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Post-2015 development agenda: implications for the UNCCD

Report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Land Degradation Neutrality

Integration of the sustainable development goals and targets into the implementation of the UNCCD

Integration of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets into the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Land Degradation Neutrality

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This document is composed of two parts. Part I is the report and proposal of the Executive Secretary as requested in decision 8/COP.11 and decision 12/COP.11, respectively. Part II is the report of the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) on the follow-up to Rio+20 containing its main findings on land degradation neutrality. The report of the IWG is submitted to Parties for final consideration at the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth session (COP 12).

Decision 8/COP.11 requests the Executive Secretary to report to COP 12 on the implementation of this decision. This decision specifically tasks the IWG with producing a science-based definition of land degradation neutrality and elaborating the options and implications for its implementation within the Convention while taking note of, inter alia, the ongoing process of elaborating the post-2015 development agenda.

As requested in decision 12/COP.11 and due to the strategic relevance of the Sustainable Development Goals, the report of the IWG and the opinions of the Parties at the thirteenth Session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, part I of this document proposes, for consideration at COP 12, a process and potential terms of reference for developing plans to further improve the implementation of the Convention.

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I. Integration of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets into the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

A. Background

1. In recognition of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) (Rio+20) contained in The future we want (General Assembly resolution 66/288) which, inter alia, calls upon Member States to “strive to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world in the context of sustainable development”, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) adopted decision 8/COP.11 creating an Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG) to follow up on the Rio+20 outcomes related to land degradation neutrality (LDN).

2. The IWG held three in-person meetings during the inter-sessional period with the generous support of the European Commission, and the Governments of Korea, China and Italy. In June 2015, the IWG co-chairs submitted their advance draft report to the secretariat which was then transmitted to the COP Bureau before its meeting on 16 June 2015. At the same time, the report was sent for consideration by the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC). The report of the IWG, presented in its entirety in part II of this document, is a consensus text, agreed to by nominated representatives from the five United Nations regional groups, which fulfils the mandate assigned to it as per decision 8/COP.11.

3. The report of the IWG provides options, not specific recommendations, for including voluntary LDN targets as part of a strategic reorientation to improve the implementation of the Convention. At the same time, decision 12/COP.11 requests the Executive Secretary to propose, for consideration at COP 12, a process and potential terms of reference for developing plans to further improve the implementation of the Convention. The rationale, conclusions and recommendations in this note draw from the report of the IWG and Parties at CRIC 13 who have already elaborated options and expressed opinions on this matter.

B. The Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

4. As mandated by world leaders at Rio+20, the process to develop an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was agreed to by the United Nations General Assembly and an open working group was established in January 2013. To support the intergovernmental process, a United Nations Technical Support Team (TST) was created with the main task of preparing Issues Briefs, harmonizing the views of the United Nations system on themes to be considered by the open working group.

5. As the TST lead organization on desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD), the UNCCD secretariat presented an inter-agency Issues brief at the third session of the open working group, held from 22 to 24 May 2013. This brief formed the basis for discussions on DLDD issues which included a stocktaking exercise, recommendations for a SDG and targets, and proposals for a way forward. This and other encouraging signs within the intergovernmental process provided the rationale for establishing the IWG to help create and benefit from synergies with the post-2015 development agenda with the aim of enhancing the implementation of the Convention.

6. In undertaking its work, the IWG took note, inter alia, of the ongoing process of elaborating the post-2015 development agenda, including the discussions in the OWG. In August 2014 the report of the open working group on SDGs was formally adopted by General Assembly resolution A/68/970. This report of the open working group includes Goal 15 which states:

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

7. And target 15.3 which states:

By 2020, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world.

8. In deliberating its first task, the IWG agreed that a science-based definition of LDN should not expand the scope or mandate of the Convention but the majority view was that it should be based on sound science and universally applicable. The IWG thus asked the COP to reflect on their proposed definition as well as the bracketed text contained within:

Land Degradation Neutrality [in affected areas][in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas] is a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources, necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security, remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems.

