



Convention to Combat Desertification

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The knowledge management system, including traditional knowledge as outlined in article 16 (g) of the Convention text, best practices and success stories on combating desertification, land degradation and drought issues

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Note by the secretariat

Summary

The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (The Strategy) defines one of the expected outcomes under its operational objective 3 concerning science, technology and knowledge, as “Effective knowledge-sharing systems, including traditional knowledge, are in place at the global, regional, subregional and national levels to support policymakers and end-users, including through the identification and sharing of best practices and success stories”.

By its decision 26/COP.9, paragraph 2, the Conference of the Parties (COP) indicated that the CST should focus in the biennium 2010–2011 on two priorities, one of which is the implementation of the knowledge-management system, including traditional knowledge as outlined in article 16 (g) of the Convention, best practices and success stories on combating desertification, land degradation and drought.

This document reports on progress made in developing the comprehensive knowledge management system of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. It presents an overview of the results of a knowledge needs assessment and of options concerning the scientific knowledge brokering system.

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I. Introduction

1. Article 6 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) urges developed country Parties to promote and facilitate access by affected country Parties, particularly affected developing country Parties, to appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how.

2. The Convention further stresses the importance of knowledge for its successful implementation: article 17 refers to knowledge of the processes leading to desertification and drought and traditional knowledge; article 18 calls for the protection, compilation, promotion and dissemination of traditional and local knowledge, and article 19 promotes capacity-building by fostering the use and dissemination of knowledge.

3. The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (The Strategy) defines as one of the expected outcomes under its operational objective 3: science, technology and knowledge, “Effective knowledge-sharing systems, including traditional knowledge,¹ are in place at the global, regional, subregional and national levels to support policymakers and end-users, including through the identification and sharing of best practices and success stories”.²

4. In its guidance to the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), The Strategy states that the CST should, in cooperation with relevant institutions, create and steer knowledge management systems aiming to improve the brokering of scientific and technical information from and to institutions, Parties and end-users.³ The Conference of the Parties (COP) indicated that the CST should focus on two priorities, one of which is the implementation of the knowledge management system, including traditional knowledge as outlined in article 16 (g) of the Convention, best practices and success stories on combating desertification, land degradation and drought.

5. With regard to the role of the UNCCD secretariat in knowledge management, the secretariat has been requested to perform, over time, information and knowledge brokering functions for various types of information, including nationally provided data on implementation, scientific and technical information, databases and rosters of different focal points and experts, and public information and communication material, among others. The Strategy specifically requests the secretariat to develop its capacity to service the CST effectively by, inter alia, supporting the knowledge management systems established by the CST and performing information and knowledge brokering functions.⁴ Furthermore, by decision 4/COP.9, the COP requested the secretariat to continue building up efficient knowledge management and knowledge brokering systems to serve as tools for successful implementation of the comprehensive communication strategy, as appropriate and in the context of the 2010–2011 programme of work as adopted by the Parties.

6. Building on the above, the secretariat introduced in its 2010–2011 work programme the establishment of a knowledge management and information brokering system that would support the related work of the CST while simultaneously providing a framework and a tool for numerous other information needs under the Convention and related tasks of the secretariat.

¹ Excluding traditional knowledge on genetic resources.

² Decision 3/COP.8, annex, paragraph 11, outcome 3.5.

³ Decision 3/COP.8, annex, paragraph 14 (b) (iii) f.

⁴ Decision 3/COP.8, annex, paragraph 20 (b) (ii) b.

7. As one of the first major steps in developing the knowledge management system, the secretariat conducted an in-depth assessment survey and analysis of UNCCD priorities for knowledge management, which was welcomed and supported by the CST at its second special session (CST S-2) in February 2011. In parallel and in accordance with decisions taken by Parties at COP 9, the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS) was also established, providing through an online reporting portal Parties and other stakeholders with standardized information on the implementation of the Convention within the framework of The Strategy. Building on this assessment undertaken at the level of the CST and the work done on the PRAIS portal, the secretariat has continued to develop the knowledge management system, which has included content-specific considerations and devising options for related information technology requirements.

8. This document represents a progress report on the development of the comprehensive UNCCD knowledge management system. Its focus is, nevertheless, on one of the key components of this system, namely the scientific knowledge brokering system that is to be steered by the CST. From this viewpoint this document presents an overview of the results of the knowledge needs assessment and the ensuing analysis and options concerning mainly the scientific knowledge brokering system, while set to the context of the comprehensive knowledge management system.

II. Overview of the development of the comprehensive knowledge management system of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

9. Knowledge management is not new at UNCCD. Effective information delivery and knowledge management is an important aspect in addressing desertification and land degradation and drought-related (DLDD) issues at various levels and by different stakeholders. As indicated in paragraphs 3–5 above, knowledge management is well reflected in The Strategy.

10. The purpose of developing a comprehensive UNCCD knowledge management system is to address the various knowledge management tasks and needs under the Convention through a coherent, value driven and practical knowledge management architecture and system. Such architecture would aim to provide an organized pathway to information on the Convention, on the implementation of The Strategy, and on the participants in the Convention process, with a view to enabling new synergies, offering additional capacities to widely collect and disseminate knowledge and scale up results. The knowledge management system should respond to identified needs and demands, but should at the same time comply with the capacities and resources of the participating stakeholders, including the secretariat itself, to carry out the tasks needed for its development, implementation and maintenance.

11. The comprehensive UNCCD knowledge management system will be a combination of internal and external functions. The internal module of the knowledge management system will build primarily on the internal needs of the secretariat for content management and the planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting under the results-based management approach. It also aims to support the work of the secretariat with the Bureaus of the COP and its subsidiary bodies and to facilitate the internal work of these Bureaus. The external module will involve the development or linking together of various knowledge management components, such as the PRAIS portal for reporting and the scientific knowledge brokering system. The internal and external modules are intrinsically interlinked

in terms of governance structure and content management approach, and largely also with regard to functional requirements.

12. The following paragraphs provide a brief overview of the process of developing the comprehensive knowledge management system as tasks to be carried out by the secretariat. From chapter III onwards, this document focuses on the development of the scientific knowledge brokering system. This component should be considered as one dimension of the comprehensive system.

13. For the development of a knowledge management system, the following will be carried out in terms of organizing the governance and content management:

- Investment in staff time and other resources in knowledge management
- Improving capacity of staff in knowledge management through training
- Development of key policy documents and guidelines for content management; establishment of a taxonomy and management guidelines
- Selection and migration of key content items from legacy systems
- Implementation of a publishing process based on a simplified tagging of content
- Organization of periodic reviews to clean-up repositories
- Engaging external partners in the development of information resources and publications

14. With regard to the technical features, the knowledge management system is likely to imply adding information and communication technology (ICT) components to an out-of-the-box bundle as well as specific design and development services. The selected ICT features may reflect various options that can be conceived as forming a spectrum of services provided by the system over time and in a phased approach. The main objective in this context would be to replace the current multitude of content repositories with a new platform that provides intranet as well as extranet capabilities granting staff and select partners with easy access to documents and offering mechanisms to bring people together to work collaboratively.

15. Because of the diversified scope and different users involved, the UNCCD knowledge management system may need to be implemented in phases. The first phase would entail laying the foundations of the intranet platform and feature document management, and collaboration components provided to UNCCD secretariat staff. A second phase would provide services to select partners, such as Bureau members, as well as external resource persons and consultants involved in the preparation of UNCCD official documentation.

III. The knowledge needs assessment

16. The objectives of the knowledge needs assessment were to identify knowledge assets as well as critical knowledge needs of UNCCD stakeholders, and thereby to clarify priorities and narrow down the number of options for the development of the UNCCD knowledge management system.

