

Decision 16/COP.4

Work programme of the Committee on Science and Technology

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 11/COP.1 on procedures for the communication of information and review of implementation, in particular paragraph 18 of the procedures annexed to that decision, which concerns the review process,

Recalling also decisions 12/COP.2 and 16/COP.3 on the programme of work of the Committee on Science and Technology,

6. *Decides* that at each session the Committee on Science and Technology will address in depth a priority issue relating to the implementation of the Convention and further decides that the fourth issue to be dealt with at the fifth session of the Committee on Science and Technology will be on strategies for the communication of information and its use to generate best practices for combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought, as described further in the annex;

7. *Invites* Parties and observers to contribute, in writing, case studies illustrating the communication of best practices related to the above theme which should not exceed 10 pages in length, and should be transmitted to the secretariat no later than 30 June 2001;

8. *Encourages* Parties and observers to include in such reports short accounts of traditional and scientific knowledge produced in various thematic fields relative to the issue of combating desertification, and strategies or mechanisms used for the communication and evaluation of the process, if available;

9. *Requests* the permanent secretariat to prepare a synthesis of such reports for consideration at the fifth session of the Committee on Science and Technology;

10. *Also decides* that the programme of work for the fifth session of the Committee shall include the other topics on the agenda for the fourth session of the Committee on Science and Technology.

*12th Plenary
22 December 2000*

Annex**Strategies for the communication of information and its use
to generate best practices for combating desertification
and mitigating the effects of drought**

These strategies should include concepts of collection, analysis, synthesis and exchange of traditional and scientific knowledge, as given below:

1. The objective should be to establish specific effective communication procedures to combat desertification.
2. Communication procedures involve at least a two-way flow of information. Therefore information should not only be transferred from scientists to the grassroots level, but also from local communities to scientists, extension workers, policy makers and other users of information.
3. Use implies the acceptance, interpretation, adaptation and utilization of such knowledge for the specific local environment or situation.
4. Best practices refer to those procedures that are successful. The goal is to make use of those experiences as well as the information that flows from them, by sharing them with other similarly affected or interested parties. This refers to all best practices from a very specific situation, such as erosion control or catchment management, to wider issues such as land-use planning and policy formation.
5. It is recommended that case studies on best practices, taking into account both traditional and scientific knowledge, should be produced in various thematic fields relative to the issue of combating desertification.