



United Nations

ICCD/COP(13)/INF.2



Convention to Combat Desertification

Distr.: General
24 August 2017
English
Original: English, French and
Spanish
English, French and Spanish only

Conference of the Parties

Thirteenth session

Ordos, China, 6–16 September 2017

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Special segment

Note on the special segment of the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth session

Note by the secretariat

Summary

At the high-level segment of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13), ministers and other heads of delegation will hold plenary discussions in the form of three ministerial round tables and three interactive dialogue sessions, as follows:

- (a) Round table 1: Land degradation: a challenge to development, prosperity and peace;
- (b) Round table 2: Drought and sand and dust storms: early warning and beyond;
- (c) Round table 3: Land degradation neutrality: “From targets to action...what will it take?”;
- (d) Interactive dialogue 1: Gender and land rights (a dialogue with civil society);
- (e) Interactive dialogue 2: How can local governments help address the challenges of land degradation? (a dialogue with elected and local government representatives);
- (f) Interactive dialogue 3: How can the private sector invest to help achieve land degradation neutrality? (a dialogue with the private sector).

It is anticipated that the high-level segment will bring political momentum to the deliberations of country Parties and boost the engagement of stakeholders in the implementation of the Convention.

GE.17-14689(E)



* 1 7 1 4 6 8 9 *

Please recycle



Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Background	1–3	3
II. Organization of the high-level segment	4–8	3
III. Round table 1: Land degradation: a challenge to development, prosperity and peace	9–15	4
A. Background.....	9–14	4
B. Key question: Can better land management ensure development, prosperity and peace?	15	5
IV. Round table 2: Drought and sand and dust storms: early warning and beyond.....	16–30	5
A. Background.....	16–29	5
B. Key question: How should UNCCD Parties deliver early warning and protection against the impacts of sand and dust storms and drought?	30	7
V. Round table 3: Land degradation neutrality: “From targets to action... what will it take?”	31–36	8
A. Background.....	31–35	8
B. Key question: What will it take to move from targets to action?.....	36	9
VI. Interactive dialogue 1: Gender and land rights (a dialogue with civil society)	37–46	9
A. Background.....	37–44	9
B. Suggestions from civil society organizations.....	45–46	10
VII. Interactive dialogue 2: How can local governments help address the challenges of land degradation? (a dialogue with elected and local government representatives)	47–58	11
A. Background.....	47–56	11
B. Suggestions from local governments	57–58	13
VIII. Interactive dialogue 3: How can the private sector invest to help achieve land degradation neutrality? (a dialogue with the private sector)	59–63	13
A. Background.....	59–61	13
B. Suggestions from the private sector.....	62–63	14
IX. Expected result	64	14

I. Background

1. Building upon the programme of work for the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 13), interactive dialogue sessions will be organized with relevant stakeholders, including ministers, civil society organizations (CSOs), the business community, the scientific community and elected and local government representatives at COP 13. The high-level segment of COP 13 will be held on 11–12 September 2017 in Ordos, China.
2. The high-level segment will be organized by the host country and the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). Ministers and heads of delegation from the 196 Parties to the UNCCD, along with the above-mentioned stakeholders, will bring political momentum to the deliberations of Parties and guide negotiators as appropriate.
3. In order to assist delegations in preparing for the high-level segment, the secretariat has prepared this information note addressing some of the questions that ministers and other heads of delegation will be invited to consider during their deliberations.