17. The knowledge needs assessment survey (annex I) returned 355 valid questionnaires contributed by national focal points (76 questionnaires), science and technology correspondents (71), accredited civil society organization (CSO) and non-governmental organization (NGO) staff (89), secretariat staff (24), academia or independent experts (27),

staff of United Nations agencies or intergovernmental organizations (12), private sector representatives (4), media professionals (11), and other respondents (41). The regional distribution indicates varying percentage of participants from UNCCD Annexes, Annex I - Africa (35.8% of total respondents), Annex II – Asia (17.2%), Annex III – Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) (20.6%), Annex IV - Northern Mediterranean (6.8%), Annex V - Central and Eastern Europe (5.1%), observer countries (0.6%), other country Parties affected not listed under annexes (2%), and other developed country Parties not affected not listed under annexes (12.1%). The gender breakdown returns a higher number of males participating (73%) than females (27%). Almost half of the respondents are above 50 years of age. The age range of the participants tends to indicate that a high number of respondents would have significant experience to share.

18. The survey offers a means to create a baseline for knowledge management on DLDD. Among the interesting results are the following:

- For 47.8% of survey respondents it is currently either *difficult or very difficult* to retrieve relevant information / knowledge on DLDD matters (annex I, figure 1)
- 62.5% of respondents assess as either *poor or very poor* the current level of knowledge-sharing on DLDD matters and networking among all types of stakeholders (e.g. policymakers, scientists, multilateral environmental agreements, CSO/NGOs) (annex I, figure 2).
- According to the majority of survey respondents, the primary objective for knowledge management at UNCCD should be to *enhance collaboration and to foster innovation* on DLDD, prior to contributing to the *capture of existing knowledge* (annex I, figure 3).

19. The thematic areas on which survey participants indicated possessing solid knowledge to share with others are *Desertification and land degradation, Sustainable land management, Climate change, and Agriculture and food security*. Conversely, few respondents prioritized and declared having solid knowledge of the thematic areas of *Migrations, Energy, and Poverty* (annex I, figure 4). Referring to the number of requests, the priority areas for knowledge development are *Sustainable land management, Desertification and land degradation, Climate change, and Agriculture and food security*. Few requests have been made for gaining additional knowledge in the areas of *Migrations, Drought, Poverty, and Energy* (annex I, figure 5). Overall, there seems to be a good match between knowledge supply and knowledge demand for the thematic areas of priority knowledge needs. However, the UNCCD process could benefit from external expertise if it was to reinforce its knowledge base in those areas that collected fewer demands for knowledge enhancement.

20. As a major trend, survey participants expressed the need for greater networking with all types of stakeholders but particularly with *local communities, colleagues in other countries, academia and researchers, staff from CSOs and NGOs, and staff from government agencies* (annex I, figure 6). The channels or mechanisms that respondents would prefer using more to access information and knowledge on DLDD are *field visits and study tours, scientific journals, seminars and conferences, and email networks* (annex I, figure 7). These needs may require to be addressed through a variety of solutions and partnerships.

21. According to a majority of survey respondents, *quality, ease of retrieval* and *relevancy* are the three most important attributes that are expected from ‘codified knowledge’ or DLDD publications. Each of these attributes implies specific mechanisms and processes towards generating content and publications. Quality implies standards, templates, editing, peer reviews, etc. Easy of retrieval implies accurate categorization,

content management procedures, and periodic reviews. Relevancy implies that knowledge products are created based on end-users' needs. Whenever feasible, such attributes may need to be mainstreamed in the functioning of the knowledge management system.

22. The types of knowledge products that are most frequently demanded by survey respondents are *analytical papers, comparative experiences, lessons learned studies, success stories, how-to guides* and *policy briefs*. Conversely, some products are not prioritized, such as *fact sheets, case studies, or flagship reports* (annex I, figure 8). From the perspective of content collection, cataloguing and indexing, the knowledge management system should first harness the most demanded types of knowledge products when they already exist and contribute to their promotion and by making them more easily retrievable. If such types of products were to be created under the aegis of the UNCCD, then specific guidelines would have to be developed. Some of these products are work intensive to create (e.g. analytical papers, lessons learned studies, how-to guides) and require most often that international organizations partner with research institutes or contract consultants to have them developed. Furthermore, while the development of some products may require field research, others can be more easily compiled through email networks and remote collaboration (e.g. comparative experiences, success stories). In addition, some of these products may be conditioned by the development of other publications and come at the end of a process. For example, how-to guides usually stem from an analysis of best practices, which themselves are selected from a pool of good practices, etc. Accordingly, the development of a policy and procedural framework to elicit and guide the creation of publications would be required.

23. The assessment of technology needs returned priority requests for a *search engine to retrieve content across repositories, a mailing list to network and discuss online, online learning events such as webinars, a content repository to publish and share resources, workspaces for online collaborations* and *teleconference facilities* (annex I, figure 9). From a knowledge management standpoint, these demands are congruent with the core ICT set-up that shapes and supports communities of practice. Conversely, the level of demand is low for social networking tools such as *blogs, wikis* or *user rating capabilities*.

24. Selecting from a portfolio of knowledge management solutions ranging from the collection of existing content to mechanisms facilitating connections between people, survey respondents have prioritized those services or tools that would offer or facilitate (i) *stronger linkages either face-to-face or online between UNCCD partners for collaboration and communications*, (ii) *a document management system to publish, categorize, track and retrieve electronic documents online*, (iii) *short-term visits/mobility/missions between UNCCD partner countries for information sharing and mutual support*, (iv) *learning events and training activities on DLDD*, and (v) *greater capacity to develop publications and to maximize and track their impact*. Conversely, other types of knowledge management services have gathered fewer demands, namely *social networking platforms, extranet platforms and workspaces* to collaborate online within teams in a secure environment, as well as *expert rosters and yellow pages* (annex I, figure 10).

25. In order to match the scope and content of a scientific knowledge brokering function with the expectations of UNCCD constituencies and stakeholders, survey respondents were asked to rank five different knowledge brokering approaches. The model most requested was *knowledge translation and uptake*, described as "*Services, processes and approaches contributing to close the gap between scientists, policy makers, CSOs, practitioners and local communities*". The second type of knowledge brokering model that was most commended is that of a *secondary data clearinghouse*, that is, a "*relay of existing information, data and analysis already produced by other organizations*" (annex I, figure 11).

26. Within the global patterns that emerged among survey respondents, some regional preferences may be highlighted. For instance the demand for teleconferences on DLDD matters is especially high for the Africa and LAC regions. Likewise, requests for field visits are high in Africa and LAC regions. Access to DLDD scientific journals is particularly requested by African and Central and Eastern European countries. Demand for seminars, conferences and workshops is high in Central and Eastern Europe and in Africa. Were adequate capacity available at the regional level, the scientific knowledge brokering system (SKBS) could tailor some of its services offered to the regions so that solutions are more closely matched to regional contexts and the adoption of the SKBS thus optimized. In any case, many of the services that were globally prioritized by survey respondents and that could be transacted by the SKBS (e.g. teleconferences, webcasts,) would require increased ad hoc capacity at the level of regional coordination functions (RCF)/Regional Coordination Units (RCUs) level, not only to promote those services and the SKBS itself but also to offer assistance to national end-users.

27. From a gender perspective, the survey evidenced slightly different knowledge needs and expectations from males and females. The featured knowledge management objective of *not reinventing the wheel* is for instance much more prioritized by females than by males. Similarly, *group meetings*, as well as *seminars and conferences* and *field visits* are more prioritized by females while males demand comparatively greater use of *emails* and the *internet*. As for knowledge products, *how-to guides*, *case studies*, *meeting minutes* and *fact sheets* are proportionately much more requested by females, while males comparatively prioritize *scientific information*, *maps*, *flagship reports* and *analytical papers*. In terms of cross-cutting priorities, females would prioritize a *social networking platform* and an *extranet platform and workspace to collaborate online* while males proportionately emphasize *automated workflows to systematically capture, distil and re-use knowledge* (e.g. *official documentation*, *roster updates*, *technical and advisory service requests*) and *thorough induction procedures and documentation for newcomers to the UNCCD*, as well as *stronger linkages either face-to-face or online between UNCCD partners for collaboration and communications* (e.g. *UNCCD-specific facilitated communities of practice to connect people and enable knowledge sharing either online or through face-to-face workshops*). If ad hoc resources were mobilized, the overall patterns returned by both males and females and priority features of the SKBS could be complemented by additional functionalities, selected from a gender perspective. Similarly, gender specific advocacy tools could eventually be conceived to foster the adoption of the SKBS.

