



United Nations

ICCD/COP(13)/3



Convention to Combat Desertification

Distr.: General
23 June 2017

Original: English

Conference of the Parties

Thirteenth session

Ordos, China, 6–16 September 2017

Items 2 (b) and 3 (c) of the provisional agenda

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: implications for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The future strategic framework of the Convention

Effective implementation of the Convention at national, subregional and regional level

Addressing particular regional and national conditions

The future strategic framework of the Convention

Report by the Intergovernmental Working Group on the future strategic framework of the Convention

Summary

By its decision 7/COP.12, the Conference of the Parties (COP) decided to establish an Intergovernmental Working Group on the future strategic framework of the Convention (IWG-FSF). The IWG-FSF was requested to assess the current 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) and consider options for a future strategic approach for the Convention. Following that decision, three meetings of the IWG-FSF were convened in the course of the year 2016.

The IWG-FSF was requested to present its initial findings to the fifteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention held in October 2016 and to present its final proposals to Parties at the thirteenth session of the COP (COP 13) for consideration and possible adoption.

The present document contains an account of the meetings convened by the IWG-FSF, describes the current status of the proposals made and presents a draft future strategic framework entitled “The UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework” to Parties at COP 13, after initial findings by the IWG-FSF were provided to Parties for comments at the fifteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention.¹

¹ Document ICCD/CRIC(15)/2.

GE.17-10493(E)



* 1 7 1 0 4 9 3 *

Please recycle



Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Background	1–5	3
II. Current status of the draft strategy	6–9	4
III. Recommendations	10	4
Annex		
The draft future strategic framework as agreed by the Intergovernmental Working Group on the future strategic framework of the Convention prior to its final meeting scheduled to take place on 5 September 2017		5

I. Background

1. By its decision 3/COP.8, Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) adopted a 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) (The Strategy). The Strategy contained two sets of objectives – strategic and operational – which guided the actions of all UNCCD stakeholders and partners during that timeframe.

2. Since the current Strategy's lifespan is set to end in 2018, the Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 7/COP.12, decided to establish an Intergovernmental Working Group on the future strategic framework of the Convention (IWG-FSF), which was tasked to consider any future strategic approach for implementation of the UNCCD.

3. By the same decision, Parties defined the scope and mandate of the working group, which comprised:

(a) An assessment of the current Strategy, including the effectiveness of its implementation and the relevance of progress indicators for the future period;

(b) Consideration of options for the possible future strategic approach for the Convention;

(c) A proposal of an approach the Convention should adopt for its future strategic direction.

4. The IWG-FSF was also requested to present its initial findings for comment at the fifteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 15). Input received was presented to the IWG-FSF at its third meeting and was incorporated in the draft strategy as annexed to this document.

5. Following the nomination of regional representatives, the IWG-FSF, comprising two co-chairs and a total of 25 members, began its work and, with assistance from the secretariat, convened the following three meetings in 2016:

(a) The first meeting was held in Bonn on 6–8 April 2016. The group decided to advance its work as fast as possible so that Parties would be in a position to comment on a comprehensive draft strategy by CRIC 15. A zero draft document was produced while the assessment of the current strategy and its implementation was undertaken;

(b) The second meeting was also held in Bonn on 26–28 July 2016. The group agreed on almost all subsections of the text, except for few paragraphs that were kept in brackets for further consultation, and thus completed a full proposal for a new strategy to be presented for comment by Parties at CRIC 15;

(c) The third meeting was held in Nairobi on 21–22 October back-to-back with CRIC 15. The group produced an update of the draft strategy based on (a) the draft documents prepared during the first two meetings; and (b) the comments communicated by Parties during the plenary sessions of CRIC 15 and included in the final report of the session (ICCD/CRIC(15)/7). The title of the draft strategy as agreed on by the group read “**The UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework**”. The introduction of a new strategic objective on drought that was proposed during the third meeting made it necessary for the group to meet again at the margins of the upcoming COP to finalize a document for Parties to consider.

II. Current status of the draft strategy

6. The updated draft strategy as annexed to the present document comprises five main sections: an introduction, a vision, strategic objectives and their expected impacts, an implementation framework and a section that specifies issues relating to the reporting on and the evaluation and monitoring of the proposed strategy.