II. Organization of the high-level segment

4. This special segment of COP 13 will focus on boosting stakeholder engagement in the UNCCD implementation processes. During the high-level segment, there will be three parallel ministerial round-table discussions followed by three interactive dialogue sessions with civil society, elected and local government representatives and the private sector.
5. Each round-table discussion will have two chairs at Ministerial level. The substantive deliberations will be opened by one of the chairs and complemented by keynote speakers. Each ministerial round-table discussion will last approximately three hours. The moderators will guide the deliberations and ensure the efficient use of time. The second chair will summarize and close the round-table.
6. The opening ceremony of the high-level segment (Monday, 11 September) will start with a welcoming statement by the President of COP 13, followed by a statement from a Chinese political leader, a message from the United Nations Secretary-General and a statement by the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD.
7. Following the opening ceremony, statements at ministerial level will be made on behalf of each of the regional and interest groups (Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the European Union, JUSCANZ¹ and Central and Eastern Europe). Names of speakers will be communicated to the UNCCD secretariat before or during the first week of COP 13.
8. The topics for consideration at the round table discussions and the interactive dialogue sessions will include the following:
 - (a) Round table 1: Land degradation: a challenge to development, prosperity and peace;
 - (b) Round table 2: Drought and sand and dust storms: early warning and beyond;
 - (c) Round table 3: Land degradation neutrality: “From targets to action...what will it take?”;

¹ Certain non-European Union industrialized countries meet as a group (JUSCANZ) to discuss various issues. The group was originally composed of Japan, the United States of America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

- (d) Gender and land rights (a dialogue with civil society);
- (e) How can local governments help address the challenges of land degradation? (a dialogue with elected and local government representatives);
- (f) How can the private sector invest to help achieve land degradation neutrality? (a dialogue with the private sector).

III. Round table 1: Land degradation: a challenge to development, prosperity and peace

A. Background

9. The planet's limited resources are under pressure. By 2050 global demand for food, water and energy is expected to grow by approximately 70, 55 and 80 per cent, respectively. Yet up to 25 per cent of the Earth's land is already degraded due to unsustainable land use, global food production is expected to decrease by 12 per cent by 2040, and available cropland is expected to decrease by 8–20 per cent by 2050.² These resource pressures are expected to increase in future, particularly where the population is growing rapidly. Developing countries are likely to account for approximately 97 per cent of global population growth by 2050.³ These soaring populations could slow efforts to combat poverty, particularly in places where environmental disasters, land degradation and climate change damage livelihoods.

10. A land-based green growth and jobs strategy, for example, could constitute a response strategy to the negative effects of environmental degradation on employment while aiming to reduce the environmental impact of key economic sectors to sustainable levels. It would involve jobs that conserve or rehabilitate the environment. A global transformation to a greener economy could generate 15 to 60 million additional jobs globally⁴ over the next two decades and lift tens of millions of workers out of poverty, with significant improvements in productivity and income levels for rural communities.

11. Failure to act in this way will leave millions without the means to create stable and sustainable livelihoods. Resource depletion perpetuates a cycle of social and political inequality, especially in rural areas, providing fodder for future frustration and discontent.

12. It is often observed that a lack of viable livelihood opportunities, particularly for rural youth, can compound pre-existing grievances, particularly where there is high unemployment.⁵ In certain vulnerable situations or where employment options are limited, youth may be drawn to criminal activities.⁶ In desertification-plagued Nigeria, for example, survey respondents from the states of Borno and Kaduna identified the high incidence of unemployment and poverty as the second most important reason why youth engage in extremist violence.⁷

13. In parallel, it is estimated that 135 million people will be at risk of being displaced by desertification over the coming decades. Large population movements are already recognized by the United Nations Security Council as constituting a potential threat to

² Adelphi et al (2015): A new climate for peace, p. 7, with further references.

³ Adelphi et al (2015): A new climate for peace, p. 6, with further references.

⁴ International Labour Organization (2013): Sustainable development, decent work and green jobs, p. 32.

⁵ Adelphi et al (2015): A new climate for peace, p. 28, with further references.

⁶ The World Bank (2011): World Development Report 2011, p. 79, with further references.

⁷ United States Institute of Peace (2014): Why Do Youth Join Boko Haram?, p. 5.

international peace and security, particularly if there are existing social and ethnic tensions. The line between economic, ecological and political refugees will be blurred. An additional downside of outmigration is that once productive areas, after they are abandoned by farmers, will become barren. In some cases, abandoned lands and natural resources become a base for the expansion of non-state actors. These regions tend to be in outlying areas and poorly controlled/managed territory.