9. This state can be achieved by the prevention or mitigation of land degradation, the adoption of sustainable land management policies and practices, and the recovery of degraded land.

10. While the IWG did not make any specific recommendations in its report, they emphasized that the options for formulating and achieving a national target on LDN, as defined above, are as numerous and diverse as the contexts in which they might be applied. The most appropriate combination of options will vary depending upon:

- (a) The drivers, types, degree and extent of land degradation;
- (b) The underlying potential and resilience of land resources;
- (c) National circumstances, priorities and capacities.

11. The IWG considered that the adoption of a SDG on DLDD and an LDN target would represent both a challenge and an opportunity for the Convention. The IWG feels that the current system of national action programmes (NAPs) could be retained as an appropriate way for countries to achieve voluntary national targets on LDN. In terms of operationalizing a national target on LDN, the IWG stressed that policy, regulatory or institutional barriers, and the reasons for them, should be identified prior to establishing new policy and national governance frameworks. It was concluded that the implementation and monitoring of an LDN target by the Parties should be country-driven, aspirational and voluntary, in the spirit of the SDGs.

12. Furthermore, the IWG, taking into account that the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) (The Strategy) has only two years remaining and that it is consistent with the objectives of LDN, sees no useful purpose in amending The Strategy at this stage. Conversely, some Parties at CRIC 13 recommended that:

- (a) The Strategy be revised and extended to cover the period 2016–2030 in line with the SDGs;

(b) The revision of The Strategy incorporates new developments in processes relating to LDN, adaptation to climate change and synergies in line with other Rio conventions and the development of common indicators.

13. As requested in decision 12/COP.11, the Executive Secretary reflects on the report of the IWG and opinions of the Parties at CRIC 13 in proposing a process and potential terms of reference for developing plans to further improve the implementation of the Convention. As this note by the secretariat, including the IWG report, was drafted and translated before the adoption of the SDGs and associated targets, it does not intend to prejudge or anticipate the expected outcomes of the United Nations Summit on the post-2015 development agenda that will be held from 25 to 27 September 2015. The COP will be provided with a full updated briefing of these outcomes prior to its twelfth session so that they may be fully taken into consideration when discussing this note.

C. Conclusions and recommendations

14. The international community has proposed an SDG specifically addressing DLDD and an LDN target that builds upon the outcomes of Rio+20, The future we want, where the UNCCD is also called upon “to take coordinated action nationally, regionally and internationally, to monitor, globally, land degradation and restore degraded lands in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas”. In this regard, the UNCCD secretariat continues to make contributions to the ongoing work on developing a global indicator for land degradation based on the UNCCD’s progress indicators, with a view to developing common indicators for the Rio conventions.

15. The adoption of an SDG on DLDD and a target on LDN by the General Assembly, will present opportunities for countries to benefit from increased awareness and investments in sustainable land management and restoration from both private and public sources. In this regard, the report of the IWG and Parties at CRIC 13 present various options for creating incentives and mobilizing resources in the context of the Convention. The UNCCD secretariat and the Global Mechanism (GM) are currently developing the LDN fund, a public-private investment platform to help ensure adequate, predictable and timely financial resources for large-scale rehabilitation activities.

16. Therefore, Parties may wish to consider in their deliberations the adoption of a target on LDN as the primary vehicle for driving implementation of the Convention and achieving its priority objectives as currently formulated in The Strategy. In addition, the Parties may wish to consider endorsing the definition of LDN as proposed by the IWG with the aim of furthering the UNCCD’s custodianship of the LDN target and increasing synergies with the post-2015 development agenda and the other Rio conventions.

17. The terms of reference for developing plans to further the implementation of the UNCCD’s existing strategy would include prioritizing assistance to countries in setting national LDN targets within the context of sustainable development and creating an enabling environment for their implementation and monitoring. Furthermore, Parties may wish to consider a 2016–2030 time horizon in their deliberations on how to develop these plans.

