

Decision 21/COP.11

Reshaping the operation of the Committee on Science and Technology in line with the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018)

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling article 24 of the Convention,

Recalling also the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) (The Strategy) adopted by decision 3/COP.8 and, in particular, the implementation framework of the Committee on Science and Technology,

Recalling further the provisions of decision 13/COP.8 that each future ordinary session of the Committee on Science and Technology shall be organized in a predominantly scientific and technical conference-style format by the Bureau of the Committee in consultation with the lead institution/consortium,

Recalling decision 12/COP.9, decision 13/COP.9, decision 16/COP.9 and decision 18/COP.10,

Highlighting the importance of using Conferences of the Parties as forums for translating the outcomes of each Committee on Science and Technology session and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) scientific conference into guidance to advise policymakers on how policies could address the issues identified as priority,

Having reviewed documents ICCD/CST(S-3)/4, ICCD/CST(S-3)/7, ICCD/COP(11)/CST/4, ICCD/COP(11)/CST/INF.3 and ICCD/COP(11)/CST/INF.5,

Taking note of document ICCD/COP(11)/21 containing the report by the Intersessional Working Group on the Mid-term Evaluation of The Strategy,

Recalling decision 23/COP.11 on creating a Science-Policy Interface,

UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference on the “Economic assessment of desertification, sustainable land management and resilience of arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas”

1. *Calls upon* the Global Risk Forum Davos to share valuable information on the mobilization of partnerships with other organizations and institutions through the secretariat, as well as lessons learned in preparing the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference with the consortium on Scientific and Traditional Knowledge for Sustainable Development of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference;

2. *Calls upon* the scientific community to further build on the substantial research work done on the thematic topic of the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference, “Economic

assessment of desertification, sustainable land management and resilience of arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas”;

3. *Invites* scientists to publish their research findings on the thematic topic in peer-reviewed journals;
4. *Requests* the secretariat, under the guidance of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology and in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Committee and the working groups for the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference, to facilitate the publication of (1) fact sheets; (2) policy briefs; and (3) targeted outcomes, such as special issues of scientific peer-reviewed journals, for all stakeholders, including scientists, decision makers, and the private sector;
5. *Requests also* the secretariat to make available, with the support of Global Risk Forum Davos, all outputs of the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference through the websites of the UNCCD and the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference;
6. *Invites* partners, including the Economics of Land Degradation initiative, to promote further activities on the thematic topic of the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference;
7. *Invites* Parties to give due attention to the economic assessment of desertification, sustainable land management and the resilience of arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas within their research programmes and to reflect the recommendations from the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference in their policy frameworks;

UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference on “Combating DLDD for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices”

8. *Notes* that the consortium on Scientific and Traditional Knowledge for Sustainable Development has been selected by the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology to organize, under the Bureau’s guidance, the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference;
9. *Takes note* of the establishment of a Conference Steering Committee and a Scientific Advisory Committee for the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference to guide the organizational process and the scientific activities for the conference, respectively;
10. *Requests* the Conference Steering Committee of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference to prepare and organize the conference, taking into account the assessment of the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference;
11. *Calls upon* the consortium on Scientific and Traditional Knowledge for Sustainable Development to mobilize partnerships with other organizations and institutions in organizing the conference;
12. *Also calls upon* the scientific community to contribute to the substantive work on the thematic topic of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference during the preparation of that conference;
13. *Invites* scientists to publish their research findings on the thematic topic mentioned in paragraph 12 above in peer-reviewed journals after the conference;
14. *Requests* the consortium on Scientific and Traditional Knowledge for Sustainable Development to make available on the conference website relevant information and outcomes of the conference at least four months before the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties;

15. *Requests also* the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology – with the support of the consortium on Scientific and Traditional Knowledge for Sustainable Development and the secretariat, and in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Committee – to present a report at the twelfth session of the Committee on Science and Technology on the organization and outcomes, including policy-oriented recommendations, of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference;
16. *Requests further* the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology, in conjunction with the Science-Policy Interface, to consult with Parties and regional groups to review the outcomes of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference prior to the twelfth session of the Committee on Science and Technology;
17. *Requests* the secretariat to organize an independent in-depth assessment of the organization of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference, including of the approaches to scientific partnership-building employed, and to report to the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth session and to the Committee on Science and Technology at its twelfth session;

Organization of future UNCCD scientific conferences

18. *Decides* that future UNCCD scientific conferences will be held intersessionally in conjunction with a session of the Committee on Science and Technology;
19. *Decides also* to replace paragraph 1 of decision 13/COP.8 “...each future ordinary session of the CST” with the following: “...each future intersessional session of the CST”;
20. *Decides further* that the intersessional sessions of the Committee on Science and Technology shall focus its agenda only on the specific thematic topics selected for the UNCCD Scientific Conference and on the review of its preliminary outcome;
21. *Decides* that, every four years, when the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention undertakes the review of the implementation of the Convention against strategic objectives, the duration of the intersessional session of the Committee on Science and Technology shall be extended to one more day in order to allow the Committee on Science and Technology to contribute to the work of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention by reviewing and assessing scientific information from Parties on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3;
22. *Decides also* that, for future UNCCD scientific conferences, the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology shall establish a Conference Steering Committee to guide the organizational process;
23. *Decides further* that the Conference Steering Committee shall establish a Scientific Advisory Committee to guide the scientific activities for the conference and that the members of Scientific Advisory Committee shall be selected based on applications submitted in response to a public call for experts, taking into account regional balance, gender balance and interdisciplinarity;
24. *Requests* the Science-Policy Interface, pursuant to decision 23/COP.11, to translate the outcomes of the UNCCD scientific conferences into recommendations for the consideration of the Committee on Science and Technology;
25. *Also requests* the Science-Policy Interface to make an assessment of the effectiveness of the outcomes of the UNCCD 1st, 2nd and 3rd Scientific Conferences in supporting the UNCCD decision-making process and to report to the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth session;

26. *Decides* that the topic to be considered by the UNCCD 4th Scientific Conference shall be “Explore the options to achieve land degradation neutrality in the context of sustainable development”;
27. *Requests* the Science-Policy Interface to make proposals to the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology for the subsequent consideration of the Conference of the Parties topics for future UNCCD scientific conferences;
28. *Decides* that future sessions of the Committee on Science and Technology, the scientific conferences and other processes and events concerning the Science-Policy Interface shall be organized sequentially and in a manner that optimizes the use of scientific knowledge in UNCCD decision-making;
29. *Decides* that sessions of the Committee on Science and Technology held between ordinary sessions of the Conference of the Parties shall be held in Bonn, Germany or in one of the United Nations headquarters in the event that no Party makes an offer to host it and meet the additional financial cost;
30. *Recognizes* that the effective delivery of the scientific conferences will require additional financial resources; and *invites* (1) Parties, international organizations and relevant stakeholders with the interest and capacity to do so to make voluntary and in-kind contributions for the organization of the UNCCD scientific conferences; and (2) each lead institution/consortium to assist in the mobilization of resources;
31. *Requests* the secretariat to report to the Committee on Science and Technology at its twelfth session on the implementation of this decision.

*3rd plenary meeting
20 September 2013*