



**Conference of the Parties**

**Report of the Conference of the Parties on its fourteenth  
session, held in New Delhi, India from 2 to 13 September  
2019**

**Part one: proceedings**

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## **I. Opening of the session**

### **A. Opening of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties**

1. On 2 September 2019, the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 14) was opened by Mr. Sun Guoji, Director General, Department of Combating Desertification, National Forestry and Grassland Administration of China, on behalf of the COP 13 President H.E. Mr. Zhang Jianlong. Pursuant to article 22 of the rules of procedure of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the President of COP 13 made a statement.

### **B. Election of the President**

#### **(Agenda item 1 (a))**

2. At its 1st meeting, on 2 September 2019, the COP elected, by acclamation, H.E. Mr. Prakash Javadekar, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, of the Republic of India, as President of its fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 14).

3. The incoming President made a statement.

### **C. General statements**

4. Also, at the 1st meeting, on 2 September 2019, H.E. Mr. Babul Supriyo, Minister of State, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, of the Republic of India made a statement on behalf of the host country.

5. At the same meeting, Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, made a statement.

6. Also at the 1st meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the State of Palestine (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Finland (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Africa (Annex I)), Iraq (on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group), Grenada (on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group), Malta (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for the Northern Mediterranean (Annex IV)), Belarus (on behalf of Regional Implementation Annex for Central and Eastern Europe (Annex V)) and Saudi Arabia (on behalf of the Arab Group).

7. Furthermore, a statement was made by a representative of a non-governmental organization (Gram Bharati Samiti).

## **II. Organizational matters**

### **A. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work, including the sessions of the subsidiary bodies**

#### **(Agenda item 1 (b) and (f))**

8. The Conference considered agenda item 1 (b) and (f) at its 1st meeting, on 2 September 2019.

9. Following a statement by the President of COP 14, the Conference adopted its agenda and the organization of work as contained in document ICCD/COP(14)/1, as follows:

1. Organizational matters:

- (a) Election of the President;
  - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
  - (c) Election of officers other than the President:
    - (i) Election of Vice-Presidents;
    - (ii) Election of the Chair of the Committee on Science and Technology;
    - (iii) Election of the Chair of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;
  - (d) Credentials of delegations;
  - (e) Accreditation of intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations and representatives from the private sector, and admission of observers;
  - (f) Organization of work, including the sessions of the subsidiary bodies.
2. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: implications for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification:
- (a) Integration of Sustainable Development Goal 15 and related target 15.3 into the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and land degradation neutrality;
  - (b) Modalities, criteria and terms of reference for a midterm evaluation of the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework;
  - (c) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification communication plan and the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010–2020).
3. Effective implementation of the Convention at national, subregional and regional level:
- (a) Report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and its recommendations to the Conference of the Parties;
  - (b) Promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies;
  - (c) Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues:
    - (i) Drought;
    - (ii) Sand and dust storms;
    - (iii) New and emerging issues: land tenure;
  - (d) Securing of additional investments and relations with financial mechanisms: Global Mechanism.
4. Linking scientific knowledge with decision-making: review of the report of the Committee on Science and Technology and its recommendations to the Conference of the Parties.
5. Special segment:
- (a) Parallel ministerial/high-level round tables:
    - (i) Round table 1: Land, climate and renewable energy;
    - (ii) Round table 2: Rural and urban communities – failing or flourishing together;
    - (iii) Round table 3: Fostering a global movement for ecosystem restoration;
  - (b) Interactive dialogue 1: A values-based approach to land stewardship;

- (c) Interactive dialogue 2: Healthy land – healthy people;
  - (d) Interactive dialogue 3: Boosting sustainable value chains for land-based business.
6. Programme and budget:
    - (a) Programme and budget for the biennium 2020–2021;
    - (b) Financial performance for the Convention trust funds;
    - (c) Report of the Evaluation Office.
  7. Procedural matters:
    - (a) Participation and involvement of civil society organizations in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
    - (b) Participation and involvement of the private sector in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the business engagement strategy;
    - (c) Programme of work for the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties.
  8. Report on the session.

## **B. Election of officers other than the President**

### **(Agenda item 1 (c))**

10. The Conference considered this agenda item at its 1st, 2nd and 14th meetings, on 2, 4 and 13 September 2019, and elected the following officers for its fourteenth session:

#### *Vice-Presidents:*

- Mr. Claude Nyamugabo (Democratic Republic of the Congo)
- Mr. Almoustapha Garba (Niger)
- Mr. Abdulrahman Alfadley (Saudi Arabia)
- Mr. Carlos M. Rodriguez (Costa Rica)
- Mr. Robert Browne (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)
- Mr. Andrey Kuzmich (Belarus)
- Mr. Ashot Vardevanyan (Armenia)
- Mr. Franz Breitwieser (Austria)
- Ms. Barbara De Rosa-Joynt (United States of America)

11. At the 2nd meeting, on 4 September 2019, the Conference appointed Mr. Carlos M. Rodriguez (Costa Rica) as Rapporteur of the fourteenth session.

#### *Chair of the Committee on Science and Technology*

12. At the 14th meeting, on 13 September 2019, the Conference elected Mr. Bongani Masuku (Eswatini) as Chair of the forthcoming fifteenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology.

*Chair of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention*

13. At the 14th meeting, on 13 September 2019, the Conference elected Mr. Trevor Benn (Guyana) as Chairperson of the forthcoming nineteenth and twentieth sessions of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention.

**C. Credentials of delegations**

**(Agenda item 1 (d))**

14. At its 4th and 14th meetings, on 6 September and 13 September 2019, the Conference considered the provisional report on credentials of delegations, as contained in document ICCD/COP(14)/21, and the final report on credentials of delegations, as contained in document ICCD/COP(14)/22, and the recommendations contained therein.

15. At its 14th meeting, the Conference adopted a draft decision contained in document ICCD/COP(14)/L.5 approving the final report on credentials.

16. The COP, on the basis of the final report of the Bureau to the COP and additional credentials provided by Niger, accepted the credentials of Parties attending the session.

**D. Accreditation of intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations and representatives from the private sector, and admission of observers**

**(Agenda item 1 (e))**

17. At the 1st meeting, on 2 September 2019, following a statement by a representative of the UNCCD, the Conference decided to accredit as observers the national, international, governmental and intergovernmental organizations listed in annex I, the non-governmental and civil society organizations listed in annex II and the business and industry entities listed in annex III of document ICCD/COP(14)/15 and the non-governmental and civil society organizations listed in annex I of document ICCD/COP(14)/15/Add.1.

**E. Committee on Science and Technology**

18. The fourteenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology was convened under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chair, Mr. Carl Kojo Fiati (Ghana). The Committee held six meetings, from 3 to 6 September 2019.

19. At the 1st meeting, on 3 September 2019, the Committee adopted its provisional agenda as contained in document ICCD/COP(14)/CST/1, and approved the organization of work for the session as contained in the annex of the document.

20. At the same meeting, the Committee agreed to establish a contact group and appointed Mr. Matti Nummelin (Finland) as Facilitator of the contact group.

21. At its 6th meeting, on 6 September 2019, the Committee elected, by acclamation, the following as Vice-Chairs for its forthcoming fourteenth session: Ms. Anna Louise (Italy), Mr. Ratko Ristic (Serbia), Mr. Pablo Viegas (Argentina) and Ms. Karma Dema Dorji (Bhutan).

22. The Committee submitted six recommendations to the COP. The Conference took action on these recommendations at its 6th meeting, on 6 September 2019.

**F. Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention**

23. The eighteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention was convened under the chairmanship of Mr. Samuel Mabilin Contreras (Philippines). The Committee held four meetings, from 3 to 12 September 2019.

