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The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) –
Committee on Science and Technology
Draft multi-year (four-year) workplan for the Committee on Science and Technology

**Draft multi-year (four-year) workplan for the Committee on
Science and Technology (2010–2013)**

Note by the secretariat

Summary

In decision 3/COP.8, the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) adopted the 10-year strategic plan and framework for enhancing the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) (The Strategy) and requested the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) to formulate a multi-year (four-year) workplan, complemented by a costed draft two-year work programme. Both should take a results-based management approach and be consistent with the objectives and outcomes of The Strategy.

The draft multi-year workplan (2010–2013) contained in this document is aimed at presenting the expected accomplishments of CST, together with related performance indicators. It contains the strategic orientation for the work of CST for the next four years. This information is complemented by the costed draft two-year work programme (2010–2011) (ICCD/COP(9)/5/Add.3).

In the same decision, CST was given primary responsibility for fulfilling operational objective 3 of The Strategy, which contains six outcome areas. For these outcome areas, the present document defines the expected accomplishments, which relate to those strategic outcomes on which CST will focus and to which its contribution is necessary. The 2010–2013 workplan is designed to enhance and harmonize the methodologies for

monitoring and assessment of the impact of the implementation of the Convention at national and regional level. CST will contribute to the strengthened mobilization of the scientific community for the implementation of the Convention and provide policy-relevant advice. CST is supported by the UNCCD secretariat in its work towards achieving the expected accomplishments set out in this workplan.

I. Background

1. In decision 3/COP.8 the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) adopted the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018), (The Strategy). In the same decision, the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) was given primary responsibility for fulfilling operational objective 3 on science, technology and knowledge, as well as a supporting role in implementing operational objective 1 on advocacy, awareness-raising and education.
2. In paragraph 3 of decision 3/COP.8, Parties requested the various Convention bodies to develop their respective results-based management (RBM) multi-year (four-year) programmes of work and to report on progress in implementation to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC). The Conference of the Parties (COP) will take relevant decisions based on recommendations from CRIC. In the same decision CST was also requested to present its costed draft two-year work programme to COP 9 for consideration and adoption.
3. At CRIC 7 and at the first CST special session (CST S-1) held in Istanbul, Parties recommended that the various Convention bodies further streamline and integrate their workplans and programmes, clarifying their roles and focus areas and proposing feasible and applicable workplans and programmes with tangible and measurable outcomes. At CST S-1, Parties also recommended that the CST Bureau identify the priorities among the expected accomplishments of the CST workplan for consideration by the ninth session of CST.
4. In this context the CST workplan (2010–2013) is intended to provide strategic orientation as to where CST should be in four years. The expected accomplishments represent those strategic outcomes on which CST will focus and to which its contribution is necessary. The performance indicators provide the tools for measuring the extent to which each accomplishment has been achieved, and also indicate the specific involvement of CST.
5. The CST workplan has been aligned to the workplan of the secretariat and a consistency analysis has been carried out following the same RBM approach. This process has enabled their respective roles and focus areas to be clearly identified: the expected accomplishments and related performance indicators reflect respectively the advisory role of CST and the technical support provided by the secretariat. The secretariat has a key role in supporting CST in achieving its expected accomplishments and in this regard the work programme of the secretariat is also essential to the whole process. Consequently, this document should be read in conjunction with document ICCD/CRIC(8)/2 and its addenda which contain the work plans of other Convention institutions and bodies, as well as document ICCD/COP(9)/5 and its addenda which contain

information on the resource requirements of the Convention institutions and bodies, and on the results-based management approach that is used in the documents.

II. Priorities of the Committee on Science and Technology for 2010–2013

6. The Strategy defines as priorities for CST in 2008–2018 to develop “in cooperation with relevant institutions, tools and methods, biophysical and socio-economic baselines on desertification/land degradation at the national level” and to develop “in cooperation with relevant institutions, methodologies and guidelines for monitoring and assessment of desertification/land degradation trends”. Furthermore, in decision 3/COP.8, CST received a precise assignment from the COP: to provide advice on how best to measure progress on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of The Strategy.

7. In response to this request, the CST Bureau selected through a participative approach a minimum set of impact indicators (contained in document ICCD/COP(9)/CST/4) to be recommended for use by affected Parties. This should be considered as a starting point for a further work of refinement, consolidation and harmonization aimed at allowing a measure of comparison and facilitating exchange and sharing of information, data and technology.

