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**Item 6 (b) of the provisional agenda**

**The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018)**

**Mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention**

**Evidence-based options for improving regional coordination arrangements**

**Note by the secretariat\***

*Summary*

1. By its decision 3/COP.8, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification called on each region to develop a proposal, in collaboration with the Executive Secretary and the Global Mechanism (GM), for mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention and to provide these to the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 9) for consideration in the context of the budget and the programme of work.
2. Decision 3/COP.8 also requests the Executive Secretary, taking into account the views of the GM on its regional arrangements, to review the current regional coordination arrangements within both the secretariat and the GM with a view to improving them, and to develop evidence-based options for improving regional coordination arrangements and submit these to COP 9 for consideration.

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\* The submission of this document is delayed because of the need to receive feedback from country Parties during the regional meetings in preparation for COP 9 and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies conducted in the period June/July 2009.

3. The review of current regional coordination arrangements and the evidence-based options are contained in the present document for consideration and any action the COP may wish to take in this regard.

4. The compilation of regional proposals on mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention, as prescribed by decision 3/COP.8, is contained in document ICCD/COP(9)/MISC.2.

## CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1–2	4
II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION .....	3–11	4
III. ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT REGIONAL COORDINATION ARRANGEMENTS .....	12–37	6
A. Understanding the aims of regional arrangements .....	14–15	6
B. The current approaches to regional coordination and implementation.....	16–23	7
C. The strengths of the current approaches.....	24–29	8
D. The weaknesses of the current approaches .....	30–31	10
E. Opportunities associated with strengthened regional coordination mechanisms .....	32	10
F. Threats linked to the process to strengthening regional coordination mechanisms .....	33–34	11
G. Conclusions .....	35–37	12
IV. PROPOSED APPROACH TO REGIONAL COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION .....	38–49	13
A. Understanding terminology .....	38–39	13
B. Principles governing regional implementation and coordination mechanisms .....	40–43	13
C. Regional implementation and coordination mechanisms: Mission statement.....	44	14
D. Operational objectives of regional implementation and coordination mechanisms .....	45	14
E. Key players and their roles in regional implementation and coordination.....	46–49	15

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
V. PROPOSED ENTITIES OF THE REGIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS: THE REGIONAL COMMITTEES, THEMATIC PROGRAMME NETWORKS AND REGIONAL OFFICES .....	50–85	15
A. Regional Committee .....	53–55	16
B. Thematic Programme Networks .....	56–58	16
C. Regional office .....	59–64	16
D. Institutional arrangements .....	65–69	17
E. Reporting arrangements .....	70–74	18
F. Staffing requirements .....	75–79	18
G. Budgetary requirements .....	80	19
H. Hosting arrangements .....	81–82	19
I. Regional implementation and coordination outcomes table..	83–85	19
VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	86–90	24

## **I. Introduction**

1. By its decision 3/COP.8, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) requested the Executive Secretary, taking into account the views of the Global Mechanism (GM) on its regional arrangements:

(a) To review the current regional coordination arrangements within the secretariat and within the GM with a view to improving them;

(b) To develop evidence-based options for improving regional coordination arrangements based on the above-mentioned review and the proposals received from regions (...);

(c) To submit these to the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 9) for consideration.

2. This document contains both the review of current regional coordination arrangements within the secretariat and the GM and evidence-based options for improving regional coordination arrangements developed by the secretariat taking into account the views of the GM on its regional arrangements. The proposals received from the five Regional Implementation Annexes are presented in ICCD/COP(9)/MISC.2 .

## **II. Background information**

3. The UNCCD recognizes from its outset the importance of regional and subregional coordination in order to achieve the objectives of the Convention. Article 3(b) of the Convention requires Parties to “improve cooperation and coordination at subregional, regional and international levels” in order to enhance financial, human, organizational and technical resources. Articles 11, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 25 and 26 further emphasize the need for effective regional cooperation and coordination on key issues such as policy consultations, preparation of action programmes, information sharing, improving research capacity, capacity-building and reporting.

4. The five Regional Implementation Annexes to the Convention define the general conditions in each region that guide implementation and coordination at the regional level, and create the framework for technical and political cooperation in the affected regions. The annexes also identified the need for regional coordination mechanisms to be the organizational framework for all activities and the coordinating framework for all actors.

5. The affected country Parties in each region strongly support this regional approach. Political and economic bodies in each region have supported the need for regional coordination in the implementation of the Convention, and have emphasized the need for regional coordination mechanisms. More detailed information on this matter is contained in document ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF.6.

6. By its decision 3/COP.8, COP 8 recognized that limiting factors had prevented the optimal deployment of the Convention. In response, Parties adopted the 10-year Strategic Plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (The Strategy), which contains an updated vision, four strategic objectives, a mission and five operational objectives.

7. Decision 3/COP.8 also instigated a review and strengthening of regional coordination mechanisms. Specifically, Parties recognized that “regional coordination is an important component in implementing the Convention and The Strategy”, and requested “each region to develop a proposal, in collaboration with the Executive Secretary and the GM on mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention”.

8. Using the mandate received from decision 3/COP.8 and following an agreed joint work programme, the secretariat and the GM have assisted Parties in the development of these proposals. To this effect, the secretariat and the GM convened a first meeting of representatives of the five Regional Implementation Annexes in Bonn, Germany, in October 2008 to define a strategy for and a road map on how to complete this exercise, and facilitated consultations among Parties in the sidelines of the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 7) in November 2008 in Istanbul, Turkey. As a result, during CRIC 7 the Regional Implementation Annexes established four ad hoc task forces,<sup>1</sup> with a view to conducting wide consultations among their constituencies and developing regional proposals for follow-up by the secretariat and submission to COP 9.

