Decision 7/COP.17

Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling articles 5, 6, 20 and 21 of the Convention, and that the Global Environment Facility is a financial mechanism of the Convention,

Noting decision 9/COP.16,

Taking note of the support of the Global Environment Facility towards the effort to implement the Convention

Noting that the continued land degradation may undermine progress towards the achievement of strategic objective 1 of the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and its voluntary targets by 2030,

1. *Takes note of* the report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session on the activities of the Global Environment Facility as they relate to sustainable land management for the period 1 July 2024 to 15 April 2026, as published on their website[2] and referred to in document ICCD/CRIC(24)/INF.1;

2. *Welcomes* the 100 per cent utilization rate as of June 2026[3] of the available funding for the land degradation focal area in the eighth replenishment cycle of the Global Environment Facility and the integrated programming of resources of other Global Environment Facility trust fund windows through the Global Environment Facility's integrated programmes, providing opportunities for enhanced coordination and cooperation, and co-benefits among all focal areas through multifocal area programming, including the continued 3:1 ratio of the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources to matching incentives for the ninth replenishment cycle of the Global Environment Facility;

3. *Notes* the initial pledges of USD 3.9 billion to the Global Environment Facility for its ninth replenishment cycle, which is currently, as of August 2026, 27 per cent lower than the replenishment level of the eighth replenishment cycle of the Global Environment Facility, and *also notes* the relative decrease of the financial allocation to the Land Degradation Focal Area of the ninth replenishment cycle of the Global Environment Facility compared to the eighth replenishment cycle of the Global Environment Facility, and *invites* additional contributions to the ninth replenishment cycle of the Global Environment Facility;

4. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to consider strengthening its support for countries in programming and accessing land degradation focal area resources to combat desertification, land degradation and drought and achieve their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, including in the context of land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes;

5. *Also invites* the Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies to continue to support Parties in meeting their reporting requirements in a timely manner, including continuing support for enhancing interoperability among geospatial platforms and tools that countries may wish to utilize for reporting, monitoring and assessment purposes;

6. *Further invites* the Global Environment Facility to continue enhancing knowledge-sharing, capacity-building and the dissemination of sustainable land management best practices to combat desertification and land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought and sand and dust storms, including through enhanced cooperation with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification-designated World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies database;

[2] The GEF report to UNCCD COP 17 can be consulted at the following link: https://www.thegef.org/documents/gef-report-unccd-cop17.

[3] GEFScorecard_June 2026_06_30.pdf.

7. *Notes with appreciation* the Global Environment Facility's support for the Great Green Wall of the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, and the Southern African Development Community in support of the Southern Africa Great Green Wall Initiative, and *invites* continued Global Environment Facility support and partnership engagement;

8. *Welcomes* the Global Environment Facility's attention to drought mitigation and adaptation in its programming strategies, and *invites* the Global Environment Facility to continue to strengthen its efforts in this regard to support countries to address their desertification, land degradation and drought priorities;

9. *Notes* that the land degradation focal area Strategy under the ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, continues to contribute towards countries' efforts to the implement their national drought plans and other drought-related policies and *requests* the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to continue to support the implementation of the national drought plans and other drought-related policies, especially strengthening early warning, preparedness, mitigation and recovery, rehabilitation and monitoring systems, and capacity-building;

10. *Takes note of* the Global Environment Facility's inclusion of a drought vulnerability sub-index as an element of the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources formula of the ninth replenishment cycle of the Global Environment Facility and also *notes* the new drought-related indicators in the results management framework for its ninth replenishment cycle.

11. *Welcomes* the new Drylands and Drought Management Integrated Program included in the Programming Directions for the ninth cycle of the Global Environment Facility and *encourages* the Global Environment Facility to continue with the integrated approach of funding drought-related projects and programmes through various Global Environment Facility funding windows, including through the Small Grants Program and Blended Finance Program, to support Parties in addressing the interconnected challenges of drought while recognizing that blended finance, as an approach that combines public and private resources, should complement, and not substitute for, public international financial resources;

12. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to support the scale up of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme 2.0 by providing support to Parties who wish to be part of this programme and moving decisively to programmatic support linking the setting and refinement of voluntary land degradation neutrality targets to implementation and financing with monitoring and reporting;

13. *Also invites* the Global Environment Facility to report on the implementation of this decision as part of its next report to the Conference of the Parties at its eighteenth session by presenting a more results-oriented report, including on options to improve the long-term impact of projects and programmes financed through the Global Environment Facility;

14. *Requests* the secretariat, according to the applicable rules of procedure, to ensure that any draft decision on collaboration with the Global Environment Facility is circulated at least six weeks prior to the sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention held in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties.

14th plenary meeting
28 August 2026