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COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE CONVENTION

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Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda

**REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND OF  
ITS INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 22,  
PARAGRAPH 2 (a) AND PARAGRAPH (b), AND ARTICLE 26 OF THE  
CONVENTION, AS WELL AS DECISION 1/COP.5, PARAGRAPH 10**

**REVIEW OF THE REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION BY AFFECTED  
AFRICAN COUNTRY PARTIES, INCLUDING ON THE PARTICIPATORY  
PROCESS, AND ON EXPERIENCE GAINED AND RESULTS ACHIEVED  
IN THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION  
PROGRAMMES**

**Addendum**

**Results of the subregional workshops of affected African country Parties\***

**Summary**

Within the framework of a medium-sized Global Environment Facility (GEF) project entitled "Supporting capacity-building for the elaboration of national reports and country profiles by African Parties to the UNCCD", jointly financed by the World Bank and the countries concerned and implemented by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) with the assistance of the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the process of preparation of national reports gave the countries concerned an opportunity to build stakeholders' capacities by enabling them to participate in the preparation and validation of their national reports. Three subregional workshops, which were held in Africa in February 2005, constituted the last stage of this process and summaries of their proceedings are given in this document together with their recommendations.

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\* The submission of this document was delayed owing to the postponement of the meetings concerned.

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**I. SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR NORTH AND WEST AFRICA  
ON THE LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES WITHIN  
THE CONTEXT OF THE NATIONAL REPORTS ON THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNCCD, OUAGADOUGOU,  
BURKINA FASO, 9-11 FEBRUARY 2005**

**Proceedings**

1. This subregional workshop was organized jointly by the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and by the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), with the support of IFAD and the Convention secretariat. It was attended by representatives of all the countries of North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia) and West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo), as well as by representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), subregional, regional and international organizations, and development partners.
2. A new feature of the workshop's work programme was the daily interactive dialogue on the basic issues raised by the representatives of the North African countries (day 1) and West African countries (day 2) and by the representatives of regional and international organizations and partners (day 3). These interactive dialogues proved useful by allowing in-depth exchanges of views between all the different actors present at the workshop concerning the seven priority themes selected by the Conference of the Parties (COP) for the review of the implementation of the Convention.
3. All the countries stressed the importance they attached to the involvement of civil society, local authorities and stakeholders in general in the implementation of programmes and projects undertaken to combat desertification. There is a recognized need, however, to identify the nature of the participation and types of stakeholders involved more specifically in national reports. The workshop also stressed the importance of supporting the decentralization process and of increased involvement by local authorities in the elaboration and implementation of projects aimed at combating desertification.
4. The part played by community associations - though encouraged in many countries of North and West Africa - remains insufficient, chiefly owing to the lack of capacities and resources. States should secure the support of these important actors of civil society and not consider their participation simply as a response to the wishes of development partners.
5. From the institutional point of view, in accordance with the terms of the UNCCD, most of the countries have formally established their national coordination bodies (NCBs). In addition, several countries have adopted new forest and land legislation which is more in line with the needs of decentralization and the devolution of responsibility to grass-roots communities. These improvements are still only at a formal stage for the time being, however, and discussions showed that there is a general problem regarding the functionality of NCBs. In institutional terms the attachment of NCBs to the highest levels of government is considered as a positive factor insofar as it facilitates their consultation and coordination efforts and encourages exchanges with other partners.

6. The fact that the countries of the region are significantly involved in the direct funding of activities to combat desertification clearly reflects the priority these countries attach to this problem. The role of the Global Mechanism in assembling partnerships for the purpose of mobilizing resources and the GEF's contribution stand out more clearly. Among the development partners, some countries have also in some cases made desertification control one of the priorities of their bilateral cooperation with African countries. The lack of financial resources, however, still remains one of the most serious stumbling blocks. National financing mechanisms, such as the National Desertification Funds, are not operational and there is reason to doubt their relevance, considering that there is the possibility of incorporating national action programmes (NAPs) within poverty reduction strategies in order to access sources of funding available within that broader framework.

7. As far as the coordination of development partners is concerned, the results of the "lead agency" (*chef de file*) experiment are very mixed and debatable and need assessing. The concept itself has not been properly understood and has often caused other developed countries to desist from supporting NAPs. The workshop concludes that the prime responsibility for the coordination of partners rests with governments and that lead agencies can only act as facilitators in that respect.

8. The possibility of incorporating NAPs within national economic and social development plans or poverty reduction strategies is a real concern for countries. Whenever NAPs have been successfully integrated within Economic and Social Development Plans, positive effects have been achieved in terms of NAP visibility, the allocation of resources by governments and by development partners, and the effective involvement of stakeholders at different levels in the twin struggles against desertification and poverty.

9. It has to be recognized, however, that in practice the policy of integrating NAP strategic objectives within poverty reduction strategy papers is still purely formal and has not yet given rise to any operational machinery for the funding of integrated field activities.

10. Interesting attempts at achieving synergy between the Rio conventions are mentioned with regard to the possibility of establishing a secretariat that would be shared by all three conventions. One favoured approach is to improve coordination between the activities of the focal points of the environmental conventions, which could lead eventually to the preparation of joint projects dealing at the same time with desertification control, climate change and biodiversity.