14. Insecure land tenure and inadequate land administration systems are further factors fuelling tensions around the globe. Approximately 70 per cent⁸ of the global population do not have freehold and rely on customary and/or indigenous tenure, informal tenure types, or rental arrangements. Tenure insecurity has been part of the cycle of poverty and insecurity in many places including Angola, Burundi, Colombia, Kyrgyzstan, Papua New Guinea, urban Peru, Rwanda, Tajikistan and Uganda.⁹

B. Key question: Can better land management ensure development, prosperity and peace?

15. Possible questions to consider include:

(a) To what extent are land degradation and drought drivers of reverse development?

(b) Will society be able to manage future pressures on land – especially as climate change accelerates – or will land degradation trigger frustration, migration, radicalization or violent conflict?

(c) Would green growth and the subsequent creation of decent land-based green jobs be a suitable strategy to mitigate youth unemployment? If yes, can land rehabilitation be a viable option for combating migration outflows and helping returning migrants?

(d) Would improving administrative systems and ensuring better land tenure rights head off conflicts over basic resources?

(e) Faced with climate change, states may need to conserve water and land, redistribute resources and develop disaster warning and response systems. How can growing needs be met in a cost-effective and self-sustaining manner?

IV. Round table 2: Drought and sand and dust storms: early warning and beyond

A. Background

16. Both drought and sand and dust storms (SDS) are natural phenomena. However, human activity, particularly that which causes land degradation, is making the impact of both costlier in terms of lives and livelihoods. Both drought and SDS are predictable and we know they will return again and again. The ‘business-as-usual’ approach of reacting too late and responding with post-impact emergency interventions can no longer be a viable option. Parties need to better understand how they can deliver early warning and protection rather than merely recovery.

⁸ UN-Habitat (2016): Scoping and Status Study on Land and Conflict: Towards UN System-Wide Engagement at Scale, p. 22.

⁹ United States Agency for International Development. (n.d.): Land & conflict. A toolkit for intervention, p. 3.

17. A three-pillar approach to action and preparedness is recommended: (i) early warning that goes beyond meteorology and reaches local communities; (ii) promotion of understanding of vulnerability and risk; and (iii) identification of risk mitigation activities that are based on sustainable and integrated land and water management approaches built into LDN plans.

Drought

18. The most recent El Niño drought has been the worst in decades. More than 20 countries and regions declared a state of emergency in 2016, including 15 Southern African Development Community member states, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Malawi, the Marshall Islands, the Philippines, Somalia, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), and regional emergency declarations in parts of Argentina, Kenya, South Sudan and the United States of America. La Niña is now in force but the impacts of drought, while country and region-specific, will be felt well into 2017.

19. For example, in early 2017 more than 20 million people in northern Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen were at risk of starvation. It is set to become the largest humanitarian crisis since the creation of United Nations in 1945.

20. In Asia in early 2017, Sri Lanka was hit with its worst drought in decades. About 900,000 people across nine provinces in Sri Lanka have been affected by drought. The current drought is forecasted to have a devastating impact on rice production. Even if there is rainfall in the early months of the year, Sri Lanka's agricultural sector is unlikely to make a full recovery in 2017.

21. Severe drought has also been linked to increasing migration and conflict as land becomes less productive. The poor management of the impacts of the prolonged drought of 2006–2010 in the Syrian Arab Republic, for example, may have forced a million Syrians off their land.

22. In economic terms, drought is the world's costliest natural disaster. Since 1980, major droughts within the United States alone have resulted in costs exceeding USD 100 billion. Water scarcity is estimated to cost some regions around the world 6 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP).

23. There have been some important recent measures to mitigate drought impact. Examples include the African Drought Conference held in Windhoek, Namibia (August 2016), which proposed the development of a (binding) drought protocol; the United States' Presidential Memorandum: Building National Capabilities for Long-Term Drought Resilience, which institutionalizes drought preparedness (March 2016); the establishment of the National Disaster Risk Management Commission in Ethiopia (November 2015); and the Ending Drought Emergencies strategy in Kenya (July 2014).

