, 78/158, 79/212 and 80/143,

Further recalling that the United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed 2025–2034 as the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms through resolution 78/314,

Noting that sand and dust storms are a global challenge of increasing frequency, intensity and duration with impacts on, inter alia, infrastructure, transport, communications, agriculture, ecosystems and human health,

Acknowledging that sustainable land and water management, agroforestry, reforestation and other regenerative practices, as well as nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches and other activities for combating desertification, land degradation and drought, are key components 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 need to be strengthened through enhanced regional and international cooperation (i.e. leveraging synergies among relevant multilateral agreements), as well as through national and regional coordination tools and instruments developed to implement them,

Welcoming the update of the Sand and Dust Storms Toolbox, including (i) the revised module on source detection and the addition of a searchable inventory of source management practices, as a significant advance in the dissemination of knowledge-based approaches and methods; as well as (ii) practical guidance and tools for more effective sand and dust storm management;

Also welcoming the progress made on developing a Global Implementation Initiative on Sand and Dust Storms;

1. *Urges* Parties, as appropriate, to:

(a) Enhance policy coherence and sectoral coordination to more effectively address sources and impacts of sand and dust storms, specifically by designing and implementing integrated land-based projects and programmes that attract the necessary technical and financial resources, making use of the Sand and Dust Storms Toolbox;

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

2. *Invites* the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, regional and multilateral financial institutions, bilateral donors, scientific institutions and other relevant stakeholders to provide technical and financial support to affected Parties for developing and implementing national and regional policies and action plans that include source mitigation interventions, risk and vulnerability assessments, and early warning mechanisms;

3. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, to:

(a) Strengthen cooperation with other United Nations entities and programmes, within the framework of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, as well as regional and international organizations and other relevant partners, donors and civil society stakeholders, to continue developing and begin implementing a Global Implementation Initiative on Sand and Dust Storms focused on assisting Parties in identifying high-priority anthropogenic source areas and designing, financing and implementing targeted source mitigation projects and programmes in accordance with national needs and priorities;

(b) Continue updating and improving the Sand and Dust Storms Toolbox, including through enhanced collaboration with the scientific community and regional and international institutions;

(c) Further engage in advocacy, awareness-raising and related communication activities for the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (2025–2034);

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

IX. Rangelands and pastoralists

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 29/COP.16,

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

Appreciating the efforts of the secretariat, the Global Mechanism, donors, partners and civil society stakeholders, in the context of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, to generate knowledge on and raise awareness of the value of healthy rangelands and the critical stewardship role of pastoralist and rangeland communities, not only for local livelihoods, biodiversity and ecosystem services, and national economies, but also for regional and global benefits that depend on the health and productivity of these vast landscapes,

Welcoming national measures being taken to increase the percentage of rangelands in protected areas, in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and to enhance climate resilience through the integration of sustainable rangeland management and restoration activities into nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans,

1. *Invites* all United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stakeholders to contribute to the momentum generated by the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists through commitments to implement sustainable rangeland management and restoration activities, including projects and programmes that foster public–private–community partnerships and empower pastoralist and rangeland communities to continue their stewardship of these vast landscapes;
2. *Welcomes* the Coalition of Rangeland States and *invites* Parties to join this platform in order to catalyse political commitments toward greater investment and collaboration, with a view to unlocking opportunities to conserve, sustainably manage, and restore rangelands, while at the same time enhancing food security, water availability, livelihood resilience, and economic opportunities;
3. *Encourages* Parties to implement specific policies and legal frameworks for the sustainable management, conservation and restoration of rangelands, as a way to halt its degradation and accelerate the restoration of at least 30 per cent of degraded rangelands by 2030, in line with Target 2 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
4. *Invites* Parties, donors, partners, civil society and other stakeholders to contribute to the Rangelands Flagship Initiative by, inter alia, implementing policy or programmatic reforms, fostering inclusive governance, enhancing tenure security, adopting sustainable pastoralism and providing technical and financial support for a pipeline of rangeland restoration projects and programmes;
5. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, to continue:
 - (a) Raising awareness and demonstrating the value of healthy and productive rangelands for people, nature, climate and economies through, inter alia, the development of strategic communication products and outreach campaigns;
 - (b) Building the evidence base to address knowledge and data gaps through, inter alia, the development of good practice guidance, tools and other capacity-building measures, and to inform the design of projects and programmes that conserve, sustainably manage, and restore rangelands;
 - (c) Developing a pipeline of rangeland projects and programmes that focus on improving food security, local livelihoods, and the stewardship of rangeland resources through, inter alia, public–private partnerships, sustainable supply chains and community-based projects and programmes;

(d) Continue engaging the private sector in the sustainable management, conservation and restoration of rangelands and the empowerment of pastoralists, through the Business4Land Initiative;

6. *Further requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to report on the progress made in implementing this decision to the Conference of Parties at its eighteenth session.

X. Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Drought

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 24/COP.16, by which it took note of the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Drought and decided 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 that decision, with a view to adopting a decision on this matter at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties,

Recognizing the substantial progress achieved during the negotiations at its sixteenth session, including the development of the consolidated draft decision contained in the annex to decision 24/COP.16,

Decides to resume consideration of the draft decision, as reproduced in the annex below.

Annex

Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Drought

[English Only]

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,
 - (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.

XI. Programme of work for the eighteenth 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, 33/COP.15 and 36/COP.16 on its programme of work,

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

1. *Decides* to include the following items on the agenda of its eighteenth session and, if necessary, its nineteenth 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) Review of the report of the Committee on Science and Technology and its recommendations to the Conference of the Parties;

(b) Post-2030 strategic framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

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

(d) Policy frameworks and thematic issues;

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

(f) 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, 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 seventeenth session, taking into consideration provisions contained in the relevant decisions taken during that conference;

4. *Also requests* the secretariat to circulate, in all official languages at least six weeks prior to the eighteenth 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 eighteenth 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.