9. The secretariat and the GM assisted the task forces in their work by: (a) preparing background documentation and methodological tools;<sup>2</sup> (b) convening a meeting of the task forces; (c) facilitating consultations among Parties throughout the whole process, including through a web-based discussion forum and a questionnaire; and (d) making external expertise available to the task forces.

10. As a result of this process, the Regional Implementation Annexes for Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) have finalized their respective proposals,<sup>3</sup> which have been compiled in document ICCD/COP(9)/MISC.2 and posted in their entirety on the UNCCD website.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Implementation Annex IV decided not to establish a task force for this purpose. Nevertheless, representatives of Annex IV participated in and contributed to the meeting of the regional task forces.

<sup>2</sup> ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF.6 contains the guidelines to assist Parties in the development of regional proposals on mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention and factual information on coordination arrangements under the secretariat and the GM at the subregional and regional levels.

<sup>3</sup> At the regional meeting for the Northern Mediterranean and other affected country Parties, held in Rome on 8–10 July 2009, it was decided that Annex IV does not require the establishment of a regional office and that the usual coordination mechanisms will continue to meet the need of concerted action by affected countries in the region. A proposal on new mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination was therefore not submitted by Annex IV.

<sup>4</sup> The regional proposals are available at <http://www.unccd.int/regional/rcm/menu.php>.

11. The proposals prepared by the task forces were endorsed at the meetings of the Convention's Regional Implementation Annexes in preparation for COP 9 and the meeting of its subsidiary bodies.<sup>5</sup>

### **III. Assessment of current regional coordination arrangements**

12. Throughout the Convention-related literature, the term "regional coordination" is used in a broad sense and often interchangeably with 'implementation' of the Convention in a region or at the regional level.

13. For the purpose of this document, the term "regional" refers predominantly to the five regions defined in the five Annexes to the Convention.

#### **A. Understanding the aims of regional arrangements**

14. Regional coordination has several complementary aims, among which are:

(a) To implement activities that can only be addressed at regional level;

(b) To support activities or address issues that can be implemented at the national or subregional levels, but where implementation will be more effective if enabling action is taken at the regional level;

(c) To implement activities or address issues that should be implemented at the national or subregional level, but, due to capacity constraints in some or all of the countries of the given region, are not being implemented currently.

15. Regional coordination and implementation mechanisms provide services to the vast number of actors involved in the implementation of the Convention and sustainable land management (SLM) policies and programme ensuring that their actions are coherent and coordinated.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Latin America and the Caribbean (Montevideo, 29 June–3 July); Asia (Bangkok, 13–17 July), CEE (Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina), 22–24 July; Africa (Tunis, 27–31 July).

<sup>6</sup> These actors include: (a) Affected country Parties and their representatives – National Focal Points (NFPs), Science and Technology Correspondents (STCs) and National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs); (b) National scientific and development organizations involved in implementing the Convention; (c) Civil society organizations (CSOs) at all levels, in particular those with a regional scope or programme; (d) Regional level scientific, technical, economic, political and financial institutions; (e) International actors, including development partners and the private sector; (f) The Convention institutions – the secretariat and the GM.

## **B. The current approaches to regional coordination and implementation**

### **1. The secretariat**

16. The secretariat plays the major role in supporting coordination at the subregional and regional levels. To achieve this, the secretariat drives several interrelated mechanisms to assist coordination across the Annexes. These include:

(a) Support in the preparation and implementation of Subregional Action Programmes (SRAPs) and Regional Action Programmes (RAPs);

(b) Facilitating the meetings of the National Focal Points from the Regional Implementation Annexes and the related policy review and reorientation process, including the review of implementation of the Convention;

(c) Support to Thematic Programme Networks (TPNs) in each Regional Implementation Annex to work on priority regional issues;

(d) Regionally based information management and knowledge-transfer mechanisms.

17. In addition, in order to generate synergies and economies of scale, much of the secretariat's support to individual countries is packaged through groups of countries or to all the countries of an Annex.

18. The secretariat has so far provided these services mainly through its headquarters in Bonn. However, in response to requests emanating from the countries of Annexes I, II and III, the secretariat established Regional Coordination Units (RCUs) in these three regions. The activities of the RCU are covered by supplementary funding, not by the core budget. In each case, a host institution provides the RCU with office space and other facilities.

19. In Annex IV, the regional Chair (rotating) assures coordination. In Annex V, the secretariat headquarters remains directly responsible for meeting implementation and coordination needs.

### **2. The Global Mechanism**

20. In line with its mandate to mobilize and channel finances to affected developing country Parties, the GM focuses at the country level and supports countries in their efforts to increase finance for SLM/UNCCD implementation.

21. In addition to country level work, the GM's engagement in multi-country activities is based on potential resource-mobilisation opportunities mainly on the subregional level. It seeks also to generate synergies and economies of scale. The GM liaises with relevant organizations

and develops joint activities to address finance and investments for SLM/UNCCD<sup>7</sup>. Occasionally, the GM engages in region-wide initiatives on targeted issues related to SLM finance.

