



CRIC Bureau Meeting Report
25 June 2019
Bonn, Germany

I. Welcoming Remarks by the Executive Secretary, Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw

1. Mr. Thiaw welcomed the two Bureaus of CRIC and CST who were convening jointly for the opening remarks and a brief presentation by the secretariat on the logistical arrangements made for COP 14.
2. After welcoming the Bureau members, Mr. Thiaw introduced his vision for the future and expectations for the upcoming COP saying that he hopes that COP 14 in New Delhi will allow the Convention to go to the next level where focus will be placed on implementation instead of institutional processes. He referred to the four scientific reports on land that are part of the documentation prepared for the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and highlighted the extent to which science can nowadays make credible assumptions about the interrelationships between land and developmental issues such as economics, water, and migration and that it is time to use this knowledge to take actions on the ground.
3. He pointed out that decisions are not made by experts and highlighted the need to engage with those who do, simplifying scientific findings and delivering a credible and science-based narrative, thus making science an integral part of the decision-making process. The Executive Secretary also seized the opportunity to inform the Bureau members that the room in which they were holding the meeting, had been renamed in recognition of the first Executive Secretary to the Convention Mr. Hama Arba Diallo who served this Convention from 1993-2007. He ended his remarks by stating how crucial the two Bureaus are for the future of the Convention and by recognizing India's efforts in doing all it can for a successful session of COP 14. He then thanked the participants and wished them success in their deliberations.
4. The welcoming remarks were followed by remarks made by the CRIC Chair, Mr. Samuel Contreras and Mr. German Kust, a CST Bureau vice-chair.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

5. The provisional agenda of the meeting was considered and adopted by the Bureau members and are contained in annex I of this report.



III. CRIC 18/COP 14 preparations

6. After the adoption of the agenda, the Chief of Administration and Finance, Mr. Lyndle Lindow briefed the Bureaus on logistical arrangements made for the forthcoming sessions of the COP, CRIC, and CST. He stressed that in preparation for this meeting, Parties would need to act quickly on visa issues since visa regulations are strict and time consuming. He also pointed out that available hotels will be listed on the government website but warned that September is high season month and thus the prices could go up.

7. To make information relating to the Conference readily accessible, the secretariat informed the two Bureaus that a conference app will be launched during COP where participants can view and download COP documentation and any other conference documentation when and where required.

8. After an exchange with Bureau members on the logistical arrangements, the following action items were identified:

- (a) In order to find adequate hotel accommodation, “booking.com” may be a good online source for Bureau members and delegates, in addition to the listing provided by the host government;
- (b) The secretariat will contact the host government to ascertain how transportation to and from the conference venue will be handled for participants;
- (c) As for interpretation services during regional consultations for Africa, the Bureaus were informed that interpretation for Africa has always been sponsored by the African Union (AU) and that delegations should contact the RCU in Africa and/or the responsible in the AU to clarify whether this can be done for the COP in India;
- (d) On issues relating to funding travel, the Bureaus were informed that UNCCD works on the basis of requests received so that participation can be ensured. For funded national focal points, who have received the official UNCCD nomination, there should be a response stating their interest to attend and request for funding.

IV. Draft texts for negotiation on issues relating to CRIC

9. Before entering discussions on the draft texts for negotiations that were prepared by the secretariat, the Bureau went over the CRIC 18 agenda again, discussing how decisions will most likely be handled during the session. The following observations were made:

- (a) Agenda items 2b and 2c of the CRIC 18 agenda (multi-year workplan and performance reports of the convention institutions and subsidiary bodies) will be introduced during the CRIC. Following past practice, the deliberations on those items however will be transferred to the budget group since they have financial implications. The budget group will prepare the relevant draft decision for the CRIC to adopt which then will be forwarded for consideration to the COP;



- (b) Item 3 of the agenda which lists a report by the secretariat on options for a drought indicator will be presented to CRIC and the CST and any relevant decision language will be added to the draft text for negotiations on how to improve the procedures for communication. It is to be noted that a joint CRIC/CST contact group is envisaged to deliberate on the decision language for this particular agenda item. During this joint contact group meeting, separate CRIC and CST contact groups will be suspended;
- (c) In terms of the format of the sessions, the secretariat explained that there will be no specific interactive sessions that warrant panellists and/or moderators. Following the traditional style of introducing official documents by the responsible/key institution (secretariat, Global Mechanism, Global Environment Facility), the floor will be opened for comments from Parties first, followed by IGOs and then the representative from the civil society organizations. The Bureau members decided that except for the opening, where regional statements will be prepared, no other regional statements following the introduction of the item will be delivered by the implementation annex and interest groups.