Sand and dust storms

24. Every year, between 500 million and 5 billion tonnes of dust move around the planet. Global dust emissions have increased by 25 per cent between the late nineteenth century and today. Annual dust production increased tenfold in the past 50 years in many parts of North Africa. Climate change and anthropogenic land-cover change are important drivers of this. According to NASA (the National Aeronautics and Space Administration), up to half of the dust in today's atmosphere may be the result of changes to the environment caused by human activity, including agriculture, overgrazing and the cutting down of forests.

25. The impacts of SDS are significant and include the following:

(a) In 2009, a dust storm hit Sydney, Australia, pummelling the city in dust that reduced visibility to 100 meters (328 feet). Pollutant levels were 20 times higher than the lowest levels considered to be hazardous. The storm, which deposited 75,000 tons of dust per hour at its peak, removed 5 million tons of topsoil from the interior farmlands and dumped it into the Pacific Ocean. The immediate on-site costs were estimated at USD 4 million;

(b) A 2009 study suggests that increased dust storms would result in annual losses of USD 12.7 billion in GDP per annum in the Middle East and North Africa region alone.

26. The health consequences span the globe but hit the Middle East, North Africa, the Sahel, Australia, China, Mexico and the southwestern United States especially hard. The pollution-laden dust can be carried over hundreds of miles, affecting millions of people outside of the source areas; the source areas might not necessarily suffer from the acute events of the storm. Populations particularly vulnerable to airborne and respiratory disease in all countries are children and the elderly, people with pre-existing heart and lung diseases (e.g. asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, ischemic heart disease and allergies) and labourers who work outdoors.

27. For those who live in areas where seasonal dust storms are unavoidable, preparation is the best way to prevent loss of property and preserve health. In areas where human activity has created dust sources, the restoration and preservation of ecosystems has been shown to reduce the number of storms that ravage farmlands.

28. There has been considerable progress made in the early warning and mitigation of SDS in some countries, notably in China.

29. A high-level interactive dialogue taking place during the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2017 will discuss action-oriented recommendations, including ways to improve policy coordination on SDS at the global level.

B. Key question: How should UNCCD Parties deliver early warning and protection against the impacts of sand and dust storms and drought?

30. Possible questions to consider include:

(a) How can early warning systems contribute to drought resilience?

(b) What lessons can be learned from the impacts of the 2015–2016 El Niño and 2016 La Niña events?

(c) What is wrong with the existing early warning systems? Why do we react too slowly? What needs to be improved?

(d) How can we build comprehensive early warning systems including forecasting, risk information communication/dissemination and risk preparedness?

(e) Can a ‘binding’ protocol help countries address drought and SDS? What are the main elements to be considered?

(f) How can we better engage and include local communities?

(g) Does national coordination need to improve? How can countries mainstream SDS/drought policies in national development strategies and LDN implementation?

(h) How can (integrated) land and water management contribute to reducing the impact of drought and SDS? What is its role in achieving LDN targets?

- (i) Are transboundary storms and droughts a problem? What kind of cooperation or knowledge sharing is needed among countries?
- (j) Is there potential to develop financial tools (e.g. innovative insurance schemes and trust funds) to mitigate the effects of SDS and drought? Can they be made more effective?
- (k) Is more private sector investment needed? What are the mechanisms?
- (l) What is the role of global policy coordination in addressing drought and SDS (UN-Water, etc.)? Can the UNCCD contribute to this?

V. Round Table 3: Land degradation neutrality: “From targets to action...what will it take?”

A. Background

31. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development embodies bold global ambition to shift the world onto a more sustainable and resilient trajectory. The target of achieving a land degradation-neutral world (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 15.3) is a critical part of this agenda. As at June 2017, 110 Parties had already committed to translating SDG target 15.3 into voluntary country-specific targets and actions. This includes actions that will generate multiple benefits and deliver on multiple SDGs, including those relating to climate change mitigation and adaptation, zero hunger, access to clean water and the creation of decent green work opportunities. The UNCCD is supporting countries in their LDN target-setting journey.