11. At the national level, the reports give accounts of activities undertaken for the recovery of degraded lands through programmes of reforestation, natural resource regeneration and fertility restoration, amongst others. The transboundary aspect of desertification control is reflected in cooperation between the AMU and the CILSS aimed at setting up a regional drought and desertification observatory, as part of the plan of action of the Environment Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

12. Some useful experiments have been conducted to introduce desertification control monitoring and assessment systems in the field, particularly in North Africa, under the aegis of the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) and with the support of development partners. Apart from the problem of capacity-building among national stakeholders, access to information and

the exchange of data and information remain some of the main constraints, owing to partitioning between institutions and the weak state of NCBs. It is generally agreed that if national reports are to serve any purpose they should henceforth give a clear idea of the baseline situation on the basis of which efforts can be monitored and assessed.

13. This question, which raises that of the role and place of science and technology in desertification control, has hardly been touched upon either in the national reports or in the presentations given. The contribution of satellite techniques to the management of natural resources appears, however, to be a concern shared by several countries.

14. The debates that took place led to the following thematic and strategic conclusions and recommendations:

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

### **A. Thematic recommendations**

#### **1. Participatory processes involving civil society, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and specialized national institutions**

15. The workshop calls on the countries of North Africa and West Africa to:

- Take concrete measures to strengthen the decentralization process with a view to ensuring genuine involvement by local authorities in the management of natural resources in their local areas;
- Build up the negotiating capacities of civil society stakeholders in order to enable them to influence natural resource management policies and strategies;
- Consider NGOs as genuine actors in the development process;
- Build up the abilities of grass-roots community-based organizations to formulate, implement and evaluate concrete sustainable rural development programmes in the field, in order to enable them to become economic actors capable of assuming their own self-development;
- Guarantee the participation of all components of civil society at all levels and make that participation more visible and more efficient, by highlighting its added value and by characterizing its actors and processes.

16. The workshop calls upon the civil society stakeholders concerned to become more involved in the formulation and implementation of natural resource management policies and strategies and to improve their capacity for action.

17. The workshop calls upon the countries of the two subregions to promote an environment which increases the ability of civil society components (such as local authorities, the private sector, NGOs and scientific and technical institutions) to implement desertification control projects and to encourage the formation of partnerships between these stakeholders.

## **2. Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements**

18. The workshop recalls former decisions taken by UNCCD bodies and calls on the countries on the two subregions to apply them effectively by taking the necessary measures to:

- Institutionalize the permanent secretariats of NCBs and establish them within national administrative structures at a high decisional level by allocating them their own funds within State budgets or from other sources;
- Provide NCBs with the legal, material and financial means they require to play their role as catalysts in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of national action programmes to combat desertification, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention;
- Pay closer attention to settling as necessary any land issues related to the preservation and sustainable management of natural resources, in order to protect the security of investments and safeguard their use, especially by women and young people, while taking account of the diversity and complexity of local situations.

### **3. Resource mobilization and coordination, both domestic and international, including conclusion of partnership agreements**

19. The workshop calls on developed country Parties to increase exchanges of information with NCBs regarding financing opportunities in particular and to include desertification control among their cooperation priorities.

20. The workshop calls on developed countries in the light of their commitments and on multilateral cooperation “lead agencies”, on the African country partners concerned in the two subregions, and on the CILSS and the AMU to assess the effectiveness and results of their work as facilitators for consultations and coordination with other developed countries and to submit their findings at the time of the seventh session of the COP.

21. The workshop calls on the countries of the two subregions to assess the functionality and sustainability of national desertification funds created in relation to the implementation of the Convention and, if needs be, to seek to strengthen the funds and appropriate existing financial mechanisms, while endeavouring to provide practical arrangements for the use of these funds for desertification control activities.

22. The workshop requests developed countries which are members of the GEF to increase their contributions to the GEF’s Operational Programme on sustainable land management (OP 15) under the fourth instalment and to give priority to the requirements of African countries by facilitating procedures and access to these funds.

23. The workshop calls on country Parties to promote diversified sources of funding for desertification control activities and in particular the recycling of the debt of African country Parties.

24. The workshop requests the Global Mechanism to:
- Continue its efforts to facilitate and build partnerships and to integrate NAPs in development strategy frameworks, in order to increase both national and international financial flows;
  - Increase the involvement of the members of its Facilitation Committee (World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), IFAD, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), regional banks and the Convention secretariat) in its partnership building and resource mobilizing activities.
25. The workshop calls on the countries of the two subregions to:
- Integrate desertification control as necessary within strategic development frameworks (national plans for economic and social development and strategic poverty reduction frameworks);
  - Mainstream desertification control activities in resource allocation to these strategic frameworks (investment plans or priority action programmes).
26. The workshop calls on African countries and their partners to give priority to strengthening decentralized cooperation as a supplementary source of funding, of capacity-building among local authorities and of effective involvement of grass-roots communities in the management of natural resources and the implementation of the Convention.
27. The workshop calls on African countries to take whatever measures are necessary to facilitate the access of impoverished populations to financial resources, inter alia by promoting appropriate financial mechanisms such as decentralized financial systems and microcredit.
28. The workshop calls on the countries of the two subregions to take advantage of existing opportunities offered by the NEPAD Environment Initiative and its Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme.