18. Parties may wish to consider the following elements in making a decision on adopting the LDN target to improve the implementation of the Convention, taking into account the SDGs, the report of the IWG and the opinions of Parties as expressed at CRIC 13.

19. The Parties are called upon to:

(a) Welcome the General Assembly's adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, including the SDGs and targets, in particular target 15.3 which states:

By 2020, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world;

(b) Recognize that the LDN target addresses the primary strategic objective of the Convention, namely to mitigate the drivers and impacts of DLDD;

(c) Further recognize that achieving national LDN targets would significantly contribute to all three dimensions of sustainable development via the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land resources;

(d) Acknowledge that the LDN target could provide the basis for a process and potential terms of reference for developing plans to further improve the implementation of the Convention;

(e) Further acknowledge the important work done by the IWG to produce a science-based definition, and elaborate the options and implications of LDN for the Convention;

(f) Endorse a science-based definition of LDN based on the report of the IWG;

(g) Reaffirm their obligation to adopt and implement the commitments made by their national governments on DLDD issues and that joint action of the international community is needed;

(h) Encourage the UNCCD secretariat and the GM to seek the resources needed to further scale up the LDN project to include all countries that wish to participate;

(i) Take note of the GM's continuing work to facilitate the establishment of an LDN fund as an investment platform by which to finance large-scale rehabilitation activities that contribute to national LDN targets;

(j) Welcome the UNCCD's new flagship publication, the *Global Land Outlook*, to provide policy-relevant and strategic assessments that help prioritize, implement and monitor sustainable land management practices and ecosystem restoration to achieve national LDN targets.

20. Affected country Parties are invited to:

(a) Formulate voluntary targets to achieve LDN according to their specific national circumstances and development priorities, and taking into account the list of options for operationalizing LDN at the national level as outlined by the IWG;

(b) Use the monitoring and evaluation approach, including the progress indicators, adopted in decision 22/COP.11 to monitor, evaluate and communicate progress towards achieving the LDN target;

(c) Explore options on how to integrate the LDN target with their NAPs and/or their national sustainable development plans and priorities;

(d) Transform the LDN target into an effective vehicle for financing large-scale implementation by creating incentives, mobilizing resources and leveraging investments that address DLDD issues.

21. Developed country Parties, other governments, private sector, civil society organizations (CSOs), and technical and financial institutions are invited to:

(a) Provide the scientific, technical and financial assistance to help affected country Parties to prioritize the setting of national LDN targets and create the enabling environment for their implementation and monitoring;

(b) Increase the financial resources made available to and by the Global Environment Facility that are dedicated to enabling activities that make further progress towards national LDN targets;

(c) Establish equitable partnerships that encourage responsible investments and practices by the private sector, including sustainable value chains, which contribute to achieving LDN and create enduring institutions that support the health and productivity of the land and its people.

22. The Executive Secretary, GM and subsidiary bodies are requested to:

(a) Develop options for scaling up, and scaling out, successful experiences and lessons learned from the ongoing LDN project and other relevant initiatives, and in conjunction with partners working on the *Global Land Outlook*;

(b) Develop options for increasing incentives and financial support, including from market and non-market options (such as the creation of an LDN fund), to be made available for the full realization of national LDN targets;

(c) Explore how they could further develop partnerships with other organizations to provide scientific and technical support to the Parties by, inter alia, developing a “user guide” for implementing LDN at the country level.

23. The Executive Secretary is requested to:

(a) Support the development of guidance for formulating national LDN targets, including the identification, development and implementation of policy reforms, investment and incentive mechanisms, and capacity building initiatives to address DLDD;

(b) Make options available to Parties, for the integration of national LDN targets with the NAPs and, at the same time, align NAPs with their national sustainable development plans;

(c) Further develop and facilitate the use of the UNCCD indicator framework to monitor, evaluate and communicate progress towards the national LDN targets;

(d) Improve the effectiveness of collaboration with the other Rio conventions and other partners at national, subregional and regional levels to support the implementation and monitoring of LDN targets;

(e) Report to the COP at its thirteenth session on progress made in implementing this decision.