24. At the 1st meeting, on 3 September 2019, the Committee adopted its provisional agenda as contained in document ICCD/CRIC(18)/1 and approved the organization of work for the session as contained in the annex of the document.

25. Also at the same meeting, the Committee agreed to establish a contact group and appointed Ms. Skumsa Ntshanga (South Africa) as Facilitator of the contact group.

26. The Committee submitted seven recommendations to the COP. The Conference took action on these recommendations at its 4th meeting, on 12 September 2019.

## G. Committee of the Whole

27. At its 1st meeting, on 2 September 2019, the Conference decided to establish a Committee of the Whole (COW) and to allocate to the Committee the agenda items listed in paragraph 16 of the COP 14 agenda contained in document ICCD/COP(14)/1 and as orally corrected.

28. Also, at its 1st meeting, the Conference designated Mr. Trevor Benn (Guyana) as Chair of the Committee of the Whole. The Committee held six meetings, from 3 to 12 September 2019.

29. At its 1st meeting, the Committee established two contact groups: (a) a contact group on programme and budget matters, and (b) a contact group on COW matters other than the programme and budget. The Committee decided that the Chair of the Committee of the Whole would serve as the Facilitator of the first meetings of the Contact Groups, on the understanding that the respective Facilitators would be appointed once identified. At its 2nd meeting, the Committee appointed Mr. Troy Torrington (Guyana) as the Facilitator of Contact Group 2 on COW matters other than the programme and budget. At its 3rd meeting, the Committee appointed Mr. R.B. Lal (India) as the Facilitator of Contact Group 1 on programme and budget matters.

30. The Committee submitted 18 recommendations to the COP. The Conference took action on these recommendations at its 5th and 6th meetings, on 12 and 13 September 2019.

## H. Attendance

31. The fourteenth session of the COP was attended by representatives of the following 156 Parties to the Convention:

Algeria	Burkina Faso	Cuba
Angola	Burundi	Czech Republic
Argentina	Cambodia	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Armenia	Cameroon	Democratic Republic of the Congo
Australia	Canada	Djibouti
Austria	Central African Republic	Dominican Republic
Azerbaijan	Chad	Ecuador
Bangladesh	Chile	Egypt
Belarus	China	Equatorial Guinea
Belgium	Colombia	Eritrea
Benin	Comoros	Estonia
Bhutan	Congo	Eswatini
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Cook Islands	Ethiopia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Costa Rica	European Union
Botswana	Côte d'Ivoire	Fiji
Brazil	Croatia	

Finland	Malawi	Sao Tome and Principe
France	Maldives	Saudi Arabia
Gabon	Mali	Senegal
Gambia	Malta	Serbia
Georgia	Marshall Islands	Seychelles
Germany	Mauritania	Somalia
Ghana	Mauritius	South Africa
Grenada	Mexico	South Sudan
Guatemala	Mongolia	Spain
Guinea	Montenegro	Sri Lanka
Guinea-Bissau	Morocco	State of Palestine
Guyana	Mozambique	Suriname
Haiti	Myanmar	Switzerland
Honduras	Namibia	Syrian Arab Republic
Hungary	Nepal	Tajikistan
Iceland	Netherlands	Thailand
India	Nicaragua	Timor-Leste
Indonesia	Niger	Togo
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Nigeria	Trinidad and Tobago
Iraq	Norway	Tunisia
Ireland	Oman	Turkey
Israel	Palau	Turkmenistan
Italy	Panama	Tuvalu
Japan	Papua New Guinea	Uganda
Jordan	Peru	Ukraine
Kazakhstan	Philippines	United Arab Emirates
Kenya	Poland	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Kiribati	Portugal	United Republic of Tanzania
Kuwait	Qatar	United States of America
Kyrgyzstan	Republic of Korea	Uzbekistan
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Republic of Moldova	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Lebanon	Russian Federation	Viet Nam
Lesotho	Rwanda	Yemen
Liberia	Saint Kitts and Nevis	Zambia
Lithuania	Saint Lucia	Zimbabwe
Luxembourg	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	
Madagascar	Samoa	

32. The session was also attended by observers from the following States not Party to the Convention:

Holy See

33. The following United Nations organs, organizations and programmes, offices and specialized agencies were represented:

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific  
 Food and Agriculture Organization  
 Global Environment Facility  
 Green Climate Fund  
 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change  
 Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services  
 International Fund for Agricultural Development  
 International Labour Office  
 Secretariat to the Convention on Biological Diversity  
 UN Women  
 United Nations Development Programme  
 United Nations Environment Programme  
 United Nations Forum on Forests  
 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change  
 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
 United Nations Industrial Development Organization  
 United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund  
 United Nations Population Fund  
 United Nations Secretariat  
 United Nations Volunteers  
 World Bank  
 World Food Programme  
 World Health Organization  
 World Meteorological Organization

34. The session was also attended by representatives of 24 intergovernmental organizations and 153 civil society organizations.

### **I. Documentation**

35. The documents submitted for the consideration of the COP at its fourteenth session are listed in annex IV.

### **III. Inclusion of activities of non-governmental organizations within the official programme of work of the Conference of the Parties: open dialogue session**

#### **(Agenda item 1 (b) and (f))**

36. The Conference held two open dialogue sessions under agenda item 1 (b) and (f) at its 3rd and 12th meetings, on 5 and 11 September 2019.

37. Mr. Octavio Perez Pardo from CIASE (Argentina) facilitated the first open dialogue session entitled: "Inclusive dialogue on land tenure in the context of land degradation neutrality".

38. Presentations were made by the following panellists: Mr. Valentin Ciubotaru from NGO BIOS, Mr. Goundo Sissoko from REFEDE, Ms. Nahid Naghizadeh from CENESTA, Mr. Pablo Mota from Mision Verde Amazonia and Ms. Nathalie van Haren from Both ENDS.

39. In the ensuing discussion, the panellists responded to comments made and questions posed by the representatives of: Dominican Republic, European Union, Argentina, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Colombia, Brazil, Gabon, India, Senegal, Switzerland and Burkina Faso and by a representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

40. Statements were made by representatives of Guinea Bissau and Bolivia (Plurinational State of). A statement was made on behalf of a civil society organization.

41. Mr. Emmanuel Seck from ENDA Tiers Monde (Senegal) facilitated the second open dialogue session entitled: “Intergenerational cooperation for Land Restoration including land tenure security, green jobs and migration”.

42. Under Part I, entitled “Testimonies for Legacy”, presentations were made by the following panellists: Ambassador Byong Hyon Kwon of Future Forest, Ms. Yugratna Srivastava of Plant for the Planet (India), Mr. Bhawani Shanker Kusum (India) and Mr. Alvaro Alfaro Morales of Plant for the Planet (Chile).

43. Under Part II, entitled “Learning from the Ground”, presentations were made by the following panellists: Mr. Moses Chabuka of Neno Active Youth in Development Organization, Malawi (Africa), Mr. Juan Riet of the Centro Interdisciplinario de Estudios sobre el Desarrollo, Uruguay (Latin America and Caribbean), Ms. Oindila Basu of the International Forestry Students' Association (, India (Asia), Ms. Mathilde Bourjac of the Centre d'Actions et de Réalisations Internationales, France (Western European and Others Group), and Ms. Sophiko Akhobadze of the Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus, Georgia (Eastern Europe).

44. In the ensuing discussion, the panellists responded to comments made and questions posed by the representatives of: India, Chile, European Union and its Member States, Indonesia, Switzerland, Senegal and the United States of America.

