

Report of the Regional Preparatory Meeting (regional consultations) for country Parties of Annex V

CRIC 17, 27 - 30 January 2019, Georgetown, Guyana

The Regional Meeting of Annex V preparatory to the 17th session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 17) took place on 27th January in Georgetown, Guyana. The agenda and list of participants are annexed to the report (Annex I and Annex II).

The meeting was opened by the National Focal Point (NFP) of Belarus, Mr. Kuzmich, the Regional Chair for Annex V, followed by the CEE Programme Officer, Ms. Annagylyjova (via Skype). The attention of the group was drawn to the fact that: (i) for the first time the analysis of the report on Strategic Objectives of the UNCCD Framework Strategy 2018-2030 was made based on the national reports as well as (ii) the next reporting exercise will be in 4 years in 2022. The Regional Chair also stressed out the tight schedule of both , the regional meeting and the CRIC session and called upon the present country Parties to work in the most efficient way in order to voice out the regional statement during the CRIC plenary and the contact group.

The agenda of the Regional Preparatory Meeting was approved. The NFP of Ukraine was elected as a rapporteur of the meeting. Mr. Hamid Custovic was proposed as a spokesperson for SO1 – 5 and Ms. Nino Chikovani as a spokesperson for the “Improvement of communication of information as well as quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties”.

As proposed and agreed by the Annex V delegates, two countries of Annex IV (Italy and Malta) joined the meeting. The Regional Coordinator of Annex IV, Mr. Erdogan Ozevren, also served the meeting.

The morning session was chaired by the Regional Chair of Annex V, NFP of Belarus, and the afternoon session was chaired by the Regional Chair of Annex IV , NFP of Malta.

Preliminary analysis – Strategic objective 1 (ICCD/CRIC(17)/2)

After presentation of the document by the Lead Scientist Mr. Barron Orr, the following discussion and positions points were articulated:

The representative of Ukraine shared the experience relating to analyses and use of the global data and pointed out the need to ensure continuity of global data flows and improvement of data quality.

He further proposed that cooperation between the UNCCD and FAO processes pertaining to SOC evaluation and mapping should be strengthened and suggest the Secretariat should take measures in that regard.

He also pointed out the need to revise the data about proportion of degraded land as presented in the document ICCD/CRIC(17)/2 to reflect the data from the national reports correctly.

Secretariat reaffirmed that collaboration with FAO is on-going and FAO has embraced the initiative of UNCCD and Global Earth Observation (GEO) on LDN. The Secretariat proposed the countries to encourage their national GEO representatives to work on the LDN GEO initiative. It was agreed that FAO data could have a huge impact on UNCCD SO1 data.

The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina congratulated the Secretariat and the countries with the first result of the reporting against the Strategic Objectives using the quantitative information. He further emphasised that due to lack of time left for reporting their team could not use the national data to produce more accurate estimates. According to him, the next reporting process and data quality could be improved. Once again, he stressed out that the national capacity is a limiting factor in successful reporting as well as political will towards the convention reporting and processes is lacking comparing to other conventions. He further proposed that other platforms such as IPCC and IPBES are producing reports and data and the convention's and SPI outcomes needs to be cross-checked with their data.

The representative of Italy acknowledged the work of the Secretariat and the GM in the organization of the reporting process. She noted the progress in reporting and raised the questions about the appropriate LDN baseline and its further improvement. The importance of the synergy between the UNCCD and SDG reporting was highlighted.

The representative of Armenia underlined the necessity to develop national geo-information system and importance of data collected at community level. He further noticed that the indicators for Strategic Objective1 are more relevant for UNCCD compared to the indicators under other Strategic Objectives and therefore , more time shall be allocated to SO1 indicators in future capacity building.

The full statement on the Preliminary analysis of Strategic Objective 1 – 5 could be found in Annex III.

GM related matters

(i) Progress made in setting land degradation neutrality (LDN) targets and advancing towards LDN implementation (ii) Identifying emerging innovative financing opportunities to combat land degradation; (iii) SO5 – to mobilize substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources (ICCD/CRIC(17)/3, ICCD/CRIC(17)/7)

After the presentation of the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism, Mr. Juan Carlos Mendosa and GM Programme Officer Mr. Sven Walter, the subsequent questions were raised by the delegates:

The representative of Ukraine expressed appreciation for opportunities provided by LDN TSP as well as its achievements. The questions were raised about the ways for Annex V countries to participate in the current and future initiatives to be supported by the GM, including possibility to extend the Drought Initiative to support more countries; get access to the LDN Fund and Rio Project Preparation Facility (Rio PPF) for relevant national stakeholders.