10. The Bureau was then briefed on the draft texts for negotiation as prepared by the secretariat. In following past practice, the secretariat prepares those draft texts based on the conclusion and recommendation section of the intersessional report of the CRIC. They will then be provided to the CRIC contact group together with any other new text that emerges from the deliberations on agenda items of CRIC 18 (e.g. on issues relating to the collaboration with the GEF, or capacity building). The secretariat also tried to clarify issues relating to how the final report and especially the conclusion and recommendation section of a final report of intersessional sessions is supposed to be drafted and the following observations were made:

- (a) At intersessional sessions of the CRIC, no negotiation will take place. Instead the final report of the intersessional session will capture what has been said in the plenary, even if comments were contradictory. Parties in the contact group at intersessional sessions should strive to ensure that all important aspects raised during the plenary sessions are reflected in the final report;
- (b) The contact group at intersessional sessions will receive a zero draft final report that reflects what has been said during the plenary sessions. It may include language from the official documentation (conclusions and recommendations) in case issues around this recommendation were mentioned during the plenary;
- (c) To accommodate that some views expressed in the final report may not constitute a consensus by Parties, the formulation “Some Parties” is often used to indicate that this text may be open for debate and negotiation during the contact group that will be convened at the sessional sessions of the CRIC;
- (d) It is understood that based on the draft texts for negotiation prepared by the secretariat, any paragraph or preambular text may be subject to change during meetings of the contact group convening during sessional sessions of the CRIC.



11. The secretariat briefed the Bureau members in detail on how the three draft texts were compiled¹. The following observations were made by the Bureau:

- (a) The draft texts for negotiations may be subject to change (change of title, or content) since the secretariat is currently in the process of preparing other draft texts for negotiations for the CST and the COP that may cause the changes;
- (b) The secretariat should make the texts provided to them available in electronic version. This said, it was understood that to avoid confusion, those draft texts should not be circulated freely to all Parties;
- (c) The secretariat was also requested to add an explanatory note clarifying the abbreviations used in the texts;
- (d) It was noted that draft texts this time were very technical which may make negotiations potentially difficult. The Bureau agreed to assist in easing the negotiations during CRIC 18 to ensure that the contact group does not get stalled over technicalities in the text.

V. Joint meeting with the CST Bureau on the document for strategic objective 3

12. The secretariat briefed the two Bureaus on the content of the document to be presented both at the CRIC and CST. It was stated that the approach taken by the CST Bureau and the SPI working group on drought leverages the major multilateral effort currently considering this challenge (WMO GMAS) and proposes a set of criteria upon which a proposed monitoring framework made up of three levels with related indicators could be developed over the next biennium following in a similar way how this was done for the three land-based indicators of land degradation.

13. The framework provides the flexibility to countries to use what would be most appropriate to them, that is one or more of the levels proposed which include a simple drought hazard indicator (level 1), a simple drought exposure indicator (level 2) and a drought vulnerability indicator (level 3).

14. The following observations were made by the Bureaus:

- (a) It was stated that while providing a means to Parties to report on drought using the two first and less complex indicators, the Convention should strive to achieve that all Parties may at some point be enabled to use the level 3 indicator that truly captures the issue of drought vulnerability;

¹ Three draft texts for negotiations were compiled by the secretariat on the following subjects: a) Assessment of financial flows for the implementation of the Convention b) Assessment of the implementation of the Convention against the strategic objectives of the UNCCD 2008-2030 strategic framework, c) Improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties



(b) One Bureau member expressed concern that the first two indicators do not fully reflect information on drought vulnerability and hence are not useful for UNCCD Parties wishing to respond to and report on the strategic objectives;

(c) Another Bureau member expressed concern that some Parties may not wish to use any of the proposed three indicators, but that this initiative may be accepted and adopted at the COP knowing that some Parties may not use them as some also do not use the entire set of bio-physical indicators used by the UNCCD.

(d) The secretariat was requested to indicate at COP 14 what the next steps would be to implement and further fine-tune this indicator framework;

(e) The secretariat clarified that this proposed monitoring framework does not prescribe the underlying methodology by which the indicator will be calculated. It was stressed that for the other indicators (land-based indicators) it was agreeable to use any metric Parties would wish to use as long as they respond to the indicator level that they chose. This is an approach that seemed to have worked and which is sought to be replicated for the strategic objective on drought as well.

VI. Any other business

15. Under this agenda item the Bureau agreed that a meeting will be convened on 31 August 2019 in New Delhi, to discuss last minute arrangements for the opening meeting of the CRIC and any other pending matter that requires guidance from the CRIC Bureau.

16. It was also agreed that the Bureau then will make ad hoc decisions on when to convene CRIC Bureau meetings during the Session and requested the secretariat to facilitate the exchange of communication between the members, when necessary.

VII. Closing Remarks by the Deputy Executive Secretary Mr. Pradeep Monga

17. The meeting ended with closing remarks by the Deputy Executive Secretary, Mr. Pradeep Monga.



Annex I

CRIC Bureau Meeting

Bonn, Germany

Date: 25 June 2019
Venue: Room 1511, Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1
53113 Bonn, Germany
Working languages: English
Working hours: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. 2:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

- PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE CRIC BUREAU MEETING -

Note by the secretariat

I. Welcoming Remarks by the Executive Secretary Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw

II. Adoption of the Agenda

1. The provisional agenda of the meeting as presented may be considered by the Bureau members with a view of amending/adopting it.