IV. Knowledge management architecture for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

28. The needs assessment returned valuable insights to plan for a knowledge management system and its scientific knowledge brokering component starting with objective setting, which should help in bridging policy, science and practice. Building on the priorities expressed by survey respondents, the overall knowledge management architecture could articulate a framework built on three pillars: “people, processes and technology”, and sets out under each pillar specific activities that respond to the knowledge needs of the UNCCD. The following outline approaches these issues mainly from the viewpoint of the scientific knowledge brokering system (SKBS).

A. People

1. Implementing the knowledge management system

29. Designing, developing and implementing any knowledge management platform requires setting up an ad hoc project governance structure and specific coordination mechanisms. Considering the scope of the SKBS and the various types of stakeholders who would use it, such a governance structure could feature mechanisms that would ensure that expectations from end-users are well embedded in the system. Furthermore, quality assurance principles may be installed to ensure that the outcomes of the system are adequate and reflect the expectations of its users. The secretariat, at the start of the information and communication technology component of the SKBS, would devise a governance structure that would help the system to sustain its potential to deliver its promised value.

30. Launching and maintaining a knowledge management platform require numerous advocacy and communications functions. A communication plan as well as communication tools and marketing materials would be developed to promote the SKBS and become part of a change management package.

2. Connecting to knowledge

31. The results of the needs assessment have indicated that connecting people should be a key feature of the knowledge management system and particularly of the SKBS. The knowledge management model upon which the system should be built is a well-known paradigm referred to as a community of practice. The main objective of this model is to bring together people who share common interests for collective learning, mutual support and global access to local knowledge.

32. Knowledge management models are not exclusive but rather complementary and tend to emphasize some tools and methods over the others. In that sense, communities of practice differ from social networks which tend to focus on smaller groups and an itemization of knowledge through direct relationships between individuals while communities of practice are aimed towards building a broader and common body of knowledge among all members of the community. Communities of practice also differ slightly from pure knowledge codification activities in the sense that they install interactive and dynamic connections between all members of the community in order to enable 'knowledge on demand' that can either complement formal publications or guide their retrieval.

33. Whereas communities of practice are not new to a number of survey respondents, as illustrated by the number of cases returned in the knowledge mapping, no online knowledge network exists that would bind all the stakeholders specifically to the Convention. No UNCCD-related community of practice could replace official communication channels or institutional decision-making processes, but such a community of practice could open new avenues to peer-to-peer discussions and the sharing of personal experience and perspectives. By providing swift access to explicit as well as tacit knowledge, communities of practice could contribute to inform decision makers as well as practitioners and scientists alike, thereby contributing to bridging the know-do gap. They would clearly respond to the priorities expressed through the knowledge needs assessment. However, the CST may wish to consider the extent to which opening and facilitating such horizontal knowledge sharing mechanisms is in accordance with the resource base, functional structure or even the mandate of the UNCCD secretariat.

34. A partial response to the question of the capability of the UNCCD to authorize, or its secretariat to manage, horizontal communication channels such as communities of practice

may be found through further consideration of adapting such models specifically to the key themes or strategic priorities of the Convention. Communities of practice could be created on explicitly defined themes such as ‘National action programme (NAP) alignment’, ‘Impact monitoring on DLDD’, or ‘Economics of drought’, to mention just a few examples. Such communities of practice could serve also as leverage to collect success stories and compile comparative experiences. Another possibility to advance collective learning and access to knowledge could be to partner with existing networks that are willing to be horizontal platforms open to UNCCD stakeholders.

B. Processes

1. Accessing knowledge

35. Demand for scientific journals was consistently high across all types of respondents in the knowledge needs assessment. One cost-effective option for increasing access to scientific journals could be to use the SKBS as a channel to promote the Research4Life programme. This programme grants privileged access to more than 8,000 scientific journals including those that were most frequently recommended by respondents to the knowledge needs assessment. Institutions⁵ from a defined group (“band 1”) of countries⁶ can register with this programme and gain free access to all these journals for their staff.

36. Facilitating access to national or local knowledge and building on existing capacities and knowledge systems has been emphasized since the inception of the SKBS. While a community of practice and email networks linking all members may be an effective channel to mine national or local knowledge, additional mechanisms would need to be included in the SKBS. In particular, the SKBS could embed an extended search engine that would search and index various knowledge systems, including national or local ones, for easier retrieval of local resources.

37. A comprehensive review of new publications, articles and events that are relevant to DLDD is produced bi-weekly by the secretariat but reaches only a limited number of people. This news update, Land Scan (UNCCD Library Information Service), would be shared with all SKBS users.

2. Collecting knowledge

38. Respondents to the knowledge needs assessment stressed the need for a global repository to upload information materials and resources that have been developed locally and that are specifically relevant to DLDD matters. This would require the SKBS to offer a site architecture that reflects selected themes or topics while remaining linked to the outcomes of The Strategy. Accurate categorization of the content published in the SKBS

⁵ Universities and colleges, research institutes, professional schools, extension centres, government offices, local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), hospitals, and national libraries.

⁶ Cf. <<http://www.research4life.org/institutions.html>>; band 1 countries in 2011 are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Kenya, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Moldova, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

would require the secretariat to develop a comprehensive taxonomy and devise a standard metadata set that enables tagging of resources published in the SKBS. The CST may wish to consider what might be the primary knowledge areas to be covered, building on the current priorities in the UNCCD process.⁷ In terms of products, analytical papers, comparative experiences, lessons learned studies, success stories, how-to guides, and policy briefs were highlighted as priorities in the knowledge needs assessment.

39. In order to further benefit from locally developed content and leverage existing local knowledge systems, the SKBS would make strong use of RSS (Rich Site Summary) feeds. In a first phase, the Parties and stakeholders would be invited to enable a feed function on their sites so that the SKBS could pull new local items and aggregate news by country, region and globally. In a second phase, Parties would be invited to add thematic tags to the feeds so that the SKBS could globally aggregate local news according to DLDD themes.

3. Analyzing and codifying new knowledge

40. Among the most needed types of publications by the respondents to the knowledge needs assessment were comparative experience papers, success stories, analytical papers and lessons learned studies. Of these, a good supply of the comparative experience papers and success stories could be generated through the normal functioning of a community of practice when its members seek assistance and request knowledge from other members. The analytical papers or lessons learned studies could require the secretariat to seek partners or other types of external assistance for their development.

41. A publications policy would need to be created to foster the adoption of common standards and know-how among different stakeholders. This policy would provide guidance on various aspects of selected types of publications, including their governance mechanisms, drafting processes, templates, retention schedules and revision procedures. The publication policy could also contain provisions for the selection, dissemination, and eventually the impact assessment of the best practices, which would need to be jointly developed with relevant constituencies and stakeholders.

42. Joint analysis and codification of knowledge should be facilitated by the SKBS. Accordingly, the system could offer mechanisms for joint discussions, revisions and commenting on draft knowledge products.

4. Disseminating and using knowledge

43. Putting knowledge into use is a well-researched subject area that comes with a number of concrete and actionable findings. One overview of such findings is presented in annex II below. Recommendations on disseminating and using knowledge should be mainstreamed in the publications policy in order to further foster knowledge translation and uptake. Such recommendations may foster collaborative mechanisms for content development including face-to-face components that may have cost implications. The CST may wish to guide the secretariat on the extent to which it should move in this direction, beyond the issuance of some key principles and guidelines.

44. The SKBS could open new and specific avenues to disseminate knowledge at the regional level. Among its features could be allowing national Parties to organize regional webcasts, webinars and teleconferences in order to share local or national achievements or solicit regional perspectives and experiences.

⁷ One area in the knowledge needs assessment survey presented a selection of broad themes as possible priority knowledge areas to be covered. Results in this area indicate DLDD, SLM, climate change and food security as such priorities.

C. Technology

45. The software package that will form the ICT backbone of the SKBS is planned to be implemented in phases. The first bundle of ICT features will be designed, developed and integrated over the course of the first year. It is expected to include the following components:

- (a) A search engine that will retrieve content internal and external to the SKBS;
- (b) An online forum that can accommodate spontaneous exchanges as well as moderated and approved messages;
- (c) Web conferencing services to hold webinars and conduct audio or video teleconferences;
- (d) A global content repository (documents, bookmarks, multimedia, news);
- (e) Workspaces to share materials and discuss within a closed group;
- (f) Link with external platforms and databases (e.g. PRAIS) to pull external content into the KMS;
- (g) RSS feeds for a supply of external news;
- (h) A shared calendar.