The GM Managing Director responded that the Drought national plans will be used as resource mobilization and basis for the project development under the Transformative Project and Programmes (TPP). He further shared that the first project funded through LDN Fund is Sustainable Coffee Production

in Peru. The countries should actively participate in the Interactive session on Financial mechanisms and direct their queries to Mirova, as GM is not involved in the selection process. Rio PPF is at early stage of development and will be discussed with countries.

Improving the procedures for communication of information ICCD/CRIC(17)/8

After the presentation of the document there was a general appreciation to the reporting process and request for its further harmonization.

The representative of Ukraine pointed out that it is important that the countries have opportunity to amend, improve and update the national reports posted on the PRAIS portal. He proposed that the template should be further simplified and improved, as well as sufficing time and timely financing should be ensured for better reporting process. As far as the capacity building is concerned the importance should be given to the regional consultations and trainings as they allow the experience exchange among the countries

The representative of Romania appreciated the Trends.Earth and highlighted that this software should be further utilized in the reporting process in order that the countries improve the quality of information they are using in the report.

The full statement on the document ICCD/CRIC17/8 could be found in Annex IV.

Preliminary analysis – Strategic objectives 2 – 4 (ICCD/CRIC(17)/4, ICCD/CRIC(17)/5, ICCD/CRIC(17)/6)

After presentation of the documents by the Secretariat, the following discussion and positions points were articulated:

The representative of Belarus proposed that the template would be pre-filled for indicators of Strategic Objectives 2 and 4. He also pointed out that the data processing and analysis should be improved as the error appears in the document Preliminary outcomes - SO4 –To generate global benefits for Red List Index. The document concludes that only 1 country reported on upward trends, however there were at least 3 countries from CEE which reported on upward trends. He further pointed on the inappropriate formulation of direct drivers for positive trends which formulated as negative factors.

The representative of Ukraine supported the proposal of Belarus to prefill data for SO2 and SO4.

The Gender Action Plan of the UNCCD as a tool to improve the living conditions of affected populations. First experiences and the way forward

After presentation of the document ICCD/CRIC(17)/CRP.1 by the Secretariat, the following discussion and positions points were articulated:

The representative of Belarus pointed out that it will be difficult to report on gender disaggregated data as our national statistic does not collect them.

The Secretariat recommended to consult the national gender policies and UN organizations, such as UN-Women, UNDP, to find out what data or methodologies on gender-sensitive monitoring are available at the national level.

ANNEX I. Agenda of the Regional Preparatory Meeting for country Parties of Annex V, 27 January 2019

Time	Session
8:30-9:00	Registration
9:00-9:20	Opening Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening statement of the Regional Chair • Welcoming remarks from the UNCCD Secretariat
9:20-9:50	Organizational matters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of the agenda and organization of work; • Appointment of the rapporteur
9:50 – 10:00	Break
10:00 -10:45	Morning session - Joint with Annex IV Assessment of Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary analysis – Strategic Objectives 1 (ICCD/CRIC(17)/2)
10:45 – 11:00	Break
11:00 – 11:50	Assessment of Implementation GM related matters: – Joint with Annex IV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress made in setting land degradation neutrality (LDN) targets and advancing towards LDN implementation (ICCD/CRIC(17)/3 and interactive session) • Identifying emerging innovative financing opportunities to combat land degradation (interactive session) • SO5 – To mobilize substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources...(ICCD/CRIC(17)/7)
11:50 - 13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for communication of information, as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties (ICCD/CRIC(17)/8)
13:00 – 15:00	Lunch
15:00 – 16:00	The reporting and review process of the UNCCD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary analysis - Strategic Objectives 2 - 4 (ICCD/CRIC(17)/4, ICCD/CRIC(17)/5, ICCD/CRIC(17)/6) Assessment of Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gender Action Plan of the UNCCD as a tool to improve the living conditions of affected populations. First experiences and the way forward (interactive session)
16:00 – 16:10	Break
16:10 – 17:30	Separately Annex V Formulation of conclusions and recommendations Closing Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Chair' Summary • Closing remark from the UNCCD representative • AOB

ANNEX II: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS PRESENT AT THE REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING AND THE CRIC17