#### **4. Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions**

29. The workshop calls on the countries of the two subregions and on subregional organizations to consider the comparative advantages of instituting a national mechanism for flexible consultation between the Rio conventions, with a view in particular to facilitating synergies.

#### **5. Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded lands and the creation of early warning systems to mitigate the effects of drought**

30. In view of the many initiatives taken to promote soil fertility and to combat land degradation in Africa, such as the Country Pilot Partnership, TerrAfrica, the “Earth and Water”

initiative and NEPAD's Environment Initiative, the workshop recommends that an analytic inventory be drawn up of these initiatives in order to assess their comparative advantages and to ensure their coordination and efficient operation for the mobilization of financial resources in support of NAP implementation.

## **6. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment**

31. The workshop recalls the importance attached by the UNCCD to desertification monitoring and assessment and the implementation of programmes of action and calls on African countries to:

- Strengthen South-South cooperation in terms of information exchange and capacity-building for the collection, processing and dissemination of data;
- Mobilize existing national capacities by combating partitioning between institutions in order to facilitate information sharing and inter alia to produce more comprehensive country profiles;
- Develop monitoring and assessment systems and design and use appropriate indicators as tools to assist decision-making, particularly those relating to the participation of civil society;
- Establish national systems for monitoring natural disasters on the basis of existing facilities;
- Highlight the impact of UNCCD actions with regard to improving the living standards of recipient populations.

## **7. Appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how**

32. The workshop calls on African countries to:

- Develop and disseminate know-how, approaches, tools and the capacities of local stakeholders in the management of natural resources;
- Recognize the know-how and innovations of local farming and take them into account in integrated programmes and projects for the management of natural resources;
- Support South-South cooperation in the areas of remote sensing, scientific research, dissemination of the results of research and successful desertification control practices;
- Encourage greater involvement by the UNCCD's Committee on Science and Technology (CST) in the collection and dissemination of local knowledge and know-how.



## **B. Strategic conclusions and recommendations**

### **1. Elaboration, adoption and implementation of programmes of action**

#### **National level**

33. The workshop urges the countries of the two subregions which have not yet prepared their NAPs for desertification control to do so and to integrate them within their programming and strategic frameworks for economic and social development and/or poverty reduction and to adopt them by the end of 2005.

34. The workshop calls on the countries of the two subregions, development partners and the UNCCD secretariat to support capacity-building among focal points and NCBs for the formulation, monitoring and implementation of NAPs.

#### **Subregional level**

35. The workshop encourages subregional organizations to intensify their South-South cooperation in areas of common interest such as setting up an interregional drought observatory, implementing transboundary projects or improving the ability to formulate GEF-eligible projects.

36. The workshop calls on the countries of the two subregions and developed country Parties, as well as on the subregional, regional and international organizations concerned to consider pest control as part of the effort to combat desertification and to strengthen institutions involved in that area.

#### **Regional level**

37. The workshop recommends strengthening the system used to coordinate thematic programme networks (TPN) and inform national focal points.

38. In relation to the regional action programme (RAP), the workshop recommends:

- Taking whatever measures are necessary to implement initiatives for developing the exchange of available information and consolidating cooperation links between network members;
- Taking whatever measures are necessary to ensure the sustainable funding of RAP activities through the involvement of development partners, including bilateral and multilateral partners and the private sector.

39. With regard to the TPN, the workshop recommends:

- For TPN 2 on agroforestry and soil conservation:
  - Diversifying the partnership by seeking further technical support from institutions able to make a further contribution in areas such as the integrated management of fertility, capacity-building or the introduction of facilities for the sharing and dissemination of information concerning network activities;
  - Circulating to interested network member countries the results of projects relating to the production and marketing of shea butter.
- For TPN 4 on ecological monitoring, natural resource mapping, remote sensing and early warning systems:
  - Intensifying the use of new information technologies, in particular by promoting the existing TPN 4 web site, with a view to making the results achieved better known and thus encouraging partnership agreements.
- For TPN 5 on renewable energies:
  - Making more use of renewable and substitution energy sources and of environment-friendly and energy-saving technologies, as part of the effort to combat desertification and alleviate the effects of drought.

## **2. International year of deserts and desertification 2006**

40. The workshop requests the UNCCD secretariat to provide more information on the activities planned under this heading and to take steps to help countries organize activities to celebrate the international year of deserts and desertification 2006.

## **3. Elaboration of national reports**

41. The workshop recommends that the countries of the two subregions should henceforth offer quantitative and qualitative information regarding the impact produced by investments in the area of natural resource management on economic growth, poverty reduction and good governance. It recommends that baseline situations should be clearly indicated in reports so that the progress achieved may be assessed on the basis of common indicators.

42. The participants welcome the fruitful discussions held between countries during the workshop, which have contributed to a broad dissemination of lessons learned with respect to the implementation of the Convention since 2002, while allowing better preparation of the work of the Committee on the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC). The workshop calls on the national focal points of the UNCCD to share the results of the workshop with stakeholders in their respective countries with a view to enhancing their capacities with respect to implementation of the Convention.