22. The GM's multi-country initiatives in the different regions have led to a number of achievements of which only a small number can be mentioned here. Typical examples are:

(a) Resource mobilization to implement national and subregional action programmes and other sustainable land-management initiatives

(b) The establishment of subregional investment platforms and support facilities

(c) Subregional workshops to roll out methods to develop national, integrated, financing strategies and to share lessons on resource mobilization

(d) Subregional workshops on mainstreaming sustainable land-management issues into national development plans as a part of an environment to enable the creation of financing strategies

23. Much of the GM national support is carried out by its five regional programmes, i.e. East and Southern Africa, West and Central Africa, North Africa, Asia and the Pacific and LAC. The GM's subregional, operational modality is to work with and through an existing economic or political institution or an existing initiative (e.g. TerrAfrica). To support country level and subregional activities, the GM has recruited, using voluntary contributions, consultants to serve as advisors, drawing on the human resources and expertise of the hosting subregional and regional organizations (c.f. Table 2 contained in ICCD/CRIC(7)/INF6).

### **C. The strengths of the current approaches**

24. Regional coordination arrangements are in place in Annexes I, II and III. Hence, this section focuses on the work carried out in these regions.

#### **1. The secretariat**

25. For the secretariat, region-based offices have been particularly beneficial in the following issues:

(a) The added political value of the Convention and the secretariat presence in the region, closer to the Parties;

(b) The development of operational links and partnerships with the agency hosting the RCU;<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> For example, in Africa, the GM has worked mostly with sub-regional organizations (e.g. CILSS, IGAD, SADC). In LAC, the GM has worked mostly with international institutions (e.g. ECLAC, Conservation International).



(c) Providing an appropriate basis for supporting each region, according to its distinctive features, in moving the Convention forward;

(d) Networking with the regional and regionally based organizations, agencies and institutions that deal with issues relating to desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) and SLM;

(e) Networking with CSOs, technical institutes, scientific institutions and donor agencies;

(f) The adoption of differentiated approaches in each region, adapted to the region;

(g) The cost-efficiency of servicing countries and representing the Convention, including reduced staff, operating and travel costs, compared to those of Bonn-based facilitation units;

(h) Practical communication benefits linked to corresponding time zones, holidays, and so on.

26. The affected country Parties of the regions are generally very supportive of the RCUs and, while recognizing their limitations, greatly appreciate their work. As a result of the above, the UNCCD has gained political credibility in the three regions and the secretariat is able to play a more influential role in policy debates with governments and other institutions.

## 2. The Global Mechanism

27. Despite its more specific mandate, which is focused on the financial and investment aspects of regional implementation, the GM also has many notable achievements at the regional level, particularly in Africa. It has established regional and subregional collaboration agreements with international organizations in Africa, LAC and Asia. It has developed contacts with a large number of political, economic and financial organizations based in the regions concerned.

28. The GM approach of working with existing initiatives and institutions has enabled the GM to work cost-effectively on many initiatives, and to develop a large number of finance and investments partnerships, each with the potential to grow into broader arrangements. This flexible approach enables the GM to respond rapidly to opportunities as they arise.

29. The hosting of GM advisors in subregional and regional partner institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean, and West and Central Africa has proved a cost-effective way for the GM to provide technical support to countries in the subregions.

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<sup>8</sup> For example, in Africa, the RCU's relationship with its host, the African Development Bank (AfDB), has led to synergies and has helped guide the AfDB portfolio towards actions that support the implementation of the UNCCD.

#### **D. The weaknesses of the current approaches**

30. Despite considerable achievements, the overall approach to regional coordination suffers from important weaknesses and limitations. In Africa, Asia and the LAC region, the majority of requests from countries for support from the RCUs remain unmet. Specific weaknesses include:

(a) At the Convention level, there is no clarity on what is meant by regional coordination and regional implementation. There is no clear definition of what actions should be undertaken at a regional level in order to add value. This leads to confusion in the work programmes and objectives;

(b) Regional cooperation has not advanced as expected for various reasons, most notably the lack of resources. The TPNs and the RAPs have been prepared but their implementation rate is low, and in many cases reorientation and/or revamping is now required;

(c) In the past, the approach taken to regional coordination has been predominantly input- and process-led rather than oriented to clearly defined results;

(d) It is not within the GM's mandate to have its own regional coordination arrangements or mechanisms;

(e) The GM has been mostly active in Africa and the LAC region, with only limited action in the CEE.

31. There are several weaknesses specifically associated with the secretariat's RCU. These are illustrated by the following:

(a) The lack of a clear mandate for the RCU, and the unclear division of responsibilities between the Head Office and RCUs, although this matter has been addressed in the present temporary structure of the secretariat;

(b) The RCU's linkages with its host agency have generated limited benefits, particularly in terms of "influencing influencers";

(c) Very few of the linkages created with political, economic, financial and technical organizations across the region have led to significant changes in the working practices or workplans of the organization concerned;

(d) The lack of predictable resources has negatively affected medium- and long-term planning. The limited resources available to the RCUs has often limited their work to information dissemination and routine tasks instead of active advocacy, advisory functions and institutional liaison;

#### **E. Opportunities associated with strengthened regional coordination mechanisms**

32. The above analysis suggests that many of the weaknesses in regional implementation could be reversed through stronger regional coordination and implementation mechanisms.

Strengthening the current regional coordination and implementation mechanisms would deliver the following benefits:

(a) Increased cooperation and coordination of activities among partners that work on SLM and DLDD issues within a region or subregion, resulting in synergies and more support for the implementation of the UNCCD through new and strengthened partnerships;

(b) Better services to countries in all regions without cost increase, most notably through increased coordination between the secretariat and the GM at the regional and country levels to generate synergies and increase resource mobilization for DLDD and the implementation of The Strategy;

(c) Improved analysis and production of strategic information on key issues related to DLDD and strengthening of information exchange and knowledge transfer mechanisms within and between regions;

(d) Effective implementation of the RAPs, including coordination of activities among countries within the regions and setting up joint programmes in suitable fields such as capacity-building and research;

(e) (Further) Operationalization of the TPNs as frameworks for regional scientific and thematic cooperation and expertise;

(f) More effective advocacy with political, economic and financial authorities and organizations in the regions.

