

Decision 29/COP.13

Policy advocacy on drought

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 69/218 on the international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, and resolution 70/204 on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction,

Also recalling decision 36/COP.11, which took note of the Namib Declaration with appreciation,

Further recalling decision 9/COP.12, which requests the secretariat to continue improving partnerships fostering capacity development for national drought preparedness planning, drought early warning, risk and vulnerability assessments, and enhanced drought risk mitigation,

Recalling the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,

Highlighting the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration to develop and implement national drought plans that can be implemented at local level to build societal resilience to the impacts of drought while also enhancing land rehabilitation to bring about sustainable land management, reducing biodiversity loss and enhancing the provision of ecosystem services and functions,

Welcoming the inclusion of a new strategic objective on drought in the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework, to be implemented through national action programmes and other means,

Recognizing that drought resilience is an important element in the implementation of the Convention, as well as Sustainable Development Goal target 15.3 on land degradation neutrality,

Noting the adoption of a common strategic framework for Drought Resilient and Prepared Africa by African countries, which calls for national action and collaboration on drought policy and governance, drought early warning systems, vulnerability and impact assessment, and drought risk mitigation measures,

Also noting the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration (2016) by the African countries and the Santa Cruz Declaration (2017) by the Latin American and Caribbean countries at their regional conferences on drought,

Recognizing that the increasing threats and adverse impacts of drought, as well as the regional and international developments on drought, will necessitate an up-to-date drought policy framework to enhance drought preparedness at all levels,

Underscoring the need for comprehensive drought measures through preparedness and early warning systems that go beyond meteorology and forecasts, including the capacity to predict drought, the analysis of drought risks, the communication of alerts to authorities, media and vulnerable communities, and response to drought warnings,

Stressing the need to strengthen institutional mechanisms for engaging Parties and relevant stakeholders in the dissemination of scientific, practical, traditional and local knowledge, and through the exchange of experiences on drought preparedness, as well as diagnosing potential areas for action, constraints, and responses,

Cognizant of the need for countries to develop and implement national drought management policies, as appropriate, to meet national circumstances and priorities,

Taking note of the various existing initiatives at all levels in relation to drought, including the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture initiative and the UN-Water initiative of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) secretariat, World Meteorological Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Convention on Biological Diversity and UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development in building capacities to support countries to develop and implement national drought management policies, and *emphasizing* the need to ensure coherence, coordination, and complementarity,

1. *Invites* the Parties to:

(a) Use, as appropriate, the Drought Resilience, Adaptation and Management Policy framework¹² in order to strengthen their capacity to enhance drought preparedness and provide an appropriate response to drought;

(b) Pursue a proactive approach on integrated drought management in the process of developing national drought policies based on the three key pillars of national drought policy: (i) implementing comprehensive drought monitoring and early warning systems; (ii) completing vulnerability and impact assessments for sectors, populations and regions vulnerable to drought; and (iii) implementing drought preparedness and risk mitigation measures;

(c) Develop a comprehensive system on drought preparedness that embraces the following: (i) analysing drought risk; (ii) monitoring the location and intensity of an upcoming drought; (iii) communicating alerts to authorities, media and vulnerable communities; and (iv) responding to drought warnings;

(d) Promote drought resilience building which is gender-responsive and which prioritizes people in vulnerable situations;

(e) Consider utilizing the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture initiative as a knowledge-sharing partnership to help countries develop their drought preparedness plans;

2. *Also invites* all Parties, multilateral and bilateral partners, and international financing mechanisms to scale up and facilitate effective financing for the implementation of drought mitigation measures at all levels;

3. *Requests* the Science-Policy Interface, as contained in decision 21/COP.13, as part of its work programme for the biennium 2018–2019, to provide technical guidance to Parties in order to support the adoption and implementation of land-based interventions for drought management and mitigation;

4. *Also requests* the secretariat and appropriate UNCCD institutions and bodies, including the Science-Policy Interface, within their respective mandates to:

(a) Implement the drought initiative for the biennium 2018–2019 which proposes action on: (i) drought preparedness systems; (ii) regional efforts to reduce drought vulnerability and risk; and (iii) a toolbox to boost the resilience of people and ecosystems to drought;

(b) Support countries to develop and implement national drought management policies, as well as the establishment and strengthening of comprehensive drought monitoring, preparedness and early warning systems;

¹² See document ICCD/COP(13)/19.

(c) Take a leading role at the institutional level through the strengthening of existing strategic partnerships and the establishment of new strategic partnerships on drought preparedness with relevant stakeholders at all levels, including United Nations agencies, inter alia, the World Meteorological Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, development partners, public and private sectors, land users and civil society, with a view to ensuring coherence, coordination and complementarity;

(d) Develop and finalize the technical guidelines to assist Parties in the implementation of the Drought Resilience, Adaptation and Management Policy framework;

(e) Assist Parties, as appropriate, in using the Drought Resilience, Adaptation and Management Policy framework;

(f) Increase awareness on drought issues, including through capacity building, to develop national drought management policies based on the principles of risk reduction;

(g) Promote North-South cooperation, South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, including the transfer of appropriate technology and up-to-date methodologies necessary for developing and improving drought monitoring, seasonal forecasts, preparedness and early warning and information delivery systems;

5. *Requests* the secretariat to prepare a report for the next Conference of the Parties on the need, if any, for additional arrangements on drought;

6. *Also requests* the secretariat to include on the provisional agenda of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, under the item entitled “Effective implementation of the Convention at national, subregional and regional level”, a sub-item entitled “Drought”;

7. *Further requests* the secretariat to report to the Conference of the Parties at its fourteenth session on the implementation of this decision.

*10th plenary meeting
15 September 2017*