**II. SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR CENTRAL AFRICA ON  
THE LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES WITHIN  
THE CONTEXT OF THE NATIONAL REPORTS ON THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNCCD, DOUALA, CAMEROON,  
15-17 FEBRUARY 2005**

**Proceedings**

43. This workshop was organized by the Ministers in Charge of Forests in Central Africa (COMIFAC), in conjunction with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and with the support of IFAD and the UNCCD secretariat.

44. This subregional workshop was attended by some 60 participants representing the country Parties (COMIFAC national correspondents and UNCCD national focal points) of Central Africa, subregional, regional and international intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, civil society and bilateral and multilateral partners. Nine country Parties of Central Africa out of 10 participated in the workshop, namely: Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Rwanda, San Tomé and Príncipe and Chad.

45. In order to achieve the objectives assigned to the workshop, namely sharing the experience gained and lessons learned with the implementation of the UNCCD, proceedings were conducted in plenary or in working groups, leading to the adoption of recommendations.

46. In plenary, discussions were held on the basis of some 20 presentations concerning the experience of countries and organizations with the implementation of activities to combat desertification and land degradation. The countries' presentations led to discussions which gave an idea of the progress, constraints and prospects affecting the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification in the countries of Central Africa. Two working groups were set up to consider the seven priority themes addressed in the presentations and to draft conclusions and recommendations which were to serve as the Central Africa subregion's contribution to the third session of the CRIC.

47. In the course of presentations and discussions, it was emphasized that the support of the Convention's secretariat and the Global Mechanism was vital and remained a key factor in the preparation and implementation of NAPs. Confirmation was given of the Global Mechanism's commitment to increasing its support for the countries of Central Africa and to seeking synergies with former structures. The effort made to develop and implement NAPs must take advantage of the many initiatives and processes taking place at national and subregional level.

48. All the countries stressed the need for capacity-building among grass-roots communities, in order to give them a better understanding of issues related to the rational management of natural resources. Further goals at national level should be to increase awareness and to stimulate public debate concerning the sustainable management of natural resources in arid and semi-arid areas.

49. The improved integration of Convention-related activities to combat land degradation within national strategies and partner cooperation programmes, as well as the long-term linkage of NAPs with poverty reduction strategies in the countries concerned are considered as key elements of those strategies.

50. Cooperation between COMIFAC national correspondents and UNCCD focal points will facilitate the preparation and completion of NAPs, as well as the preparation of the subregional action programme (SRAP) for Central Africa on the basis of the subregional Convergence Plan for the joint management of forest resources.

51. The development partners and sponsors renewed their commitment to supporting the implementation of the UNCCD through their cooperation programmes in the areas of agriculture and natural resource management.

52. For Central Africa, the principles set forth in the UNCCD are important and a matter of urgent priority for the processes currently under way in the Congo Basin, such as the subregional Convergence Plan adopted at the Summit of Heads of State in February 2005, the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) process supported by the European Union, and national forest programmes. The specific problems of Central African countries with their considerable forest resources provide a suitable opportunity for updating potential synergies between the UNCCD, the CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) and the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change).

53. The above concerns and contributions led to the formulation of the following conclusions and recommendations:

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

54. The participants at the Douala workshop,

*Recognizing* the efforts of international partners to bring the country Parties of the UNCCD of Central Africa up to date with the real situation regarding the implementation of the Convention and the role of the COMIFAC in monitoring implementation of the UNCCD in the subregion,

*Noting furthermore* the outcome of the Summit of Heads of State held in Brazzaville, the signature of the COMIFAC Treaty and the adoption of the Convergence Plan on 5 February 2005 by the Heads of State and Government of the ten countries of Central Africa,

*Recalling* that the countries of Central Africa are all Parties to the UNCCD and have therefore undertaken to provide their completed and validated NAP by the end of 2005,

*Drawing attention* to the specific problems experienced by the countries of Central Africa with the implementation of the UNCCD in Africa owing to their considerable forest resources, which constitute the second largest forested area in the world, and to the fact that these problems must be taken into account in efforts to update potential synergies between the UNCCD, CBD and UNFCCC,

*Aware* of the outcome of the Subregional Workshop for the Countries of Central Africa on the Implementation of the UNCCD, which was held in Libreville (Gabon) from 30 July to 1 August 2003, and the regional training workshop for French-speaking countries on the GEF approach to sustainable land management, which was held in Tunis (Tunisia) from 11-13 October 2004,

*Convinced* of the need for the immediate operational implementation of the NAPs and SRAP to deal with the threat of land degradation affecting the subregion's ecosystems,

*Taking account* of the limited financial flows to Central Africa related to the implementation of the UNCCD,

*Recognizing* the potential of the UNCCD for poverty reduction and the need to facilitate the insertion of the relevant provisions of NAPs in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) with a view to achieving the Millennium Goals (goal 1: poverty; goal 7: sustainable development).