#### **F. Threats linked to the process of strengthening regional coordination mechanisms**

33. There are some threats associated with strengthening regional coordination mechanisms, in particular with strengthening the secretariat's RCUs. These include:

(a) The increased size of regional mechanisms could lead to increased administrative structures, in turn tending to decrease efficiency and increase operating costs;

(b) Should the RCU have an unclear mandate and increased resources, there is a danger of duplication or overlap with other agencies, in particular with other United Nations agencies in the region;

(c) To be effective, the RCU needs operational linkages with many political and economic organizations in the region. However, should the RCU develop stronger relationships with its host agency, this could decrease its motivation or ability to develop operational linkages with *other* agencies and thus limit the influence of the RCU;

(d) If the host agency provides facilities for the RCU but does not enter into a collaborative programme of work with it, the influence of the RCU will be limited.

34. Finally, it must be noted that regionalization, or decentralization, does not automatically lead to cost savings. Each regional mechanism has an associated cost. Each RCU requires an office and an operating budget. Without strict financial oversight, there is a danger that net costs will rise.

### **G. Conclusions**

35. The evidence outlined above shows that, despite its many achievements, regional coordination for UNCCD implementation is far from satisfactory. This is undoubtedly a factor contributing to the sub-optimal deployment of the Convention referred to in decision 3/COP.8. There is a clear need for effective and efficient regional coordination mechanisms to enhance cooperation, improve delivery of services to Parties and raise the profile of the Convention in the regions.

36. The level and complexity of the activities required in each region – which are likely to increase with the implementation of The Strategy, including the new reporting system and the alignment of action programmes – and the need for coordinated action of a wide range of actors justify a dedicated regional coordination unit. Existing RCUs under the secretariat have provided some services in Africa, Asia and the LAC region. However, the existing approach has many associated weaknesses. The evidence suggests that a significant reform and revision of the current approach, also in the light of The Strategy, would be necessary to provide the required coordination and regional implementation. This approach should include not only coordinating support functions, but also a wider delegation of the secretariat's core functions to its regional offices, and a stronger coordination of the regional approaches of the secretariat and the GM.

37. A key measure will be to ensure that the regional mechanisms are streamlined and truly results-oriented. The instigation of constant monitoring tied to performance targets is one way to ensure this. The newly introduced results-based management approach to the Convention provides practical tools for monitoring and periodic evaluation of the regional coordination arrangements.

## IV. Proposed approach to regional coordination and implementation

### A. Understanding terminology

38. A regional coordination mechanism could be defined as a set of norms – formal and/or informal – through which the stakeholders of a region coordinate their action towards a common goal. The aim of such mechanisms is to facilitate multi-stakeholder participation in policy development and implementation within the framework of a multilateral and sustainable development agreement.

39. Conversely, regional offices are physical structures that should:

- (a) Be instrumental to any regional coordination mechanism that is established;
- (b) Form part of a decentralization process through which regional functions and a number of core functions of the Convention's institutions are more efficiently delivered;
- (c) Ensure better integration of, and enhanced performance in, service delivery by the secretariat and the GM.

### B. Principles governing regional implementation and coordination mechanisms

40. *Globally coherent and regionally focused:* The Convention text and in particular The Strategy guide all actions to implement the Convention and provide the basis for coordination mechanisms. In this context, the mechanisms have to be focused on regional priorities and adapted to regional needs and resources.

41. *Subsidiarity:* This principle states that decisions have to be taken as closely as possible to the community and constant checks have to be made as to whether action at higher levels is justified in the light of the possibilities available at the national or local levels. Specifically, actions should only be taken at the regional level when to do so is more effective than action at the national, sub-national or local levels. Likewise, actions should only be taken at the global level when to do so is more effective than at the regional level.

42. *Results-oriented:* The regional implementation and coordination mechanisms have to be established in response to a recognized need and in order to deliver significant and agreed results. Each action and each input at the regional level has to be justified by the result it contributes to, ultimately in terms of reversing land degradation. Each action, input and result at the regional level has to be monitored.

43. *Start small, and develop in line with achievements:* The programme of regional actions has started small. All future expansion is conditional on the achievement of agreed results. As performance leads to results, the regional programme and mechanisms could be progressively expanded and strengthened.

### **C. Regional implementation and coordination mechanisms: Mission statement**

44. Based on the global mission and the regional consultations, the following mission statement is proposed as a starting point:

In line with the global strategy, and in response to the needs of affected countries in the region, the mission is to provide a framework that actively fosters effective regional partnerships that facilitate implementation of the Convention. These partnerships will support the development and implementation of national and regional policies, programmes and measures, implemented by the private and public sectors and civil society, to prevent, control and reverse desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought through scientific and technological excellence, raising public awareness, standard setting, advocacy and resource mobilization, and thereby contribute to poverty reduction.

### **D. Operational objectives of regional implementation and coordination mechanisms**

45. Ultimately, each regional mechanism will approve its own objectives (although regional offices would still have coherent expected accomplishments). However, in order to ensure an appropriate focus and global coherence, and to facilitate performance monitoring and reporting, these should be fully coherent with the operational objectives of The Strategy. Based on these operational objectives, the following generic regional operational objectives (ROO) are proposed:

ROO.1: To actively influence relevant regional, national and local processes and actors in adequately addressing desertification/land degradation and drought-related issues.