	Country	Delegate	Email Contacts
1.	Armenia	Ashot Vardevanyan (NFP)	ashot_v@mail.ru
2.	Belarus	Andrei Kuzmich (NFP)	a.kuzmich.belarus@gmail.com
3.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Hamid Custovic (STC)	custovic.hamid@gmail.com
4.	Georgia	Nino Chikovani (NFP)	ninochikovani@gmail.com
5.	Montenegro	Mirko Knezevic	mirkok@ac.me
6.	Moldova	Valeriu Cazac	mihail.roibu@meteo.gov.md
7.	Romania	Radu Sbirnea	radu.sbirnea@mmediu.ro
8.	Ukraine	Yuriy Kolmaz (NFP)	saveland@menr.gov.ua, kolmaz@ukr.net

ANNEX III. Opening Statement of behalf of the Annex V, CRIC 17

(By NFP of Belarus)

Mister Chair
Excellency,
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. On behalf of the Annex V countries allow me to start by thanking people and the Government of Guyana for organizing the 17th session of CRIC and the regional consultative meetings in beautiful city Georgetown. Your warm hospitality is highly appreciated!
2. CRIC 17 is an important milestone in the implementation of the Convention as this session aims to analyze and evaluate the results and process of the first reporting against the Strategic Objectives of the UNCCD Framework Strategy 2018-2030. During next three days we will evaluate how effective are the first steps taken towards the attainment of the SDG Target 15.3.1.
3. We also would like to express our gratitude to the Secretariat, the Global Mechanism of UNCCD, the Global Environmental Facility, UN Environmental Program and other partners in supporting countries in the reporting process.
4. One of the most important outcomes of the reporting was the possibility to receive and analyze the global dataset and estimate the proportion of degraded lands. This exercise strengthened the national capacity, helped us to build links to the national SDGs process and improve cooperation among key national institutions including the statistics. This process is critically important for the countries in successful formulation and implementation of national voluntary Land Degradation Neutrality targets.
5. We appreciate available reporting tools, PRAIS portal, template, but they need to be further improved in order to make them more friendly as for reporting teams as well as for the users. Nonetheless, the fact that 3/4 (three quarters) of countries submitted their national reports and majority of the countries utilized the global dataset, proves the significant accomplished work. Task of the CRIC 17 is to assess the results of this process in order to enhance its efficiency. And the important conditions of this efficiency is that global data flows should be sustained and quality of data should be further improved.
6. 11 countries of Annex V joined the LDN TSP process. Seizing this opportunity, we , once again, express our commitment to achieve LDN targets. The process of LDN target setting helped the countries to improve advocacy on the Convention and increased awareness on LDN. Many countries continue their efforts in upscaling LDN in their national policies, however, without adequate support from the international partners this momentum could be lost. We, therefore, encourage the Secretariat , Global mechanism and other bilateral and multi-lateral partners to continue their efforts in supporting countries in the integration of LDN targets into national action programmes and other strategic national documents.
7. We also consider that for the effective implementation of the Convention it is crucial for to mobilize additional financial resources for the advancing UNCCD Framework Strategy and the national voluntary LDN targets. And we would like to ask the Secretariat, the GM, the GEF, other multilateral and bilateral partners to undertake necessary measures in order to have adequate and

timely financial support . It's very important when financial resources are mobilized and provided timely, including for reporting process.

8. Definitely, in the process of implementing the Convention, it is also important to take into account gender issues. Gender equality issues are becoming an integral part of projects and programs to combat land degradation.
9. We welcome the Drought Initiative which is currently implemented and we think this initiative should be scaled up and more countries should be supported.
10. National capacity should be further developed and improved in order to achieve greater country ownership, data accuracy and sustainability of the reporting. This is crucially important for 4 years reporting cycle, when the knowledge and continuity could be easily lost. . Our region greatly benefited from the regional training which were organized during the reporting process and would like to encourage more regular and more targeted capacity building events. In this regard , we welcome the emerging collaboration with the Group on Earth Observation and participating organizations which will work on further data improvement and harmonization and the building national capacity.

Distinguished delegates,

11. Taking in account the importance of current session, we however , are concerned with the time allocated for the regional consultation as well as for the CRIC session . Tight schedule is very challenging for both countries and the Secretariat , it affects the quality of discussion and finally the outcomes of the session. Therefore, we would like to ask secretariat to ensure the adequate resource mobilization for next inter-session CRIC session in order to have efficient and meaningful discussion and outcomes.
12. In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are ready for an open and constructive dialogue to develop recommendations during the CRIC 17 that will serve a solid basis for decisions at the upcoming 14th session of the Conference of Parties and will make the implementation process of the Convention more effective in actual global context.

