Decision 15/COP.17

Avoiding, reducing and reversing land and soil degradation of agricultural lands

The Conference of the Parties,

Noting decision 19/COP.16,

Recalling article 2 of the Convention, stating that achieving the objective of the Convention will involve long-term integrated strategies that focus, inter alia, on the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources, leading to improved living conditions, in particular at the community level,

Also recalling article 18 of the Convention on the transfer, acquisition, adaptation and development of technology,

Recognizing that agricultural lands and soils are central to achieving land degradation neutrality, food security and nutrition, their interlinkages with biodiversity and climate, and that their degradation undermines their productive capacity, the provision of ecosystem services and the resilience of rural livelihoods,

Also recognizing that the drivers and nature of land and soil degradation differ across countries and regions, and that countries with limited land areas might face particular challenges that may require targeted measures to avoid, reduce and reverse land degradation,

Having noted document ICCD/COP(17)/CST/4 and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

1. *Encourages* Parties to apply the land degradation neutrality response hierarchy on agricultural lands and soils, prioritizing the avoidance of degradation, followed by the reduction of ongoing degradation and the reversal of past degradation through restoration and rehabilitation, and, where appropriate, to embed related assessment, planning and monitoring within existing integrated land use planning and other relevant national processes, in line with national priorities;

2. *Invites* Parties to design and implement national legal and policy frameworks, in line with national priorities and circumstances, that promote soil health and generate enabling conditions for the meaningful participation of all relevant stakeholders;

3. *Also invites* Parties to pursue evidence-based approaches to sustainable land management practices, including, but not limited to, sustainable bioeconomy, nature-based solutions and or ecosystem-based approaches, agroecology, regenerative agriculture, conservation agriculture, sustainable integrated land management and land restoration, among other approaches, in order to avoid, reduce and reverse the degradation of agricultural lands and soils while facilitating access to finance and knowledge for smallholders and other land users;

4. *Further invites* Parties to recognize and enhance the participation of the private sector as a contributor to the sustainable management and restoration of agricultural lands and soils, including by taking into account relevant private sector activities and business models when designing policies, monitoring, reporting and data frameworks and financial mechanisms, where appropriate, in line with national priorities;

5. *Invites* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, under their respective mandates and subject to the availability of resources, and *also invites* other relevant partners to assist interested Parties in identifying key enabling conditions for scaling private sector contributions and public-private partnerships for the sustainable management of agricultural lands and soils;

6. *Further invites* Parties, as appropriate, and in accordance with national priorities and circumstances, to consider innovative and forward-looking analyses of how environmental drivers and land suitability may change over time, and their potential impact on agriculture, producers and other stakeholders, and, where appropriate, to use such analyses to anticipate

future production needs and conditions, identify adaptation pathways and guide investments in land use, infrastructure and support services for sustainable agriculture;

7. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, under their respective mandates and subject to the availability of resources, to continue supporting Parties, upon their request, to improve the sustainable management of agricultural lands and soils to address desertification, land degradation and drought in accordance with national circumstances, priorities and needs while promoting cooperation and coordination with other relevant multilateral environmental agreements, within their respective mandates;

8. *Invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other technical partners to support Parties, upon their request, in strengthening national assessments, mapping agricultural lands and soils, monitoring systems to effectively track changes in the conditions of agricultural lands and the health of soils, and measuring progress made in sustainable land management, identifying potential areas for restoration and investment;

9. *Also invites* the Global Mechanism, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other technical partners, as well as Parties, in line with articles 5, 6 and 20 of the Convention, and taking into account the recommendations from the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Resource Mobilization Toolbox, to support Parties in mobilizing resources, including through the Global Environment Facility, following a country-driven approach and other financial partners;

10. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to continue to strengthen their collaboration with other multilateral environmental agreements, within their respective mandates, and to continue exploring work through the Joint Liaison Group to promote sustainable land management;

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

14th plenary meeting
28 August 2026