55. Adopt the following recommendations:

The workshop invites the countries and intergovernmental organizations concerned of the subregion to undertake or facilitate the following measures:

**1. Participatory processes involving civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations**

- Preparation and implementation at national level of a strategy to train and create awareness among key stakeholders;
- Representation of civil society in NCBs, particularly elected officials, the private sector, the scientific community, the media, women and young people;
- Effective participation of key stakeholders at the various stages of UNCCD implementation, particularly with regard to the establishment and/or strengthening of decentralized NCB structures for the preparation of national reports and the preparation and implementation of NAPs and the SRAP.

**2. Legislative and institutional framework**

- Institutionalization of NCB secretariats at the appropriate decision-making level and provision of adequate means for their operation within State budgets in order to ensure their continuity;
- Harmonization of existing laws with conventions ratified by the countries of the subregion, updating of legal frameworks as a matter of priority and easier public access to legal texts;
- Effective enforcement of relevant laws and regulations and participation by countries of the subregion in the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) process;

- Gradual integration of institutional bodies responsible for the management of water, pastures, agriculture and forests, amongst others, accompanied by greater compatibility of crosscutting measures for the maintenance and rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems with the interests of impoverished local populations.

### **3. Mobilization and coordination of internal and international resources including the conclusion of partnership agreements**

- Awareness creation among ministers responsible for planning and allocating resources to UNCCD objectives, by highlighting links between land degradation and natural resource management;
- Allocation of resources under the national budget to cover activities related to land degradation and desertification control;
- Appeal to the Global Mechanism, the UNCCD secretariat and international partners to promote the preparation, implementation and review of NAPs consistently and without delay;
- Appeal to member countries of the GEF to increase their contribution to the GEF's Operational Programme on land degradation (OP 15) in the light of the needs of UNCCD implementation;
- Requesting an increased share under the GEF's fourth instalment with the support of its executing and implementing agencies, while recognizing the Global Mechanism's role as catalyst;
- Taking the necessary steps to join the TerrAfrica initiative and requesting the multilateral partners and UNCCD developed country Parties to facilitate the implementation of the initiative;
- Continued support by the GEF, World Bank, IFAD and UNCCD secretariat for capacity-building and monitoring of the UNCCD process, following the impetus provided by the preparation of the third series of national reports.

### **4. Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and, as appropriate, with national development strategies**

- Facilitation at national level of meetings between the GEF focal point, the focal points of the three Rio conventions and the Ramsar Convention with a view to promoting synergies between their activities in harmony with other national strategies, while taking full advantage of the UNCCD's multisectoral and participatory approach in countries;
- Integration of the UNCCD implementation process in existing national strategies, particularly the PRSPs and the forest and environmental programmes;

- Development of synergies between the NAPs and national components of the COMIFAC Convergence Plan;
- Establishment of cooperation between the UNCCD's national focal points and national COMIFAC correspondents, which should be members of NCBs;
- Strengthening of cooperation between institutions (African Union, ECCAS, Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), COMIFAC, International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF), etc.) with a view to harmonizing activities undertaken within the framework of UNCCD implementation.

#### **5. Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded lands and the creation of early warning systems to mitigate the effects of drought**

- Promotion of production systems (such as agroforestry) adapted to the agro-climatic conditions of sub-humid drylands and of soil conservation and restoration techniques, in cooperation with members of the UNCCD thematic programme network on agroforestry (TPN 2);
- Development of early warning systems at subregional level and strengthening of South-South cooperation with regard to exchanges of information and experience, in cooperation with members of the UNCCD thematic programme network on early warning systems (TPN 4);
- Promotion and enhancement of wood substitution energies in order to reduce the pressure on natural formations, in cooperation with members of the UNCCD regional thematic programme network on renewable energies (TPN 5).

#### **6. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment**

- Establishment of a subregional observatory to monitor and assess desertification in consultation with COMIFAC, ECCAS and the Agency for the Development of Environmental Information (ADIE) and strengthening of national systems for the collection, processing and management of desertification data;
- Capacity-building for data collection and social analysis in order to identify more clearly the links between natural resource degradation and poverty.

#### **7. Appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how**

- Identification and enhancement of the traditional know-how of local populations in terms of natural resource management and land degradation control, in the light of the relevant UNCCD arrangements;
- Enhancement of the scientific and technical potential of the subregion and use of new information and communication technologies (NICTs) for a better dissemination of the results of research on sustainable land management;

- Strengthening of exchanges between the UNCCD's CST and national and subregional research institutions, in order to make best use of research results at international level.

### **8. General recommendations**

- In order to facilitate cooperation between COMIFAC/ECCAS, the Global Mechanism and the UNCCD secretariat, a cooperation framework in which the commitments of each party are clearly defined should be established and a joint work programme set up periodically for the three institutions;
- With regard to the preparation of the SRAP, the COMIFAC should ensure that best use is made of the existing capacities of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations of the subregion.

### **III. SUBREGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA ON THE LESSONS LEARNED AND BEST PRACTICES WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE NATIONAL REPORTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNCCD, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 21-23 FEBRUARY 2005**

#### **Proceedings**

56. The workshop was organized by the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in collaboration with IFAD and the UNCCD secretariat. It was attended by representatives from five Eastern African country Parties (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda) and eleven Southern African country Parties (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe), as well as from subregional and regional institutions, NGOs and bilateral and multilateral partners.