ROO.2: To support the creation of enabling environments across the region for promoting solutions to combat desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.

ROO.3: To become a regional authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to desertification/land degradation and mitigation of the effects of drought.

ROO.4: To identify and address capacity-building needs in the region to prevent and reverse desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.

ROO.5: To mobilize the region and improve the targeting and coordination of national, bilateral and multilateral financial and technological resources in order to increase their impact and effectiveness.

### **E. Key players and their roles in regional implementation and coordination**

46. As ever, country Parties are the most critical and key players in regional implementation and coordination.<sup>9</sup> In each region, country Parties shall commit themselves to:

(a) Supporting the regional coordination mechanisms, including through technical and financial support;

(b) Contributing technically to all regional planning and policy processes;

(c) Follow-up in country on all regional initiatives and decisions.

47. Pursuant to the Convention, its Regional Implementation Annexes and The Strategy, the secretariat has a fundamental role in regional coordination – ensuring that the necessary meetings, information flows and other tools for coordination are established and operated. The secretariat will establish regional offices (ROs) in cooperation with the GM and in consultation with the Parties. The secretariat will also be responsible for concluding agreements with agencies in the region.

48. Consistent with its mandate, the GM will be a key partner in regional coordination. It will participate in the ROs, by managing functions related to the mobilization of resources and partnership building.

49. TPNs will play a technical role in key scientific and technological issues with increased linkages and support from interested donors and United Nations institutions.

### **V. Proposed entities of the regional coordination mechanisms: The Regional Committees, Thematic Programme Networks and Regional Offices**

50. This chapter sets out how the regional bodies will contribute to the regional outcomes set out in the table below. Collectively, the country Parties, the secretariat, the GM, the regional offices,<sup>10</sup> the Regional Committees (RC)<sup>11</sup> and the TPNs will be responsible for delivering the outcomes in the table below.

51. By performing their functions, the RCs, regional offices and TPNs will: (i) consolidate the strengths of the current arrangements as described in section III.C; (ii) overcome most of the weaknesses described in section III.D; and (iii) exploit the opportunities and manage the threats set out in sections III.E and III.F. Result-based work programmes will be developed for each region, with clear responsibilities allocated to RCs, regional offices and TPNs.

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<sup>9</sup> The country Parties are to act through a small, nil-cost (or low cost) Regional Committee.

<sup>10</sup> In the regional proposals, many regions defined these offices as “regional offices of the Convention”.

<sup>11</sup> In some regions the regional committee is already established and operational (e.g. in the Latin American and Caribbean region, where it is called the Regional Executive Committee).

52. Given the current weak capacity of some of these institutions, a gradual approach to increasing their scope of action will be adopted. It is expected that all the functions will be being performed by the end of 2012.

### **A. Regional Committee**

53. The RC will be streamlined, nil-cost mechanisms through which the country Parties provide advice to the ROs and support implementation of the regional outputs. There will be no additional costs to the Convention's core budget.

54. The RC will consist of a number of members from country Parties. It will have two overall responsibilities:

(a) Providing technical and policy advice to the regional office and the TPN, as appropriate;

(b) Assisting the regional office and TPN in the delivery of outcomes at the regional level.

55. RC meetings will take place back-to-back with other regional meetings, which means that there will be no additional travel costs. Between meetings, the RC will function through e-mail and the Internet.

### **B. Thematic Programme Networks**

56. The TPNs will undergo an independent evaluation, which will be steered centrally by the CST, with a view to reorienting their mandate, functions and linkages with regional coordination mechanisms.

57. The TPNs will be restructured to address key issues in line with The Strategy and regional priorities, that is, so they contribute directly to the biennial regional work programmes. The TPN will be structured to yield results in line with The Strategy.

58. The TPN will work mostly electronically through e-mail and the Internet. However, in line with the RO operating budget, funding for TPN focal point meetings and surveys may be made available when necessary.

### **C. Regional office**

59. The regional office is to be the driving force behind regional coordination and implementation. The regional office is to provide the working linkages between the country Parties and the secretariat and the GM. The RO is to be a streamlined, dynamic, catalytic body, actively increasing coordination and linkages. When appropriate for operational reasons, the RO will represent the secretariat and the GM in country level processes, for example, when this proves more cost-effective than the direct involvement of the secretariat or the GM.



60. The regional office will play a key role in achieving each regional outcome, and will be responsible for:

(a) Overseeing a process to adapt the regional outcomes in the table below to the region, and to determine the indicators and targets;<sup>12</sup>

(b) Allocating roles in achieving the results set out in the table below in the region;

(c) Monitoring performance as set out in the table below and reporting on performance.

61. The regional office will also be responsible for directly implementing activities in order to achieve many of the results set out in the table below. The main functions of the regional office are to: organize meetings, distribute policy papers and information, engage in dialogue with influential organizations, organize studies and reviews, undertake country visits, prepare tools and guidelines, contract and supervise consultants, review working documents and action programmes, design and manage knowledge-management systems, support the preparation of strategies and organize forums.

62. The regional office will be staffed and equipped to perform the support and oversight functions, covering all countries and subregions in their region.

63. The regional office will have delegated authority from the secretariat and the GM to perform the support and oversight functions.

64. The functions, mandate and authority of each regional office will be clearly defined in a charter to be prepared by the secretariat and the GM.

#### **D. Institutional arrangements**

65. The RO will be an integral part of the secretariat. The GM will be responsible for delivering the relevant functions for ROO.5.