45. A statement was made by a representative of the Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands.

46. A statement was also made by a representative of the Economic Community of West African States.

47. A statement was made by a representative of the Holy See.

48. A statement was also made by the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD.

49. The declarations of civil society organizations attending the fourteenth session of the COP and of the Youth Forum are included in annexes I and III to the current report.

## **IV. Special segment**

### **(Agenda item 5)**

50. At its 5th to 11th meetings, on 9 and 10 September 2019, the Conference held a special High-Level Segment with opening and closing meetings, three parallel ministerial/high-level round tables, three interactive dialogue sessions and one formal statements session under the agenda item.

### **A. Opening of the High-Level Segment**

51. At the 5th meeting, on 9 September 2019, the President of the Conference opened the special high-level segment and made a statement.

52. At the same meeting, the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD made a statement.

53. Also at the same meeting, the United Nations Deputy Secretary General, Ms. Amina Mohammed made a statement.

54. At the same meeting, the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, H.E. Mr. Ralph Gonsalves, delivered a statement.

55. Also at the same meeting, the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi, addressed the Conference.

56. At the same meeting, H.E. Mr. Zhang Jianlong, Minister of State Forestry Administration of China and COP 13 President, made a statement.

57. Also at the same meeting, statements on behalf of regional and interest groups were made by H.E. Mr. Riad Attari, Minister of Agriculture of the State of Palestine (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), H.E. Ms. Elina Kalkku, Deputy Minister of Development Policy, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States), H.E. Mr. Almoustapha Garba, Minister of Environment, Urban Sanitation and Sustainable Development of Niger (on behalf of the African Group), H.E. Dr. Mahendra Reddy, Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, Waterways and Environment of Fiji (on behalf of the Group of Asia-Pacific States), H.E. Mr. Robert Browne, Minister of Health of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States), H.E. Dr. Jose A. Herrera, Minister of Environment of Malta, (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for the Northern Mediterranean (Annex IV)) and H.E. Mr. Ezzaldin Omar Abusteit, Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation of Egypt (on behalf of the Arab Group).

58. A statement was also made by Mr. Emmanuel Seck, Executive Director of Environnement Développement Action dans le Tiers Monde (on behalf of civil society organizations).

## **B. Parallel ministerial/high-level round tables**

59. At the 6th, 7th and 8th meetings, on 9 September 2019, the Conference held three closed parallel ministerial/high-level round tables under agenda item 5 (a), as follows:

### **1. Round table 1: Land, climate and renewable energy**

60. Round table 1 was co-chaired by H.E. Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and H.E. Mr. Guðmundur Ingi Guðbrandsson, Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources of Iceland.

### **2. Round table 2: Rural and urban communities – failing or flourishing together**

61. Round table 2 was co-chaired by H.E. Ms. Ana Cristina Quiros, Vice Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica, and H.E. Mr. Almoustapha Garba, Minister of Environment, Urban Safety and Sustainable Development of Niger.

### **3. Round table 3: Fostering a global movement for ecosystem restoration**

62. Round table 3 was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Nestor Bassiere, Minister of Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change of Burkina Faso, and H.E. Dr. Mahendra Reddy, Minister of Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, Waterways and Environment of Fiji.

## **C. Interactive dialogues**

63. At its 9th meeting, the Conference held two interactive dialogue sessions under agenda items 5 (b) and (c) as follows:

**1. Interactive dialogue 1: A values-based approach to land stewardship**

64. Interactive dialogue 1 was moderated by H. E. Mr. Ezekiel Joseph, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Cooperatives of Saint Lucia.

**2. Interactive dialogue 2: Healthy land – healthy people;**

65. Interactive dialogue 2 was moderated by H.E. Mr. Dennis Musuku Wanchinga, Minister of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Protection of Zambia.

66. At its 11th meeting, the Conference held a third interactive dialogue session under agenda item 5 (d), as follows:

**3. Interactive dialogue 3: Boosting sustainable value chains for land-based business.**

67. Interactive dialogue 3 was moderated by H.E. Mrs. Patricia Appiagyei, Deputy Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation of Ghana.

**D. Formal statements session**

68. At its 10th meeting, during the formal statements session, statements were made by the Minister of Environment of Armenia, Eric Grigoryan (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Central and Eastern Europe (Annex V)); the Minister of Agriculture and Forests of Bhutan, Yeshey Penjor; the Minister for Environment, Energy and Climate Change of Seychelles, Wallace Cosgrow; the Minister of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock of Burundi, Deo-Guide Rurema; the Minister of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Protection of Zambia, Dennis Musuku Wachinga; the Minister of Environment of Haiti, Joseph Jouthe; the Minister of the Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change of Burkina Faso, Batio Nestor Bassiere; the Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change of Bangladesh, Shahab Uddin; the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of Senegal, Abdou Karim Sall; the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Central African Republic, Thierry Kamach; the Vice-Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica, Ana Cristina Quirós; the General Director at the Ministry of Agriculture of Lebanon, Louis Lahoud; the Director General of the National Fund for Environment and Climate of Benin, Appolinaire D. Gnanvi; the Deputy Chef de Cabinet of the Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Côte d'Ivoire, Nasséré Kaba; the Vice-Minister for Water Resources and Irrigation of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Braulio Huaylla; the Chief Director at the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining of Malawi, Oliver Kumbambe; the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources of Iceland, Guðmundur Ingi Guðbrandsson; the High Commissioner of Guyana in India, David Goldwin Pollard; the Ambassador of Ecuador to India, Héctor Cueva; and the Permanent Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Environment of Nigeria, Ibukun Odusote.

**E. Closing of the High-Level Segment**

69. At the 11th meeting, on 10 September 2019, the President of the Conference closed the special high-level segment. The meeting heard reports by the respective Chairs of the three closed parallel ministerial/high-level round tables held under agenda item 5 (a). The outcomes of the three interactive dialogues held under agenda item 5 (b), (c) and (d) were also presented.

70. The Chairpersons' summary reports on the three parallel ministerial/high-level round tables and the moderators' summary reports on the interactive dialogues are included in annex II to decision 27/COP.14 on the special segment. The New Delhi Declaration is included in Annex I to the same decision.

71. The President of COP 14 made concluding remarks and closed the high-level segment.

## **V. Decisions and resolution adopted by the Conference of the Parties**

72. At its 4th, 13th and 14th meetings, on 6, 12 and 13 September 2019, the Conference adopted 34 decisions and one resolution.

### **A. Decisions taken at the recommendation of the President of the Conference of the Parties**

73. At the recommendation of the President of its fourteenth session, the Conference adopted the following decisions:

- 27/COP.14 Special segment
- 29/COP.14 Declaration of civil society organizations attending the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties
- 30/COP.14 Declaration from the Sustainable Land Management Business Forum
- 31/COP.14 Declaration of the Youth Forum
- 32/COP.14 Programme of work for the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties
- 33/COP.14 Date and venue of the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties

### **B. Decisions taken at the recommendation of the Bureau**

74. At the recommendation of the Bureau of the COP at its fourteenth session, the Conference adopted the following decisions:

- 28/COP.14 Credentials of delegations

### **C. Decisions taken at the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole**

75. At the recommendation of the Committee of the Whole, the Conference adopted the following decisions:

- 1/COP.14 Multi-year workplan for the Convention institutions (2020–2023)
- 3/COP.14 Integration of Sustainable Development Goal 15 and related target 15.3 into the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and land degradation neutrality
- 4/COP.14 Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification communication plan and the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010–2020)
- 5/COP.14 Participation and involvement of civil society organizations in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
- 6/COP.14 Participation and involvement of the private sector in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the business engagement strategy
- 7/COP.14 Modalities, criteria and terms of reference for a midterm evaluation of the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework
- 8/COP.14 Promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies
- 10/COP.14 Programme and budget for the biennium 2020–2021
- 22/COP.14 Follow up on the positive role that measures taken under the Convention can play to address desertification/land degradation and drought as one of the drivers that cause migration

- 23/COP.14 Policy advocacy on drought
  - 24/COP.14 Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Gender
  - 25/COP.14 Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Sand and dust storms
  - 26/COP.14 Land tenure
76. The UNCCD Delhi Declaration from Business from the Sustainable Land Management Business Forum is included as annex II to the current report.