III. CRIC 18/COP 14 preparations

2. The secretariat will brief the Bureau on all logistical arrangements made to facilitate CRIC 18 and CST/COP 14. The secretariat will also provide Bureau members with information on the format of CRIC 18 sessions, the convening of a contact group as well as the process leading to forwarding draft decisions to the COP for its consideration. Making use of the experience made during CRIC 17, the Bureau may also appreciate discussing in more detail how the CRIC undertakes its work in between sessions and especially when it comes to finalizing the report of the intersessional session.

As for issues relating to the format of the CRIC session as well as the process leading to adopting decisions coming from the CRIC, the Bureau may consider the arrangements proposed by the secretariat and provide guidance as required.

IV. Draft texts for negotiation on issues relating to CRIC

3. In conformity with the Terms of Reference of the CRIC, the CRIC, at sessional sessions, is to discuss draft texts for negotiations and forward to the COP decisions for its consideration and adoption. Based on the final report of CRIC 17, the secretariat prepared a set of documents that will be used by the contact group to prepare draft decisions. It is to be noted that the draft



texts presented to the CRIC Bureau will only deal with those issues that were already discussed at CRIC 17 i.e. items that were on the CRIC 17 agenda. For those issues that will be discussed at CRIC 18 as part of the official programme, the secretariat will prepare additional draft texts for the contact group, taking into consideration the deliberations of Parties during the plenary and thus will not be presented to the CRIC Bureau.

Traditionally, the CRIC Bureau does not endorse texts for negotiations prepared by the secretariat since they only form the basis for further discussion and negotiations by all Parties during the CRIC session. However, previous Bureaux appreciated being informed on the substantive items that will be presented to Parties during the sessional session to inform their constituencies accordingly.

IV. Joint meeting with the CST Bureau on the document for strategic objective 3

4. By its decision 15/COP.13, paragraph 8, the COP considers the need for a specific indicator for the strategic objective on drought, which is contained in the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework adopted by Parties at COP 13. Taking into consideration that the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) assisted in defining and identifying monitoring frameworks for the other strategic objectives, including indicators, the COP requested the CST to also assist in considering the need for a specific indicator for strategic objective 3.
5. Since this issue touches on UNCCD reporting a document was prepared by the UNCCD secretariat that will be introduced by the CST and the CRIC during COP 14. The Bureau will be briefed on the content and findings of the document and on how negotiations will be undertaken between the CST and CRIC to prepare a draft decision for consideration by the COP.

The two Bureaus may wish to provide procedural guidance to the secretariat on how a draft decision on this topic can be generated by the joint CST/CRIC contact group

V. Any other matter

6. The Bureau may wish to consider the schedule of Bureau meetings during the sessional session of CRIC in India and decide on the frequency of meetings. Bureau members may also wish to raise any other issue that they deem important and which would require action by the Bureau or the Convention institution.



Annex II

List of participants:

ASIA (Philippines) - CHAIR

Mr. Samuel Mabilin CONTRERAS (CHAIR)

Head, Soil Conservation and Management
Division

Bureau of Soils and Water Management

Department of Agriculture

Quezon City 1101, Philippines

Tel: +632 920 4364 / 923 0454

Fax: +632 920 4318

E-mail: sammycontreras@yahoo.com

AFRICA (Namibia)

Mr. Marthin KASAONA

Chief Conservation Scientist

Ministry of Environment and Tourism

Department of Environmental Affairs

Private Bag 13306

Windhoek, Namibia

Tel: +264 61 2847 111

Fax: +264 61 240 339

E-mail: m.kasaona@met.gov.na

CEE (Georgia)

Ms. Nino CHIKOVANI

Head of Land Resources Protection Division

Department of Environment and Climate Change

Ministry of Environmental Protection and

Agriculture

6, Marshal Gelovani ave, Tbilisi 0159, Georgia

Tel: +995 32 72 7257 (cell: +995599517733)

Fax: +995 32 72 7223

E-mail: n.chikovani@moe.gov.ge

nino.chikovani@gmail.com

nino.chikovani@mepa.gov.ge

EU (Italy)

Ms. Anna LUISE

ISPRA - Institute for the Environmental
Protection and Research

Via Cesare Pavese 305

00144 Rome, Italy

Tel: +39 06 5007 2653

E-mail: anna.luise@isprambiente.it

LAC (Mexico)

Dr. Jorge Luis GARCIA RODRIGUEZ

National Forestry commission

(CONAFOR)

Ministry of Environment and Natural
Resources

(SEMARNAT)

Periférico Poniente No. 5360, Col. San
Juan de Ocotán

Zapopan, Jalisco 45019, Mexico

Tel: +52 333 777 7000 Ext. 1001

Fax: +52 333 7777 012

E-mail: gardezjl@gmail.com