46. The planned key building block of the site architecture is planned to be the country page that will concentrate relevant national DLDD information. This information may be aggregated from external sources such as the national knowledge systems or it may result from content that national users choose to share and publish directly into the SKBS. The categorization of information, that is, the taxonomy, would be multi-layered so that information may be organized and found by geographic source as well as by thematic area and according to the outcomes of The Strategy. For the country page, it is proposed that each country should designate a manager who has the authority to modify the contents. Each country would have a choice of optional web components for the country page, such as:

- (a) Search facility;
- (b) Document library for limited or more open use;
- (c) Country calendar feeding the global SKBS Calendar;
- (d) Announcements board (pulled into UNCCD global announcements board);
- (e) RSS feed pulling content from country's knowledge systems;
- (f) Pulled or published information on who's who in the country (national focal point, science and technology correspondents, accredited CSO / NGO contact person, national experts).

47. It is anticipated that users of the SKBS will include, at the minimum, national focal points, science and technology correspondents and secretariat staff. The CST may wish to consider the eventual scope of the SKBS membership, keeping in mind that each added user is likely to represent additional transaction and licensing costs.

V. Conclusions

48. The CST may wish to consider recommending to the COP that Parties would:

(a) Take note of the progress made by the secretariat in establishing the comprehensive UNCCD knowledge management system and invite the secretariat to continue with the development of this system as described in the present document;

(b) Commend the secretariat for carrying out the knowledge needs assessment, request the secretariat to use the results of this assessment as guidance for the development of the KMS and its components, including the SKBS, and invite the secretariat to make these results available on the UNCCD website for interested stakeholders;

(c) Request the secretariat to carry out the taxonomy for content categorization, building on existing similar information and categorizations where appropriate and useful;

(d) Request the secretariat to prepare the necessary policies, procedures and guidelines for improving the quality and coherence of information products prepared internally and externally;

(e) Request the secretariat to pilot an interaction model based on the idea of communities of practice on a selected theme;

(f) Request the secretariat to test the implementation of the SKBS at both national and regional level through a pilot implementation exercise on a voluntary basis.

Annex I

[English only]

Results of the knowledge needs assessment

Figure 1

How easy is it for you to retrieve information / knowledge on DLDD matters that is relevant to your specific needs? -By status of respondents-

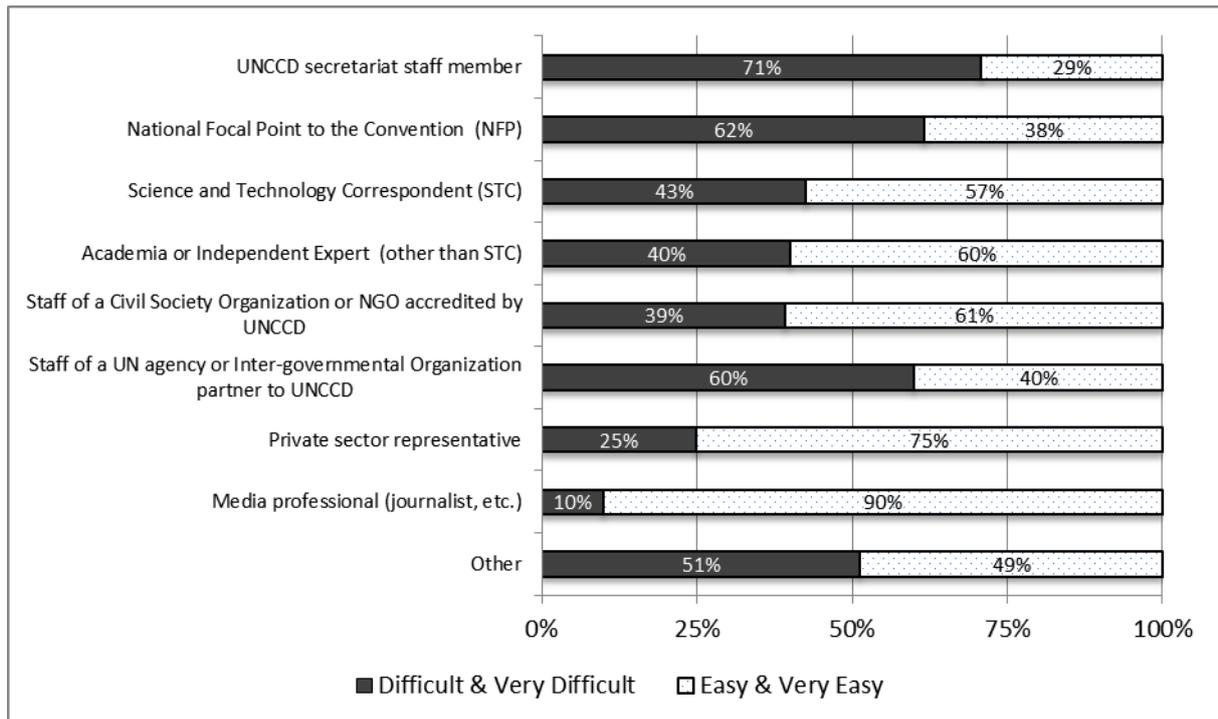


Figure 2

How do you assess the current level of knowledge-sharing and networking on DLDD among all types of stakeholders (e.g. policy makers, scientists, multilateral environmental agreements, CSO/NGOs, etc.)? –By type of respondent-

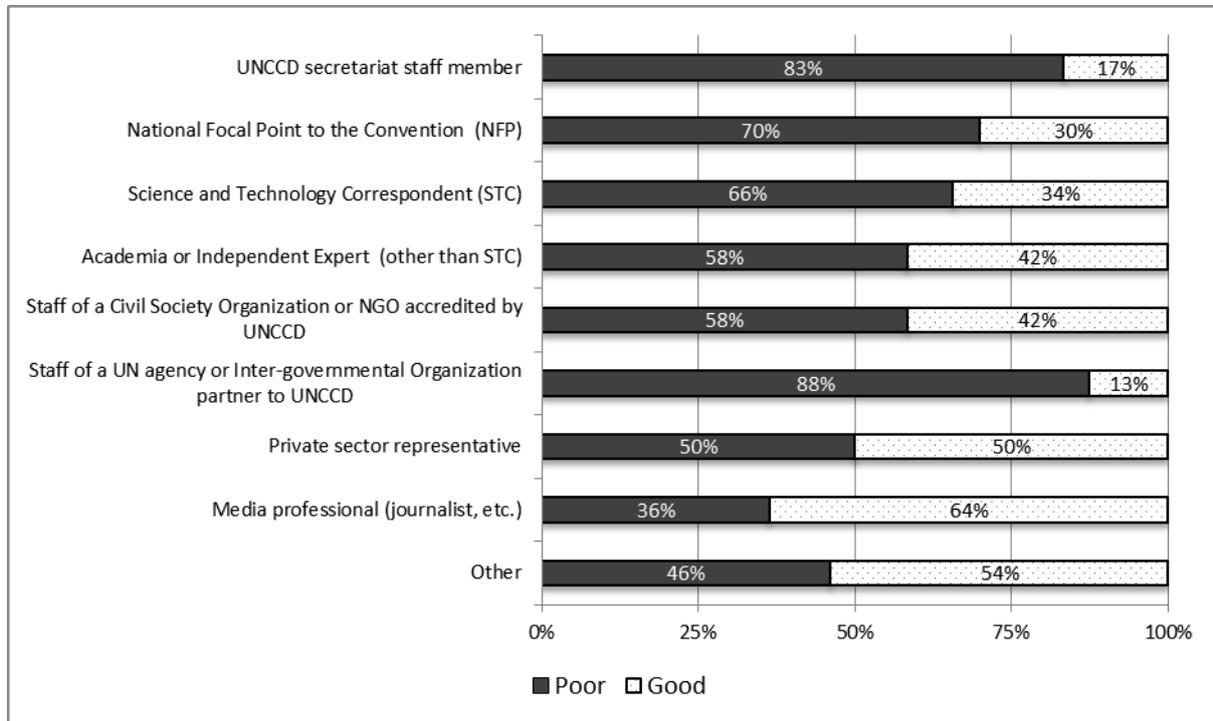


Figure 3

In your view, what should be the top 3 objectives of Knowledge Management at UNCCD?