57. After the presentations made by country Parties, representatives of the IGAD and SADC secretariats informed the participants on the status of implementation of SRAPs. Significant progress has been achieved by IGAD on institutional strengthening and programme implementation. Progress seems, however, to be slow within the SADC subregion, mainly because of the restructuring exercise which has taken place during the past two years. The exercise has been completed and programme implementation is expected to commence by April 2005.

58. Representatives of African organizations working in the subregions, United Nations agencies, NGOs and development partners presented a number of topic-based papers. Most of the presentations were in support of the effective implementation of the Convention and the need for close cooperation amongst the various institutions. Emphasis was also placed on the need to concentrate action at the local level in order to achieve the objectives of the Convention.

59. Based on the various presentations, facilitated interactive dialogues were undertaken during the second and third days of the workshop. During these dialogues, participants were



encouraged to deliberate on all seven key thematic topics for the review of implementation of the Convention. Highlights of the key issues discussed under each thematic topic may be summarized as follows.

60. On participatory processes involving civil society, NGOs and community-based organizations, it was agreed that in some instances mere consultations are referred to as participation. Almost all the countries' presentations indicated the involvement of major stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of NAPs. Discussions, however, identified the need to ensure and evaluate effective participation by civil society, including the private sector and the scientific community. It was agreed that participation could be strengthened through integration of land management-related matters into district development plans, capacity-building of NGOs and community-based organizations through environmental education and exchange of best practices, and support to community-based projects.

61. On legislative and institutional frameworks, all country Parties have established NCBs; some country Parties have also enacted new legislation and policies to support effective implementation of the Convention. However, the NCBs lack the institutional mandate, capacity and resources to mainstream UNCCD issues into the main development-planning framework. It was therefore recommended that the effectiveness of coordinating bodies should be assessed, in addition to their outreach being strengthened at the local level.

62. On resource mobilization, a number of country Parties still have difficulties accessing resources for implementation. Other countries are in the process of establishing trust funds for UNCCD implementation and the involvement of the private sector in resource mobilization was recommended. The need for a rigorous and systematic mainstreaming of NAPs into poverty reduction strategies and other development frameworks was also emphasized.

63. With regard to linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions, participants noted that the outcome of the National Capacity Self-Assessments is expected to facilitate appropriate joint action by three key conventions (UNCCD, CBD and UNFCCC). It was also underlined that synergies should be further promoted at local level when it comes to the implementation of projects and programmes.

64. In the area of rehabilitation of degraded lands, participants agreed that there was a need for disaster preparedness and the establishment of early warning systems. The use of best practices was viewed as important in promoting effective land management systems.

65. As far as drought monitoring and assessment was concerned, the need for capacity-building to enhance data collection was emphasized. Most country profiles submitted were incomplete due to lack of data or difficulty of access to existing information at country level. The need to collaborate closely with the CST was mentioned. The participation of local communities in local level drought monitoring and assessment was viewed as critical.

66. On appropriate technologies, knowledge and know-how, the participants requested close collaboration with the CST and the resuscitation of multidisciplinary committees on science and technology at subregional and national levels.

67. A draft text summarizing the conclusions, recommendations and action plan was distributed to all participants of the workshop, who had the opportunity to propose amendments and comments, which were subsequently adopted in plenary. The full text of the conclusions, recommendations and action plan is given below.

### **Conclusions, recommendations and framework of action**

68. Participants at the subregional workshop on the lessons learned and best practices within the context of the national reports on the implementation of the UNCCD in Eastern and Southern Africa,

Having considered the third cycle of national and subregional reports on the implementation of the UNCCD,

Have adopted the following strategic and thematic recommendations including the draft Framework of Action:

#### **A. Strategic conclusions and recommendations**

##### **Elaboration, adoption, and implementation of action programmes**

69. *At the national level:*

- Political and social stability is a necessary prerequisite for sound environmental governance in general and the elaboration and implementation of NAPs to combat desertification in particular;
- Greater effort from national authorities and international partners is essential to concretize the potential UNCCD contribution to the settlement of conflicts resulting from competition for scarce natural resources;
- Greater political commitment towards the UNCCD and the building of the capacity necessary for its implementation at country level is called for, taking into account the capacity needs of all stakeholders as required;
- Participants call upon the UNDP and the Global Mechanism to assist countries to finalize their NAPs by 2005 as requested by decision 8/COP.4;
- Upon finalization of the National Capacity Self-Assessments, support for the follow-up to this exercise is needed from the relevant partners (both national and international) in order effectively to build capacity for the implementation of the UNCCD and the other Rio conventions.

70. *At the subregional level*, the workshop calls upon:

- Relevant subregional organizations to enhance information exchange with the UNCCD national focal points of the member countries through networking;
- The SADC secretariat to speed up its restructuring process and strengthen the capacity of the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit to be able to support the implementation of UNCCD activities effectively in the subregion; and requests the SADC secretariat to include UNCCD-related issues in its short- and medium-term action plans for the implementation of the indicative 15-year Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan;
- The SADC centres of excellence identified for the purpose of the UNCCD to continue their support to the UNCCD implementation process in the subregion and to mobilize resources as appropriate and according to their mandate;
- The SADC secretariat in close collaboration with the Global Mechanism to revive and strengthen the Subregional Support Facility - Southern Africa for the purpose of funding the implementation of the UNCCD in the SADC subregion;
- The IGAD secretariat in collaboration with the Global Mechanism and the UNCCD secretariat to strengthen its capacities by way of mobilizing resources for the Subregional Support Facility to implement the UNCCD.