7. During CRIC 15, Parties stressed the importance of addressing issues related to drought and making drought an integral part of implementation efforts as part of the future strategic orientation for this Convention. These comments were reflected in the final report of the session (ICCD/CRIC(15)/7).

8. While considering this specific feedback on drought from Parties during the third meeting of the IWG-FSF, the group reached a consensus to propose a new strategic objective on this topic and include it in the draft strategy. However, due to time constraints and the need for further technical consultations on this matter, the group decided to revisit the wording of this strategic objective² (as reflected in the annex) and finalize the draft strategy during an exceptional meeting convened on the margins of COP 13. After consultations with the two co-chairs it was agreed to convene this meeting on 5 September 2017, prior to the commencement of COP 13.

9. The proposed draft strategy as annexed to this document constitutes an agreed text by the group with the exception of the concrete wording for the strategic objective on drought. It is foreseen that after general discussions during the plenary, the draft strategy will be forwarded to a contact group for a final reading before being submitted to the COP for consideration and possible adoption.

III. Recommendations

10. **The COP, at its thirteenth session, may wish to:**

- (a) **Consider and adopt the draft strategy as proposed by the IWG-FSF;**
- (b) **Request Parties to integrate the strategic thrust of the strategy into their national planning, thereby ensuring a structured and targeted approach to UNCCD implementation;**
- (c) **Also request UNCCD institutions to support Parties in the implementation of “The UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework”.**

² The unnumbered strategic objective and expected impacts contained in the annex.

Annex

The draft future strategic framework as agreed by the Intergovernmental Working Group on the future strategic framework of the Convention prior to its final meeting scheduled to take place on 5 September 2017

The UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework

I. Introduction

1. Desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD) are challenges of a global dimension. They contribute to and aggravate economic, social and environmental problems such as poverty, poor health, lack of food security, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, reduced resilience to climate change and forced migration. They continue to pose serious challenges to the sustainable development of all countries, particularly affected countries.

2. Addressing DLDD will involve long-term integrated strategies that simultaneously focus on the improved productivity of land and the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) can play a central role in addressing these issues through capacity-building, the sharing of successful experiences, technology transfer, the provision of scientific support, awareness-raising, mobilization of resources and the provision of assistance to countries in implementing policies at national, subregional, regional and international levels.

3. The strategy will contribute to (i) achieving the objectives of the Convention and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular regarding Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15 and target 15.3: “by 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world” and other interrelated SDGs, within the scope of the Convention; (ii) improving the living conditions of affected populations; and (iii) enhancing ecosystems services.

II. Vision

4. A future that avoids, minimizes, and reverses desertification/land degradation and mitigates the effects of drought in affected areas at all levels and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, within the scope of the Convention.

III. Strategic objectives and expected impacts

5. The following “strategic objectives” will guide the actions of all UNCCD stakeholders and partners in the period 2018–2030. Meeting these long-term objectives will contribute to achieving the above-mentioned vision within the scope of the Convention, taking into account particular regional and national conditions.

Strategic objective 1: To improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality

Expected impact 1.1 Land productivity and related ecosystems services are maintained or enhanced.

Expected impact 1.2 The vulnerability of affected ecosystems is reduced and the resilience of ecosystems is increased.

Expected impact 1.3 National voluntary land degradation neutrality targets are set and adopted by countries wishing to do so, related measures are identified and implemented, and necessary monitoring systems are established.

Expected impact 1.4 Measures for sustainable land management and the combating of desertification/land degradation are shared, promoted and implemented.

Strategic objective (...): To mitigate and manage the effects of drought, enhance the resilience of ecosystems and the preparedness of affected populations, and improve response and recovery capabilities

Expected impact X.1 The impact of drought is reduced, including through sustainable land and water management.

Expected impact X.2 Communities' vulnerability to drought is reduced.

Strategic objective 2: To improve the living conditions of affected populations

Expected impact 2.1 Food security and adequate access to water for people in affected areas is improved.

Expected impact 2.2 The livelihoods of people in affected areas are improved and diversified.

Expected impact 2.3 Local people, especially women and youth, are empowered and participate in decision-making processes in combating DLDD.

Expected impact 2.4 Migration forced by desertification and land degradation is substantially reduced.