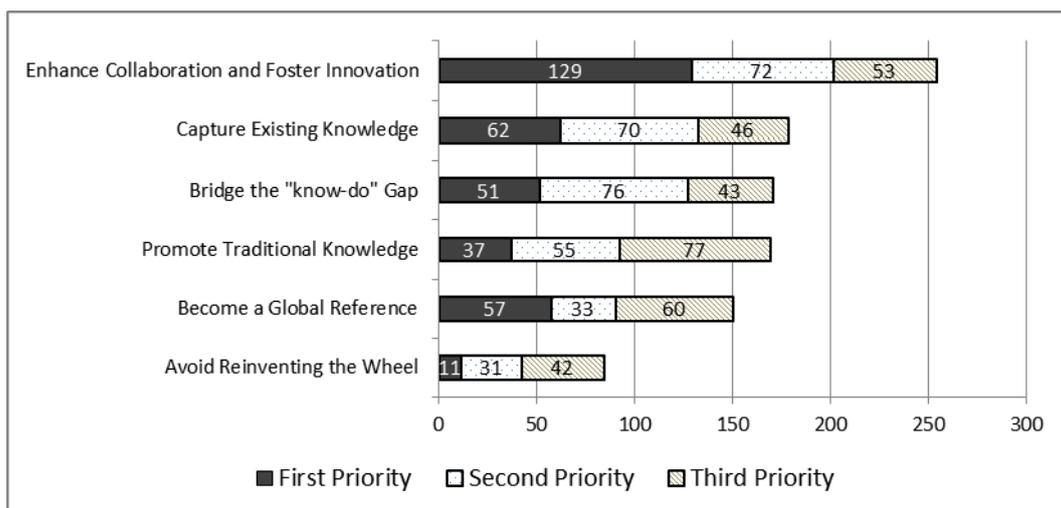


Figure 4
Please choose up to 3 thematic areas about which you think you have solid knowledge to share with others

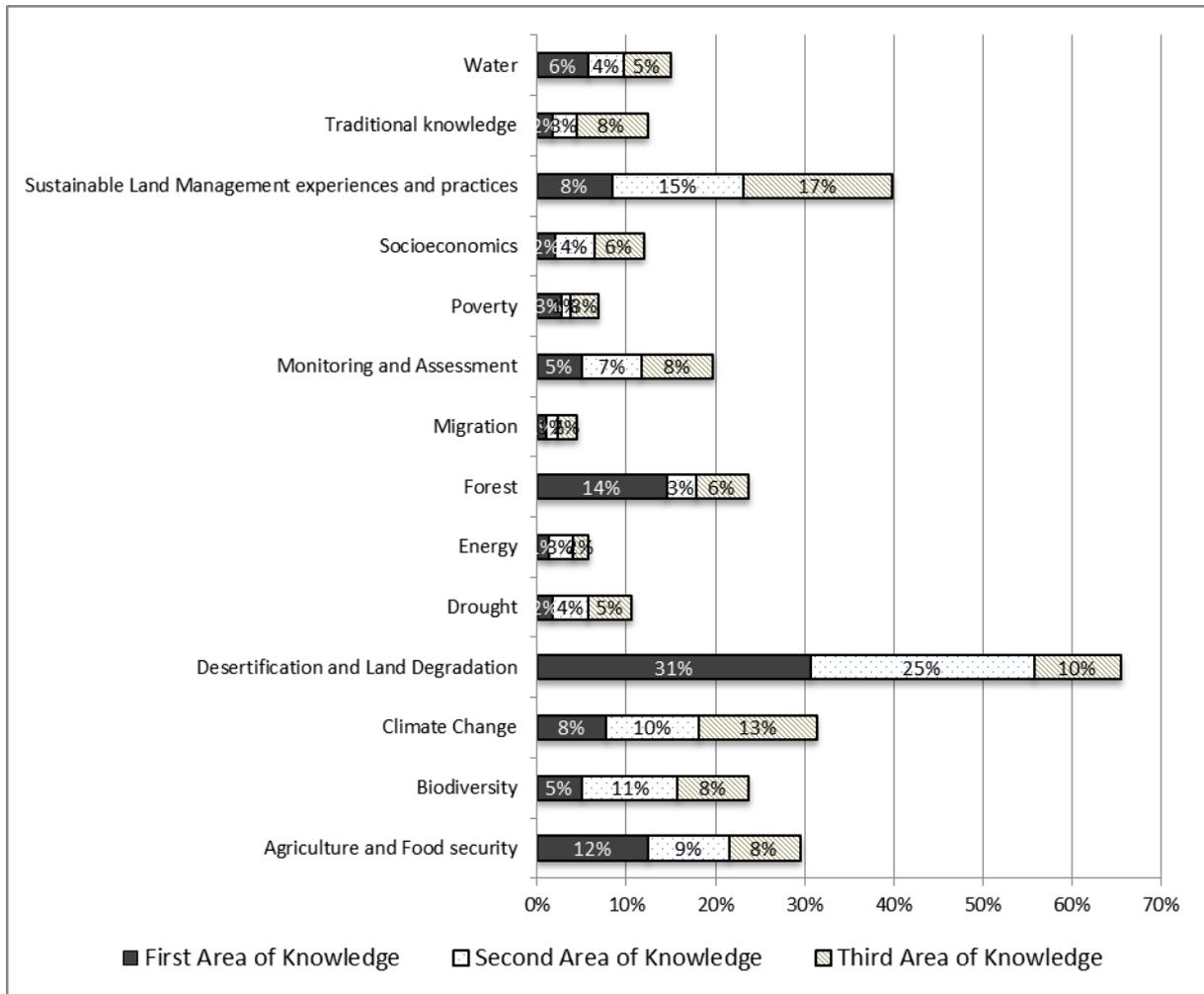


Figure 5
Please choose up to 3 thematic areas on which you would like to gain additional knowledge

