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Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda

**Effective implementation of the Convention at
national, subregional and regional levels**

**Multi-year workplan for Convention institutions
and subsidiary bodies**

Comprehensive multi-year workplan for the Convention (2018–2021) and two-year costed work programme for the Convention (2018–2019)

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This document contains the proposed workplan and work programme for the institutions and bodies established under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, presenting the planned orientation and accomplishments of the secretariat, the Global Mechanism, the Committee on Science and Technology and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention for the biennium 2018–2019. This document also provides an overview of the human and financial resources required by each programme and should be considered in conjunction with the documents on the programme budget (ICCD/COP(13)/7) and performance (ICCD/COP(13)/9 and ICCD/CRIC(16)/3).

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Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	1–4	3
II. Four-year perspective: 2018–2021	5–13	3
III. The costed two-year work programme for 2018–2019	14–73	6
A. Overview of resource requirements	14	6
B. Resource requirements of the secretariat	15–54	7
C. Resource requirements of the Global Mechanism	55–73	16
IV. Conclusions and recommendations	74	19
 Annexes		
I. Organizational structure of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism		20
II. Assumptions and terminology used in the budget		21

I. Introduction

1. By its decision 1/COP.12, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) requested the secretariat and the Global Mechanism (GM) to prepare a multi-year workplan for the Convention (2018–2021), utilizing the results-based management approach, to be considered at COP 13. By decision 10/COP.12, the COP further requested the Executive Secretary to prepare a results-based budget and work programmes for the biennium 2018–2019, in line with decision 1/COP.12. This document presents the comprehensive four-year workplan (2018–2021) and the costed two-year work programme (2018–2019) for the Convention institutions and bodies.

2. The workplan is built on the new 2018–2030 strategic framework¹ for the UNCCD, as drafted by the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) in the course of its meetings in 2015. It is formulated as a brief four-year results framework that focuses on ambitious substantive aims, which represent the contribution of the secretariat and the GM toward the objectives of the draft strategic framework.

3. The two-year costed work programme derives from the results framework. It outlines a practical proposal for work to be carried out in the next biennium in order to meet the aims of the results framework. It is structured around the units of the secretariat and the priority areas of the GM.

4. This document should be read in conjunction with document ICCD/COP(13)/7 on the proposed programme and budget for the biennium 2018–2019, and documents ICCD/COP(13)/9 and ICCD/CRIC(16)/3 on the performance in the biennium 2016–2017.

II. Four-year perspective: 2018–2021

5. In recent years, the UNCCD has gone through a process of change. Its foundations have been considered and its value to global development and intergovernmental cooperation objectives has been assessed and found to be significantly high. The secretariat and the GM have also evolved – they have acquired more specialized skills, sharpened their focus, improved coherence and increased effectiveness.

6. As a result of this change process, the UNCCD now emerges as a stronger intergovernmental tool for addressing desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD). New strategic objectives are expected to be adopted at COP 13. In addition, the UNCCD has an operational target that is embedded in the global development agenda and is being translated into national targets in more than 100 countries, and an institutional setting that is both committed to and capable of bringing the process further.

7. On this basis, the overall aim for the coming years will be to expand and intensify the implementation of the UNCCD at the national level, with emphasis on meeting the land degradation neutrality (LDN) target. The secretariat and the GM, within the limits of their mandates, are committed to generating real impact that will eventually be reflected in a declining trend of land degradation globally.

8. The UNCCD results framework for 2018–2021 is presented in table 1.

¹ Document ICCD/COP(13)/3.

Table 1
UNCCD results framework for 2018–2021

<i>UNCCD strategic objectives</i>	<i>2018–2021 main outcomes</i>	<i>Outcome indicators</i>	<i>2018–2019 main outputs</i>
To improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality (LDN)	1.1 Reduction of the area affected by desertification/land degradation	1.1 Affected country Parties implement activities towards achieving the targets they have set for addressing land degradation and rehabilitation	- Technical advice, partnerships and access to capacity=building to support countries in implementing activities towards their LDN targets
	1.2 Up-to-date information of the status of desertification/land degradation	1.2 Affected country Parties report on the status of land degradation and related activities	- A functional reporting system for the progress indicators and for other reporting requirements that may derive from the new strategic framework
	1.3 Affected country Parties use science-based policy-relevant information deriving from the UNCCD in addressing desertification/land degradation, promoting sustainable land management and contributing to LDN	1.3 Scientific cooperation involving the UNCCD delivers policy-relevant science-based information for addressing desertification/land degradation, promoting sustainable land management and contributing to LDN	- Support to the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) in refining its guidance on LDN implementation
To mitigate and manage the effects of drought and enhance the resilience of ecosystems and the preparedness of affected populations, and improve response and recovery capabilities	2.1 The effects of drought are better mitigated and managed, building on the support and information deriving from the UNCCD	2.1 Affected country Parties use the UNCCD guidance and technical advice concerning drought and sand and dust storms	- Support to the SPI in preparing its guidance on land-based interventions for drought management and mitigation
	2.2 Early warning concerning drought and/or sand and dust storms is increasingly applied, building on the support and information deriving from the UNCCD	2.2 Partnerships and collaboration are established on early warning concerning drought and/or sand and dust storms	- Technical advice, policy guidance and partnerships on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early warning systems for drought and sand and dust storms; • Drought risk reduction; • Sand and dust storm source mitigation
To improve the living conditions of affected populations	3.1 Affected country Parties use land-based activities for improving stability and security	3.1 The potential of land-based activities in improving security and stability is recognized	- Support to the 3S initiative on sustainability, stability and security in Africa
	3.2 Gender issues are increasingly taken into account in plans to address desertification/land degradation and drought	3.2 Affected country Parties use the UNCCD guidance and technical advice on integrating gender issues into UNCCD implementation and design of transformative LDN projects	- Partnerships and policy guidance on using sustainable land management for increasing economic opportunities and generating stability - Technical advice, policy guidance and partnerships on integrating gender issues into UNCCD implementation and design