32. Through decisions taken at COP 12 and in light of the revisions taken on in the new draft UNCCD strategy, Parties have a clear roadmap for the next 15 years. The challenge is to capitalize on this momentum.

33. The Scientific Conceptual Framework for Land Degradation Neutrality¹⁰ produced by the Science-Policy Interface provides a scientific foundation for understanding, implementing and monitoring LDN. It was designed to create a bridge between the vision and the practical implementation of LDN by defining LDN in operational terms.

34. The Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme (LDN TSP)¹¹ led by the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD is supported by more than 17 bilateral and multilateral partners. The programme is assisting 110 countries in making the concept of LDN a reality by 2030 by first providing practical tools and guidance for the establishment of voluntary LDN targets; providing data to establish national LDN baselines; and identifying transformative LDN programmes and projects.

35. In particular, the LDN target-setting process provides a major opportunity for countries to increase the coherence and scale of and resource mobilization for their programmes and projects by (i) using LDN as a lens to foster the coherence of national policies, actions and commitments; (ii) moving from pilots to scale, that is consolidating a plethora of small-scale, sometimes scattered and fragmented projects into bold, large-scale, transformative projects to achieve countries’ LDN targets; and (iii) creating blended finance packages to finance the transition towards LDN by creatively combining public and private, national and international climate and development resources.

¹⁰ <www2.unccd.int/publications/scientific-conceptual-framework-land-degradation-neutrality>.

¹¹ <www2.unccd.int/actions/ldn-target-setting-programme>.

B. Key question: What will it take to move from targets to action?

36. Possible questions to consider include:
- (a) Resource Mobilization: What does it take to attract substantial financial resources for LDN implementation?
 - (b) Projects: What does it take to design a transformative LDN project?
 - (c) Unlocking private sector investments: What does it take to attract private sector investments in LDN?

VI. Interactive dialogue 1: Gender and land rights (a dialogue with civil society)

A. Background

37. CSOs carried out research that looked at the implications of land tenure on achieving LDN, resulting in some interesting findings. A rights-based approach to sustainable land management (SLM) is necessary to ensure good stewardship of land resources and the achievement of SDG target 15.3. Long-term land tenure could create incentives for investments that generate longer term benefits. Roughly 1.2 billion people currently live without rights of access or formal land tenure. When local communities have secure access to and control over those resources, they tend to invest in the land, use resources more efficiently and adopt SLM practices.

38. Land rights for women are seen as critical. In much of the developing world, land is shared and allocated on the basis of the needs and roles individual men and women are given in their communities. These roles dictate the kinds of crops and livestock men and women tend and the size and quality of the plots of land men or women are allocated. This reality defines the resources men and women can access, the technologies they use and the assistance they receive from the government.

39. If women were treated equally to men, up to USD 28 trillion, or 26 per cent, could be added to the annual global GDP by 2025.¹² Closing the gender gap in agriculture alone would increase yields on women's farms by 20–30 per cent and total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5–4 per cent.¹³ Closing the gender gaps in all areas relating to land use, including fuel and water production, could raise national outputs even further.

40. The rights men or women have to use, access, control, own or sell land is particularly important. Land is the asset most commonly used to borrow funds against for investment, but having title to the land is often critical. Having or lacking these rights can mean all the difference in avoiding or reducing land degradation. Men have stronger land rights than women in just about every region of the world.¹⁴ Fifteen per cent of women globally have the right to manage their land; this figure declines to five per cent in the Middle East.¹⁵ In sub-Saharan Africa, where female and male farmers are roughly equal in

¹² McKinsey Global Institute. *The Power of Parity*. 2015.

¹³ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 2011. *The State of Food and Agriculture*. 2010–2011.

¹⁴ 2015, FAO. *Gender and Land Statistics*.