66. The regional office's work programmes will be an integral part of the Joint Work Programmes (JWPs) of the secretariat and the GM.

67. The regional office will have clearly delegated authority from both the secretariat and the GM. The regional office will have a clear mandate, determining the limits of its authority and decision-making. The coordinator of the RO will report to the Deputy Executive Secretary of the secretariat through the officer responsible for RO's direct coordination.

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<sup>12</sup> With support from the Task Forces, the regions (except the Northern Mediterranean) have already prepared proposals for regional coordination. The workplans in those proposals will require minor reformatting and some modifications to be in line with the table below.

68. The RC will provide advice to the regional office on behalf of the country Parties in the region. The RC will be representative of all the countries in the region and report to all the Parties in the region.

69. The TPN will be under the guidance of the secretariat's Knowledge Management, Science and Technology (KMST) Unit, assisted by the RO.

### **E. Reporting arrangements**

70. Acting as a substantive unit within the secretariat and the regional programmes of the GM, each RO will prepare reports<sup>13</sup> in line with the table below. The reports will focus on (i) performance towards achieving the regional outcomes, in line with the agreed indicators; (ii) the contribution of the RO to achieving the regional outcomes (iii) a justification of cost efficiency and the measures taken to increase cost-effectiveness.

71. RO reports will be prepared with inputs and advice from the GM.

72. The secretariat will prepare a consolidated report every two years to submit to the COP as part of its performance report.

73. The performance of the RO will be assessed after two years. This will include an assessment of whether the weaknesses and threats identified in chapter III above have been addressed. According to the secretariat and the GM-approved work programme, in the periodic review of ongoing work the performance of the RO will also be assessed, including an assessment of progress made in implementing The Strategy as well as addressing the identified weaknesses and threats.

74. The RC will provide annual reports on its functions and achievements to be shared with parties in the region.

### **F. Staffing requirements**

75. The task forces established for Annex I, Annex II and Annex III have assessed the staffing levels needed to perform the functions listed in the table below in their region. The analysis took into account: (i) existing capacity in the region; (ii) the number of affected countries in the region; (iii) the percentage of land and percentage of people affected by land degradation in the region; (iv) the complexity of land degradation issues in the region (v) the needs of country parties and National Focal Points; and (vi) the implementation of The Strategy.

76. Final staffing requirements of ROs will be determined according to their work programmes. This will be part of the discussion at COP on the general staffing requirements of the secretariat and the GM. The lower costs of regular posts at the RO location in comparison to those located at the headquarters of the secretariat and the GM could lead to a net saving.

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<sup>13</sup> The frequency of reports will be determined by, and should be in line with the frequency of those of, the secretariat's units.

77. A regional coordinator will ensure substantive and administrative coordination of each regional office.

78. Given the overall rise in staffing levels, and the related budgetary implications, the regional office could be expanded progressively from its present size to the required size. The first step could be to relocate staff from headquarters to regional offices and to make other arrangements such as regional recruitments in order to maintain the performance of the essential duties described in the 2010–2011 work programmes of the secretariat and the GM, and their 2010–2011 JWP.<sup>14</sup>

79. The RC and the TPN have no staffing requirements.

### **G. Budgetary requirements**

80. The budget allocations of the regional office should be included in the two-year costed work programmes of the secretariat and the GM.

### **H. Hosting arrangements**

81. The current hosting arrangements will initially be maintained. For CEE, contacts are being developed and offers are expected from potential hosting agencies. For Africa, Asia and the LAC region, current hosting arrangements will be reviewed within two years and, if appropriate, alternatives will be explored.

82. As appropriate, memoranda of understanding will be concluded as required between the secretariat and the GM and the host agency, and between the secretariat/GM and the host country.

### **I. Regional implementation and coordination outcomes table**

83. The regional work programmes are to be an integral part of the joint work programmes of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism. The regional work programmes will be prepared through an iterative process led by the secretariat and closely coordinated with the GM and the respective RC.

84. The table below sets out the outcomes to be achieved in each region. Although the secretariat and the GM retain overall responsibility for these outcomes, in each region these regional outcomes are to be achieved in part by the actions of the regional bodies (i.e. the regional office, the RC and the TPN). The table indicates the role of the regional bodies in each outcome.

85. The table below was developed based on:

- (a) The Strategy and its operational objectives and outcomes;

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<sup>14</sup> Submitted separately.

(b) The 2010–2013 workplan and the 2010–2011 work programmes of the secretariat and the GM;

(c) The proposals prepared by the task forces of Regional Implementation Annexes I, II, III and V on mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention;

(d) The analysis in the above chapters of this report and a consideration of where most value can be added by regional coordination and implementation mechanisms.

**Table. Proposed functions of the regional coordination mechanisms**

Operational objectives and related outcomes, as contained in The Strategy	Functions of the regional coordination mechanisms
<i>Operational objective 1 To actively influence relevant international, national and local processes and actors in adequately addressing desertification/land degradation and drought-related issues.</i>	
1.1 Desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD) issues and the synergies with climate change adaptation/mitigation and biodiversity conservation are effectively communicated among key constituencies at the international, national and local levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to awareness-raising activities targeting regional, subregional, national and local levels, including provision of information material on DLDD and related synergies, and internet-based communication opportunities, to various stakeholders</li> <li>- Participation in the preparation of outreach material and events for awareness-raising</li> </ul>
1.2 DLDD issues are addressed in relevant international forums, including those pertaining to agricultural trade, climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, rural development, sustainable development and poverty reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awareness-raising and advocacy for the UNCCD/DLDD/SLM through substantive contributions to regional or subregional meetings and processes</li> <li>- Dissemination of information material that advocates resource mobilization for SLM</li> <li>- Dissemination of information material concerning outcomes of international forums and processes that have the potential to enhance resource mobilization for implementation of action programmes</li> </ul>
1.3 Civil society organizations (CSOs) and the scientific community in the North and the South are increasingly engaged as stakeholders in the Convention processes and DLDD is addressed in their advocacy, awareness-raising and education initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assistance to CSO participation in the UNCCD process at the regional, subregional and national levels</li> <li>- Dissemination of information material on mobilizing resources for SLM</li> <li>- Advisory services and analytic contributions to scientific institutions on SLM financing at the subregional and regional levels</li> </ul>