<i>UNCCD strategic objectives</i>	<i>2018–2021 main outcomes</i>	<i>Outcome indicators</i>	<i>2018–2019 main outputs</i> of transformative LDN projects
To generate global environmental benefits through effective implementation of the UNCCD	4.1 The UNCCD process contributes to, and benefits from, synergies with the other Rio conventions and related cooperation processes on climate change and biodiversity	4.1 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services take into account the inputs from the UNCCD 4.2 Development of joint indicators with the other Rio conventions advances	- Support to the SPI in delivering UNCCD priorities and concerns to scientific processes under other conventions - Cooperation on the joint indicators and selected thematic topics with the other Rio conventions - Technical advice and partnerships on integrating land-based activities, particularly those on LDN targets, into national plans concerning climate change and biodiversity - United Nations system-wide communication strategy for the celebrations to mark the end of the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification in 2020
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	5.1 Improved access to resources for implementation	5.1 Scope of funding sources to address land degradation 5.2 Affected country Parties have improved capacity to translate their project ideas for UNCCD implementation into high-quality projects	- Strategic partnerships and collaboration with international financial institutions - Support to the preparation of high-quality projects

9. The secretariat and the GM will continue to improve their performance and effectiveness through focused action, strict budget discipline and regular internal monitoring and evaluation.

10. In implementing the results framework, **the secretariat** will focus on the following:

(a) Showcasing and catalysing the use of policies and approaches that have proved to be effective and provide added value to implementation. The secretariat will intensify its efforts in promoting policy integration, best practices and collaboration concerning drought, sand and dust storms, and early warning. The secretariat will also support the UNCCD stakeholders in taking a pragmatic, results-oriented approach to issues that are critical for effective implementation but often difficult, for various reasons, to work on. Such issues include the role of women in managing and using land, and land rights in a broader sense;

(b) Demonstrating the multiple benefits of investing in land rehabilitation, as not only generating environmental improvement but also increasing economic productivity and improving stability and well-being. Generating land-based employment opportunities for youth in migration-prone areas is an example of such investments with multiple benefits;

(c) Supporting scientific collaboration, notably the Science-Policy Interface (SPI), which translates latest scientific findings and knowledge into practical guidance that can be used for policymaking and implementation;

(d) Through national reporting, delivering analyses of recent data on the status of land degradation, as outlined in the UNCCD progress indicators, that derive from reliable sources globally and have been verified or updated at the national level.

11. The secretariat will carry out these tasks and provide support in different ways and at different levels, including through advocacy and awareness-raising, technical expertise, sharing information and best practices, facilitating access to capacity-building and knowledge, and enhancing cooperation and coordination with relevant United Nations entities and other partners.

12. **The GM** will strategically engage and collaborate with relevant international institutions to facilitate access of UNCCD Parties to finance and related knowledge. The GM will focus on climate finance and multilateral development banks in mobilizing resources for the implementation of the UNCCD, with emphasis on supporting the achievement of the LDN targets established by the affected countries.

13. The GM operational work in supporting Parties on project design and implementation will be substantially scaled up, without the GM becoming directly involved in the management of country-level projects.

III. The costed two-year work programme for 2018–2019

A. Overview of resource requirements

14. As presented in detail in the document on the programme and budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (ICCD/COP(13)/7), the Executive Secretary proposes to maintain the level of the core budget at the same level as for the biennium 2016–2017, representing a zero-nominal budget growth percentage. Information on the assumptions and terminology used in the budget is contained in annex II. The costs of staffing for the biennium 2018–2019 will be EUR 10,581,075. The organizational structure of the secretariat and the GM is presented in annex I, while the distribution of posts for the UNCCD secretariat by programme and for the GM are shown in table 2.

Table 2

Distribution of core posts for the UNCCD secretariat by programme and for the Global Mechanism for the biennium 2018–2019

<i>Grade</i>	<i>EDM</i>	<i>ERPA</i>	<i>STI</i>	<i>AS</i>	<i>GM</i>	<i>Total</i>
Under-Secretary-General	1	0	0	0	0	1
Director	1	0	0	0	1	2
Professional	2	5	12	0	9	28
Subtotal	4	5	12	0	10	31
General Service	3	3	3	1	4	14
Total	7	8	15	1	14	45

Abbreviations: AS = Administrative Services, EDM = Executive Direction and Management, ERPA = External Relations, Policy and Advocacy, STI = Science, Technology and Implementation, GM = Global Mechanism.

B. Resource requirements of the secretariat

1. Executive Direction and Management

15. The Executive Direction and Management (EDM) programme coordinates the secretariat in its support to the Convention bodies, and ensures the overall effectiveness and coherence of the work of the secretariat. EDM advises the COP President and the COP Bureau, coordinates the secretariat support to related activities and provides institutional, procedural and legal advice.

16. The Executive Secretary provides strategic direction for the secretariat and the GM, and represents the organization externally. She consults with Parties, coordinates cooperation with other organizations and reaches out to stakeholders worldwide to encourage their commitment to the objectives and implementation of the Convention. The Deputy Executive Secretary supports the Executive Secretary in managing the secretariat and in liaising with Parties and institutions at the highest level.