II. Report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Land Degradation Neutrality

A. Introduction

24. In recognition of the outcomes of the (UNCSD) (Rio+20) contained in The future we want (General Assembly resolution 66/288) which, inter alia, calls upon Member States to strive to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world in the context of sustainable

development, the COP adopted decision 8/COP.11 to establish an IWG to follow up on the outcomes related to LDN.

25. The IWG was given three specific tasks, namely to:

- (a) Establish a science-based definition of land degradation neutrality in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas;
- (b) Develop options relating to arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas that Parties might consider should they strive to achieve land degradation neutrality;
- (c) Advise the Convention on the implications for its current and future strategy, programmes and the resource requirements.

26. In establishing this IWG, a number of Contracting Parties were concerned that it was potentially premature to reflect on the implications of the expected SDGs before they were adopted and it was therefore stressed that, in undertaking its work, the IWG should also take note of the following, inter alia:

- (a) The ongoing process of elaborating the post-2015 development agenda, including, inter alia, the discussions in the open working group on SDGs called for at the UNCCD;
- (b) Relevant economic studies and work undertaken by the Science-Policy Interface (SPI), as appropriate;
- (c) The importance of identifying synergies to avoid duplication among the Rio conventions, other international bodies, and agencies addressing environment and development issues.

27. The COP also decided that the IWG should prepare a report to be submitted to the COP Bureau no later than 60 days before the twelfth session of the COP and that this report should be sent for consideration by the CST and the CRIC prior to the twelfth session of the COP. In accordance with the above terms of reference, this information note contains the report of the IWG which presents its main findings, conclusions and recommendations on the follow-up to the outcomes of Rio+20. This report is submitted to Parties for consideration at COP 12.

28. Decision 8/COP.11 further specified that the IWG would consist of a maximum of five representatives from each region, nominated by the respective regional groups on the basis of nominations by national governments. Following the nomination of the regional representatives, the IWG met for the first time in Brussels, Belgium from 10 to 11 February 2014 to establish its terms of reference and programme of work. During this first meeting, the IWG appointed Mr. Nicholas Hanley of the European Union and Mr. Bongani Simon Masuku of Swaziland as their co-chairs. In addition, it was agreed that three task forces would be formed to address the three specific tasks contained in paragraph 1 of decision 8/COP.11. Each task force was led by its own coordinator: task force 1 on the definition was led by Mr. German Kust of Russia, task force 2 on the options was led by Ms. Jia Xiaoxia of China, and task force 3 on the implications was led by Ms. Belsis Llorente of Cuba. The IWG met again in Beijing, China from 16 to 18 July 2014 and in Rome, Italy from 18 to 20 March 2015 for a total of three meetings.

29. The members of task forces 1 and 2 corresponded by e-mail to produce working documents for discussion at the second meeting of the IWG in Beijing. Subsequently, a three month consultation period from 1 August to 31 October 2014 was opened in order to solicit comments from the UNCCD Parties, CSOs and observers to get a broader opinion on the working documents of task forces 1 and 2. During that period, comments were received from nine country Parties and the CST's SPI. Prior to the third meeting of the IWG in Rome, and taking into account the comments received, the coordinators of task

forces 1 and 2 revised their working documents and presented them in order to achieve consensus. At the third meeting, the coordinator of task force 3 circulated its working document for discussion.

30. Before presenting the report of the IWG, the co-chairs would like to draw your attention to a number of issues. The first of these relates to the status of the SDGs. During the period of the IWG's work, considerable progress was made in the United Nations process taking place in New York regarding the elaboration of a set of SDGs. The IWG has taken note of the results of the United Nation's open working group and the recommendations of the Secretary General. At the time of finalizing this report, the SDGs were still in their preparatory phase. However, it appeared clear that the proposed inclusion of a target on LDN under the proposed SDG 15 was likely to be agreed. As the General Assembly is expected to approve the SDGs as part of the post-2015 development agenda in September 2015, the reserved language as to the status of this potential target in our report will therefore become outdated prior to COP 12 in October 2015. In considering the findings of our report and its recommendations, the COP will be fully apprised of the final outcomes on the SDGs.