71. *At the regional level*, the potential of the TPN of the African RAP for disseminating and implementing knowledge management measures advocated by the CST of the UNCCD and identified by the Parties in the context of the CRIC reporting must be actualized more successfully. The usefulness of these networks in support of national level initiatives must be concretized, notably through more effective contribution from the six institutional focal points of the thematic programme networks (TPNs) and the provision of support from international governmental and scientific partners.

72. The workshop notes with appreciation the progress made by TPN 3 on promotion of rangelands and fodder crops to mobilize funds for the implementation of the RAP within its mandated programme areas, and requests the UNCCD secretariat to facilitate the exchange of experience with the other TPNs.

73. The workshop calls upon the NEPAD secretariat to facilitate mobilization of adequate resources for the implementation of component 1 on land degradation and combating desertification of the Action Plan of the NEPAD Environment Initiative, particularly in the development of the SRAP. With a view to mastering the process of resource mobilization, the NEPAD secretariat should also seize the opportunities offered within the framework of the NEPAD Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (components 1 and 5).

## **B. Thematic recommendations**

### **1. Participatory processes involving civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations**

74. The workshop calls upon countries of Eastern and Southern Africa to:
- Further enhance the participation of civil society including the International NGO Network on Desertification (RIOD) in UNCCD implementation as true partners in development;
  - Intensify environmental education and awareness creation activities on issues relating to combating desertification and to land degradation through focused campaigns using civil institutions;
  - Integrate sustainable land management issues into school curricula in close collaboration with the ministries of education;
  - Promote institutionalization of gender perspectives, HIV and AIDS issues while increasing gender mainstreaming at a high level;
  - Build capacities and enhance exchange of good practices and experience among communities, NGOs and community-based organizations in the preparation and management of small-scale community-based projects while enhancing their organizational capacity;
  - Promote involvement of stakeholders including international partners in strengthening traditional participatory land management processes and poverty reduction at community level;
  - Empower communities through effective decentralization and allocation of funds to local authorities and communities to enable them to manage their resources;
  - Build capacities of local governments and communities for better integration of sustainable land management issues within their district development plans as well as resource mobilization, conflict resolution and group organization and management in the context of NAPs;
  - Evaluate the effective participation of civil society in the UNCCD implementation process on the basis of qualitative indicators.

### **2. Legislative and institutional frameworks or arrangements**

75. The workshop calls upon countries of Eastern and Southern Africa to:
- Strengthen enforcement mechanisms for laws and policies, including customary laws, that encourage sustainable natural resource management and update/revisit legislation which does not yet take into account current environmental problems;

- Expand NCBs further by including representatives from various key stakeholders, ensuring gender balance, and enhance their capacities through training in environmental law, policy analysis, development of environmental planning tools, and development and provision of appropriate communication and networking equipment;
- Promote institutional collaboration and coordination through the establishment of environment desk officers in all relevant government ministries;
- Strengthen institutional arrangements for coordination and implementation of the UNCCD to take account of local communities that are implementing programmes, particularly in view of the importance of the synergies which need to be established.

**3. Resource mobilization and coordination, both domestic and international, including the conclusion of partnership agreements**

76. The workshop calls upon countries of Eastern and Southern Africa to:

- Pursue the sensitization of policy and decision makers to support the integration of land management issues into national planning and budgeting processes and to ensure integration of NAPs into public investment programmes, with a view to increasing allocations to environmental programmes in national budgets, while promoting private sector participation and investment in drylands development;
- Develop skills in financial negotiation and project planning in order to enable stakeholders at all levels to submit eligible projects and programmes under NAPs;
- Strengthen the ability to argue cases better in all environmental accounting forums in order to identify the price of ecosystem services and the cost of land degradation and thereby secure higher budgetary allocations for natural resource management;
- Call upon the Global Mechanism, while recognizing its indispensable role as a catalyst, to expand its support to countries in both subregions by mainstreaming NAPs and to mobilize resources for the completion and effective implementation of NAPs, particularly through priority projects and programmes at community level;
- Strengthen in-country capacity to effectively coordinate mainstreaming of the UNCCD NAPs into national development planning frameworks such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, in order to ensure the effective mobilization of resources for NAP implementation;
- Ensure the early involvement of UNCCD national focal points, with the direct support of GEF implementing agencies, in the elaboration of projects to be submitted to the GEF and in ongoing training for preparation of eligible projects under Operational Programme 15 (OP 15);

- Systematically integrate issues relating to land degradation into strategic development frameworks (national economic and social development plans or strategic poverty reduction frameworks) and subsequently into the resource allocation processes of these strategic frameworks (investment plans or priority action programmes);
- Closely monitor initiatives and frameworks relating to sustainable land management and desertification control such as TerrAfrica and the NEPAD Environment Initiative, as well as the implementation of agreements such as the Cotonou Agreement between the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the European Union (ACP-EU) in order to integrate NAPs as appropriate into these strategies and mobilize support for their effective implementation.