17. In 2018–2019, EDM will focus on advancing effective implementation towards meeting the objectives of the new UNCCD strategy, while simultaneously contributing to agreed global commitments, notably the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Particular importance will be placed on promoting partnerships and cooperation for concrete action to address DLDD.

18. The New York Liaison Office (NYLO), as part of EDM, will ensure visibility for UNCCD issues in the United Nations bodies and events that are of high political importance, notably the General Assembly, the Security Council and the High-level Political Forum (HLPF). In 2018, SDG 15 concerning life on land will be among the SDGs to be considered in-depth by HLPF. NYLO will undertake targeted outreach to constituencies at the United Nations Headquarters and provide information and advice on UNCCD matters to United Nations Member States and special interest groups such as the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. NYLO will also promote land-related partnerships and initiatives involving various stakeholders, notably youth, women, civil society and academia. NYLO, in collaboration with other units of the secretariat and the GM, will advocate for further attention to be given to UNCCD priorities in the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the World Bank programmes, as well as in the follow-up to key global processes and events.

19. Internally, EDM strives to advance the secretariat towards becoming a top-performing organization with solid expertise and recognized efficiency and effectiveness in

service delivery. EDM will coordinate results-oriented planning and monitoring, through which the secretariat will continue to focus and prioritize its activities to ensure that its limited resources are used in an optimal manner to respond to the mandate given by Parties. The Evaluation Office, which functions as part of EDM, will continue to facilitate internal learning for improved effectiveness and, through evidence-based measurement of achievements, further improve the transparency and accountability of the secretariat and the GM.

20. The EDM resource requirements are presented in table 3.

Table 3
Core budget of Executive Direction and Management for the biennium 2018–2019 by object of expenditure

(Euros)

<i>Object of expenditure</i>	<i>Approved budget</i>	<i>Proposed budget</i>	<i>Percentage variance</i>
	<i>2016–2017</i>	<i>2018–2019</i>	
Staff and other personnel costs ^a	1 661 600	1 661 600	0
Consultants	65 000	65 000	0
Official travel	255 986	255 986	0
Hospitality	22 000	22 000	0
Meetings of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties	45 499	45 499	0
Total	2 050 085	2 050 085	0

^a Core budget posts: 1 USG, 1 D2, 1 P5, 1 P3, 3 GS.

2. External Relations, Policy and Advocacy

21. The External Relations, Policy and Advocacy (ERPA) programme helps to position land and drought issues on key agendas and communicates strategically about the Convention to expand the engagement of critical stakeholders and partners. By highlighting the importance of sustainable land and water resource management as an accelerator of the SDGs and as way to build the resilience of both ecosystems and populations, ERPA provides communications support and tools for effective decision making and accelerated implementation of the Convention.

22. During the biennium 2018–2019, ERPA will focus on four priorities:

- (a) Policies that support accelerated implementation of the Convention are mainstreamed;
- (b) Recognition of the role of improved land and water management in delivering greater security and livelihood opportunities increases;
- (c) Partnerships and synergies for UNCCD implementation deliver value;
- (d) The corporate communications of the UNCCD are streamlined and revitalized.

23. On the mainstreaming of policies that support accelerated implementation, at the international level, ERPA will seek to ensure that LDN remains high on the political agenda. It will promote LDN as an accelerator for multiple SDG delivery and advocate for land degradation and drought issues to be addressed in a number of complementary sectoral approaches. ERPA will also translate agreed UNCCD advocacy policy positions into useful tools for decision makers that could be used to support scaling up and embedding into national implementation. In 2018–2019, ERPA will, in particular:

(a) Support the development and pilot testing of drought and sand and dust storm early warning systems that go beyond meteorology, in the most affected Parties; demonstrate vulnerability and risk assessment methodologies and land-based mitigation measures. With this approach, ERPA aims to demonstrate the potential of sustainable land management in drought risk reduction and sand and dust storm source mitigation and would explore the feasibility of integrating drought and flood risk reduction approaches in vulnerable land degradation hotspots. ERPA would then document the evidence and lessons learned and produce practical guides, jointly or for eventual review by the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and the SPI, for use by all stakeholders;

(b) Support implementation of critical elements of the proposed gender plan of action to aid Parties in their efforts to increase the share of women benefiting from the implementation of LDN and drought risk mitigation efforts;

(c) Propose a framework to better promote scaling up of good practice and the uptake of new or more appropriate technology.

EUR 570,900 will be required for the mainstreaming of policies that support accelerated implementation of the Convention.

24. ERPA will advocate for a greater recognition of the role of improved land and water management in delivering human security and livelihood opportunities, such as land-based green employment and the ability to address food and energy security challenges through land management. In 2018–2019, ERPA will, in particular:

(a) Coordinate the support of the UNCCD secretariat to the 3S initiative on sustainability, stability and security in Africa, which is promoting land management and rehabilitation based employment opportunities for young people in migration-prone or conflict-prone areas. In that context, ERPA will develop the concept and promote the potential of land-based (management/rehabilitation) green employment opportunities;

(b) Develop evidence-based information material on the linkages between trends in land degradation and (1) food security/price volatility and (2) energy security.

EUR 539,950 will be required for advocating for the recognition of the role of improved land and water management in delivering greater human security and livelihood opportunities.

