

## Decision 23/COP.14

### Policy advocacy on drought

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Recognizing* that droughts are occurring more frequently and becoming more common, intense, severe and extended in space and time,

*Reaffirming* the objective of the Convention in article 2, which is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious desertification or drought, particularly in Africa,

*Recalling* the particular conditions of the Regional Implementation Annexes to the Convention,

*Recalling* that the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework recognizes that desertification/land degradation and drought are challenges of global dimension and contribute to and aggravate economic, social and environmental problems, such as poverty, poor health, lack of food security, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, reduced resilience to climate change and forced migration,

*Mindful* of the increasingly devastating impacts of drought, resulting in loss of life and long-term negative economic, social and environmental consequences, particularly on women and girls and vulnerable populations,

*Noting* the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on Climate Change and Land, which assessed information on the change in the frequency and intensity of drought in some regions and the role of land-based interventions to mitigate drought,

*Recalling* decision 7/COP. 13 and decision 29/COP. 13,

*Emphasizing* the importance of a holistic, integrated approach to disaster risk reduction and enhancing the resilience of communities to shocks and natural disasters,

*Noting* the synergies in addressing drought with the other Rio conventions as well as a number of Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those dealing with land, food, water, and energy security,

*Welcoming* the enhanced collaboration among the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Global Water Partnership, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification secretariat, the World Meteorological Organization and other partners in the framework of the Drought Initiative,

*Emphasizing* the importance of coordinating efforts of multiple actors in this area, avoiding duplication and enhancing synergies, including global networks such as the Global Network against Food Crises as well as regional initiatives,

*Noting with appreciation* the progress made so far in the implementation of the Drought Initiative and in particular the support to Parties to develop plans for drought preparedness, regional advocacy and capacity-building,

1. *Requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, and appropriate United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification bodies, within their respective mandates, to build on the Drought Initiative during the biennium 2020–2021 by, inter alia:

(a) Further upgrading and expanding the Drought Toolbox, recognizing national contexts, in collaboration with regional and subregional stakeholders, and supporting country Parties in building capacity on its effective usage, including on early warning and monitoring systems, impact and vulnerability assessments and drought risk mitigation measures;

(b) Expanding collaboration and partnerships with relevant agencies, organizations and platforms to design and test innovative, gender-responsive and transformative approaches to supporting countries in mitigating the impacts of drought;

(c) Engaging with humanitarian actors in the development and implementation of national drought preparedness plans in order to ensure better complementarity and, where needed, operationalize a coordinated humanitarian and development response;

2. *Encourages* Parties to use the Drought Toolbox, developed within the framework of the Drought Initiative, to strengthen their preparedness for drought, including through enhanced regional efforts;

3. *Also encourages* Parties to enhance the integration and coherence at national and local levels with sustainable water management strategies and actions, mindful of the respective needs of certain sectors;

4. *Invites* Parties to use a variety of technical approaches, such as sustainable land and water management, agro-ecological approaches, ecosystem restoration and watershed management, for addressing drought and increasing resilience of ecosystems and communities to extreme weather and *requests* the secretariat, in cooperation with partners, to support them by making available related information, technical assistance and capacity-building, and promoting peer-to-peer knowledge-sharing;

5. *Requests* the Global Mechanism to identify potential and innovative financing instruments, based on clearly identified added value, for addressing drought, such as, but not limited to, insurance products, bonds and microfinance, and to make available related information and guidance for facilitating the access of Parties to these instruments;

6. *Encourages* Parties to engage their respective stakeholder communities, as appropriate, in the implementation of their national drought planning processes and activities;

7. *Also encourages* Parties to use the indicators for the drought strategic objectives recommended by the Science-Policy Interface as found in the annex of decision 11/COP.14 and engage their respective stakeholder communities in affected areas to develop methods, metrics and indicators for the drought vulnerability indicator (level 3);

8. *Further encourages* Parties to translate appropriate drought-related United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification materials into relevant local languages;

9. *Requests* the secretariat to compile an inventory of existing drought-related tools beyond the Drought Toolbox and make this information available to Parties;

10. *Decides* to establish an intergovernmental working group, subject to the availability of resources, on effective policy and implementation measures for addressing drought under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, with a view to presenting its findings and recommendations to Parties for their consideration at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties;

11. *Also decides* that this intergovernmental working group will have the following terms of reference;

(a) The terms of reference of the intergovernmental working group are to take stock of and review the existing policy, implementation and institutional coordination frameworks, including partnerships, on drought preparedness and response and to consider options for appropriate policy, advocacy and implementation measures at all levels for addressing drought effectively under the Convention, in the context of a wider holistic and integrated approach to disaster risk reduction and enhancing the resilience of communities and ecosystems;

(b) The intergovernmental working group will comprise Parties, international organizations, the Science-Policy Interface, civil society organizations and key stakeholders, as appropriate;

(c) The intergovernmental working group will consist of a maximum of three Party representatives nominated by the respective regional group on the basis of nominations by national governments;

(d) The secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, will nominate participants from key stakeholders, including United Nations organizations, the Science-Policy Interface, and other scientific organizations, regional organizations and civil society organizations, with a maximum of 15 additional members;

(e) At its first meeting, the intergovernmental working group will select a chair from its members;

(f) The intergovernmental working group will prepare an interim report for consideration by Parties at the nineteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;

12. *Requests* the secretariat to inform key United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification stakeholders and relevant regional organizations, including, where appropriate, United Nations regional economic commissions, on the establishment of the intergovernmental working group and *invites* their collaboration to promote regional coordination in support of the discussions of the intergovernmental working group, taking into account their role in the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

13. *Invites* Parties, international organizations, and stakeholders to make submissions on:

(a) Policy, implementation and institutional coordination frameworks and implementation measures for addressing drought under the Convention: and

(b) Barriers, challenges, opportunities and implementation measures as well as preparing for, responding to, and recovering from drought;

14. *Requests* the intergovernmental working group to present its findings and recommendations to Parties for their consideration at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties;

15. *Also requests* the secretariat to report on the implementation of this decision at future sessions of the Conference of the Parties.

*14<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting*

*13 September 2019*