#### **D. Decisions taken at the recommendation of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention**

77. At the recommendation of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, the Conference adopted the following decisions:

- 2/COP.14 Enhancing the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the enhancement, strengthening and promotion of capacity-building
- 9/COP.14 Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility
- 11/COP.14 Improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties
- 12/COP.14 Assessment of the implementation of the Convention against the strategic objectives of the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework
- 13/COP.14 Assessment of financial flows for the implementation of the Convention
- 14/COP.14 Programme of work for the nineteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention
- 15/COP.14 Date and venue of the nineteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

#### **E. Decisions taken at the recommendation of the Committee on Science and Technology**

78. At the recommendation of the Committee on Science and Technology, the Conference adopted the following decisions:

- 16/COP.14 Follow-up on the work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2018–2019: Objective 1
- 17/COP.14 Follow-up on the work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2018–2019: Objective 2
- 18/COP.14 Work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2020–2021
- 19/COP.14 Interfacing science and policy, and sharing knowledge
- 20/COP.14 Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from the cooperation with other intergovernmental scientific panels and bodies
- 21/COP.14 Programme of work for the fifteenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology

#### **F. Resolution adopted by the Conference**

79. At its 14th meeting, on 13 September 2019, the Conference adopted the following resolution at the recommendation of Italy:

1/COP.14 Expression of gratitude to the Government and people of the Republic of India

## **VI. Conclusion of the session**

### **A. Adoption of the report of the Conference of the Parties on its fourteenth session**

#### **(Agenda item 8)**

80. At its 14th meeting, on 13 September 2019, the Conference adopted the draft report on its fourteenth session (ICCD/COP(14)/L.7) and authorized the Rapporteur, with the assistance of the secretariat, to complete the report, as appropriate.

### **B. Closure of the session**

81. Also at the 14th meeting, closing remarks were made by the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD.

82. Statements were also made by the State of Palestine (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Finland (on behalf of the European Union and its Member States), Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), Bhutan (on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group), Grenada (on behalf of the Latin America and Caribbean Group), Malta (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for the Northern Mediterranean (Annex IV)), Azerbaijan (on behalf of the Regional Implementation Annex for Central and Eastern Europe (Annex V)) and Egypt (on behalf of the Arab Group).

83. A statement was also made by a representative of a non-governmental organization (BIOS, Republic of Moldova).

84. H.E. Mr. Prakash Javadekar, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, of the Republic of India, and President of COP 14, made concluding remarks and declared closed the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties of the UNCCD.

## Annex I

### **Declaration of civil society organizations attending the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties**

[English only]

1. Over the past two weeks, the representatives of the 1,000 registered civil society organizations (CSOs) have actively and passionately participated in all stages of the agenda of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 14).
2. With the support of our elected panel of CSO representatives from among the 600 accredited CSOs, two open dialogue sessions allowed us to better share our concerns and contributions during the opening sessions, the Committee of the Whole, the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and the Committee on Science and Technology.
3. As well as the round tables and interactive dialogues held during the High-Level Segment, though we do regret the absence of debates generated by the richness of the contributions.
4. First of all, we would like to thank you for the work you have done together. You will also have seen the growing mobilization of CSOs following the review of document ICCD/COP14/20 in this session.
5. We believe that nothing important can be achieved without civil society. Regarding the panel in support of the CSO community, we ask for a decision from the COP to provide it with a deputy representative for each of the five regions represented. We also wish to provide interpretation facilities during the preparatory session on the eve of each COP.
6. We have shared our priorities on several occasions. In addition, allow us to reiterate our main concerns, which we, as CSOs, strongly recommend that the Parties here present adopt:
  - (a) Regarding funding: the most direct access possible to funds for communities, especially young people and women, to enable them to commit themselves even more strongly to combating desertification and countering the temptation of irregular migration.
  - (b) Regarding good practices: the combined use of suitable techniques from traditional knowledge and modern high technology.
  - (c) Regarding the focus on land management: based on the scientifically sound evidence produced by recent reports from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, it is now crucial to broaden our perceptions of what needs to be done, but also the need for alternative approaches to land management. It is also crucial to take into account intergenerational cooperation, which plays a fundamental role in the persistence of a way of life based on environmental and cultural conditions. The knowledge of adults and youth must be pooled in order to enable land restoration and combine traditional knowledge and innovation.
  - (d) Regarding youth and women: urgently ensure access to land for youth and women in order to recognize and encourage their contributions to land restoration as well as strengthening their unique role in society.
7. Science confirms that migration is closely linked to the degradation of natural resources, particularly through unsustainable use practices and low incomes in the agricultural sector. Yet there are many examples of successful practices implemented by CSOs for land restoration and green jobs in rural areas, which must be more seriously supported and replicated given their power to encourage people to stay on their territory and in their own countries.
8. Close and transparent cooperation between CSOs, business, governments and local stakeholders is not an option but imperative to collective effectiveness. This applies to

everyone here. With regard to raising the level of awareness and preparing civil society for the COP, we affirm that the Désertifications Forum, the last of which took place in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso in June, is a great opportunity. In this regard, we ask that the declaration entitled, "we are the land that fights desertification", produced by 380 participants from 40 countries and 240 organizations represented, be annexed as a reference document for the mobilization of civil society around the decisions of this COP.

9. Many requests from CSOs have been submitted. In some cases, such as the complicated issue of land tenure, we are pleased to see that this has been integrated. However, we are aware that, particularly at the country level, many of our requests and recommendations have never been implemented. For example, CSOs have not generally been actively involved in processes concerning land degradation neutrality in countries. This is very unfortunate. We call for clearer guidelines on the participation of CSOs in all Convention processes and for these to be applied in countries.

10. The time has come for synergy and even integration between the Multilateral Environmental Agreements, in particular the Rio conventions, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We note, according to science, that they converge towards a single objective: to preserve our common home. None of these conventions can achieve this alone and we cannot afford the luxury of competition. We have the technology, the workforce, active participation and scientifically sound arguments. Considerable resources can be mobilized if we wish to do so.

11. It has been 25 years since the Convention was born and though our situation is worse today than when we started, the time for complaining is over. The future will judge us.

We call for concrete action now.

We want to say with one voice:

LET'S ACT TOGETHER NOW.

TOMORROW IT MAY BE TOO LATE.

## Annex II

### The UNCCD Delhi Declaration from Business

[English only]

#### Executive summary

Business recognizes that the world needs to build a future that avoids, minimizes and reverses desertification and land degradation and mitigates the effects of drought. This is essential for the resilience and success of our societies, and for the businesses that operate within them.

To do so, we require unprecedented collaboration between all stakeholders, including business, governments and society, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 14) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), businesses have come together with key stakeholders to emphasize their critical role, and to commit to action towards a land degradation neutral world, prioritizing:

- The widespread and rapid adoption of sustainable land management (SLM) solutions for agriculture, food, forestry, shelter and energy.
- Scaling solutions through value chain- and landscape-based approaches, including the conservation and restoration of ecosystem services such as soil, forests and water, and addressing deforestation-risk commodities.
- The increased resilience of communities through improved livelihood opportunities, addressing food loss and food security.
- The adoption of climate-smart approaches to agriculture to enable productivity, the mitigation of carbon emissions and measures to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- Biodiversity, including crop and dietary diversity, and land restoration and conservation.
- Robust business decision-making and progress through science-based targets, risk management, reporting and environmental, social and governance processes.