25. On ensuring that partnerships and synergies for UNCCD implementation deliver value, ERPA will actively reach out to and collaborate with stakeholder groups that are critical for the effective implementation of the Convention. Of these, civil society organizations (CSOs) are of particular importance and their role is recognized in many COP decisions. In 2018–2019, ERPA will, in particular:

(a) Support the CSO Panel, building on the related outcomes of COP 13 and within the limits of voluntary contributions available for this purpose. The secretariat proposes to collaborate with the CSO Panel on a project to document examples of how good practice in land tenure positively impacts trends in land degradation. In parallel, ERPA, in collaboration with the GM, will continue to manage private sector participation and develop action plans to increasingly engage faith-based groups and local authorities in LDN implementation;

(b) Seek to leverage the progress made on synergies between climate change and biodiversity conventions and action plans by promoting the use of UNCCD endorsed indicators to measure progress and drive investment in land-based activities that can deliver benefits across all three Rio conventions. ERPA will also support the implementation of the synergistic and thematic targets of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017–2030 that are related to land degradation and drought, and advocate for the support of the forestry community for the implementation of LDN.

EUR 399,150 will be required for partnerships and synergies

26. In the 2018–2019 biennium, following the launch of the new visual identity and adoption of the revised UNCCD strategy at COP 13, ERPA will review and enhance the UNCCD common communications strategy with an emphasis on strengthening the credibility of a ‘joined up’ UNCCD corporate brand, that seamlessly supports secretariat and GM outreach, and on awareness-raising about Convention-related issues among decision makers, investors and land users. In 2018–2019, ERPA will, in particular:

(a) Collaborate with the SPI and Parties to produce engaging and policy-relevant materials, such as brochures, guides and tools, and infographics, which support and build the capacity of all stakeholders to implement LDN. ERPA will develop a specific package of materials that can be used for outreach with the private sector and grant-making foundations;

(b) Support a UNCCD presence at a calendar of strategic advocacy and high-profile events, including an annual celebration of the World Day to Combat Desertification, that leverage the greatest impact and reach;

(c) Strengthen the UNCCD visual identity with the production of branded corporate material. ERPA will strive to ensure that the UNCCD corporate website, social media channels, newsletter and the information services of the library are populated with dynamic and interactive content, and will carry out media outreach and journalist training that target delivery and placement of opinion editorials and ‘think pieces’ in leading, influential and policy-relevant news outlets.

EUR 662,900 will be required for streamlining and enhancing UNCCD corporate communications.

27. A summary of the resources requirements for the ERPA programme is provided in table 4.

Table 4
Core budget of External Relations, Policy and Advocacy for the biennium 2018–2019 by object of expenditure
 (Euros)

<i>Object of expenditure</i>	<i>Approved budget 2016-2017</i>	<i>Proposed budget 2018–2019</i>	<i>Percentage variance</i>
Staff and other personnel costs ^a	1 992 300	1 992 300	0
Consultants	32 100	32 100	0
Official travel	48 500	48 500	0
Production and media events	100 000	100 000	0
TOTAL	2 172 900	2 172 900	0

^a Core budget posts: 1 P5, 4 P3, 3 GS.

3. Science, Technology and Implementation

28. The Science, Technology and Implementation (STI) programme supports scientific cooperation, facilitates reporting and the assessment of information submitted by Parties, and supports countries within each Regional Implementation Annex² of the UNCCD to

² There are five Regional Implementation Annexes: Annex 1 for Africa, Annex 2 for Asia and the Pacific, Annex 3 for Latin America and the Caribbean, Annex 4 for Northern Mediterranean, and Annex 5 for Central and Eastern Europe.

implement the Convention. In addition, the unit manages the secretariat's functions on capacity-building and knowledge management.

29. Scientific cooperation is mostly supported through the CST and its SPI. It aims to make relevant scientific knowledge and policy advice that is based on scientific evidence easily accessible and available to Parties and beyond, thereby contributing to knowledge transfer. Emphasis is on themes with a high policy relevance to the Convention.

30. The SPI has within a short time become a respected advisory body in the science-policy arena. In the context of the Convention it has proved its unique usefulness and significance by having developed the LDN conceptual framework as a key deliverable in the biennium 2016–2017. The framework is being used in more than 100 countries. For the SPI to keep abreast of new science-policy developments, it will be critical to continue or expand its networking activities with scientific partners, platforms and other bodies.

31. In line with the above, STI will continue to prioritize support to SPI work. The SPI will build upon its strengths and achievements to date, and it will also engage in new, emerging subject areas. The SPI will be further developed in response to the outcomes of the review of its performance and overall achievements, which will be conducted at COP 13.

32. In the biennium 2018–2019, the proposed priorities of the SPI are the following:

(a) Provision of refined guidance for LDN implementation, building upon the LDN conceptual framework (Objective 1 of the 2016–2017 work programme of the SPI). This would include:

(i) Advice on the design and implementation of LDN transformative initiatives that bring multiple and synergistic environmental benefits, in particular for climate change adaptation and mitigation actions;

(ii) Provision of science-based evidence on the contribution of LDN implementation to enhance the well-being and the livelihoods of people affected by DLDD;

(b) Provision of guidance on land-based interventions for drought management and mitigation.

33. In addition to supporting the SPI work programme implementation, STI prepares the meetings of the CST and its Bureau. It also represents the secretariat in various scientific meetings and processes, and in networking and cooperation with scientific partners.