We wish all participants of CRIC 17 successful and fruitful work.
Thank you for attention!

**Annex IV: Statement of behalf of the Annex V on the document ICCD/CRIC17/2, ICCD/CRIC17/4, ICCD/CRIC17/5, ICCD/CRIC17/6, ICCD/CRIC17/7
(By STC of Bosnia and Herzegovina)**

**Mister Chair
Excellency,
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Annex V countries allow me to start by thanking people and the Government of Guyana for organizing the 17th session of CRIC and the regional consultative meetings in beautiful city Georgetown. Your warm hospitality is highly appreciated!

On SO-1

- We appreciate that for the first time the convention has solid estimates on land degradation and we would like to thank the Secretariat, the GM and other partners. We believe we are moving into right direction. In order to improve efficiency we would like to share some of our experience and to propose recommendations.
- We would like to start with the concern of timeliness of financial support. Delay of the national financing for 2018 reporting did not allow sufficient time allocation for data analysis by the national experts. However, thanks to the fact that majority of the countries gained experience through the LDN TSP processes as well as the reporting training in April 2018, our region could achieve 80% reporting rate. However, the quality of the reports suffered substantially as well as the national verification process. Therefore, we would like to reiterate that all necessary arrangements for next Umbrella programme should be completed in timely and transparent manner.
- Based on the experience of our countries during this reporting cycle we would like to highlight the improvements to be introduced for the next reporting cycle. Those improvements could be clustered in two groups – technical and institutional

At technical level:

- More efforts should be made to harmonize global and national data – attention should be given to harmonization of diverse land classification systems
- Global data should be combined and verified using a ground-truthing - sufficient time and resources should be allocated for ground-truthing ;
- Problem of land take (land sealing) is under estimated and needs to be better addressed.
- The most challenging part was the assessment of soil organic carbon dynamic due to Land Use and Land Cover Change and changes in land productivity, particularly if the countries utilized non-spatially-explicit data, such as aggregated official statistics for land-change estimates. Therefore, further attention should be given on improving national capacity in assessment of soil carbon. Partnership and synergies with FAO soil mapping should be further strengthened.

- In Central and Eastern Europe where parcelized agriculture and mixed classes dominate, it is highly preferential to further develop the products with higher spatial resolution.
- We also would like to ask secretariat to revise the global and regional data analysis as presented in the document ICCD/CRIC(17)/2 to reflect the data from the national reports correctly;
- Global data flows should be sustained, improved and further provided to eligible countries. We also would like to ask Secretariat to further analyze and present global and regional data in interactive and visualized format. Better presentation of the data will facilitate advocacy and scientific discussion for implementation of the convention at global, regional and national levels

At institutional level:

- For many countries the data used in the report should be correlated with the official national statistic, which was a barrier due to (1) differences in land cover classification systems, (2) lack of time series and area coverage, (3) absence of required data in the national statistic system Therefore, some countries could use global data only as supplementary information.
- The absence of the comparable data in the national statistic hinders the collaboration with the National Statistic organizations. This could be solved through the training and workshops specifically targeting SO1 for land cadaster services and national statistic organization (NSO).

The important question under the Strategic Objective 1 remains the baseline.

Despite the fact that most of the countries provided reports, however covering only 61% of global Earth area, it does not allow us to consider the data obtained as complete. In this regard, it is proposed, with subsequent reporting along with the information provided by countries, to also evaluate default data from global sources over the entire surface of the Earth.

- For the purposes of the subsequent reporting steps, it is necessary to determine which data to consider as the baseline - 2000 (the first year for which countries provided data from global sources), 2015 (adoption of the Sustainable Development Agenda) or 2018 (first reporting under the new strategic framework of the Convention).
- Finally ,we support the recommendation “working with: (i) Relevant international partners to expand initiatives which promote increased tree-covered areas while also working to reverse declining trends where these have been reported;”. At the same time,. the reporting results show that the largest carbon stocks in relative terms are concentrated in wetlands, especially in peatlands. Therefore we consider it is necessary to include in the recommendations the importance of of increasing and rehabilitation of degraded wetlands, and especially peatlands areas.