¹⁵ As footnote 14 above.

number, women farmers receive 10 per cent of the loans granted to smallholders and less than 1 per cent of the total credit advanced to the agriculture sector.¹⁶

41. Countries that are committed to achieving LDN can take measures to promote and protect land tenure and resource rights, especially with respect to women, the poor and the vulnerable, through appropriate legislation and institutions, including the right to inherit.

42. CSOs suggest that governments might, for example, set policies that:

- (a) Grant authority to local governments to issue land titles to women;
- (b) Ensure national legislation includes mechanisms to address the specific needs of critical groups, including women and indigenous peoples;
- (c) Provide a limited-time use and ownership of land for multipurpose gardens where women's groups can cultivate food to meet their households' needs;
- (d) Allocate to women some of the land earmarked for restoration in pursuit of SDG target 15.3 for the women to rehabilitate and then own.

43. The responsibility women (and sometimes girls) have in meeting household needs makes women even more heavily reliant on natural resources than men.¹⁷ The global consensus around the SDGs and the adoption of the new draft strategy for 2018–2030 are opportunities for policymakers to act in a gender-responsive way. Women need adequate means to safeguard their land from degradation. It is the only way that SDG target 15.3 can be achieved by, and remain sustainable beyond, the year 2030.

44. With regard to land rights and gender, there has been considerable progress made in some countries, notably Ethiopia and Uganda.

B. Suggestions from civil society organizations

45. CSOs propose that a gender-responsive approach to land tenure issues be effectively mainstreamed in the implementation of LDN target-setting.

46. Questions that can be considered include:

- (a) Will Parties acknowledge the link between land rights and land degradation?
- (b) Is the integration of land tenure guidelines into national policies important for achieving LDN? How could it be done?
- (c) What does gender-responsive land tenure/land rights look like? Are there particular examples that are working? Why? What were the critical elements of success?
- (d) What are the biggest challenges for implementing gender-responsive tenure regimes?
- (e) How does the institutional setup need to change to address these challenges?
- (f) What is the role of civil society?
- (g) What is the relationship between women's capacity-building in SLM and securing tenure?

¹⁶ Undated, FAO. Agricultural Support System. <www.fao.org/docrep/005/y3969e/y3969e05.htm>. Accessed 14 December 2016.

¹⁷ 2009, IBRD/World Bank. Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook, p. 425.

VII. Interactive dialogue 2: How can local governments help address the challenges of land degradation? (a dialogue with elected and local government representatives)

A. Background

47. The millennia-old balance between town and country is being transformed. Rapid urbanization is taking place all over the world, driven largely by rural migration, resulting in urban sprawl and slum developments. If current projections are accurate, 66 per cent of the world's population will be living in cities by 2050. This is having dramatic impacts on the environment and increasing pressure on limited land resources. Future urban expansion is likely to result in the loss of some of our more productive croplands.

48. In 1990, there were only 10 cities with more than 10 million inhabitants,¹⁸ but by 2017 there were 34, representing around 12 per cent of the world's population.¹⁹ Urban agglomerations, encompassing multiple cities, suburban or peri-urban areas, began to form as contiguous and continuous regions.²⁰ In 2007, the global balance of urban versus rural living tipped for the first time in history, with more people living in urban than in rural areas.²¹ Levels of urbanization have varied across regions. By 2014, urbanization at or above 80 per cent was recorded in Latin America, the Caribbean and Northern America, while 73 per cent of Europeans, 48 per cent of Asians and 40 per cent of Africans lived in urban areas.²²

49. Migration from rural to urban areas is often seen as a natural consequence of uneven regional development,²³ with gaps in incomes between rural and urban dwellers cited as a major incentive for people to move.²⁴ However, many other motives affect these migration flows, such as access to improved amenities, educational possibilities,²⁵ and avoidance of climate change²⁶ and weather-related disasters.²⁷ There are also countervailing forces that may restrict migration, such as constraints placed on migration relating to finances, distance, access to information, social networks and policy limitations.²⁸ In many countries, rural migrants are regarded as an underclass within cities. Some 200,000 people migrate to cities every day.²⁹

¹⁸ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. 2014. *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Highlights* (ST/ESA/SER.A/352).