EUR 1,515,800 will be required for scientific cooperation, which includes EUR 115,000 for the SPI and EUR 76,000 to service the CST Bureau

34. Facilitation of reporting and assessment of implementation enables Parties, through the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC), to assess the implementation of the Convention, using credible data and an indicator framework that is synchronized with that of the SDG process and in particular target 15.3. Through the assessment, Parties decide on medium- to longer-term priorities and thereby ensure a focused and targeted approach to implementing the Convention. As part of its functions in facilitating the reporting and assessment of implementation, STI also supports related capacity-building at the national level together with the GM. It prepares for the CRIC Bureau meetings and supports the Bureau in the organization and handling of the CRIC sessions.

35. For the biennium 2018–2019, the priorities concerning the facilitation of the reporting and assessment of implementation are as follows:

(a) To support Parties in the 2017–2018 reporting process against the newly adopted strategy, including the first review of voluntary national targets set to achieve LDN;

(b) To study and provide, in consultation with involved international agencies and institutions, recommendations to Parties on how to establish national monitoring systems.

36. COP 13 will consider a new strategic framework for the UNCCD implementation on the basis of a draft proposed by the IWG established at COP 12 for this purpose. The new strategy, once adopted, would require Parties to provide information on progress indicators relating to trends in land cover, land productivity and carbon stocks, which would be considered at CRIC 17 in 2018. At the same CRIC session, progress made with regard to the voluntary target setting by Parties to achieve LDN will be reviewed for the first time.

37. One of the bottlenecks for continued monitoring of implementation at the national level has been the difficulty in establishing monitoring systems. STI, in consultation and cooperation with relevant institutions and agencies, will draw recommendations from case studies on how best to achieve a consistent monitoring of information for the UNCCD and other multilateral environmental agreements.

EUR 811,400 will be required for facilitating reporting and assessment of implementation, of which EUR 76,000 will be used to service CRIC Bureau meetings.

38. The capacity-building activities of the secretariat are aimed at increasing the knowledge, technical skills and expertise, as well as technological and scientific competencies of UNCCD stakeholders, particularly in developing country Parties, so as to ensure that these stakeholders can effectively support the implementation of the Convention. These activities support the implementation of the Convention by, inter alia, information-sharing and peer-to-peer learning concerning LDN target setting, facilitating the creation and/or strengthening of a national cadre of professionals to support the reporting process, providing access to existing technical and scientific expertise and financial resources, and support to gender mainstreaming.

39. For the biennium 2018–2019, UNCCD capacity-building activities will focus on the following:

(a) Expansion of the areas/topics covered by the Capacity Building Marketplace and an increase in the content in languages other than English, in particular French, Spanish and Russian;

(b) Support to the LDN target setting and the development of transformative projects through e-learning courses;

(c) Support to the national reporting process through various tools;

(d) In cooperation with partners, development of massive open online courses on the SDGs and the role of land and the UNCCD in achieving them;

(e) Support to gender mainstreaming in the UNCCD implementation, particularly in the context of LDN activities, which will include a ‘toolbox’ for gender matters;

(f) Support to accredited CSOs to effectively participate in the UNCCD process;

(g) Increased cooperation with universities by provision of material on UNCCD topics, support to courses on, for example, sustainable land management or intergovernmental cooperation on land issues, and internship openings;

(h) Synergies and capacity-building collaboration with the other Rio conventions, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and

Ecosystem Services, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme and the GEF;

(i) Partnership building for support to capacity development on UNCCD implementation, particularly LDN matters, at the regional, national and local levels and for specific target groups such as environmental journalists;

(j) Increased opportunities for the UNCCD staff for professional development.

EUR 292,900 will be required for capacity-building.

40. The UNCCD knowledge management functions facilitate knowledge capture (documenting knowledge in a structured way) and knowledge dissemination (acquiring knowledge from partners and stakeholders through the UNCCD Knowledge Hub).

41. For the biennium 2018–2019, knowledge management will focus on the following priorities:

(a) Maintain and further develop the UNCCD Knowledge Hub and the website as the single source for all relevant information for UNCCD stakeholders, including the latest scientific-based guidance and resources;

(b) In cooperation with partners, most notably the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT), facilitate the exchange of information on best practices;

(c) Enable the UNCCD Knowledge Hub to serve as a platform for Parties to share success stories on the implementation of the Convention, building on the priorities contained in the new UNCCD strategy;

(d) Manage the Roster of Independent Experts database and promote the use of the information it contains;

(e) Manage internal information and knowledge management projects within the secretariat and the GM.

EUR 211,600 will be required for knowledge management.

42. The regional coordination units (RCUs) support countries within each Regional Implementation Annex of the UNCCD to implement the Convention. The RCUs assume an important function for Parties by maintaining a two-way communication flow between the Convention institutions and Parties. Their work programme contributes to the activities of other units of the secretariat and the GM.

43. During the biennium 2018–2019, the RCUs will continue to support and strengthen cooperation within and among the regions, facilitating information sharing and capacity-building and offering logistical, administrative, operational and coordination support to Parties under each Annex. Their thematic priorities derive from the overall aims of the secretariat and the GM and include, with differing emphasis depending on the region, land-based adaptation to climate change, drought preparedness, LDN and national land resource monitoring systems.

44. On land-based adaptation to climate change, the RCUs will focus on existing regional initiatives, while facilitating new cooperation in areas and on themes of high potential and interest from the UNCCD viewpoint. Building on the policy guidance from other units of the secretariat, they support the countries in each Annex to link actions addressing DLDD with those on climate change, particularly to connect countries'

voluntary LDN targets with national plans and programmes addressing climate change and related financing. In Africa, the RCU will support the 3S and AAA³ initiatives.