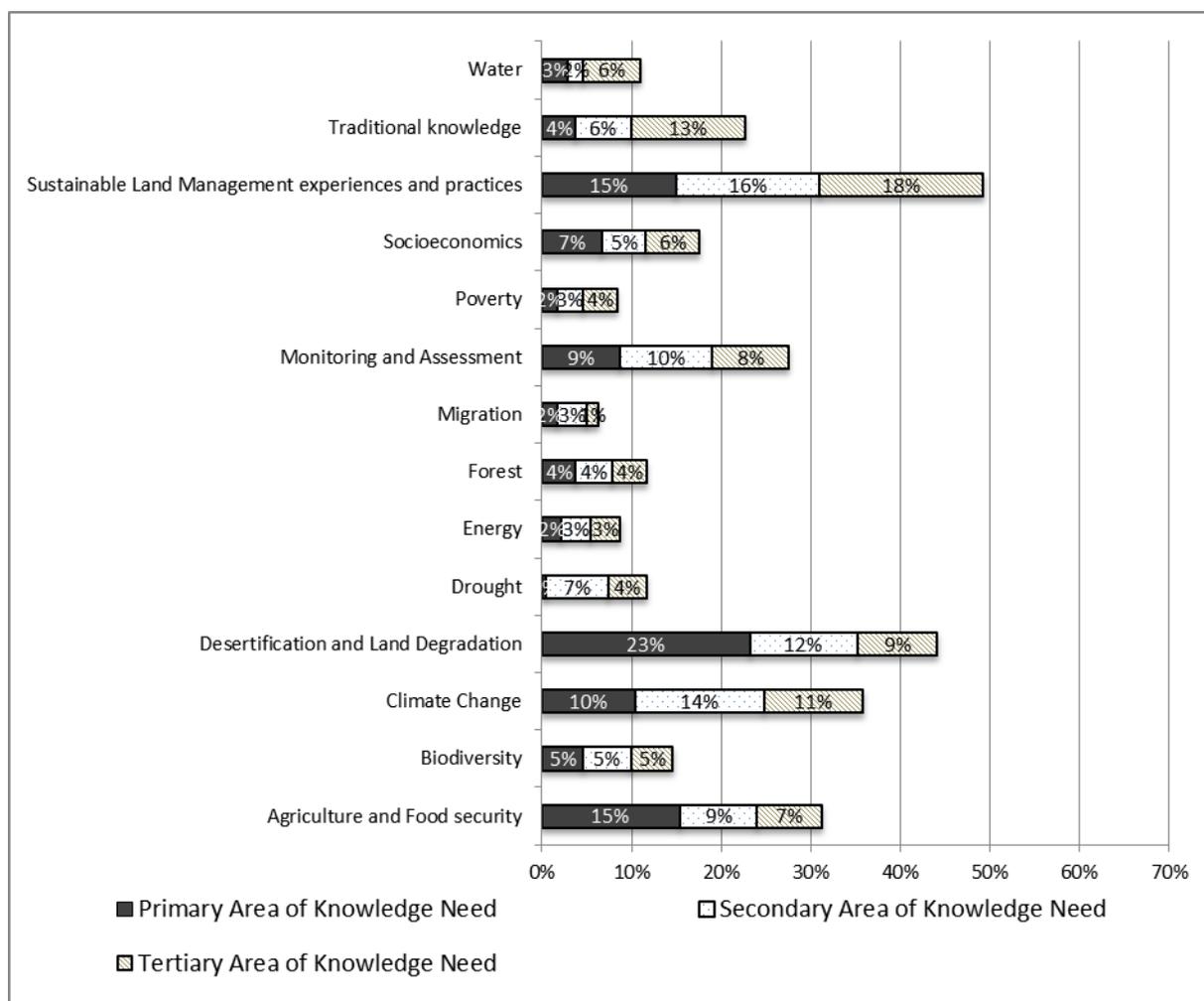


Figure 6
How would you prefer to access these sources of knowledge?

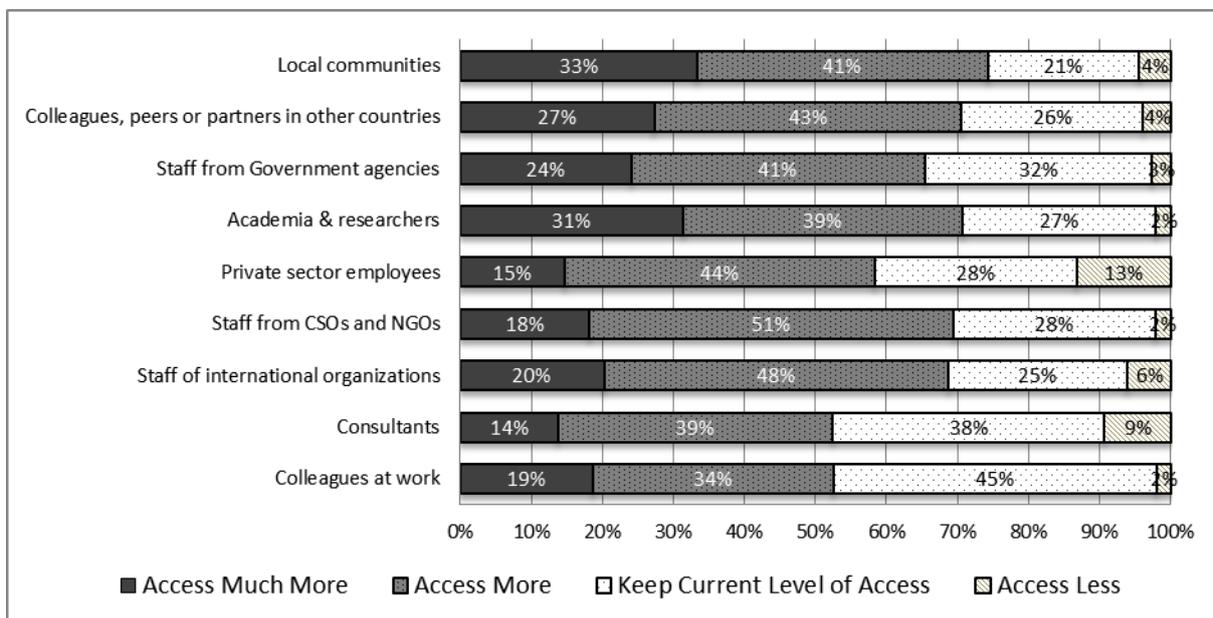


Figure 7
How would you prefer to use these channels to access knowledge?

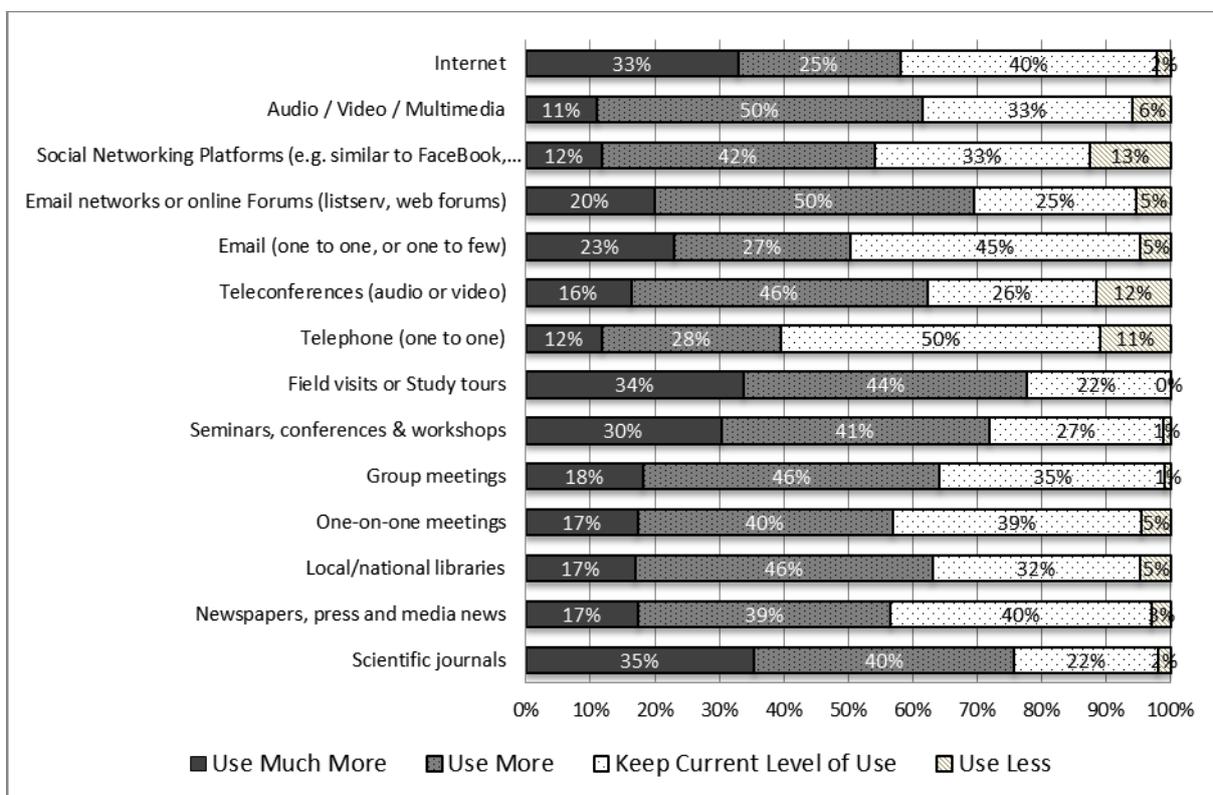


Figure 8
What are the 5 most needed types of information material / knowledge products on DLDD? -Indexed-