To realize these priorities, business calls on governments to adopt a new deal for nature and people through a wide range of policy shifts:

- Harmonizing decisions coherently within the United Nations framework.
- Regulating in support of innovation for the purpose of SLM.
- Supporting incentive mechanisms that reward the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of nature.
- Enabling public and private sector dialogue, collaboration and knowledge exchange.
- Developing clear policies and targets, ensuring synergies across wider environment and society.
- Harnessing the role of market-based mechanisms, including carbon markets.
- Increasing the emphasis on public-private financing mechanisms.
- Supporting resilient rural livelihoods through entrepreneurship and climate adaptation measures.
- Strengthening local land tenure and rights with a recognition of women and youth.

To achieve change at scale, we call on all businesses and wider organizations to support these priorities, and on governments to act in order to create an enabling environment in which business contributes to the maximum of its potential.

**1. The purpose of this declaration and background**

Supported by the outcomes of the Business Day of the UNCCD, the Delhi Declaration from Business has the key purpose of emphasizing the importance, priorities, commitments and policy requests of the private sector regarding the UNCCD.

This statement is issued from a variety of key actors working towards meeting the United Nations SDGs, including businesses, business representative organizations and key stakeholders working with the private sector, with the purpose of galvanizing action and directing private sector action relating to the UNCCD.

Tackling the land degradation challenge requires unprecedented collaboration between all stakeholders – business, governments and society. This declaration builds upon the 2013 Windhoek Declaration, the 2015 Ankara Declaration and the 2017 Ordos Declaration from the respective Sustainable Land Management Business Forum of each COP. It presents the next step towards implementing land degradation neutrality (LDN) and must be supported by real action on the ground by all Parties.

In light of the points outlined in this document, we call on all companies to join us in our collaborative effort to implement SLM practices and land restoration. Our next steps will be critical in materializing the transition to a sustainable global economy in support of halting and reversing land degradation and restoring degraded ecosystems, while managing land resources sustainably to serve prospering communities.

**2. Preamble and context**

*A. About the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification*

i. The UNCCD aims to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought through national action programs that incorporate long-term strategies supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements.

ii. LDN is a critical objective in order to restore the productivity of the vast expanses of degraded land, reflected in SDG 15.3: “By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world”.

iii. The livelihoods of more than 1.3 billion vulnerable people are at risk due to the impacts of drought.

iv. We must build a future that avoids, minimizes, and reverses desertification and land degradation, and mitigates the effects of drought in the affected areas at all levels to achieve a land degradation-neutral world.

*B. The role of business in supporting the strategic objectives of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification*

i. Land degradation threatens the important goods and services that healthy ecosystems provide to society. As a result, livelihoods, food security and economic development are increasingly compromised. Climate change can exacerbate stress on degraded ecosystems, further reducing land productivity for crops and livestock, increasing water shortages and releasing more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

ii. Business has a critical role to play in SLM and drought resilience, collaborating with multiple stakeholders and actively engaging across global, regional and national processes for positive social and environmental outcomes.

iii. In collaborating with stakeholders and engaging in multi-level processes, business seeks to identify market-driven solutions that enable business continuity and compliance with legislation, and embrace ethical, social and environmental values and responsibilities.

iv. As a major user and manager of land and natural resources, business has a stewardship role which can be enhanced through the deployment of innovative technologies, the establishment of private-private and public-private partnerships and engagement with civil society.

C. *Mobilising business in support of land degradation neutrality and nature*

i. As the dynamics of land, climate and biodiversity are intimately connected, business solutions related to SLM and drought resilience should also seek to be aligned with and meet the objectives set out by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

ii. With the critical CBD and UNFCCC COP scheduled for 2020, the Business for Nature community calls on governments to embrace the opportunity to adopt a new deal for nature and people that would provide the needed policy signal to the business community.

iii. At the UNCCD COP 14, hosted by the Indian Government from 2 to 13 September 2019, business leaders came together to demonstrate their support and commitment to the scaling and delivery of solutions addressing these priorities, as highlighted on the UNCCD Business Day on 7 September 2019.

**3. Within this context we, the participants of the 2019 UNCCD Business Day, recognize the following priorities:**

A. The widespread and rapid adoption of SLM approaches that contribute to LDN.

B. Supporting the improvement of living conditions of affected populations through food security and improved livelihoods.

C. Also supporting the mitigation of and adaptation to the effects of drought in order to enhance the resilience of vulnerable populations and ecosystems.

**4. In recognizing these priorities, we, the participants of the 2019 UNCCD Business Day, commit to:**

A. *Sustainable land management through value chain engagement*

i. Adopting improved soil health practices for all scales and types of farming.

ii. Addressing deforestation risk commodities and supply chains.

iii. Taking landscape-based approaches to managing, conserving and restoring natural resources, including forests and watersheds, including rural and urban linkages and needs.

B. *Improved livelihoods and food security and healthy communities*

i. Ensuring prosperity through livelihood opportunities, including farmers, in rural and urban communities, and the linkages between them.

ii. Addressing the importance of healthy communities with access to safe, sustainable, nutritious food and healthy diets.

iii. Reducing food and agricultural commodity losses and waste along the supply chain.

C. *Climate change mitigation and adaptation*

i. Adopting climate-smart forms of agriculture that increase agricultural productivity and build resilience to the adverse effects of climate change and extreme weather, while mitigating agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, as well as water efficiency solutions for agriculture, industry and urban development.

*D. Biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and restoration*

- i. Adopting forms of agriculture that restore and conserve global biodiversity and ecosystems through nature-based solutions.
- ii. Conserving landscape connectivity to help rehabilitate degraded land and nurture the biological flows and structures needed to increase our resilience in the face of drought and other climate impacts.
- iii. Mainstreaming agrobiodiversity in the food system.
- iv. Diversifying food to enable variety in the crops we produce and consume for healthy and sustainable diets.
- v. Restoring degraded and abandoned production lands and degraded natural and semi-natural ecosystems that provide vital, albeit indirect, benefits to business, people and working landscapes.

**5. In undertaking these commitments, our approach will include:**

- A. Adopting the agreed ambitious science-based targets for key “planetary boundaries”, including climate, land, water and biodiversity.
- B. Monitoring and managing risks in the business, including the consideration of externalities through true value accounting of food production and consumption.
- C. Communicating relevant progress transparently through corporate reporting and disclosure.
- D. Engaging fully in global and regional climate and biodiversity processes, specifically the 2019 UNFCCC COP 25 and the 2020 COP 26 as well as the 2020 COP 15 of the CBD.

**6. To enable business action, we call on governments to:**

- A. Integrate and harmonize decisions coherently under key United Nations conventions (CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC) and the SDGs by recognizing the interrelations and dependencies of the development, climate and nature agendas.
- B. Drive action for LDN by regulating in favour of innovation with a purpose to usher in inclusive and sustainable soil management and use.
- C. Adopt coherent incentive mechanisms and regulations in order to promote decisions that reward the development of projects for the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of nature, including the establishment of public-private partnerships and blended financing solutions.
- D. Enable effective, early public and private sector dialogue and collaboration in the development and delivery of SLM policies and priorities at landscape, regional and global levels.
- E. Develop clear and predictable policies and legal requirements ensuring synergies across wider environmental and social priorities to allow businesses to operate on a level playing field when implementing solutions with the support of robust regulatory monitoring and evaluation frameworks.
- F. Harness the role of market-based sustainability solutions, including new innovations and technologies, in order to accelerate progress with clear commercial benefits to increase business participation and uptake.
- G. Increase the emphasis on value-chain and market-orientated global financing mechanisms, such as green commodity-, landscape- and food systems-based funds, to support the piloting and scaling of solutions, alongside carbon financing and payments for ecosystem services.
- H. Support crop insurance programmes that encourage investment in sustainable soil management and use technologies that improve yields and resiliency, reduce post-harvest losses and/or reduce net greenhouse gas emissions.

