



**- MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE COP 14 BUREAU  
(17 DECEMBER 2020) -**

The fourth intersessional COP 14 Bureau meeting was held virtually on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020. Opening remarks were provided by the President, Mr. Jigmet Takpa, on behalf of his Excellency Mr. Prakash Javadekar, Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change and UNCCD Executive Secretary Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw.

An overview of the matters discussed, and the decisions taken by the Bureau are presented below.

**I. Adoption of the Agenda**

The agenda was adopted without modification.

**II. Status of organization of CRIC19**

The CRIC Chair introduced the agenda item.

The CRIC Chair has, with the support of the secretariat, engaged in consultations with the CRIC Bureau to address the concerns raised by the COP14 Bureau members. To ensure consensus on the way forward and based on the outcomes of these exchanges, it is proposed that CRIC 19 will be organized along the following lines:

- a) CRIC 19 will be a non-negotiation session;
- b) CRIC 19 will be held in a virtual format and take place in March (15-19 March), for a duration of 5 days with a 2-hour session per day;
- c) There will be simultaneous interpretation in the UN official languages;
- d) there will be no contact group established. CRIC 19 will use the time allocated to ensure that information sharing will take place. Country Parties will be encouraged to share their own experience vis a vis the topics discussed during the session;
- e) taking into account that increased interaction among Parties was desired during the reduced plenary meetings of CRIC 19 and bearing in mind that no impact was expected on the CRIC process, no changes will be made to the CRIC-19 agenda as adopted by the CRIC 19 Bureau;
- f) regarding the issue of reporting as raised by Bureau members, the Secretariat informed that the 2021-2022 reporting process will be launched around June 2021 when the updated reporting platform and default data will be ready to be shared with Parties;
- g) regional meetings may take place upon request from the regional and interest groups. These meetings will take place with a view to enable country Parties to familiarize themselves with the topics discussed at CRIC 19 and to prepare Parties to share their own experience made on topics discussed during CRIC 19;



- h) regional meetings may take place in January / February with flexibility to reschedule those meetings in case this is deemed more suitable for the regions / interest groups;
- i) the online forum, initially envisaged to allow Parties to provide comments on the official documentation will not be established since CRIC 19 will not negotiate its recommendations;
- j) CRIC 19 will adopt a final report at the end of the session. The substantive part of this report (conclusion and recommendation section) will comprise of a verbatim report of the meeting, to be prepared by the rapporteur with the support of the secretariat after the session. Parties at the session may wish to entrust the rapporteur with the task of compiling and finalizing the report after the session;

While the suggested amendments to the format of the CRIC 19 session address all concerns raised by the COP Bureau, they will further allow Parties to exchange views on the implementation of the Convention, hence, enabling the development of zero draft decision texts in time to meet the requirements of Decision 32/COP.14.

A bureau member raised the issue on the time constraint of this virtual format of the CRIC 19. Two hours per day seem not to be enough for effective discussions given to the number of stakeholders (Parties, CSOs etc.). The bureau member raised once again concerns regarding the role of spokespersons, which does not apply to its region/group.

The same bureau member further inquired about the policy frameworks as underlined by the CRIC Chair during their presentation but seems not to be reflected in the notes.

The bureau member further proposed, to swap, under CRIC 19 agenda item 3., the two thematic 3.a and 3.b, so as to first discuss the LDN fund (3.b) and second, the voluntary LDN Target (3.a), with a views to allow parties for a full session on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021 during which to hear from parties on the implementation of the LDN targets at the national, subregional and regional levels.

The bureau member finally requested more details on the organization on the regional meetings.

The CRIC chair thanked the bureau members and took note of their comments. On agenda item 3. (a and b), the Chair promised to explore with the CRIC bureau and the secretariat, how this can be done, as discussion on the LDN fund are also foreseen and enough time might also be allocated for that purpose.

The Executive Secretary welcomed all the comments by the bureau members and also stressed that the format of CRIC 19 is unprecedented.

The Executive Secretary further clarified that the regional meetings will be organized upon requests. The Secretariat will work with the representative of each regions to decide on the agenda and how the meetings will be conducted, focusing, and adapting on the needs of each regions.



The Executive Secretary finally made the proposal to have another virtual session of the COP 14 Bureau in April 2021 to take elements from CRIC 19 and see how to introduce them to COP 15.

A bureau member also proposed to structure and manage the speaking time of the Parties/participants in order to ensure equity and conciseness in the discussions.

In the same line, another bureau member proposed to limit the speaking time to three (3) minutes for each speaker. The President might even consider turning off the microphone after the expiration of the allocated time.

The same bureau member further inquired about the 2021-2022 UNCCD reporting process.

Another bureau member also suggested to the secretariat to explore ways to allowing parties to log in advance on the virtual platform, in order to test and check their internet connectivity and at the same time fixing all eventual technical issues.

The Secretariat clarified that the reporting process is for the period 2021-2022 and will be completed at the COP 16. As the reporting will not be discussed during CRIC 19, information on the forthcoming reporting process will be made available for information and comments, where appropriate, to Parties on the UNCCD website.

The Secretariat further added that the Policy framework is indeed integrated in the CRIC 19 agenda under the agenda item *3.c: Update on the implementation of the Drought Initiative and related implementation efforts*.

### **III. Other Business**

A bureau member on behalf of his region stressed a concern on the timing of the UNCCD COP 15 and underlined that we should not exclude the scenario of organising COP 15 in 2022.