On Strategic Objective -2, 4

-Based on the experience gained during the reporting process and after reviewing the CRIC documents, our group would like to share some observations on the Strategic Objectives 2 and 4:

- We appreciate the provision of data sources for SO 2 and 4 , however , we support the recommendation on “Prefilling SO-2 reporting templates with UNCCD-recognized indicator/metric data from international sources to allow this default data to be confirmed by country Parties or replaced with national data, as appropriate. We would like to consider the same recommendation for SO 4 and SO 5.
- Recommendation (c) under SO 2 in the document ICCD/CRIC 17/4 proposes to add new functionality to the reporting format such as possibility to replace data systematically , multiple languages, etc. Those functionality should be added not only to SO2 but to all SOs.

Finally , we have a question to the Secretariat how the data received on SO2 and SO4 will be correlated with SO1 land-based estimates? We believe, it is important to make this correlation and linkages more clear and visible.

- Specifically on SO 4 on “Trends in abundance and distribution of selected species” we would like to draw your attention to mismatch in the reporting template the upward trend and its direct drivers which are formulated as negative processes. Therefore , the document (ICCD/CRIC(17)/6, para 13) we have the following contradiction “The direct drivers reported as being associated with an upward trend in the Red List Index were cited as deforestation, over-exploitation of vegetation.”
- In the same document, para 18 , There is the conclusion ‘The majority of reporting country Parties reported downward trends in the Red List Index; only one country reported upward trends’ does not correspond to the data in Table 2, which shows the growth of this index, specifically, in Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Ukraine.

On Strategic Objective-5

- Our region considers that for most indicators under SO5 , reporting is overly simplified, only trends (growth-decline) without quantitative data are indicated, which does not allow for any informative analysis. Simplification became a reduction, but should be optimization. We suggest to prefilling SO-5 reporting templates with data from OECD and other international sources.
- We also would like to ask Global Mechanism to inform countries systematically about the development of the LDN Fund.

Thank you for attention!

ANNEX V: Statement on behalf of Annex V on the document ICCD/CRIC17/8

(By NFP of Georgia)

Mister Chair

On behalf of the Annex V countries allow me to address the document on “Improving the procedures for communication of information...”. We find that this document is at some extent linked to the documents on SO1 – 5 which we have already commented yesterday . We believe, that our recommendations on improving specific parts of the templates, as well as adding new functionality were well noted and will be included in the final CRIC report.

Nevertheless , we would like to reiterate the following points:

We appreciate the work undertaken by the secretariat, the GM, Global Environment Facility, UN Environmental Programme and Conservation International for ensuring the development of reporting template, manuals and improving PRAIS portal.

On the SO1 – 5 data:

- Global data flows should be sustained, improved (in terms of higher resolution of images etc.) and further provided to eligible countries;
- Existing tools, methods and databases should be better used (e.g. the WOCAT UNCCD SLM best practice reporting and database, carbon benefit tool, Trends. Earth, Collect Earth etc.);
- National monitoring systems and indicators should be further developed, improved and used.

On the reporting template and PRAIS portal we have observed and recommend the following:

- Countries experienced technical problems with the format of the report: the form is not readable by all common versions of programs for .pdf, the contents of some columns are not displayed when printed.
- The functionality on data retrieving by any set of attributes should be added.
- As indicated by the analysis done by the Secretariat, for some descriptive sections of reporting (for example, "Enhancing resource mobilization", "Drought risk management and early warning systems"), the 3/4 information provided by countries is irrelevant to the topic. This suggests the need to optimize such reporting sections in the next cycle.
- We also propose to have a printable and readable format of the report which would facilitate its distribution and use as an information tool as for public as for decision –makers.
- As for PRAIS portal , the countries should have a possibility to amend already submitted national report if necessary
- In order to increase the sustainability and comparability of data necessary for reporting, we consider it is important that the Secretariat ensures provision of data from the global sources up to 2030.

For the Implementation Framework

- To make the format of reporting on IF more user friendly by expanding the text box

On Capacity building and quality assurance of the report

- To organize target training at regional or sub-regional levels in partnership with the specialized agencies , GEO LDN initiative , Conservation International
- To use quality assurance exercise as a part of national capacity building process. For example, making in-depth technical review of the reports of selected countries per region with a broad stakeholder engagement. This could help to build national capacity for more than 1 or 2 persons usually invited to the training .