I. Provide better legal recognition and protection of local and customary land rights to enable them to be recognized and accounted for by financial institutions in their lending policies. Work to amend land tenure laws to include explicit guarantees for women to own land in their own right.

## Annex III

### Declaration of the Youth Forum

[English only]

#### I. Establishment of Global Youth Caucus on Desertification and Land

1. Meaningful youth engagement, universal access to decision-making spaces, and equitable participation of children and youth are key elements toward the achievement of Agenda 2030, objectives of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Paris Agreement and related mechanisms. Several young people from different youth organizations participated at the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 14) of the UNCCD as a part of efforts to make youth engagement more structured and institutional; thereby establishing formal children and youth engagement mechanism (constituency) to the UNCCD - the Global Youth Caucus on Desertification and Land.<sup>1</sup> The Caucus serves as the formal voice of youth and youth organizations to the processes of the Convention, including in implementation efforts by Parties and non-Party stakeholders on national, regional, and global level. Desertification Youth Forum from 6–7 September 2019 during COP 14 was an initiative of the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth (UNMGCY),<sup>2</sup> United Nations Environment Programme Major Group for Children and Youth (UNEP MGCY),<sup>3</sup> Plant-for-the-Planet,<sup>4</sup> Science Policy Circle,<sup>5</sup> Global Indigenous Youth Caucus (GIYC),<sup>6</sup> and others through as a part of formalizing the Caucus. The Forum brought together more than 100 young people from different parts of the world, with funding support for some international participants provided by the UNCCD secretariat.

#### II. Preamble

2. UNCCD COP 14 is a historic moment because, for the first time, the *Global Youth Caucus on Desertification and Land* has been established into a permanent mechanism to help engage youth more meaningfully on issues of desertification, land degradation and drought. The Global Land Outlook report has already identified desertification and land-related issues as a critical threat to human security in various dimensions.

3. With 42 per cent of the world's population being young people, this calls us to act, and be more concerned about environmental issues which revolve around desertification, land degradation and climate crisis, as well as their implications on further exacerbating social inequalities. A sense of urgency on these environmental issues has been raised by major global reports such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) findings, and if we act collectively against these challenges, we can avoid loss of biodiversity, ecosystem and protect the fate of the 8.7 million species on the planet.

4. Young people are concerned about the dearth of political will and slow progress to overcome the environmental issues for the betterment of our future. The steady increase in environmental degradation, desertification and climate change will decrease the productivity of our soil, put food security at risk, increase poverty, affect employment sources, produce forced migration, affect mental and physical capacity and reduce

<sup>1</sup> <[www.desertification-youth-caucus.org](http://www.desertification-youth-caucus.org)>.

<sup>2</sup> <[www.unmgcy.org](http://www.unmgcy.org)>.

<sup>3</sup> <[www.unep-mgcy.org](http://www.unep-mgcy.org)>.

<sup>4</sup> <[www.plant-for-the-planet.org](http://www.plant-for-the-planet.org)>

<sup>5</sup> <[www.sciencepolicycircle.org](http://www.sciencepolicycircle.org)>.

<sup>6</sup> <[www.globalindigenouslyouthcaucus.org](http://www.globalindigenouslyouthcaucus.org)>.

resilience of communities, in particular vulnerable groups such as young people; and also force indigenous young populations to leave their communities, risking the loss of traditional knowledge and languages that contain a source of acquaintance to solve the problem.

5. 2019 can be considered as a year which will decide the fate of our future considering the recent IPCC findings which predict that we have around 12 years exist to limit climate change catastrophe. To overcome issues such as carbon emissions, ecosystem breakdowns - 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (including the Sustainable Development Goals), Aichi Biodiversity Targets, Paris Agreement have been adopted: however, implementing these at national/subnational scales still requires a translation of global ambition into local action and broad participation of youth; without the involvement of everyone - we risk a huge gap in the processes of protecting the environment and achieving sustainable and resilient development. The Forest Landscape Restoration, if conceived in a right sense, will serve as an opportunity for youth and redefine our relationship with nature. This will create excellent green employment opportunities for youth.

6. As important stakeholders in fighting climate change and desertification, young people seek to meaningfully engage with the UNCCD COP negotiation processes with their voices being listened to. Parties and the United Nations system should ensure that young people are part of the global, national and local initiatives for combating environmental issues. The current issues can be tackled well, to make a better world with the involvement of the youth and support from our elder generations.

7. Hear us, we are hearing you; we are open-minded; we are adaptive; we are not divided; we are the children of Mother Earth. Stop being passive, start engaging in solution, not wait for change, shape the change. Conserve land for protecting livelihoods and biodiversity, for a better today and a brighter tomorrow.

### **III. Thematic Focus – problems and how to overcome**

8. The Global Youth Caucus on Desertification and Land further presents its stance on the thematic focus – land degradation, desertification, land tenure and rights – thereby providing recommendations to the Parties. Overall, the Caucus emphasizes the role of land tenure security and property rights as an incentive for Parties to enhance the environment and promote land degradation neutrality (LDN).

9. Nearly all social struggles in antiquity were mostly for the ownership and use of land. Land tenure is a complex social institution which governs the relationship among people with regard to assets such as land, water bodies and forests. It can have a legal or customary basis or both. Even though land constitutes the main asset from which the rural poor can derive a livelihood, millions of such farming families do not enjoy ownership rights over it and are considered landless. Up to a quarter of the world's population is estimated to be landless, including owing to legal issues regarding gender rights as well as ownership of land.

10. Meanwhile, there is a correlation between land tenure and environmental conditions. Land tenure can either enhance the environment or promote practices that harm the environment. Lack of tenure security is a significant disincentive for tenant farmers to invest in the land they farm because as they do not hold land rights, they are unlikely to adopt measures to improve, control, and reserve future land degradation as benefits of their investments cannot be assured. Access and tenure security to land is therefore crucial and must be recognized as a vehicle for sustainable land management (SLM) since insecure land and tree rights discourage medium- and long-term investments.

11. It is globally recognized that agriculture accounts for 80 per cent of land degradation. The nexus is that women who form the largest group of people employed in the agriculture sector, lack tenure security and land rights and so, reduce the incentive to implement long-term resource measures.

12. Lack of tenure security and simultaneously, the challenges related to land degradation both represent a vicious circle. Lack of tenure security causes migration, this

threatens security, leads to loss of identity and further causes hindrance in the propagation of traditional knowledge due to the gap in the intergenerational transmission of knowledge from elders to youth. This lack of awareness about conventional practices can be disadvantageous to the youth who are working towards preventing land degradation. Thus, this calls for a holistic approach to combat desertification/land degradation and drought.

13. To combat desertification, a strong tenure system must be ensured. There is a need to create robust tenure security mechanism for the countries where there are no existing policies or laws in these regards. In the countries where there are current mechanism and regulations, it needs to be implemented and monitored regularly. Along with secure tenure system, there is also a need to focus on community-based management of natural resources (land, water and forest) with the indigenous people. The contribution of the indigenous people in restoring the natural resources have proved to be helpful, hence should be acknowledged and encouraged. Creating localized job opportunities for indigenous youth with traditional knowledge can be useful to formalize traditional practices and instrumentally contribute to restoring land degradation and preventing desertification.<sup>7</sup>

14. Moreover, tenure security is the core of the access to food and food security. It ensures a long-term, sustainable security of food. Ensured rights will give ownership to the people over their natural resources (land, water and forest), incentivising them to rejuvenate the natural resources which will enable individuals (both in the rural and urban areas) to have access to food and water as the urban communities are dependent on the rural population for food security.