Strategic objective 3: To generate global environmental benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD

Expected impact 3.1 Sustainable land management and the combating of desertification/land degradation contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and addressing climate change.

Expected impact 3.2 Synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements and processes are enhanced.

Strategic objective 4: To mobilize substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources to support the implementation of the Convention by building effective partnerships at global and national level

Expected impact 4.1 Adequate and timely public and private financial resources are further mobilized and made available to affected country Parties, including through domestic resource mobilization.

Expected impact 4.2 International support is provided for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building and "on-the-ground interventions" in affected country Parties to support the implementation of the Convention, including through North–South, South–South and triangular cooperation.

Expected impact 4.3 Extensive efforts are implemented to promote technology transfer, especially on favourable terms and including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, and to mobilize other non-financial resources.

IV. Implementation framework

6. The Strategy will be implemented primarily through actions at national or subregional levels, with the support of UNCCD institutions, partners and other relevant stakeholders. This section defines the roles and responsibilities of the various Parties, UNCCD institutions, partners and stakeholders in meeting the above-mentioned strategic objectives.

A. Parties

7. Parties bear the main responsibility in the implementation of The Strategy, including through their national action programmes, and would need to steer implementation in accordance with their national priorities and in a spirit of international solidarity and partnership.

8. The Strategy will become an effective tool that guides national, subnational and local implementation while enabling Parties to undertake an assessment of implementation at the level of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC). Each Party could implement The Strategy by taking advantage of partnerships, including public-private partnerships, and innovative agreements.

9. Through this Strategy and in accordance with their obligations as stated in the Convention, Parties aim to:

With respect to financial and non-financial resources:

(a) Increase mobilization of financial and non-financial resources for the implementation of the Convention from international and domestic, public and private sources as well as from local communities, including non-traditional funding sources, and climate finance;

(b) Take advantage of the opportunity to use land degradation neutrality as a framework to enhance the coherence, effectiveness and multiple benefits of investments;

(c) To improve the use of existing and/or innovative financial processes and institutions (such as the Global Environment Facility or other newer funds);

With respect to policy and planning:

(d) Develop, implement, revise and regularly monitor, as appropriate, national, subregional and regional action programmes and/or plans as effective tools for UNCCD implementation;

(e) Establish policies and enabling environments for promoting and implementing solutions to combat desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought, including prevention, relief and recovery;

(f) Leverage synergies and integrate DLDD, while optimizing efficacy and eliminating duplication of efforts, into (i) national plans related to the other multilateral environmental agreements, in particular the other Rio conventions; and (ii) other international commitments as appropriate, within their respective mandates;

(g) Mainstream DLDD as appropriate into economic, environmental and social policies, with a view to increasing the impact and effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention;

(h) Establish national policies, measures and governance for drought preparedness and management, including drought contingency plans, according to the mandate of the Convention;

With respect to actions on the ground:

(i) Implement sustainable land management practices;

(j) Implement restoration and rehabilitation practices in order to assist with the recovery of ecosystem functions and services;

(k) Develop and operationalize drought risk management, monitoring and early warning systems and safety-net programmes, as appropriate;

(l) Promote alternative livelihoods;

(m) Establish systems for sharing information and knowledge and facilitate networking on best practices and approaches to drought management.

B. Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

10. Under the authority and guidance of the Conference of the Parties (COP), the CRIC plays a central role in assisting the COP in the review of the implementation of the Convention and this Strategy by, inter alia:

(a) Assessing reports submitted by Parties and other reporting entities with the aim of producing targeted recommendations and draft decisions for consideration by the COP;

(b) Facilitating the exchange of information on measures adopted by Parties through formal and informal interactive sessions and online platforms on topical issues, including capacity-building, best practices and lessons learned relating to on-the-ground implementation.

C. Committee on Science and Technology

11. At the request of the COP, the Committee on Science and Technology will provide, with input from the Science–Policy Interface, scientific advice for the assessment and implementation of the Convention and The Strategy by:

(a) Contributing to improving the scientific understanding of and knowledge on the processes leading to and solutions to address desertification/land degradation and drought;

(b) Contributing to addressing specific needs of local populations and helping to identify solutions that improve the standards of living of people in affected areas;

(c) Facilitating networking among scientific institutions related to DLDD and ongoing activities through the Science–Policy Interface to provide recommendations for implementation;

(d) Assisting the CRIC through the timely provision of scientific advice on methodological matters related to reporting.