Operational objectives and related outcomes, as contained in The Strategy	Functions of the regional coordination mechanisms
<i>Operational objective 2 To support the creation of enabling environments for promoting solutions to combat desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.</i>	
2.1 Policy, institutional, financial and socio-economic drivers of desertification/land degradation and barriers to SLM are assessed, and appropriate measures to remove these barriers are recommended	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organization of regional meetings</li> <li>- Compilation of information on regional trends and inputs to the CRIC review in each Regional Implementation Annex</li> <li>- Support to the alignment of RAPs with the implementation of The Strategy</li> <li>- Support to interregional cooperation</li> <li>- Facilitation and promotion of regional approaches to the assessment of financial drivers inter alia in the context of integrated financial strategy (IFS) processes devised by the GM</li> <li>- Dissemination of information on and facilitation of capacity-building for addressing water scarcity, forestry, gender issues and migration, as well as related cross-sectoral governance issues, in the context of action programmes</li> </ul>
2.2 Affected country Parties revise their NAPs into strategic documents supported by biophysical and socio-economic baseline information and include them in integrated investment frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support services to affected countries in NAP alignment and mainstreaming, in cooperation with partners</li> <li>- Support to affected countries in assessing existing NAPs</li> </ul>
2.3 Affected country Parties integrate their NAPs as well as SLM and land degradation issues into development planning and relevant sectoral and investment plans and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to affected countries for the integration of NAPs and land degradation in development planning through mainstreaming and related activities</li> <li>- Facilitation of cooperation and liaison with the regional and national offices of major multilateral cooperation organizations and programmes to enhance their support to affected countries in integrating NAPs, SLM and land degradation issues into development planning and relevant sectoral and investment plans and policies</li> </ul>
2.4 Developed country Parties mainstream UNCCD objectives and SLM interventions into their development cooperation programmes/projects in line with their support to national sectoral and investment plans	

<b>Operational objectives and related outcomes, as contained in The Strategy</b>	<b>Functions of the regional coordination mechanisms</b>
<p>2.5 Mutually reinforcing measures among desertification/land degradation action programmes and biodiversity and climate change mitigation and adaptation are introduced or strengthened in order to enhance the impact of interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dissemination of information material on synergistic implementation of NAPs and NAPAs; drylands carbon in the context of NAPs; and best practices on synergistic use of MEA financing mechanisms</li> <li>- Facilitation of the dissemination of regional specific information and advice on regional approaches and opportunities for the development of SLM investments targeting UNFCCC- and UNCBD-related funding mechanisms</li> <li>- Support to affected countries on the inclusion of measures to mitigate the effects of drought in their action programmes</li> </ul>
<p><i>Operational objective 3 To become a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to desertification/land degradation and mitigation of the effects of drought.</i></p>	
<p>3.1 National monitoring and vulnerability assessment on biophysical and socio-economic trends in affected countries are supported</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technical support to affected countries and regional organizations in monitoring and reviewing progress towards meeting the operational objectives, including operational objective 5</li> <li>- Support to the organization of regional scientific meetings</li> </ul>
<p>3.2 A baseline based on the most robust data available on biophysical and socio-economic trends is developed and relevant scientific approaches are gradually harmonized.</p>	
<p>3.3 Knowledge on biophysical and socio-economic factors and on their interactions in affected areas is improved to enable better decision-making</p>	
<p>3.4 Knowledge of the interactions between climate change adaptation, drought mitigation and the restoration of degraded land in affected areas is improved to develop tools to assist decision-making</p>	
<p>3.5 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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participation in the development and maintenance of the UNCCD knowledge-management system, including               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Support to the conceptual development of the system</li> <li>o Liaison with regional, subregional and national data-collection institutions</li> <li>o Collection of relevant information at the regional, subregional and national levels</li> <li>o Compilation and preparation of region-specific information</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Operational objectives and related outcomes, as contained in The Strategy</b>	<b>Functions of the regional coordination mechanisms</b>
3.6 Science and technology networks and institutions relevant to DLDD are engaged to support UNCCD implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to update the UNCCD databases on scientific institutions and experts</li> <li>- Advocacy, information delivery and liaison for regional, subregional and national science and technology networks and institutions</li> <li>- Representation of UNCCD in major regional and subregional scientific meetings relating to the Convention</li> <li>- Preparation of regional reports on scientific networking</li> <li>- Support to the evaluation and further development of the thematic programme networks</li> </ul>
<b><i>Operational objective 4 To identify and address capacity-building needs to prevent and reverse desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought.</i></b>	
4.1 Countries which have carried out the national capacity self-assessment (NCSA) implement the resulting action plans to develop the necessary capacity at the individual, institutional and systemic levels to tackle DLDD issues at the national and local levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to the identification of capacity-building needs relating to NAP alignment with the strategy</li> <li>- Liaison with regional and subregional institutions, agencies and bodies in order to identify options for meeting capacity-building needs</li> <li>- Support to the initiation of partnership arrangements for technology transfer</li> </ul>
4.2 Those countries which have not previously undertaken capacity needs assessments engage in relevant assessment processes to identify capacity needs for tackling DLDD at the national and local levels	
<b><i>Operational objective 5 To mobilize and improve the targeting and coordination of national, bilateral and multilateral financial and technological resources in order to increase their impact and effectiveness.</i></b>	
5.1 Affected country Parties develop integrated investment frameworks for leveraging national, bilateral and multilateral resources with a view to increasing the effectiveness and impact of interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitation and monitoring of opportunities for supporting subregional platforms for partnership building</li> <li>- Facilitation of South-South knowledge exchange, including specific initiatives</li> <li>- Support to the identification of needs for the establishment and implementation of integrated financial strategies and integrated investment frameworks at a national level</li> <li>- Support to regional partnership building for financing sustainable-land management</li> </ul>
5.2 Developed country Parties provide substantial, adequate, timely and predictable financial resources to support domestic initiatives to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to regional level consultation with bilateral and multilateral institutions on increased investment in SLM</li> <li>- Support to CCD Focal Point institutions for the elaboration of SLM project/programme proposals</li> </ul>