45. With regard to drought preparedness, the RCUs seek to facilitate knowledge and information exchange among and within the regions. The African RCU will support the ongoing drought preparedness process, which since the regional drought conference (August 2016, Namibia) has focused on supporting the integration of policies relevant to drought preparedness, early warning systems and national drought policies. In Asia, the RCU will facilitate collaboration on policies and approaches on sand and dust storms, notably on assessing related economic impact, building on the outcomes of the recent expert meeting (September 2016, Republic of Korea). Asian countries will be supported in developing a regional strategy for developing drought resilience. In Latin America and the Caribbean, as a follow-up to the regional drought conference due to be held in August 2017, training on national drought policy and pilot projects on water harvesting and drought early warning systems will be facilitated. In the Northern Mediterranean, the RCU will support the annual workshop on sand and dust storms organized by Turkey and the Drought Management Centre for Southeastern Europe. The RCU also supports an international training course on combating desertification and drought, which is organized at least three times a year by Turkey.

46. More than 100 affected countries are working on the LDN target-setting, and related support to countries will be among the most important tasks of the RCUs in the coming years. In close collaboration with the GM, they will facilitate the political endorsement of the LDN targets, advise and assist countries in integrating their targets into national plans and programmes and regional/international initiatives, and support the mobilization of resources.

47. RCUs will increase their support to countries in national monitoring and reporting under the UNCCD, which will also influence the monitoring and reporting on DLDD for other purposes. They will organize regional capacity-building workshops and provide regional backstopping services for the next reporting in 2018. They will also facilitate learning and exchanges on the UNCCD indicators, promote the sharing of best practices on national approaches to monitoring, and support scientific cooperation and institutional networking.

48. CSOs are critical for effective UNCCD implementation at the national and regional levels, and their involvement in the Convention process supports the flow of information between local stakeholders and the intergovernmental negotiations. The RCUs encourage CSOs working on DLDD issues in each region to become familiar with the UNCCD. They provide information on the Convention and its implementation and assist the CSOs in preparing for the accreditation process. Recently, the RCUs have also started to explore possibilities to better engage private sector entities in UNCCD implementation.

49. The RCUs have a continuous function of keeping the UNCCD national focal points informed of the UNCCD and its events and developments. They deliver responses to the questions of the focal points and assist them in taking informed decisions at the sessions of the COP and its subsidiary bodies. They support and service regional consultation processes, facilitate the work of regional committees where established, and serve as the secretariat's liaison for the focal points and other national and regional stakeholders in each Annex.

EUR 1,121,700 will be required for the regional coordination units.

³ Adaptation of African Agriculture.

50. A summary of the resources requirements for the STI programme is provided in table 5.

Table 5
**Core budget of Science, Technology and Implementation for the biennium 2018–2019
by object of expenditure**

<i>Object of expenditure</i>	<i>Approved budget 2016–2017</i>	<i>Proposed budget 2018–2019</i>	<i>Percentage variance</i>
Staff and other personnel costs ^a	3 410 400	3 410 400	0
Consultants	117 000	117 000	0
Official travel	108 000	108 000	0
Meetings	166 000	166 000	0
Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology			
Official travel	68 400	68 400	0
Logistical arrangements	7 600	7 600	0
Bureau of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention			
Official travel	68 400	68 400	0
Logistical arrangements	7 600	7 600	0
Total	3 953 400	3 953 400	0

^a Core budget posts: 2 P5, 6 P4, 1 P3, 3 P2, 3 GS.

4. Administrative Services

51. The Administrative Services (AS) programme is tasked with ensuring effective and efficient delivery of services to the secretariat and the GM with regard to financial management, human resources, conference serving, travel, procurement and information technology, in accordance with the regulations and rules of the United Nations and the UNCCD.

52. In the biennium 2018–2019, AS will continue its efforts to improve administrative processes in meeting the growing needs of the organization. In the context of financial management, the secretariat and the GM have experienced greater demands from the donor community, especially with the implementation of multi-donor funded projects. Reporting capacity will continue to be strengthened to address donor agreement requirements, complying with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards. More complex, larger projects involve greater demands for human resources. The secretariat will increase its capacity within its available resources to strengthen its recruitment of staff and

consultancies, as well as the management of contracts in Umoja,⁴ for the secretariat and the GM. These growing demands are serviced within the current staffing of the unit to ensure sufficient resources for travel arrangements, office space, information technology equipment and related procurement actions.

53. With respect to conference servicing, the secretariat has now fully assumed the role of assisting Parties in providing procedural support to the official sessions of the UNCCD, including conducting the proceedings of the conference, preparing speaking notes for the Chairpersons as well as summaries and the programme of work for the daily Journal and drafting the reports on proceedings of the COP and its subsidiary bodies. In addition to this new function for the AS programme, conference servicing will continue to be provided for preparatory processes leading to the organization of the sessions of the COP and meetings of its subsidiary bodies over the biennium, as well as providing document processing and editing for these sessions, the meetings of the Bureaux, ad hoc events and UNCCD publications as required.

54. A summary of the resources requirements for the AS programme is provided in table 6.

Table 6
Core budget of Administrative Services for the biennium 2018–2019 by object of expenditure
(Euros)

<i>Object of expenditure</i>	<i>Approved budget</i>	<i>Proposed budget</i>	<i>Percentage variance</i>
	<i>2016–2017</i>	<i>2018–2019</i>	
Staff and other personnel costs ^a	457 375	457 375	0
Consultants	313 000	313 000	0
Official travel	34 000	34 000	0
Training	154 000	154 000	0
General operating expenses	683 676	683 676	0
Supplies and equipment	70 000	70 000	0
Joint administration costs (United Nations, Bonn/United Nations Office at Geneva)	797 000	797 000	0
TOTAL	2 509 051	2 509 051	

^a Core budget posts: 1 GS.