15. Lack of tenure security brings the people under the radar of land grabbing and displacement because of development projects, which further leads to land degradation and drought. If people have tenure security, it would be difficult for the other parties to snatch the land from the people, preventing it from being degraded.

#### IV. Land rights

16. The Caucus calls for the following to be respected:

- (a) Right to not be forced to migrate over climatic reasons (instead of adaptation and mitigation).
- (b) Right to cultivate your own seeds without restrictions.
- (c) Right to own land and harvest cultivations and right to sell the cultivated products as well.
- (d) Right to cultivate on an organics ways without restrictions.
- (e) Right to store, share and conserve natural and ancient seeds.
- (f) Right to adapt your land to resist desertification and climate change and lack of diversity issues. In terms of fund alternative water sources, recycling water, bringing biodiversity back in a safe way, etc.
- (g) Right to reforest the land with endemic species, in terms of adaptation and mitigation, to capt CO<sub>2</sub>, to prevent erosion, to prevent and combat degradation of the land, to prevent earth slides, to prevent crops loss from wind effects using trees for this, to prevent and combat desertification, to restore the soil, and to bring back flora and fauna biodiversity.
- (h) Right to be a key decision-maker on public policy regarding changes on your land and their surrounding area, in terms of immobiliary projects, agriculture projects, industrial projects, and on adaptation and mitigation projects. Desertification, land degradation and action from Parties.

<sup>7</sup> Weber, M. 1988. *The Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations*, trans. Frank R I. Verso, London; Ashley, J.M. 2016. *Cross-Cutting Issues*. <<https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-801594-0.00006-3>>; UN-Habitat, 2008. *Secure Land Rights for All*. Global Land Tool Network, Nairobi, Kenya, 47 pp.

(i) Rights for indigenous peoples to protect their native places, noting the traditional knowledge, faith-based components, and resilience for nature and biodiversity they have historically demonstrated.

(j) Rights for women to be equal partners in efforts, and implementation of solutions at all levels. Land rights are incomplete without rights of women

## **V. Food security**

17. Ensuring food security depends on a sustainable level of food production, which means that there should be the availability of not only human capital to increase production, but also land and water resources. Therefore, in order to ensure secure access to food and water to every human being, an ambitious and cross-cutting plan which tackles effectively and efficiently all the issues related to this focal problem is required. Desertification is mainly caused by overexploitation of natural resources, and, thus, the pollution of the developed countries while those parts of the world which are already extremely vulnerable have to shoulder its drastic effects.

18. Therefore, the fight against hunger and thirst must start from the reduction of global inequalities in wealth, standard of living, socioeconomic opportunities prompting developed countries to compensate others for the harm they caused and empowering vulnerable persons to be able to claim for reparation. To pursue this aim, global, international and national policies to implement intergenerational equity and sustainable developments are necessary. These policies must aim at raising awareness on the global burden of hunger and thirst and the urgency to improve standards of living, investing in education and spreading new technology and sensitizing developed and rich countries to fight for a more equal distribution of resources. From the organizational point of view, synergy and collaboration among global, supranational, international, national, local agents both institutional and private ones are essential.

## **VI. Livelihood security and sustainable consumption and production**

19. UNCCD and the United Nations Refugee Agency along with other agents must come together: their work is essential to predict which regions might be prone to produce land desertification refugees - and concur a plan, drafting the specific steps, that can address the issue in order to ensure access to food and water to every human being. Another fundamental action which must be transversely undertaken is a serious shift in the economic system with the adoption of a circular economy in order to ensure nil wastage of our resources. The flow of the circular economy employs the use of a well working cycle of recycling, reuse manufacturing and refurbishing of what exists versus the linear economy the world functions as right now. This circular economy would by no means cause a drop in the quality of life, and could be achieved without loss of revenue. In order to pursue this aim, developed countries must change their patterns of development and consumption while peoples and persons affected by desertification ought to claim for compensation to foster sustainable development and to build a circular economy.

20. To this regard, agricultural practices of those parts which suffer more from desertification must be improved in order to mitigate the effects of desertification. Since water and land are the most important goods for the integrity of the body, countries ought to ensure the secure accessibility to these goods protecting property rights of the locals. This is because in many countries, law privatizes groundwater while water should be made a public trust. The tenurial security is another fundamental element to fight against hunger and thirst. Only when indigenous people have tenurial security they can grow crops and have their livelihood. The last point needed to be stressed is the relation between land, job and education in order to make everyone able to get means of subsistence. To access food and water, land tenure system must be taken care of. Incentive regarding land opportunities comes as a localized job for the people – all people. Usually these jobs come with set credentials; that only helps the educated get jobs, the uneducated don't get opportunities -

therefore, we should ensure that as long as the skill exists, the job can be given. While there are many good examples of training and skilling centres being set up in developing nations, people and especially youth have to be given a choice to be trained in jobs of their choice.

## VII. Adaptation measures for land degradation neutrality

21. Among the plans and policies to fight against thirst and hunger, funded and targeted measures to reduce desertification play a key role. Within desertification it is possible to distinguish funded adaptation measures, which aims at reducing vulnerability of peoples and persons harmed by desertification helping them to adapt to the new environment, and funded mitigation measures, which aims at reducing desertification endorsing all the actions required to achieve this purpose, such as reforestation, recycling, plastic-free, etc. The two measures should be conceived as two sides of the same coin. Indeed, while the first measures ought to be directed to support the places suffering more from desertification working on the effects of it, the second measures ought to be adopted by all countries working on the causes of desertification. Funded adaptation and mitigation measures must first and foremost aim at raising awareness on the causes and effects of desertification among all peoples and persons. Funded adaptation and mitigation measures must include a clear procedure of accountability for their utilization. Thus, efficiency and effectiveness must be two core criteria to the assessment of their realization.

22. The Caucus urges Parties and non-Party stakeholders to implement the following actions to help ensure SLM and LDN, as well as enhance food and water security:

(a) Financing for SLM is on the low side as compared to climate change and biodiversity activities. The Global Environment Facility, as the financial mechanism of the Rio conventions including UNCCD must increase the portfolio for SLM in countries' allocations. Also, it will be vital to have the Global Environment Facility invest more in the SLM in its impact project.

(b) To restore degraded land/forests and prevent further deforestation, policy incentives should be put in place to ensure that the drivers of deforestation are addressed, while respecting traditional and indigenous agricultural livelihoods.

(c) To avoid clearing of lands for agricultural purposes by those women and youth in the quest to lay claims on the land, Parties should demarcate areas in their respective countries as land banks for agricultural purposes to guarantee land tenure and land rights for long-term farming activities of women and youth.

(d) Unsuitable laws and rules regarding access to land must be redefined to ensure long-term land rights and tenure security.

(e) Moreover, the rights of forest-dependent populations, and particularly indigenous peoples and local communities should be protected, strengthened, and empowered. They must be assured of the right to the benefits associated with forest preservation and SLM. This will incentivize them to control, reverse, and avoid land degradation.

(f) To ensure the Convention is implemented by countries to the best of their abilities, Caucus calls upon the secretariat and partner agencies, as a matter of urgency, to facilitate the preparation of a legally binding instrument on drought, sand and dust for adoption.

(g) Educational programmes at school and university level must be initiated and promoted to ensure that the youth have access to information and knowledge base required for understanding sustainable agriculture and aligned fields, also overlapping with the Article 12 of Paris Agreement.

