

Proceedings of the Regional Meeting Preparatory to CRIC16, CST13 and COP13 for

Country Parties of Annex II

4-5 September 2017, Ordos, Inner Mongolia, China



A. Attendance of the regional meeting

The Regional Meeting Preparatory to CRIC16, CST13 and COP13 for Country Parties of Annex II was held on 4-5 September 2017 at the Convention Centre, Ordos, Inner Mongolia, China. Dr. Karma Dorji, Chair of Annex II Group and National Focal Point (NFP) of Bhutan to UNCCD chaired the meeting. Dr. Pradeep Monga, Deputy Executive Secretary of UNCCD delivered his statement on behalf of the Secretariat. The meeting was attended by 50 NFPs and representatives of CSOs. The following Asia-Pacific countries participated in the regional meeting: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lebanon, Laos, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Nauru, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, PNG, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tonga, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, representatives of Asian CSOs. Staff of the Global Mechanism (GM) and UNCCD Secretariat delivered presentations on the items of the agenda of the meeting.

B. Organizational Matter

The agenda of the meeting was adopted as presented by the Chair. Under the Agenda Item 1 on Organizational Matters, Ms. Rawea Mizel Mahmood, Director General of Natural Resource Management and Land Degradation and National Focal Point of Iraq was selected as the chair of the Annex II Group and Dr. Eng. Mohammed Alzuhairi from Iraq was nominated as the Rapporteur of Annex II Regional Meeting Preparatory to CRIC16, CST 13 and COP13.

C. Item on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and future strategy

On Agenda Item 2 on Sustainable Development and Future Strategy, NFPs and delegates reviewed the documents prepared by the Secretariat and discussed in detail the objectives and measures to implement the SDGs and the future strategy of UNCCD. The annex II Group reviewed and discussed the following:

- a) Integrating the SDGs and targets into the UNCCD implementation and the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Land Degradation Neutrality. Country parties are aware the importance of integration of SDGs and targets into UNCCD implementation.
- b) The future strategic framework of the Convention. Country parties advised to take another title to replace the future strategy.
- c) Implementation of the comprehensive communication strategy and the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification. Country parties support the efforts on communication strategy and calls for more attention on this item.

At the afternoon session of Item 3 on Effective Implementation of UNCCD, the group reviewed:

- a. Report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and its recommendations to the Conference of the Parties. The Group suggested the following on Item 3 on Report of CRIC:**
 - Both Secretariat and GM are kindly requested to improve capacity building before start the 2018 reporting;
 - Timeline for 2018 reporting is a challenge and Secretariat suggested timeline is shorter to NFPs to be ready;
 - Consultation service is needed on ground, not just remotely service;
 - Countries suggested that reporting officers should be trained;
 - Both regional and sub-regional workshop are necessary for 2018 reporting;
 - New comers (NFPs) need to be trained to understand fully the reporting template.
- b. Additional procedures or institutional mechanisms to assist the Conference of the Parties in regularly reviewing the implementation of the Convention – Terms of reference of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention. On the item of TOR of CRIC, NFPs suggested the following:**

- The current TOR is practical and it should be retained;
- Country parties are concerned that both political attention and technical efforts to DLDD issues will be weakened at all levels due to the 2 year inter-sessional sessions of the CRIC meetings;

c. LDN TSP Report of the Global Mechanism:

- NFPs advised GM to use more efforts in mobilizing resource and managing LDN Fund. Also, GM is requested to work on climate fund and Rio Convention synergy. Countries request GM to have more countries involved in the LDN practice.

d. Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Global Environment Facility:

- GEF 7 is welcome and Country parties need assistance from the Secretariat to help them apply for funds from GEF 7, especially on reporting and achieving target of LDN and SDG 15.3. Secretariat staff made presentations on the Promotion and Strengthening of Relationships with Other Relevant Conventions and International Organizations, Institutions and Agencies.