31. The second key issue relates to the scope of the science-based definition that we have formulated in the context of the first task. As you will see, the IWG's definition contains text in square brackets referring either to "affected areas" or to "arid, semi-arid and dry, sub-humid areas". This arose from a difference of opinion on the part of the IWG members which was unable to be resolved by any alternative formulation. The majority of the IWG considered that the definition did not require square brackets since they considered that the definition proposed was applicable to all land types. A minority of IWG members argued that such a universal definition was going beyond the mandate of the group and that of the Convention which is restricted in the Convention text to "arid, semi-arid and dry, sub-humid areas". The majority view was that a universal definition without the text in brackets was scientifically sound and should in no way be seen to be a challenge to the mandate of the Convention. Furthermore, the majority felt that it was clearly up to Contracting Parties to apply the definition at their discretion to areas beyond the scope of the Convention. The COP is therefore invited to reflect on this issue.

32. Finally, with regard to the IWG's recommendations on tasks 2 and 3, the IWG sees the need for the Convention to work closely with other organizations in order to contribute to a collective response to the global challenge of land degradation and to achieving LDN. The recommendations under task 3, in particular, call for a "collective partnership" which identifies a key role for the UNCCD, while not suggesting that the Convention should expand its remit to an exclusive role in addressing LDN in all areas.

B. A science-based definition of land degradation neutrality in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas

1. Preamble

33. In accordance with decision 8/COP.11, and consistent with the text of the Convention, the IWG has produced a science-based definition of LDN in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas for consideration by Parties at COP 12. This definition is suggested by the IWG as equally applicable to other areas.

34. LDN, in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, as a goal to maintain or improve the condition of land, is applicable at the national, sub-national and local levels taking into consideration the circumstances and capacities of each Party. LDN may contribute to maintaining or improving ecosystem services for the social, economic, and environmental benefit of current and future generations. LDN occurs as the result of a combination of

avoiding or reducing the rate of land degradation and increasing the rate of recovery. LDN can occur naturally or due to adequate land management.

2. Definition

35. Land degradation neutrality [in affected areas][in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas] is a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security remain stable or increase within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems.

C. Options relating to arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas that Parties might consider to achieve land degradation neutrality

1. Preamble

36. Taking note of the final report of the open working group on SDGs and other relevant studies, the IWG has produced the following recommendation on the options that Parties might wish to consider should they strive to achieve LDN [in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas], [and at their discretion, other areas]. This can be achieved by the prevention of land degradation and the adoption of sustainable land management and recovery of degraded land.

37. The options for achieving LDN, as defined by the IWG, are as numerous and diverse as the contexts in which they might be applied. The most appropriate combination of options will vary depending upon:

- (a) the drivers, types, degree and extent of land degradation;
- (b) the underlying potential and resilience of land resources;
- (c) national circumstances, priorities and capacities.

2. Management options at the national level

(a) Prevent, avoid or minimize land degradation. Preventing future land degradation can be addressed through, inter alia:

- (i) national and local land use planning that fully accounts for the potential and resilience of land resources;
- (ii) the adoption of sustainable land management practices in a given location;

(b) Rehabilitate or restore degraded land to improve environmental quality and to support sustainable food production by reducing the drivers and impacts of current land degradation processes and by the implementation of projects and other measures for rehabilitation and recovery.

3. Policy options at the national level

- (a) Integrate LDN into the current NAP;
- (b) Integrate LDN into new NAPs developed to align with the next 10 year strategy;
- (c) Develop an LDN implementation plan that complements the current NAP.

