United Nations
Convention to Combat
Desertification

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Report on the meeting of the Bureau of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (Bonn, Germany, 10 April 2018)

I. Adoption of the agenda

1. The Chairperson of the CRIC, Mr. Samuel Mabilin Contreras opened the meeting and welcomed everyone, including the Deputy Executive Secretary Mr. Pradeep Monga and the newly appointed Global Mechanism Managing Director Mr. Juan Carlos Mendoza. Mr. Monga and Mr. Mendoza in turn addressed the participants.

2. The Latin American and Caribbean was represented by Mr. Jose Armando Alanis de la Rosa replacing the vice-chair Mr. Dr. Jorge Luis Garcia Rodriguez. Furthermore, the Bureau was informed that an additional participant from Namibia (representing Africa) was attending the meeting as an observer. The attendance to the CRIC Bureau meeting is recorded in annex I. The Chair introduced the Provisional Agenda and sought a motion from members for the approval and adoption of the Agenda. It was agreed among the Bureau members that the appointment/election of a new rapporteur will be dealt with under the last item of the Agenda entitled "any other business". The provisional agenda was adopted as contained in annex II.

II. Work programme of the CRIC 2018-2019

1. The secretariat shared with the Bureau members a presentation on the outcome of CRIC 16 and COP 13 and all the important decisions that are directly relating to the work of the CRIC and the CRIC Bureau. The secretariat also presented a slide on the work programme of the CRIC and all the potential meetings of the CRIC Bureau until 2020. The timeline of activities for the CRIC Bureau is recorded in Annex III.

2. The Bureau members discussed different matters relating to CRIC Bureau meetings and requested the secretariat to make available documents 2 weeks prior to the date of the meeting in order to have adequate time to receive feedback from their respective constituencies. In addition, the secretariat shared with the Bureau members an overview of the new terms of reference for the CRIC, including its different functions.

3. It was then agreed to prepare for the next Bureau meeting scheduled to take place in September 2018 where CRIC 17 organizational matters will be discussed in more details.

III. The UNCCD reporting process

1. The secretariat briefed the Bureau members on the reporting process and gave an overview of the reporting tools, the reporting timeline as well the capacity-building activities taking place in all regional annexes. The secretariat highlighted the importance of this reporting cycle to establish a baseline. Some of the Bureau members who attended regional workshops highlighted in particular the late invitation letters received by some countries and hence the difficulties faced by them to properly prepare for those meetings.

2. Bureau members also expressed their wish that Parties could get engaged in organizing such capacity-building workshops. This request was made in particular because virtual attendance during the workshops by experts and/or support staff turned out not to be practical, nor efficient.

3. The Bureau members seized the opportunity to discuss under this item, the submission deadline of national reports and there was an overall consensus that 31 July was not an adequate date, taking into consideration a) that many countries have not yet received the funds under the umbrella projects and b) the technical nature of the reporting. In this connection it was also pointed out that the last capacity-building workshop would finish by mid-May which would give many Parties less than 3 months to compile all the needed information. It was then proposed that the submission deadline be moved by 4 to 5 weeks beyond 31 July, which should be brought to the attention of the COP Bureau.

4. The Bureau members also noted the importance of ensuring coherence between national processes dealing with UNCCD and SDGs reporting and of engaging national statistical offices (NSO) in the PRAIS process, suggesting also to send an explicit message to Parties to establish contact with national authorities.

5. Mr. Rajeb Boulharouf, the Chief of Staff at the secretariat was invited to the meeting to brief the Bureau on issues relating to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and the secretariat's preparation and announced that ECOSOC requested CCD inputs on SDGs

processes. During the HLPF there will be a specific ministerial declaration where UNCCD representatives will participate.

6. After discussions, the Bureau members suggested to involve countries in the HLPF meeting taking place in July 2018 in order to reinforce the role of UNCCD as an accelerator in the SDG process , by engaging *inter alia* through "the friends of DLDD" coordinated by the ambassadors of Namibia and Iceland.

IV. CRIC 17, documentation, venue, tentative agenda

1. The secretariat introduced the item and invited the conference services officer from the secretariat to present the latest information on the venue and the travel arrangements for participants.

2. The presentation *inter alia* highlighted the difficulties in reaching the venue for CRIC 17, in Georgetown, Guyana and that the first preparatory mission is to take place by the end of April 2018. As the duration of the CRIC is 3 days, the Bureau members highlighted the importance of having up to 2 days regional consultations prior to the meeting which have led to some discussion relating to the budget of CRIC 17. It was therefore suggested that these proposed regional consultations be brought to the attention of the COP Bureau for consideration and approval.

3. The secretariat also presented the tentative agenda of CRIC 17. It was highlighted that the inclusion of some Information document needs to be reviewed taking into consideration decisions taken by COP 13. The Bureau members also emphasized that the CRIC 17 session should be made as interactive as possible in order to allow for more dynamic discussions during the session and not just presenting documents and outcomes of the reporting. This matter will be further discussed in detail during the next CRIC Bureau meeting prior to CRIC 17.

4. Welcoming the decision of the government of Guyana for hosting the CRIC17, LAC representative suggested to extend CRIC Bureau's appreciation to the Government of Guyana for this, taking into account the effort needed to organize such an important event.

V. Briefing by the UNCCD secretariat on the work of the SPI and the linkages between CRIC and CST

1. The secretariat presented an update of CST activities and the work programme of the Science-policy Interface (SPI), including its objectives. The presentation highlighted the importance of coordinating activities between the SPI with other scientific panels and bodies such as IPBES, and the IPCC.

2. The CRIC Bureau welcomed these activities and encouraged further synergies. In addition they also highlighted the importance for a continuous cooperation between the CST and the CRIC.