The group made the following suggestions:

- The Secretariat briefed the group about GEF7 and cooperation between UNCCD and GEF Secretariat;
- GEF is requested to consider the land degradation caused by oil/gas production;
- GEF is requested to help the Secretariat and country parties link up with other conventions;
- Report stories from the ground and share their experiences as part of future reporting cycle;
- Focus more attention on advanced expertise on good practices related to LDN from the country parties in upcoming reporting and meetings.

Draft Advocacy Policy Frameworks: Gender, Drought, and Sand and Dust Storms (ICCD/COP(13)/19):

Secretariat staff delivered presentations on the items on addressing particularly regional and national conditions. Country parties support the Secretariat to launch these priority areas during next Biennium year programme, and also supported the recommendations made by the Secretariat. As the old MoU was issued ten years ago, there is the need for a revised one. Both donor and non-donor can give comments to the MoU. GEF Secretariat is kindly requested to pay more attention to the DLDD. Land degradation is also a cause for poverty and food shortage. Country parties are also suggested to make target 15.3 as their country's priority. Delegates accepted the recommendations with additional suggestions:

- There are difficult challenges in the Middle East due to conflicts which can also result in more use of soil and water. There is need for regional collaboration and UNCCD need to discuss this and come up with suggestions.

- The Asia-Pacific group suggested the Secretariat should organize a regional drought conference at an appropriate time in 2018 as the Dust and sand issues are a sub-regional and even global issue.

D. Linking scientific knowledge with decision-making

On Item 4, the Secretariat made presentations on scientific conceptual framework for LDN, on cooperation with other scientific panels, on work programme for SPI, and on compilation of proposals for topics in SPI work programme 2018-2019.

The group actively attended the discussion and review of documents of CST13 and entrusted contact persons to join the discussions and negotiations at the contact group.

The following documents were reviewed and discussed:

- a. The scientific conceptual framework for Land Degradation Neutrality. Synthesis report by the Science-Policy Interface;
- b. Cooperation with other scientific panels. Report by the Science-Policy Interface;
- c. Work programme for the Science-Policy Interface (2018-2019);
- d. Compilation of proposals for topics to be considered for inclusion in the SPI work programme 2018-2019.

E. Programme and budget for the biennium 2018–2019

On Item 5, the secretariat delivered a presentation on budget and programme and NFPs fully supported the plan made by the secretariat. The group invited delegates with experience in the process to attend the discussions and negotiations at the contact group.

F. Special segment

The annex II Group has reviewed the following documents:

- a. Parallel ministerial/high-level round tables;
- b. Gender and land rights (a dialogue with civil society);
- c. How can local governments help address the challenges of land degradation? (a dialogue with elected and local government representatives);
- d. How can the private sector invest to help achieve land degradation neutrality? (a dialogue with the private sector).

G. Regional issues

The group has reviewed the documents below and suggested the following:

- a. Presentation of the outcomes of gender training;
- b. Chair of CST Bureau;

- c. Report of the regional representative to the UNCCD Civil Society Organizations Panel and Other issues;
- d. Nominations of members of CST Bureau, CRIC Bureau, COP Bureau and regional chair.

NFPs and representatives of the Annex II group supported the Secretariat to conduct similar training on gender and other issues related to gender, equality and immigration and also endorsed the report on CSOs. The Annex II Group nominated the following representatives of CRIC16, CST13, COP13 and regional chair:

- Chair of COP13: China
- Vice chair of COP Bureau: Bhutan
- Chair for CRIC Bureau: Philippines
- Chair of CST Bureau: Pakistan
- Annex II Group Chair: Iraq

H. Closure of the regional meeting

The Group Chair, Ms. Rawea Mahmood expressed sincere thanks to both the host government and the Secretariat for their effective and substantive support for the regional meeting. She also thanked the NFPs and delegates for their active participation of the regional meeting and their contribution to the meeting. The Chair requested the NFPs and delegates to actively participate in the sessions as well as attend contact groups and other negotiation processes. On behalf of the secretariat, the Asia Region Coordination Unit staff expressed thanked all participants for their participation during the 2 day regional meeting and encouraged delegates to make more contributions at the CST13, CRIC16, HLS and COP13 sessions.