On the reporting timeline

- We would like to ask for clarification from the secretariat for proposed timeline in the document. IN Russian version of the document dated of 19 Nov, the 19th session of inter-sessional CRIC takes place in 2020. However, in English version of document published on the same date the CRIC Inter – session session is missing. We know, that CRIC 19 is supposed to take place in 2020, according to the Term of Reference of CRIC (I refer to the document 13 COP 13 which says Intersessional sessions of the CRIC are to be held once between ordinary meetings of the COP). We think, it is important to have an opportunity to meet between two COPs in order to advance the post-COP discussion as well as to adjust and fine-tune the tools and procedures for the next reporting cycle. Which document is correct?
- Our next question is for GEF, the secretariat and UNEP- GEF 7 has started. What will be done to ensure that the financial resources for GSP 3 and particularly next Umbrella programme will reach countries timely? In the current cycle, some countries received financial support almost one year after a formal request to UNEP. Many countries in our region received fund when the actual work on reporting was already completed. Delays in the provision of support reduce the number of reports submitted by the deadline, and also reduce the quality of reporting.
- We would like to thank to GEF, UNEP, Secretariat and GM for supporting countries through the Umbrella project.
- Some countries express the need to ensure better communication and advisory service from the UNEP on the implementation of Umbrella project at country level. It is important that those limited resources are used in appropriate manner. For some countries in our region, it is important that for the next Umbrella process, the rules and procedures to access and manage of Umbrella funds are explained to the countries.

Finally, we would like to reiterate the importance of having sufficient time allocated for CRIC, both regional consultation and CRIC session. As we see from on-going session, it is challenging for secretariat to service such a tight schedule. The contact group was cancelled yesterday. We are concerned that the countries will not have time to discuss the CRIC report. Therefore, we request the secretariat to ensure that the next intersession session will be organized in the manner which will allow in-depth discussion and will produce solid outcomes.

Thank you for attention!

Annex VI: Closing remarks on behalf of the Central and Eastern Europe

(By NFP of Belarus)

Mister Chair,
Excellency,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen

1. On behalf of the Central and Eastern Europe, we would like to thank you, Chair, for carefully driving us through three days of CRIC agenda and the delegations of the Parties to the Convention for their fruitful work in a spirit of cooperation and goodwill.
2. Allow me to express our gratitude to the UNCCD Secretariat for the efforts in the organization of CRIC-17. But, as we noted earlier, the organization of the sessions of the CRIC can and should be improved.
3. However, despite the tight schedule of CRIC and its regional meeting, the countries of our region could exchange the views, learn from each other's experience and jointly formulate the recommendations. This face-to-face discussion is essential for building regional partnership and having fruitful deliberations.
4. Today CRIC-17 is completing its work, and the Annex V countries would like to highlight the peculiarity of this CRIC – our discussions and our recommendations were very specific, perhaps more than ever before. It signifies the transformation of the Convention, which we have already noted at COP-13, and now we confirm that our progress continues. At COP-13 we endorsed the Strategic Framework of the Convention until 2030, we set our clear goals and now, at CRIC-17, our way to them is becoming clearer too.
5. We received the first experience of reporting on the new Strategic Framework. Thanks to this experience, we were able to see the shortcomings and, therefore, eliminate them in the next reporting cycle. We are improving a tool to receive more accurate information about our progress towards the attainment of the SDG Target 15.3.1.
6. We believe that the interactive dialogues of CRIC-17 were useful in terms of exchanging opinions, experiences, and searching for new approaches to solving existing problems. We believe, this format should be maintained for future but organized in less formal and more engaging ways.

Mister Chair,

7. On behalf of the region, we would like to thank the government of India for hosting the 14 sessions of the Conference of the Parties later this year. Your political commitment to the implementation of convention is highly appreciate and we all will work hard to make this event successful.
8. We would also like to express appreciation to the Global Mechanism, UNEP and other partners for assisting countries in the process of setting national LDN targets, building capacity for their achievement and reporting. We hope that our further cooperation will continue to be just as effective.

9. And especially we would like to express our gratitude to the Executive Secretary Madame Monique Barbut for your contribution to the promotion of the Convention to a new level, for your productive energy, which gave impetus to all of us.
10. And finally, of course, we cannot fail to thank our hosts, the government of Guyana and the good people of Georgetown for their excellent hospitality.
11. We thank all delegations once again for your participation and wish you all a safe journey home.

Thank you Mister Chair