8. A number of issues need to be tackled during the intersessional period to ensure that the indicators will be effectively used for the first reporting cycle in 2012. The recommended minimum set of impact indicators should be consolidated and fine-tuned with inputs from, among others, the UNCCD 1st Scientific Conference. Furthermore, strategies and approaches required to address capacity-building, access to data and information, and some harmonization of methodologies need to be developed to support the use of the consolidated set of indicators and the establishment of related baselines and targets

9. The strategy and reshaping of the operation of CST require a strengthening of the scientific understanding of desertification and land degradation processes with regard to evolving ecosystem trends in order to inform COP decisions. This includes the organisation of CST sessions in a predominantly scientific conference format in cooperation with leading scientific institutions. The topic and outcome of the conference should be relevant for the implementation of The Strategy and enable better decision-making. CST should identify such topics and make recommendations for decision by the COP. CST should also develop recommendations for further development of ways to engage with scientific networks and institutions beyond the scientific conference, including an increased involvement of science and technology correspondents appointed by Parties.

10. The Strategy identified the need for knowledge of interactions between climate change adaptation, drought mitigation, and restoration of degraded land. This implies increased cooperation between CST and the scientific subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Means and mechanisms for increased cooperation should be reviewed and developed, as well as subjects to be jointly addressed.

Outcome Area 3.1: National monitoring and vulnerability assessments on biophysical and socio-economic trends in affected countries are supported.	
Risks/assumptions: The political will of the Parties and low capacity in some affected countries	
Expected accomplishments (2010–2013)	Performance indicators (2010–2013)
3.1.1 Parties use a consolidated set of impact indicators	Progress in meeting Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 3 is measured according to a consolidated set of impact indicators
3.1.2 Parties use gradually harmonized methods to measure progress against the consolidated set of impact indicators	Increase in the number of countries using harmonized methods
3.1.3 Parties agree measures to address capacity-building needs relating to the use of impact indicators and the establishment of targets and baselines	A COP decision on an enhanced capacity-building programme relating to the use of impact indicators

Outcome Area 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.	
Risks/assumptions: The political will of the Parties and low capacity in some affected countries	
Expected accomplishments (2010–2013)	Performance indicators (2010–2013)
3.2.1 Parties establish national and regional baselines and targets for the consolidated set of indicators by using commonly agreed criteria	A comparative review of progress in meeting Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 3 is carried out.

Outcome Area 3.3: Knowledge on biophysical and socio-economic factors and on their interactions in affected areas is improved to enable better decision-making.	
Risks/assumptions: The political will of the Parties and the engagement of the regions	
Expected accomplishments (2010–2013)	Performance indicators (2010–2013)
3.3.1 Parties address priority themes that have been selected by the CST as key emerging issues	CST recommendations on priority themes are reflected in COP decisions

Outcome Area 3.4: Knowledge of the interactions between climate change adaptation, drought mitigation and restoration of degraded land in affected areas is improved to develop tools to assist decision-making.	
Risks/assumptions: The political will of the Parties, and the engagement of the scientific bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change UNFCCC and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	
Expected accomplishments (2010–2013)	Performance indicators (2010–2013)
3.4.1 Scientific cooperation and knowledge exchange with the scientific subsidiary bodies of the UNFCCC and the CBD are increased	Agreement among the three conventions on enhanced scientific cooperation and knowledge exchange
3.4.2 Parties identify relevant subjects related to the interactions between climate change adaptation, drought mitigation and the restoration of degraded lands	A COP decision on relevant subjects to be addressed jointly by the three conventions

Outcome Area 3.6: Science and technology networks and institutions relevant to desertification/land degradation and drought are engaged to support UNCCD implementation.	
Risks/assumptions: The political will of the Parties, and the engagement of scientific networks and institutions (including non-governmental and civil society organizations) in affected countries	
Expected accomplishments (2010–2013)	Performance indicators (2010–2013)
3.6.1 Parties agree effective ways to engage scientific networks and institutions in the UNCCD process and related measures	A COP decision on effective ways to engage scientific networks and institutions in the UNCCD process and related measures

III. Conclusions and recommendations

11. Taking into account the guidance set out in The Strategy, the decisions of the COP, the provisions of the Convention, and the recommendations of CST S-1 and CRIC 7, the proposed draft workplan for 2010–2013 identifies eight expected accomplishments for CST, constructed around the outcome areas of operational objective 3 on science, technology and knowledge. This proposed workplan sets out a concrete road map for the implementation of The Strategy while setting clear priorities for the work of CST over the next four years.

12. Effective implementation of the workplan (2010–2013) is essential for progress in monitoring and assessment of the impact of the implementation of the Convention. In the draft workplan (2010–2013) CST also seeks to inject sound scientific knowledge into the decisions of the COP and enhance cooperation with other conventions. It seeks coordination with other UNCCD subsidiary bodies, as well as opportunities to catalyse capacity-building in affected country Parties and harmonize the policy and scientific elements of the reporting process.

13. In light of recommendations from the CST Bureau, the CST may wish to consider endorsing the proposed draft four-year workplan (2010–2013).