4. Options for operationalizing land degradation neutrality at the national level

38. Achieving LDN [in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas] [and at the discretion of Parties in other areas] may be facilitated by the following non-exhaustive list of interlinked activities. Parties may consider that these measures are of value in implementing the options outlined above for achieving LDN:

- (a) Define the spatial scales and functional units for LDN implementation;
- (b) Assess the type and extent and diagnose the degree of land degradation to establish baselines;
- (c) Identify the drivers of land degradation and ways to reduce or eliminate them;
- (d) Identify and implement land management practices based on the assessments, diagnosis and persistence of drivers;
- (e) Develop and implement appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems, including methodologies and indicators for assessing progress towards LDN and its benefits;
- (f) Establish policy and national governance frameworks, as appropriate, that put in place, as necessary, the legal instruments, institutional and technical capacities, incentive mechanisms, and facilitate engagement and partnerships;
- (g) Incorporate LDN recommended options into national sustainable development strategies and other relevant plans and programmes to ensure multi-sectoral cooperation, including synergies with biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation [and mitigation], and the adequate flow of financial resources. The development of a national integrated financial strategy may be a useful mechanism for achieving LDN;
- (h) Leverage and share traditional and local knowledge, as well as modern technologies, best practices, experiences and lessons learned from relevant projects and programmes, including drought resilience, preparedness and mitigation;
- (i) Develop comprehensive public awareness and education strategies at all levels to effectively promote and communicate sustainable land use and management with all stakeholders, especially youth and rural women who play a critical role in enhancing sustainable agriculture and rural development as well as local and indigenous communities. This could include both traditional and non-traditional education strategies.

D. Advice to the Convention on the implications for its current and future strategy, programmes and the resource requirements

1. Preamble

39. The third task in decision 8/COP.11 mandates the IWG to advise on the implications of LDN for the Convention's current and future strategy, programmes and resource requirements. At the time of the drafting of these recommendations, the IWG was not aware of the possible SDGs and targets that might be related to LDN and their means of implementation, nor of monitoring frameworks that may be agreed by the General Assembly. In considering this element, the IWG recalls to the COP that the objectives of the Convention and its existing operation are fully consistent with the objective of LDN.

2. Implications for the current strategy

40. The current strategy of the Convention has only two years left to run. Given that it is consistent with the objectives of LDN but does not fulfil all of its components, the IWG sees no useful purpose in amending The Strategy at this stage.

3. Implications for the future work and strategy of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

41. The IWG considers that the adoption of an SDG incorporating an LDN target by the General Assembly would represent a challenge and opportunity for the Convention, to improve its effectiveness in assisting Parties in their implementation of the objectives of the Convention in the pursuit of LDN. In organizing its future work, the Convention has a number of options, including the following:

(a) Prepare a new 10-year strategy that includes LDN to follow on from the current strategy 2008–2018;

(b) In lieu of a 10-year strategy develop, at each COP, work programmes with the length of each programme based on the objectives and the nature of the activities.

42. In the current 10-year strategy, the Convention has sought to work in partnership with other bodies whose objectives are supportive of the implementation of the Convention objectives to halt desertification and land degradation. The IWG recommends that the Convention should, in the event that the General Assembly establishes an LDN target and timeline, explore how it could further develop its partnerships with other bodies to contribute to this objective.

43. With respect to the relation between the Convention and the Parties, the IWG believes that the current system of NAPs should be retained as an appropriate way for countries to strive to achieve LDN. However, if Parties decide that they wish to establish a national LDN plan or include this within a national sustainable development plan, the Convention should be prepared to accept the submissions by Parties of such plans in lieu of a stand-alone NAP.

4. Implications for programmes (including the Committee on Science and Technology, the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and the Science-Policy Interface)

44. The implementation of LDN by the Parties should be country-driven, aspirational and voluntary. The UNCCD, its subsidiary bodies (CST-SPI, CRIC and the GM) and partners may play an important role in supporting countries to develop and implement effective plans and programmes for achieving LDN.

45. Based on the options for operationalizing LDN at the national level, the CST-SPI, CRIC and GM are well positioned to address LDN, in accordance with their respective mandates, in particular by providing the scientific and technical support for Parties. In the planning of resources for the next biennium, the COP may give consideration to granting adequate resources to the Convention bodies to help them fulfil this task.