<b>Operational objectives and related outcomes, as contained in The Strategy</b>	<b>Functions of the regional coordination mechanisms</b>
5.3 Parties increase their efforts to mobilize financial resources from international financial institutions, facilities and funds, including the Global Environment Facility (GEF), by promoting the UNCCD/SLM agenda within the governing bodies of these institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to regional inter-ministerial consultations and workshops</li> <li>- Support to a regional approach for the development of DLDD/SLM-related investments, in the context of programmatic proposals, co-financing GEF and other facilities or funds</li> <li>- Dissemination of information on GEF policies and projects related to DLDD/SLM</li> </ul>
5.4 Innovative sources of finance and financing mechanisms are identified to combat desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought, including from the private sector, market-based mechanisms, trade, foundations and CSOs, as well as other financing mechanisms for climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and for hunger and poverty reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organization of capacity development workshops for identifying and mobilizing innovative finance</li> <li>- Monitoring of opportunities for innovative finance and facilitation of advisory services to countries for the exploration of innovative financing mechanisms</li> <li>- Monitoring of regional opportunities for the promotion of investment in SLM by the private sector, foundations and CSOs in order to facilitate advisory and brokering services</li> <li>- Development of partnerships with regional institutions to facilitate the mobilization of innovative sources of finance and financing mechanisms</li> <li>- Support to initiatives for identifying technology needs and/or facilitating technology transfer through, inter alia, decentralized cooperation mechanism</li> </ul>
5.5: Access to technology by affected country Parties is facilitated through adequate financing, effective economic and policy incentives, and technical support, most notably within the framework of South-South and North-South cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to addressing technology transfer through e-forums, workshops or other means, organized in the context of South-South cooperation initiatives or DIFS workshops</li> </ul>

## **VI. Conclusions and recommendations**

86. The evidence suggests that a significant reform and revision of the current approach to regional coordination is necessary in order to provide the required coordination and implementation at the regional level. The solution proposed is to decentralize significant functions of the secretariat and the GM to regional offices, and to create a stronger merger of the regional approaches of the two institutions.

87. Under these proposals, an increasing number of facilitation, coordination and monitoring of implementation activities would be implemented by and through regional bodies. This will lead to cost savings, increase political credibility, improve outreach and strengthen communications between the Convention and all its stakeholders, in particular the affected country Parties. This is to be achieved by transferring regional functions from the headquarters of the secretariat and the GM to regional implementation mechanisms backed by streamlined, regionally responsive offices and supporting regional bodies.



88. The COP at its ninth session may consider directing the Executive Secretary, at the request of and in consultation with the Regional Implementation Annexes:

(a) To assist Regional Implementation Annexes in establishing regional committees and defining the mission statements of regional coordination mechanisms, with a view to ensuring consistent and coherent actions by stakeholders at the subregional and regional levels;

(b) To establish regional offices in those Regional Implementation Annexes that have asked for such structures to be established;

(c) To review the current hosting arrangements of the RCUs, and to conclude memoranda of understanding with the host institutions of the regional offices with a view to reducing the direct operational costs of the regional offices and establishing solid partnerships at the subregional and regional levels;

(d) To establish clear and effective institutional links with existing regional institutions, programmes and mechanisms, including regional committees and TPNs, with a view to implementing effective coordination that involves the largest number of subregional and regional stakeholders;

(e) To prepare two-year costed work programmes and four-year (multi-year) workplans on the basis of results-based management for the regional offices as part of the work programmes and workplans of the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies in consultation with the chair persons of the subsidiary bodies and the Managing Director of the GM as appropriate;

(f) To draw the resources required for the functioning of the regional offices from the Convention budget, in accordance with their staffing requirements and other operational costs, and to complement these with resources from the Supplementary Fund as appropriate;

(g) To report to the COP at its tenth session on the implementation of this process and the results achieved.

89. The COP may also consider requesting the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism:

(a) To provide technical and financial assistance, including through providing personnel as required, to the regional offices;

(b) To mobilize resources in order to meet the financial needs for the effective implementation of the functions assigned to regional offices, with a view to establishing predictable funding mechanisms to this effect;

90. The COP may further consider requesting developed country Parties, international organizations, the private sector and civil society to provide technical and financial support to the regional offices, including through voluntary contributions to the Supplementary Fund and contributions in kind as appropriate.