D. Global Mechanism

12. The Global Mechanism has a central responsibility to contribute to financial mobilization, support technology transfer and explore opportunities for increasing financing for the implementation of the Convention and The Strategy. It does this by:

- (a) Supporting resource mobilization for the implementation of the Convention and The Strategy;
- (b) Assisting affected country Parties in exploring solutions for resource mobilization corresponding to the needs expressed in the countries' UNCCD action programmes;
- (c) Spearheading, in collaboration with relevant partners, the establishment of new funding options, including the possible creation of an independent Land Degradation Neutrality Fund for the implementation of The Strategy.

E. Secretariat

13. The successful implementation of this Strategy requires the continued strong core servicing advocacy, agenda-setting and representation functions of the UNCCD secretariat with commensurate capacity and resources in order to support Parties, the COP and the subsidiary bodies of the Convention in fulfilling their respective roles.

V. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

14. Monitoring the progress made in the implementation of The New Strategy will be done through national reporting and sharing of national experiences, best practices and lessons learned from Parties to the COP and a review and evaluation by the CRIC for consideration by the COP.

15. Reporting on progress towards the strategic objectives is required provided that (i) Parties have sufficient official national data/information to report or validate national estimates derived from global data sources; and (ii) reporting is provided primarily from official national data.

16. Indicators for strategic objectives should be reviewed and fine-tuned, as necessary and appropriate, in consideration of the reporting system/indicators for the SDGs and with reference to the follow-up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Rio conventions and other relevant MEAs in order to improve their synergetic implementation and avoid duplication.

17. Reporting on chapter IV of The Strategy (implementation framework) will be done through qualitative reporting and on a voluntary basis until the CRIC has considered refining the reporting guidelines. In order to ensure that interactive sessions can be organized during sessional and intersessional sessions of the CRIC on information provided in reports, the COP will identify, where needed, specific topics that will be reviewed during those sessions.

Progress indicators used to report on strategic objectives 1–4 of the Strategy

18. Indicators used for reporting on The Strategy are those identified by Parties in decisions 22/COP.11 (for strategic objectives 1–3) and 15/COP.12 (for strategic objective

4). In addition to indicators agreed by the COP, the Intergovernmental Working Group on the future strategic framework of the Convention also introduced new indicators for strategic objective 4 (see table below).

19. Parties may wish to report on progress towards expected impacts for strategic objectives 1–3 which are not fully covered by this set of indicators by using nationally relevant quantitative indicators or qualitative information, as appropriate.

Table

List of progress indicators used to report on strategic objectives 1–4 of the Strategy

Strategic objective 1: To improve the condition of affected ecosystems

SO 1-1 Trends in land cover

SO 1-2 Trends in land productivity or functioning of the land

SO 1-3 Trends in carbon stocks above and below ground

Strategic objective 2: To improve the living conditions of affected populations

SO 2-1 Trends in population living below the relative poverty line and/or income inequality in affected areas

SO 2-2 Trends in access to safe drinking water in affected areas

Strategic objective 3: To generate global environmental benefits through effective implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

SO 3-1 Trends in carbon stocks above and below ground

SO 3-2 Trends in abundance and distribution of selected species

Strategic objective 4: To mobilize substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources to support the implementation of the Convention by building effective partnerships at global and national level

SO 4-1 Trends in international bilateral and multilateral official development assistance

SO 4-2 Trends in domestic public resources

SO 4-3 Trends in number of co-financing partners

SO 4-4 Resources mobilized from innovative sources of finance, including from the private sector

The indicators below were identified to report on achievements made towards reaching the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” and particularly SDG targets related to technology and capacity-building. These indicators may be subject to change within the framework of the SDG process^a and are hence listed as a tentative future source of information.

SO 4-5	Total amount of approved funding for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies
SO 4-6	Number of science and/or technology cooperation agreements and programmes between countries, by type of cooperation
SO 4-7	United States dollar value of financial and technical assistance, including through North–South, South–South and triangular cooperation, committed to developing countries and countries with economies in transition

^a Indicators and information on SDG 17 will be reviewed yearly by the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.