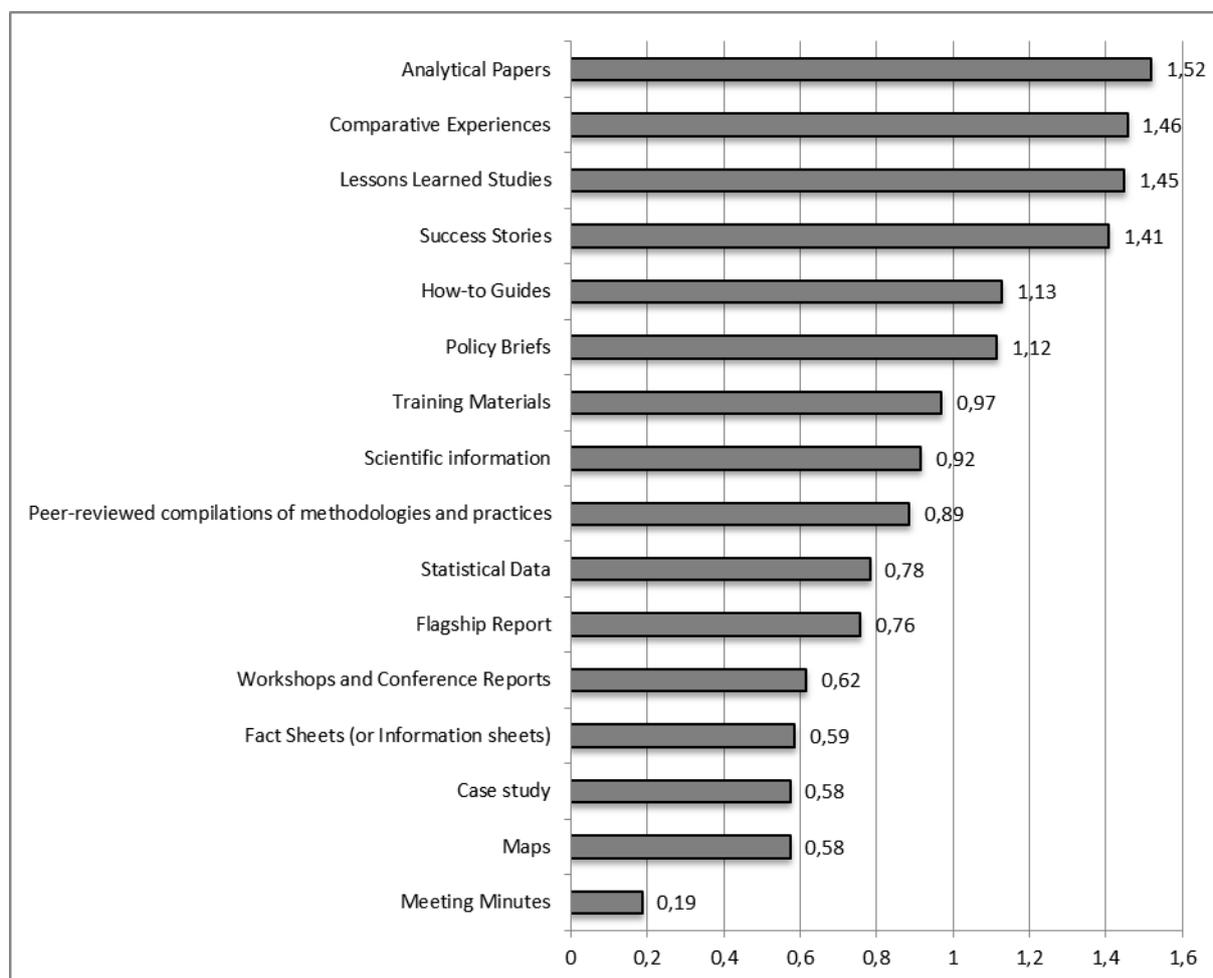


Figure 9
Please tell us how useful these tools would be to your work on DLDD matters -Indexed-

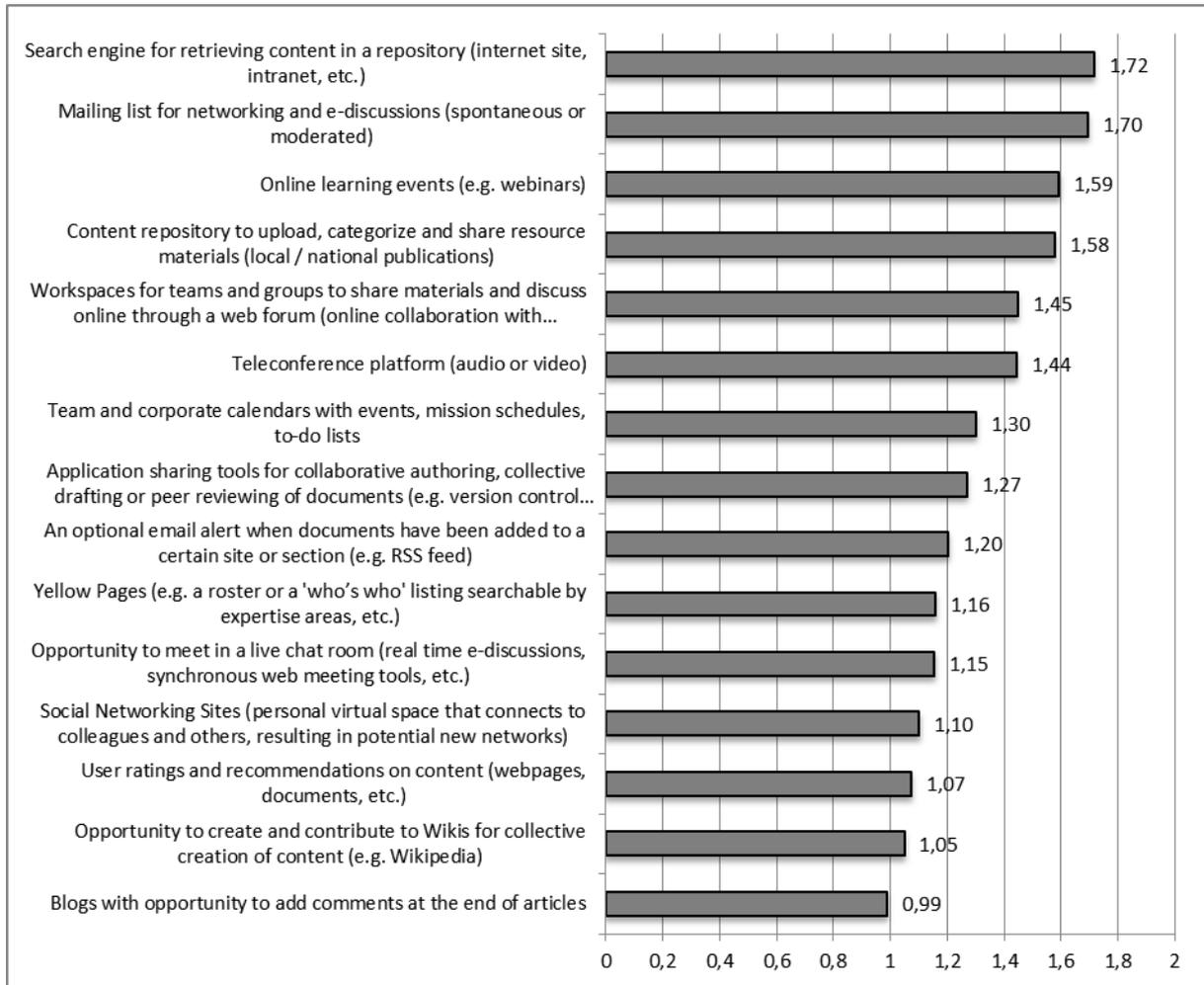


Figure 10
What are the 5 most important knowledge management priorities, which if the UNCCD focused on within the next 2 years, would support your daily work? -Indexed-