(h) Parties must encourage entrepreneurship in climate change with particular focus on agriculture, technological innovation, sustainable living and support youth engagement through formalized policy and schemes at national level. The United Nations should also support youth engagement in agriculture, ecology and environment.

(i) Given that uncontrolled use of chemicals in agriculture over the past so many decades across the globe had resulted in land degradation, the transition to chemical-free organic agriculture is a necessity.

(j) Food is the single-most essential element of our daily lives, critical to survival. Parties must initiate a gradual ban on the use of harmful chemicals in agriculture to ensure the people's health and well-being. To ensure that the growing need for food is met, supplementary programmes such as the following must be promoted:

- (i) Community Farming;
- (ii) Community kitchens;
- (iii) Food collection centres for leftover food that is safe and fit for consumption;
- (iv) Regulating the industry on food waste.

(k) Thus, by ensuring that food wastage is controlled and reduced with effective implementation of these programmes, the ban on the use of chemicals in agriculture could be implemented and the transition towards organic agriculture could be successful. The Caucus calls upon Parties to use the armed forces and other public workers to help with mitigation and adaptation works as some Parties are already doing in an effective and successful way.

(l) Enhance people's involvement in decision-making process on mitigation and adaptation measures; and on decision-making process on changes of the use of their lands and surroundings, in terms of agriculture, immobiliary development, and industrial development.

(m) Caucus calls upon United Nations agencies, international organizations, and nations to implement policies for the reforestation of the planet, recycling of water, and rehabilitation of the lands.

## **VIII. Meaningful youth engagement**

23. The Caucus acknowledges that meaningful youth engagement is central to attaining the goals of the UNCCD, while highlighting the principles and barriers for meaningful youth engagement. Young people are already, and will continue to deal with the consequences that past generations have created, thus, inputs of young people must be valued. Young people must be directly consulted in the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all efforts made to combat land degradation and desertification. This declaration also reaffirms commitment of youth and youth organizations to protect and promote the rights of the global youth:

(a) Regulatory norms and forums should be built to see if the youth voices made are on record and are being used in real decision-making by policymakers.

(b) There should be more frequent and permanent engagements of youth bodies, beyond intergovernmental proceedings.

(c) Local authorities should be engaged to understand the cause of LDN that can help the youth to mobilize their resources for young leaders in their actions pertaining to LDN specifics.

(d) There is a need for more education and awareness programmes regarding the United Nations mandates offered to all youth bodies and universities to ensure representation from all levels.

(e) Youth must be involved in decision-making at the local, state, regional and international levels.

(f) Special attention must be given to engage indigenous youth as they are equipped with the traditional ecological knowledge of their people.

(g) Efforts should be made to reach a mandatory 30 per cent of youth representation as part of country delegations for the effective representation of youth issues in all UNCCD decision-making processes.

(h) Educational institutions at all levels must incentivize the students engaged in combating desertification/land degradation and drought by rewarding credits or certifications.

(i) Public and private sector must incentivize the employees engaged in contributing to the LDN.

(j) Green jobs must be created at the grass-roots level for the rural youth.

(k) Youth from various faith-based organizations should be further involved in achieving LDN targets. Interfaith initiatives for LDN should be given more cooperation in terms of acceptance, resources and policymaking.

**Annex IV****Documents before the Conference of the Parties at its  
fourteenth session**

[English only]

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
ICCD/COP(14)/1	Provisional agenda and annotations. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/2	Integration of Sustainable Development Goal 15 and related target 15.3 into the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and land degradation neutrality. Report by the Executive Secretary
ICCD/COP(14)/3	Modalities, criteria and terms of reference for a midterm evaluation of the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/4	Report on progress made in the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification communication plan and the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010–2020). Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/5	Promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/6	Programme and budget for the biennium 2020–2021. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/7- ICCD/CRIC(18)/2	Comprehensive multi-year workplan for the Convention (2020–2023) and two-year costed work programme for the Convention (2020–2021). Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/8	Financial performance for the Convention trust funds. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/9	Audited financial statements for the Convention trust funds for the biennium 2018–2019 as at 31 December 2018. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/10	Audited financial statements for the Convention trust funds for the biennium ended 31 December 2017, including the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/11	Report on the status of contributions to the Convention trust funds for the biennium 2018–2019. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/12	Report of the Evaluation Office. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/13	Participation and involvement of civil society organizations in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/14	Participation and involvement of the private sector in meetings and processes of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the business engagement strategy. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/15	Accreditation of intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations and representatives from the private sector, and admission of observers. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/15/Add.1	Accreditation of intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations and representatives from the private sector, and admission of observers. Note by the secretariat. Addendum
ICCD/COP(14)/16	Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Drought. Note by the secretariat

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
ICCD/COP(14)/17	Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Sand and dust storms. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/18	Follow-up on policy frameworks and thematic issues: Gender. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/19	The positive role that measures taken under the Convention can play to address desertification/land degradation and drought as one of the drivers that causes migration. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/20	New and emerging issues: land tenure. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/21 <sup>8</sup>	Credentials of delegations. Report of the Bureau to the Conference of the Parties
ICCD/COP(14)/22 <sup>9</sup>	Credentials of delegations. Final report of the Bureau to the Conference of the Parties
ICCD/COP(14)/INF.1	Information for participants. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/INF.2	Note on the special segment of the Conference of the Parties at its fourteenth session. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/INF.3	Options for additional arrangements for drought under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/INF.4	Status of ratification of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/INF.5	List of participants
ICCD/COP(14)/MISC.1	The Peace Forest Initiative

## **Documents before the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention at its eighteenth session**

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
ICCD/CRIC(18)/1	Provisional agenda and annotations. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/7- ICCD/CRIC(18)/2	Comprehensive multi-year workplan for the Convention (2020–2023) and two-year costed work programme for the Convention (2020–2021). Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(18)/3	Report on the performance of Convention institutions and subsidiary bodies (2018–2019). Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/CST/7- ICCD/CRIC(18)/4	Outcomes of the work of the Committee on Science and Technology on a monitoring framework for the strategic objective on drought. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CRIC(18)/5	Report by the Global Environment Facility on the financing of programmes and projects concerning desertification/land degradation and drought
ICCD/CRIC(18)/6	Report by the Global Mechanism on update on the Global Support Programme in support of UNCCD reporting

<sup>8</sup> This document has been discontinued.

<sup>9</sup> This document replaces a previous version, ICCD/COP(14)/21, which was issued in English only.

## Documents before the Committee on Science and Technology at its fourteenth session

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
ICCD/COP(14)/CST/1	Provisional agenda and annotations. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/CST/2	Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from guidance for the implementation of land degradation neutrality, under sub-objectives 1.1 and 1.2 of the Science-Policy Interface work programme for the biennium 2018–2019. Synthesis report by the Executive Secretary
ICCD/COP(14)/CST/3	Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from guidance for the adoption and implementation of land-based interventions for drought management and mitigation, under objective 2 of the Science-Policy Interface work programme for the biennium 2018–2019. Synthesis report by the Executive Secretary
ICCD/COP(14)/CST/4	Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from the cooperation with other intergovernmental scientific panels and bodies. Report by the Executive Secretary
ICCD/COP(14)/CST/5	The Science-Policy Interface, the UNCCD Knowledge Hub, and the analysis, dissemination and accessibility of best practices. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/CST/6	Work programme of the Science-Policy Interface (2020–2021). Note by the secretariat
ICCD/COP(14)/CST/7- ICCD/CRIC(18)/4	Outcomes of the work of the Committee on Science and Technology on a monitoring framework for the strategic objective on drought. Note by the secretariat

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