¹⁹ As footnote 18 above.

²⁰ d'Amour, C.B., Reitsma, F., Baiocchi, G., Barthel, S., Güneralp, B., Erb, K.-H., Haberl, H., Creutzig, F., and Seto, K.C. 2016. Future urban land expansion and implications for global croplands, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* (PNAS), doi:10.1073/pnas.1606036114.

²¹ As footnote 18 above.

²² As footnote 18 above.

²³ Todaro, M. P. 1969. A Model of Labor Migration and Urban Unemployment in Less-Developed Countries. *American Economic Review* 59:138–148.

²⁴ Lucas, R. 2015. Internal Migration in Developing Economies: An Overview, KNOMAD Working Paper 6, May 2015.

²⁵ Clark, W.A.V. and Maas, R. 2015. Interpreting migration through the prism of reasons to move. *Population, Space and Place*. **21**: 54-67.

²⁶ Brown, O. 2008. *Migration and Climate Change*. International Organization for Migration, Geneva.

²⁷ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre. 2016. *Global Estimates 2015: People displaced by disasters*. Geneva.

²⁸ Liang, Z. 2016. China's Great Migration and the Prospects of a More Integrated Society, *Annual Review of Sociology* **42**:451–71.

²⁹ DNV GL AS. 2015. Global Opportunity Report 2015, DNV GL AS, Høvik, Oslo.

50. Peri-urban areas represent the interface between the city and the countryside, a hybrid landscape with both rural and urban characteristics. At best, such areas can represent a safe bridge between the urban and rural, providing services for both communities such as recreational areas, markets or shopping centres, and/or waste disposal sites.

51. However, they can also be barriers. Urban sprawl, loosely defined as dispersed, excessive and wasteful urban growth,³⁰ can quickly degenerate into unregulated slums, becoming virtual no-go areas apart from those who live in them. Unregulated and unplanned urbanization, often exacerbated by weak governance structures and a lack of institutional coordination,³¹ can lead to land degradation, biodiversity loss, pollution and water contamination, higher levels of crime, and congestion.

52. In most parts of the world, the urban land footprint is expanding even faster than urban populations.³² While urban populations are projected to reach around 5.0 billion in 2030 and 6.3 billion people in 2050,³³ urban areas are forecast to triple in land area against a 2000 baseline over the same period,³⁴ increasing by 1.2 million square kilometres.³⁵ Soil sealing is a global problem: within European cities, for example, it varies between 23–78 per cent³⁶ and is regarded as one of the main threats to soil function, with around half of all new land take within the European Union being sealed.³⁷

53. Furthermore, the footprint of cities extends far beyond their boundaries due to huge demands: for food, where a small but highly urbanized country like the Netherlands requires a land area four times larger than the country itself; for water: half of all cities with populations greater than 100,000 are located in water-scarce areas with freshwater sources running dry (especially in times of drought) as more water is extracted than recharged; for energy: cities currently consume 60–80 per cent of all energy and produce 75 per cent of carbon emissions.

54. In theory, cities can offer economies-of-scale with respect to resource use and environmental impacts. The concept of sustainable cities is gaining ground, but urban planners are struggling to put these sustainable approaches into practice.

55. Cities need to ensure food, water, shelter and services are available for the increasing population. Municipalities could become key players in SLM, addressing the man-made drivers of land degradation and drought. Cities could play a decisive role in achieving LDN and in promoting ‘joined-up’ rural and urban planning. Will they take the lead in creating a more harmonious and productive relationship between town and country to provide for the needs of all their citizens sustainably?

56. There has been considerable progress made in sustainable city development in some countries, notably in Germany and the Republic of Korea.

³⁰ Fang, Y. and Pal, A. 2016. Drivers of urban sprawl in urbanizing China – a political ecology analysis, *Environment and Urbanization*, 28, 2, doi: 10.1177/0956247816647344.