46. There is also a need to explore ways on how to develop efficient cooperation between the SPI and other relevant scientific bodies such as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform (IPBES), the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Global Environment Facility Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (GEF-STAP).

5. Implications for resource requirements

47. Future national and sub-national efforts on achieving the LDN goal need the appropriate means of implementation, that is:

- (a) First and foremost, better use and refocusing of existing resources;
- (b) Additional, new financial resources;
- (c) [Reference to or cut and paste para 73 of the future we want] [technology transfer and capacity building for developing countries and economies in transition on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed upon][access to technologies and capacity building for developing countries and economics in transition];
- (d) Awareness-raising campaigns.

48. Of the three environmental problems addressed by the Rio conventions, land degradation is the problem that historically has received the least direct financial resources. For example, in GEF-6 the focal area related to land degradation is the one that has fewer resources allocated to it under the System of Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) used by recipient countries at national levels [40 per cent of resources correspond to climate change, 45 per cent to biodiversity and only 15 per cent to land degradation].

49. In order to adopt new commitments and successful implementation of LDN by interested Parties, a substantial increase in financial resources is needed. This could be met by one or more of the following options:

- (a) Multilateral funding options:
 - (i) A new LDN fund could be created within the UNCCD framework to cover the financial requirements of affected Parties, especially for capacity-building and technology transfers for sustainable land management (SLM) and restoration activities, including land-based adaptation issues;
 - (ii) For GEF-7 there could be a substantial increase in resources for land degradation, at least triple the amount of current available resources. This will be properly reflected in a decision at COP 12;
 - (iii) The Green Climate Fund could also be an opportunity for financing climate change adaptation actions, inter alia, those related to food security and SLM which can be strategically linked to LDN implementation plans;
 - (iv) The financial mechanism to be implemented for the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs also could support activities for LDN;
- (b) Bilateral aid: developed countries could continue to increase their funding of development aid to affected Parties. Substantial elements of existing funding are already committed to LDN-positive investments. LDN implementation plans/programmes could provide an appropriate planning tool for attracting future funding;
- (c) Private sector investments: in many affected countries, the private sector both nationally and internationally has made, and continues to make, substantial investments in land and agricultural enterprises. Government and municipal instruments as well as initiatives should be used to encourage responsible investments and practices by the private sector that contributes to achieving LDN. Public-private partnerships should be further developed to attract additional funding.

50. Domestic government contributions are also complementary. For example, LDN could be used as an opportunity to transform legislative and regulatory frameworks and

financial and other incentive mechanisms could be used to improve land planning and governance and foster SLM and ecosystem restoration activities at the appropriate scale.

E. List of Intergovernmental Working Group meeting participants

Africa (Annex I)

Algeria (Abdelkader Kader Khelifa); Côte d'Ivoire (Yao Koffi Bernard); Ethiopia (Berhanu Ayalew Bezabeh); Swaziland (Bongani Simon Masuku)

Asia (Annex II)

Lebanon (Talal Darwish); China (Xiaoxia Jia); Samoa (Faainoini Laulala, Filisita Heather); Philippines (Silvino Quevedo Tejada, Karen Salandanan-Bautista); Iran (Hossein Badripour)

Latin America and the Caribbean (Annex III)

Colombia (Andrés Comba Morales, Haendel Sebastián Rodríguez González); Mexico (Armando López Santos); Cuba (Belsis Llorente Díaz); Brazil (Saulo A. Ceolin, Felipe Augusto Ramos de Alencar da Costa); Grenada (Raymond Baptiste)

Central and Eastern Europe (Annex V)

Armenia (Ashot Vardevanyan); Georgia (Nino Chikovani); Ukraine (Yuriy Kolmaz); Bosnia and Herzegovina (Hamid Custovic); Russia (German Kust)

Western Europe and Other Groups (WEOG)

Australia (Russel Philips); United States of America (Jeffrey Herrick); Italy (Anna Luise); European Commission (Nicholas Hanley); Iceland (Jon Erlingur Jonasson)