3. The Bureau members also requested more information about the IPBES report on the land degradation assessment and the secretariat promised to follow up as the full report was not yet available online on the IPBES website.

VI. Any other matter

1. The Bureau members agreed to propose to Parties that Ms. Anna Luise (WEOG) would become the rapporteur of the committee for the biennium 2018-2019.

2. The Bureau also agreed on a list of recommendations that would be brought to the attention to the COP Bureau on 11 April 2018. The recommendations are listed in the following paragraph.

VII. Recommendations for the COP Bureau from CRIC Bureau meeting 10 April 2018

1. Extension of deadline for the submission of national reports of 4 to 5 weeks beyond 31 July 2018 as countries will need more time to prepare good quality reports and ensure a high submission rate of reports, and taking into account the late obtainability of enabling funding, data requirements and the ongoing capacity-building activities ending on 9 May 2018.

2. Necessity to have a regional preparatory meeting up to two days back to back with CRIC 17, as per usual practice in order to review documentation, discuss regional views and prepare countries to actively participate in the CRIC activities.

3. The Bureau put emphasis on a good outcome from the HLPF in July 2018 and welcomes the information received that the group of Friends of DLDD[1] works on this outcome. All Parties are invited to engage in generating a political will and ensure that the ministerial declaration includes relevant elements related to SDG 15.3.

4. Sessions of CRIC 17 should primarily be interactive. Official documentation should be used as important reference material to enrich the debates undertaken by Parties. Other stakeholders such as UN agencies and IGOs should be identified to provide information on their contribution on topics identified by the CRIC Bureau for interactive sessions.

5. The Bureau also highlighted the importance of the work done by the SPI including its coordination activities with other scientific panels and bodies such as IPBES, IPCC, etc. and encourages it to continue strengthening the linkages between the CRIC and CST/SPI.

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[1] A New York-based Group coordinated by the ambassadors of Namibia and Iceland

Annex I- List of participants

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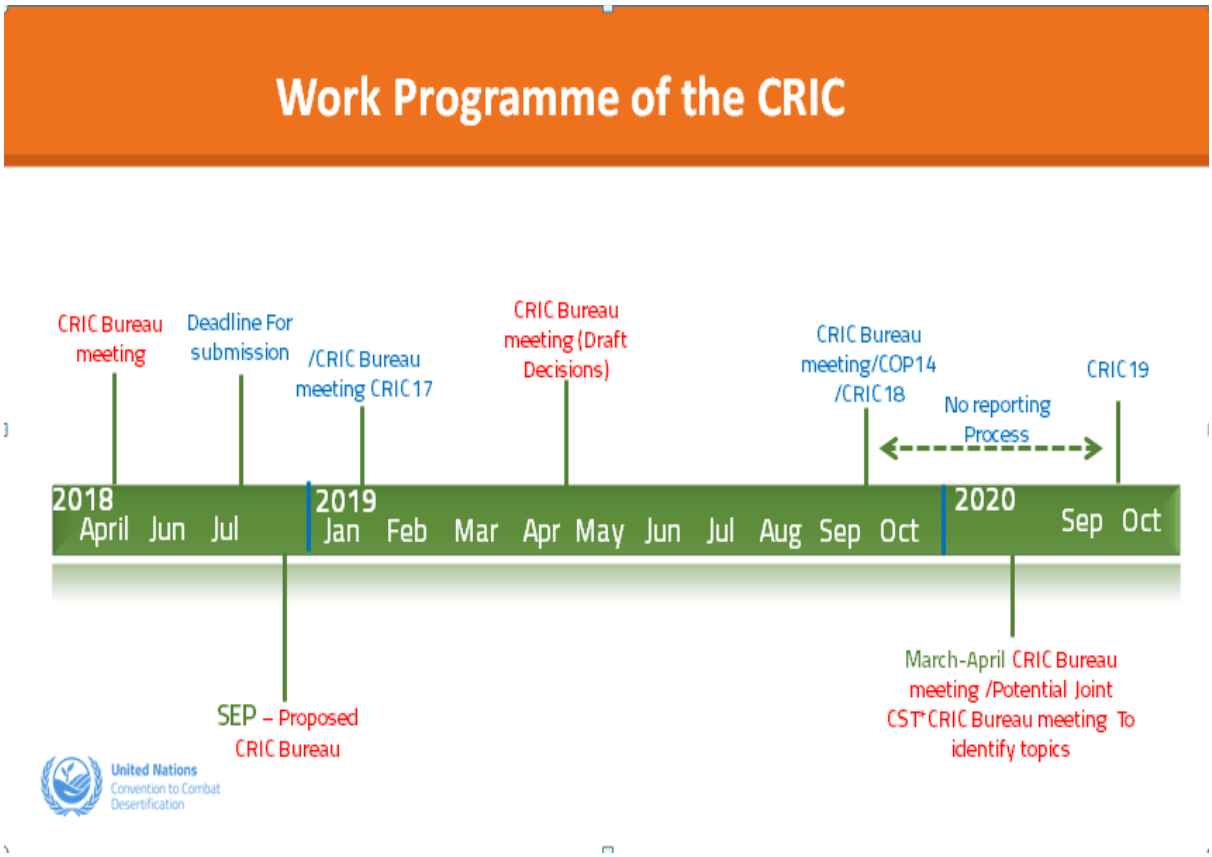
Annex II - Agenda of the CRIC Bureau meeting

1. Adoption of the Agenda
2. Work programme of the CRIC 2018-2019
3. The UNCCD reporting process
4. CRIC 17, documentation, venue and tentative agenda
5. Briefing by the UNCCD secretariat on the work of the SPI and the linkages between CRIC and CST.
6. Any other business

Annex III- Work Programme of the CRIC for 2018-2020