³¹ Song, Y. and Zenou, Y. 2009. How differences in property taxes within cities affect urban sprawl, *Journal of Regional Science* 49, 801-831.

³² As footnote 21 above.

³³ As footnote 18 above.

³⁴ As footnote 21 above.

³⁵ Seto, K.C. Güneralp, B., Hutyrá, L.R., 2012. Global forecasts of urban expansion to 2030 and direct impacts on biodiversity and carbon pools. *PNAS*. **109** (40).

³⁶ van Delden, H., and Vanhout, R. 2014. In: ET2050 — Territorial scenarios and visions for Europe. Volume 5: Land use Trends and Scenarios.

³⁷ European Environment Agency. 2016. The direct and indirect impacts of EU policies on land. European Environment Agency, Copenhagen, Denmark. Retrieved from <www.eea.europa.eu/publications/impacts-of-eu-policies-on-land/at_download/file>.

B. Suggestions from local governments

57. Municipalities believe they can help address the challenges of land degradation and propose greater collaboration.

58. Possible questions to consider include:

(a) SDG 11 calls for countries to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. What are the steps needed to achieve sustainable cities? Can tackling land degradation help?

(b) Cities are main recipients of desertification-induced migration. How can we collaborate to cope with these challenges?

(c) How can municipalities protect adjacent rural/agricultural land, forestry and open spaces as ecological buffers against land degradation and climate change impacts?

(d) How can citizens be involved in achieving LDN at the local, national and international level?

(e) What can local governments do to slow down and reverse the trends in land degradation and help achieve LDN?

(f) How can cities integrate sustainable land-use policies into their planning? Which actors at the local, regional and national level should be involved in urban planning?

VIII. Interactive dialogue 3: How can the private sector invest to help achieve land degradation neutrality? (a dialogue with the private sector)

A. Background

59. Land productivity will determine whether the world can feed a population projected to grow to nine billion by 2050 while sustaining natural environments. Practices that reduce ecosystem services such as nutrients in the earth, limit carbon sequestration, degrade topsoil and ultimately reduce the fertility and water retention of the land have long-term economic impacts for business and society. Other ecosystem services that would be relevant to businesses include timber and wood fibre production, flood prevention, waste purification, provision of genetic resources, medicinal plants and organisms, freshwater availability, power, biomass production and recreation.

60. By achieving LDN, businesses can promote food production, improve access to markets for local products, improve rural income development, raise the gender balance, protect the forests and cut land-use emissions by raising crop and livestock productivity and utilizing new technologies and comprehensive approaches to soil and water management. The private sector can invest in rehabilitating up to 500 million hectares of degraded and abandoned agricultural land, moving from grey to natural/green infrastructure and verifying sustainably managed supply chains. The business opportunities in creating a sustainable world in which 9 billion people can live could be worth USD 3–10 trillion per year by 2050.

61. While there are successful cases in some countries, notably in Egypt, the private sector lacks the policy and tax incentives and signals from the public sector to invest in LDN. There is no easily available pipeline of ‘bankable’ projects. The relevant markets and market infrastructure are not available in some regions.

B. Suggestions from the private sector

62. The private sector proposes that business can invest to help achieve LDN if the signals and incentives are right.

63. Questions that can be considered include:

(a) Can a business be considered land degradation neutral? Would Parties recognize if a company or industry had achieved this goal? How can this target be measured and reported upon by businesses? Would certification help achieve the objective?

(b) What are the incentive gaps that need to be filled?

(c) What is needed to create a more dynamic market (e.g. infrastructure)?

(d) What sectors should we prioritize?

(e) What about the financial services industry (e.g. investment, insurance and banking)?

(f) How can we create business-friendly 'bankable projects'?

(g) What kind of systems and policies should be in place to move towards green infrastructure?

IX. Expected result

64. A summary of the outcomes of the ministerial round-table discussions and the interactive dialogue sessions will be presented by the President of the Conference of the Parties. The summary from the President will be transmitted to a plenary session of COP 13 for further consideration.