C. Resource requirements of the Global Mechanism

55. The overall objective of the GM for the biennium 2018–2019 is to support Parties in scaling up the implementation of the Convention and achieving LDN at the national level. Therefore, the GM will focus its work on three interlinked priorities:

- (a) Strategic partnerships and resource mobilization;
- (b) Innovative financing vehicles;
- (c) Support to country-level implementation.

⁴ Umoja is an administrative reform initiative for the United Nations Secretariat that includes a thorough streamlining of United Nations business processes. At its core, it is an implementation of SAP Enterprise Resource Planning software.

56. The main activities and related core budget resource needs concerning each priority, as well as those for GM management and coordination, are presented below.

57. For strategic partnerships and resource mobilization, the GM will strengthen its collaboration with international finance institutions and its support to Parties in their resource mobilization efforts, with a particular focus on climate finance and multilateral development banks. The GM will further support Parties in financial reporting and identify opportunities for them in the light of global trends in public and private resource flows.

58. The development of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund (LDN Fund) has been spearheaded by the GM and co-promoted with a competitively selected private investment firm specializing in sustainable financing. Once the LDN Fund has been launched, the GM will not be involved in its management but will continue to work closely with it and facilitate access to LDN Fund financing for the public and private project promoters of Parties.

59. More specifically, going forward, the role of the GM related to the LDN Fund will be two-fold. The GM will continue to support the LDN Fund on further capitalization, in particular capitalization from public sources. With further increased capital, the scale and impact of LDN Fund financing will grow. The GM will also directly work with Parties to facilitate access to financial resources provided by the LDN Fund through training, and tailored advice, and by connecting project promoters with the LDN Fund.

60. The GM will strategically engage with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), with a particular focus on the links between land-based climate action and scaled-up UNCCD implementation. Activities will include training for Parties on how to tap GCF resources for UNCCD implementation and the achievement of LDN targets.

61. With regard to multilateral development banks, the GM will scale up its engagement with the World Bank Group, in particular the International Development Association (IDA), in the light of the resource availability under IDA18 replenishment (USD 75 billion for the three-year period starting in July 2017) and its priority focus on resilience. The GM will similarly engage with other multilateral development banks, including the African Development Bank, taking into consideration the bold climate finance commitments⁵ made by these institutions in the context of the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in 2016 in Paris.

62. Based on existing data and reports, and in collaboration with the secretariat and selected knowledge partners, the GM will support countries in making the economic case for increased LDN investments. It will also support developing country Parties in designing transformative LDN projects and support countries in tapping resources from international finance institutions and vehicles.

EUR 1,146,950 will be required for strategic partnerships and resource mobilization.

63. The GM will continue spearheading the development of innovative financing vehicles in collaboration with private and public partners, building on the reputation that is being gained through the work on the LDN Fund, and with a particular focus on crowding in private sector finance.

64. One of the main lessons learned from developing the LDN Fund is that while financial resources are available, albeit still too limited, what is missing in many cases are transformative projects. Therefore, the GM will explore the development of an innovative project preparation financing vehicle that would complement existing project preparation

⁵ <www.eib.org/attachments/press/joint-mdb-statement-climate_nov-28_final.pdf>.

facilities. It would increase financial resources for Parties to prepare projects in support of UNCCD implementation with multiple benefits, including climate and biodiversity benefits.

65. With regard to tailored country-level financial vehicles, the GM, in collaboration with other partners, will support the development of a few selected national financing mechanisms, building on existing or planned national environmental/forest/climate funds.

EUR 503,590 will be required for innovative financing vehicles

66. The GM operational work in supporting country Parties on project design and implementation will be substantially scaled up, without the GM becoming directly involved in the management of country-level projects.

67. The LDN target-setting process will be completed by December 2017 and all countries that commit to set voluntary LDN targets will be supported in establishing baselines, identifying drivers and hotspots, and deriving targets and measures. Jointly with Parties participating in LDN Target Setting Programme, lessons learned and good practice will be distilled, presented and discussed at CRIC 17 in 2018 and widely shared, including through the UNCCD Knowledge Hub.

68. The LDN target-setting process will be linked with reporting under the UNCCD in 2018; it supports countries in establishing the national baseline on the three UNCCD biophysical progress indicators and at the same time it strengthens the UNCCD data capacity. This will facilitate future reporting and underpin the role assigned to the UNCCD of custodian agency for SDG target 15.3.

69. Once work on supporting countries in setting LDN targets is completed, the focus will shift to providing hands-on implementation support to Parties. Also drawing on extra-budgetary resources, LDN implementation support will be provided for the development of transformative projects and resource mobilization, LDN data management and specific ‘on-demand’ requests by countries. In order to fulfil this support role, the GM will continue its close partnership with several international and bilateral partners.

70. With regard to the development of transformative projects, the GM will provide advisory services for national institutions that develop projects seeking, for example, GCF, Adaptation Fund or LDN Fund financing, with a particular focus on tapping blended finance opportunities, including private sector finance. GM support to Parties’ national institutions for project development aims at delivering cutting-edge LDN knowledge, ensuring gender-responsive and socially sound projects, and translating relevant science into practice in close collaboration with the SPI and with a particular focus on science related to the land and climate nexus.

71. In addition to this project development advisory role, the GM will explore opportunities to partner with a few international organizations (e.g. UNDP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) and bilateral agencies in supporting the implementation of transformative projects managed by these partners.

