

Decision 5/COP.9

Revised procedures for the participation of civil society organizations in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling the special role of non-governmental organizations and other groups in programmes to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought as emphasized in the Convention,

Recalling also decision 23/COP.1 on the accreditation of non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations,

Further recalling paragraph 37 of decision 3/COP.8 requesting the Executive Secretary to take into account input from civil society organizations (CSOs) when formulating the selection criteria for financial support for their participation at meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), consistent with the established rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties (COP),

Noting section B.3 of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (The Strategy), which directs the secretariat to develop revised procedures for the participation of CSOs in UNCCD meetings and processes, including clear selection criteria and a mechanism to ensure a balance of participants from different regions,

Having reviewed the proposed procedures for the participation of CSOs in UNCCD meetings and processes as contained in document ICCD/COP(9)/4/Add.1 and its corrigendum,

Noting with appreciation the wide consultations conducted with CSOs in order to include their input in establishing the revised procedures for their participation in UNCCD process and events,

1. *Decides* to adopt the revised procedures for the participation of CSOs in the COP and other UNCCD activities as contained in document ICCD/COP(9)/4/Add.1 and its corrigendum, and the eligibility criteria contained therein ((a) Geographical balance; (b) Turnover regime; (c) Consideration of representative networks; (d) Expertise balance; and (e) Gender balance);
2. *Requests* the secretariat to apply the eligibility criteria mentioned in paragraph 1 above, starting from the ninth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;
3. *Invites* the Executive Secretary to facilitate the mechanisms and procedures to select candidates taking into account, as appropriate, the annex to the present decision;

4. *Requests also* the secretariat to facilitate active participation of CSOs in the process in preparation for the meetings of the COP and its subsidiary bodies, with the view of enhancing the effectiveness of inputs from the civil society;
5. *Requests further* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau of the COP, to ensure that the programme of work of the COP includes open-dialogue sessions with the civil society in the first week of the COP in order to ensure effectiveness of its input in the deliberations of the COP;
6. *Invites* developed country Parties, international and financial organizations and relevant stakeholders to contribute to the Supplementary Fund of the Convention, in order to ensure wider participation of CSOs in the official UNCCD meetings, and *invites* developed country Parties, international organizations and multilateral agencies supporting the participation of CSOs in the official UNCCD meetings, as well as the Global Mechanism, to consult with the secretariat with the view of making the participation of the CSOs in these meetings more predictable and balanced, and to inform in advance the secretariat of any pledge in order to ensure better predictability of funding and better organization of the civil society inputs to the process;
7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report at COP 10 on the implementation of this decision and the results achieved.

*9th plenary meeting
2 October 2009*

Annex

**Additional mechanisms and procedures to select candidates
by the eligibility criteria**

1. The Executive Secretary shall convene a selection panel, making use of electronic technology as necessary, consisting of two representatives of civil society networks and two representatives of the secretariat in order to select candidates in accordance with the agreed upon eligibility criteria.
2. The civil society networks shall nominate two representatives to the panel upon request from the Executive Secretary.
3. The selection panel shall inform the selected accredited civil society organisations (CSOs) representatives and their constituencies well in advance of their participation.
4. The selected accredited CSO representatives shall present a clear mandate from their organizations or networks to the secretariat and selection panel prior to their participation in meetings of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).
5. The selected CSO representatives shall prepare and present to the secretariat and the selection panel Terms of Reference defining their obligations and responsibilities, particularly in terms of their preparatory work and in terms of reporting back to their constituencies regarding their participation in UNCCD meetings.
6. The accredited CSOs and CSO networks shall evaluate and review the criteria for financial support to accredited CSOs to participate in UNCCD meetings.