Decision 4/COP.17

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,

Noting 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 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, 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 Support Hubs, technical advisory institutions, the Group on Earth Observations Land Degradation Neutrality flagship initiative and other partners 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 limitations of global default data sets, limited observational networks and current methodologies, especially in capturing changes in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, and in particular in hyper arid areas and small islands, low lying atolls, and heterogenous mountainous landscapes;

Further 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 untimely disbursement of funds, differences in national capacities, long processing times for large data sets, and limited access to high-quality and high-resolution data and imagery of Earth observation, including coverage and accessibility due to gaps in data availability and the application of certain current standardized methodologies,

Recognizing that effective national reporting is dependent upon a variety of factors, noting article 26 of the Convention, and that reporting requirements remain responsive to national circumstances,

Also recognizing that fit-for-purpose reporting, in accordance with national circumstances, incorporates nationally validated data, appropriate spatial and temporal resolutions and national supplementary indicators,

1. *Invites* Parties to actively engage with available support mechanisms and *encourages* Support Hubs and technical advisory institutions to take into account 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 relevant stakeholders 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. *Further invites* Parties to submit national reports in a timely manner and consistent with national circumstances and capacities in order to enable comprehensive and credible global assessments of progress towards implementing the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification UNCCD based primarily on national reporting data;

4. *Encourages* Parties to make nationally reported data 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* Parties, in line with articles 5, 6, and 20 of the Convention, and taking into account the recommendations from Resource Mobilization Toolbox, as appropriate, to mobilize resources to support national reporting through the performance review and assessment of implementation system and the interoperable reporting tools, and as appropriate and upon request, the strengthening of national spatial data infrastructures relevant to reporting under the Convention 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, technical advisory institutions, and other relevant initiatives, 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 collaboration and cooperation 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, as appropriate and informed by the assessment of lessons learned from the 2026 reporting process, the roles and functions of Support Hubs and technical advisory institutions as complementary and advisory mechanisms responding to the needs and requests of Parties for the next reporting process, including through the Global Environment Facility-funded Global Support Programme and Umbrella Projects for Enabling Activities while affirming that authorization of access of national reporting information remains subject to Parties' approval;

(b) Explore options for the further evolution of Support Hubs and technical advisory institutions beyond national reporting and into longer-term centres of excellence, building on existing regional and subregional institutions and networks and avoiding the creation of parallel structures;

(c) Further strengthen and expand peer-driven 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 with a view to enhancing the quality of national reporting and strengthening the coherence and coordination across related reporting processes;

(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 and decision-making processes, and by facilitating the continued use of data, tools and institutional capacities developed through reporting;

(e) Support Parties through technical cooperation upon their request, and subject to the availability of funds, in strengthening national capacity to generate, manage, analyse, interpret and use national data, Earth observation and geospatial information for monitoring and reporting;

(f) Promote further efficiency of reporting systems and tools, with a view to reducing duplication of reporting and administrative burdens on Parties;

8. *Invites* the secretariat, in collaboration with the Earth Observation community, including its relevant data providers, end users and other technical partners, as appropriate, within their respective mandate capacity and expertise, and using existing mechanisms and resources, to continue structured dialogue and collaboration with a view to identifying and addressing gaps in the accessibility, quality, high spatial resolutions and temporal coverage of data sets used for national reporting, including, as appropriate, through existing dialogue forums;

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.

14th plenary meeting
28 August 2026