Decision 5/COP.17

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 decision 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, decision 6/COP.15 on the establishment of the Business4Land Initiative as the principal vehicle for private sector engagement under the Convention, decision 6/COP.16 on private sector participation and the private sector engagement strategy, and decision 19/COP.16 on guidance for the sustainable management of agricultural lands,

Noting 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,

Recognizing the urgency of mobilizing private sector resources, in line with the Convention, capacities and partnerships at speed and scale to address desertification, land degradation and drought,

Acknowledging the devastating impacts of droughts on economies, with cascading impacts on global food systems, supply chains and livelihoods, giving consideration to women,

Welcoming the work of the International Drought Resilience Alliance in supporting the mobilization of strategic financial resources to catalyze the creation of innovative financial instruments and supporting its members in facilitating the engagement of the private sector to achieve drought resilience,

Also 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 in the achievement of land degradation neutrality and drought resilience,

Welcoming the continued development of the Business4Land Initiative as the main vehicle for private sector engagement and involvement 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 support the implementation 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 the development of the land restoration industry,

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

Taking note of the participation of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism in (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 World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Healthy Soils and Land 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, private sector engagement and involvement remains constrained by high perceived and systemic risks, limited project bankability, inadequate capacities and insufficient data and methodologies to measure land health and resilience, weak enabling environments, and persistent gaps in standards and metrics,

Action by Parties

1. *Encourages* Parties to promote, as appropriate, the participation and engagement of the private sector in the implementation of the Convention;

2. *Also encourages* Parties, as appropriate, to consider the development and implementation of measures, including enabling conditions, necessary to facilitate private sector contributions to land degradation neutrality, drought resilience and combating desertification;

3. *Further encourages* Parties to consider supporting the establishment of Business4Land Hubs at national level to mobilize business participation, facilitate multi-stakeholder collaboration and advance activities aligned with the priorities of the Convention;

4. *Encourages* Parties to facilitate the participation of representatives of business and industry entities, including small and medium-sized enterprises, as appropriate, in the meetings and processes of the Convention, in line with the procedures established in decision 5/COP.10, while maintaining the intergovernmental and Party-driven nature of decision-making and ensuring transparency regarding affiliations and potential conflicts of interest;

5. *Invites* Parties to promote, at the national level, the engagement and participation of business and industry entities, including small and medium-sized enterprises, in the Business4Land Initiative;

6. *Also invites* Parties to consider the use of blended finance approaches and de-risking instruments, risk-sharing, and investment instruments for land and drought resilience in order to mobilize private capital for the implementation of the Convention while safeguarding public interests and with the understanding that such approaches should be complementary and in line with the Convention;

7. *Further invites* Parties, as appropriate, to engage with the private sector to explore and develop innovative approaches to address desertification, land degradation and drought, including, but not limited to, sustainable bioeconomy, nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches, agroecology, regenerative agriculture, conservation agriculture, sustainable integrated water and land management, and land restoration;

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 Strategy and to further develop the Business4Land Initiative as the main vehicle for private sector engagement under the Convention;

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 relevant work on voluntary 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 voluntary 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, ensuring consistency with Party decisions on drought and nationally determined drought priorities and plans;

(c) Continue the collaboration with partnerships to support corporate capacities, upon request, to improve their sustainable land and water management and drought resilience practices;

(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 drought-resilient action;

(e) Continue the engagement of specific value chain sectors critical to achieving the objectives of the Convention;

(f) 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, ensuring meaningful contribution to the Convention's objectives and priorities;

(g) Promote capacity-building and partnerships with the private sector, including by promoting drought resilience technologies in drought affected areas;

(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 in document ICCD/CRIC(24)/2 on the mobilization of resources and financing flows, on the understanding that such approaches should be complementary and in line with the Convention;

(i) 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, subject to the availability of resources, to continue facilitating the participation of representatives of business and industry entities as appropriate, including from underrepresented regions, in the meetings and processes of the Convention, including through the accreditation procedure established in decision 5/COP.10, and to recommend additional business and industry entities for accreditation by the Conference of the Parties at its eighteenth session;

11. *Requests* the Global Mechanism, subject to the availability of resources, to support interested affected Parties in preparing country-driven projects and programmes that are suitable for public, concessional and blended financing according to the mandate of the Convention;

12. *Also 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.

14th plenary meeting
28 August 2026