EUR 1,282,460 will be required for support to country-level implementation

Management and coordination

72. The Managing Director provides overall management and strategic direction for the GM functions. In cooperation and coordination with the UNCCD Executive Secretary, his office sets the GM priorities and plans its operations. The office of the Managing Director

is responsible for the programming, budget and resource mobilization as well as for the GM knowledge management and communication activities.

EUR 707,300 will be required for GM management and coordination

73. A summary of the resources requirements for the GM is provided in table 7.

Table 7

Core budget of the Global Mechanism for the biennium 2018–2019 by object of expenditure (Euros)

<i>Object of expenditure</i>	<i>Approved budget</i>		<i>Percentage variance</i>
	<i>2016–2017 (revised)</i>	<i>Proposed budget 2018–2019</i>	
Staff and other personnel costs ^a	3 059 400	3 059 400	0.0
Consultants	164 000	164 000	0.0
Official travel	77 000	77 000	0.0
General operating expenses	183 000	183 000	0.0
Supplies and equipment	22 000	22 000	0.0
Joint administration costs (United Nations, Bonn/ United Nations Office at Geneva)	134 900	134 900	0.0
TOTAL	3 640 300	3 640 300	0.0

^a Core budget posts: 1 D1, 1 P5, 2 P4, 4 P3, 2 P2, 4 GS.

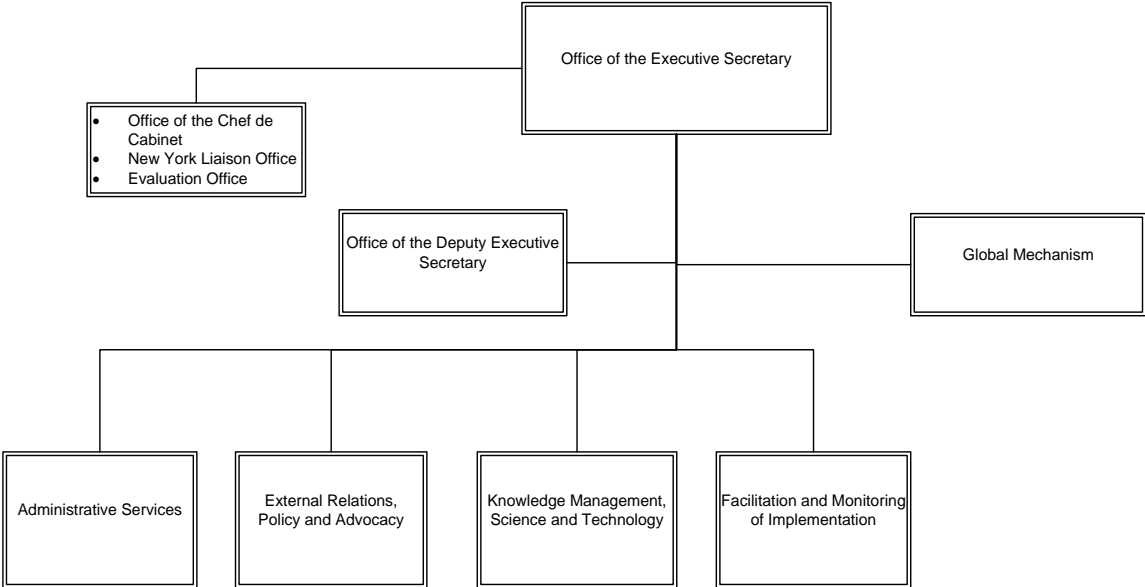
IV. Conclusions and recommendations

74. Parties may wish to consider the proposed comprehensive multi-year workplan (2018–2021) and two-year costed work programme (2018–2019) for the Convention and decide on the budget for 2018–2019 on this basis, taking into account the specific requests and tasks addressed to the secretariat, the GM, the CST and the CRIC that may be raised in other decisions at COP 13.

Annex I

Organizational structure of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism

[English only]



Annex II

Assumptions and terminology used in the budget

I. Staff costs

1. Salary and common staff costs: the standard salary costs have been established to determine staff costs in the proposed budget of the secretariat using the United Nations salary scales for 2017 and the average post adjustment and exchange rate⁶ of the last 17 months in the biennium 2016–2017. The standard costs take into consideration education grants and at least one home leave per biennium for Professional staff. The table below indicates the standard costs applied in the proposed budget for the secretariat and the Global Mechanism.

Standard salary costs by biennium (Euros)

	2016–2017	2018–2019
USG	370,000	380,000
D-2	353,600	353,600
D-1	354,000	354,000
P-5	315,500	315,500
P-4	272,900	272,900
P-3	230,800	230,800
P-2	191,600	191,600
GS	132,000	132,000

Abbreviations: USG = Under-Secretary-General, D = Director, P = Professional, GS = General Service.

II. Non-staff costs

2. Consultancies include institutional and individual contracts for services that require specialized expertise not available in the secretariat. Costs are estimated on the basis of actual requirements and past expenditures for similar activities.

3. Experts and expert groups encompass the costs of experts' travel, participation in meetings of constituted bodies and work on reviews. Costs are estimated on the basis of actual requirements and past expenditures.

4. General operating expenses represent costs of rentals and maintenance of premises and equipment, communications, shipping and other contractual services, including logistical support for meetings.

⁶ 1.00 USD = EUR 0.912.

III. Working capital reserve

5. In accordance with the Financial Rules of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies and the Convention secretariat,⁷ a working capital reserve is maintained at 10 per cent of planned expenditure for one year.

⁷ Decision 2/COP.1.