

Decision 17/COP.6

Benchmarks and indicators

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling its decisions 22/COP.1, 16/COP.2, 11/COP.3, 11/COP.4 and 11/COP.5,

Noting with appreciation the work undertaken by the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) and the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) on their initiative on the development of benchmarks and indicators,

Noting with satisfaction the work carried out by the Parties, as well as their reports contained in ICCD/COP(6)/CST/5,

Bearing in mind the work of the Group of Experts in assisting in developing appropriate benchmark and indicator systems for the monitoring and assessment of desertification,

1. *Encourages* the Parties, OSS and CILSS, and other interested organizations, including non-governmental organizations, to continue their initiative on the development of benchmarks and indicators for implementation of the Convention, taking into account the observations and recommendations made by the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and its Group of Experts during the sixth session;
2. *Encourages* the Parties to develop, test and use appropriate benchmarks and indicators, especially those which target the local level and the involvement of civil society, and in particular to develop indicators for implementation of the Convention to be used in the national action programmes, and to report on the results to the CST at its seventh session;
3. *Invites* the Parties, international organizations, and interested public and private entities to contribute scientifically, technically and financially to the initiatives undertaken by developing country Parties to develop, test and use appropriate benchmarks and indicators, including activities for capacity building such as training;
4. *Invites* the Parties to facilitate the work of the Group of Experts in respect of its activities relating to the benchmarks and indicators work programme;
5. *Encourages* the CST to evaluate the progress of work on benchmarks and indicators at its next session.

*9th plenary meeting
3 September 2003*