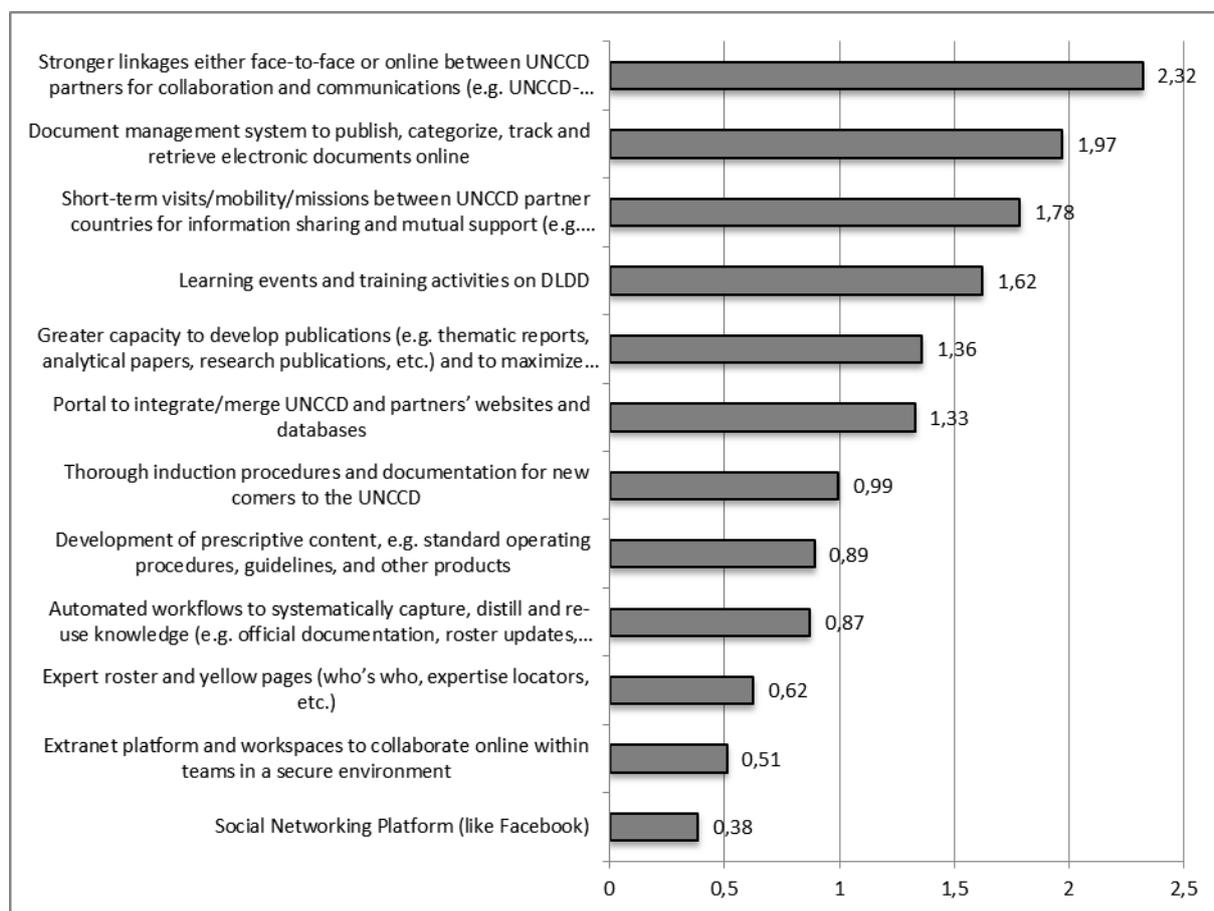
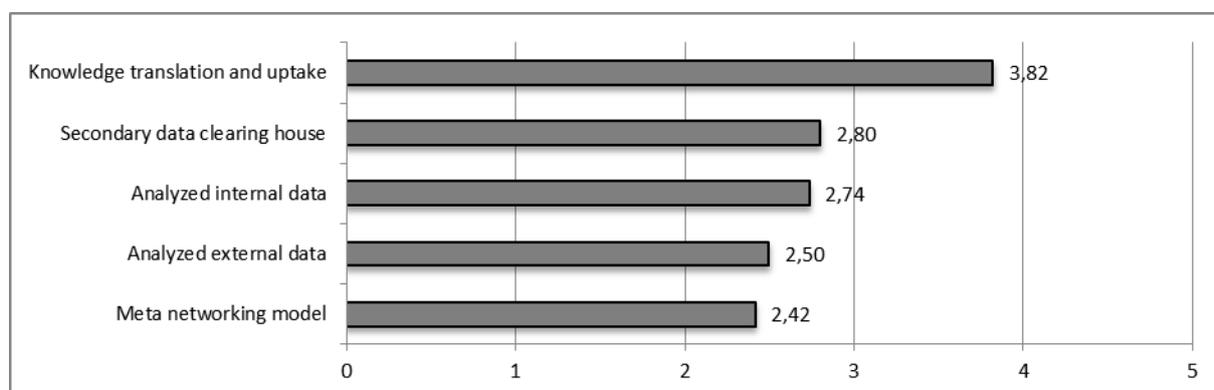


Figure 11
Please tell us how relevant it would be for you to be provided with the following types of knowledge brokering services if capacity was mobilized and means were available to deliver them? -Indexed-



Annex II

Information on knowledge translation and uptake

Research on knowledge translation and uptake highlights the following points (see. National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR), *A Review of the Literature on Dissemination and Knowledge Utilization*, 1996, at <<http://www.researchutilization.org/matrix/resources/review/>>):

Purpose: Knowledge products to be disseminated must address the context and concerns of a potential user's daily life. Knowledge translation is most effective when it responds to real needs and conveys practice in the real world. The strongest barrier to research utilization is the perceived non-practical focus of research reports.

Process: Knowledge products must be developed with end-users as active agents in determining and informing how they will make use of these materials. Potential users should be involved in the project from the beginning, with ongoing and substantial interaction between developers and users. Users' involvement should be arranged during at least four phases: (1) before the study is conducted, "where scope is negotiated and the target public's preexisting knowledge is assessed," (2) during the study, "where members of the target public are involved in reviewing findings and determining how findings might best be presented," (3) "during analysis and write-up, when a dissemination plan is developed and the implications of the findings for challenging local norms are examined," and (4) after the study, when "the study findings are brought directly to the user organization."

People: The source of information disseminated is more important to users than the content of the information. Users tend to accept assistance, information, and ideas from sources they know and trust: expertise is less important than trustworthiness in obtaining audience support. Persons from different racial and cultural backgrounds have varied means of obtaining information and varied sources that they trust. People with strong social networks are more likely to adopt an innovation sooner. When a critical mass of individuals (more or less 20 per cent) has adopted an innovation, the innovation's further rate of adoption becomes self-sustaining.

Product: When researchers actively gear their work towards its use by specific groups, research utilization is improved. A primary cause of negative attitudes about researchers and lack of use of research outcomes stems from language differences between the communities of researchers and users. Materials must be comprehensible by the intended audience and avoid obscure jargon. However, there is no obvious relationship between quality of content and use: dissemination is more influential than quality for knowledge uptake. Effective knowledge uptake is favored by materials emphasizing positive behavior more than negative consequences of current behavior, and stressing current rewards rather than distant negative consequences.

Promotion: Mass media channels are most important in creating awareness-knowledge, while interpersonal communication channels with peers, and the frequency of these personal contacts, are most effective in persuading to try an innovation. Multifaceted interventions, a combination of methods including two or more interventions, seemed to be more effective than single interventions. The larger the number of recipient organizations targeted, the lower the resulting impact is likely to be. The impact on small and homogeneous target groups must be amplified so that the ultimate scale of improvements is enlarged.

Project management: Organizations are more effective in disseminating knowledge products and services with a high impact on practitioners when they are organized towards this end. Management must give dissemination a reasonably strong and clear place in the mission of the organization. The value of providing information, technical assistance, and staff development services must be internalized within the subculture of the organization to a point where all staff identify with the value. Dissemination specialists must not be sequestered and compartmentalized but integrated into the applied research, policy planning, development and evaluation functions of the organization as a whole, as well as into its status structure. Accountability for impact and rewards for its attainment must be part of the operational code of the organization. Staff time and financial resources are required for effective knowledge translation. Research projects need to allocate a percentage of project time and resources to dissemination activities –e.g. 12%–.

Performance: A number of studies also point out the need to anchor knowledge translation into accountability and efficiency principles by attaching a monitoring and evaluation framework to the development of knowledge products. While the principles of using indicators and targets are sometimes mentioned, examples of actionable results frameworks attached to knowledge products are scarce.