#### **4. Linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and as appropriate with national development strategies**

77. The workshop calls upon countries of Eastern and Southern Africa to:

- Set up a multidisciplinary coordination forum bringing together various actors (governments, NGOs, private sector, banks, etc.) responsible for overseeing the implementation of the UNCCD, CBD and UNFCCC with a view to synergizing activities and including all three conventions as far as possible in projects and programmes at community level relating to the integrated management of natural resources;
- Synthesize as appropriate action programmes relating to all three conventions within one single action plan, based on the results of the National Capacity Self-Assessments;
- Promote national, subregional and interregional programmes in order to take advantage of experience and technical expertise;
- Assist the relevant stakeholders in the documentation and dissemination of success stories and best practices that can be used or replicated by other countries.

78. The workshop requests the UNCCD secretariat to continue to support country-driven synergy workshops and requests the Global Mechanism to facilitate the financing of such events under the subsequent joint work programme of the Global Mechanism and the UNCCD secretariat.

#### **5. Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded lands and the creation of early warning systems to mitigate the effects of drought**

79. The workshop calls upon countries of Eastern and Southern Africa to:

- Identify innovative and successful interventions targeting sustainable land management, the protection of fertile land and the rehabilitation of degraded land at national and subregional levels for wider dissemination;

- Promote a holistic approach and improved coordination in the implementation of projects and programmes at the local level;
- Identify and promote incentives at local level encouraging land users to invest in the protection of fertile land and the rehabilitation of degraded land;
- Evaluate the impact of projects relating to land protection and land degradation control in order to improve the planning and design of sustainable land management, policies and strategies;
- Integrate disaster risk assessments into all project formulations under the framework of the UNCCD.

### **6. Drought and desertification monitoring and assessment**

80. The workshop calls upon countries of Eastern and Southern Africa to:

- Build capacities to improve data collection, collation and analysis (human resources and equipment) while making use of subregional and regional institutions such as the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (formerly Drought Monitoring Centre (DMC) Nairobi), the Drought and Monitoring Centre of Harare, the Remote Sensing Unit of SADC, the Regional Centre for Mapping Resources for Development, the OSS, etc.;
- Set up a regional/subregional team of experts on drought and desertification monitoring and assessment to exchange lessons learned and deal with transboundary issues that cause drought or desertification, with a view amongst others to setting up sustainable land management information exchange networks in close collaboration with the CST and TPN 4 on monitoring and assessment;
- Strengthen national and subregional monitoring facilities and early warning systems, taking into account the participation of local communities (i.e. farmers) in local level monitoring for enhanced decision-making;
- Complete and refine baseline data contained in country profiles on which future monitoring can be based as well as the elaboration of a desertification map based on all indicators (identification of “hot spots” that require close monitoring).

### **7. Appropriate technology, knowledge and know-how**

81. The workshop calls upon countries of Eastern and Southern Africa to:

- Promote demand-driven research, documentation and dissemination of best practices and technology transfer processes, taking into account the needs of women and other disadvantaged groups;
- Promote appropriate small-scale irrigation schemes in drylands;

- Promote appropriate management practices, conservation farming and improved management practices among small-scale farmers through community-based exchange and training, with the support of TPN 2 on agroforestry, the Global Mechanism and the UNCCD secretariat and in close collaboration with the CST;
- Promote appropriate crop marketing and storage skills, especially among small-scale farmers (including women);
- Resuscitate the multidisciplinary science and technology committee of SADC for effective support to the member countries in close collaboration with the CST.

### **C. Elaboration process of national reports**

82. In general, the broad involvement of stakeholders in the elaboration of the third series of national reports contributed to enhanced involvement in the UNCCD implementation process, built stakeholder capacities, promoted teambuilding and networking and facilitated awareness raising, advocacy and publicity.

#### **1. Country profiles**

83. Countries acknowledged the usefulness of country profiles as a decision-making tool. The elaboration of profiles involved new stakeholders in the UNCCD process and allowed them to reach a common understanding regarding relevant indicators to enable effective monitoring of NAP implementation, as required by the UNCCD. While large amounts of data are available in individual countries, these data are spread among different institutions and not easily accessible. Countries therefore request the UNCCD secretariat to propose ways and means of reviewing data formatting with them, to institutionalize formatting in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals and other guiding programmes and to assist them, as appropriate, to fill in existing gaps in country profiles.

#### **2. Help Guide**

84. The Help Guide for the elaboration of national reports proved to be too complex for some of the actors at national level and the UNCCD secretariat is hereby requested to produce a simplified version for the fourth series of national report preparation.

#### **3. Elaboration of the next series of national reports**

85. While countries from Southern and Eastern Africa acknowledged the positive impact of the support provided through the GEF medium-sized project co-funded by the World Bank, related to supporting capacity-building for the elaboration of national reports and country profiles, they have stressed that further support will be needed for the next series of national reports. While NCB members have contributed substantially to the process in 2004-2005, the capacity requirements identified in the context of the elaboration of national reports could be only partly addressed.



**FRAMEWORK OF ACTION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
UNCCD IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA**

Thematic area	Priority action(s)/objectives	Suggested activities	Level	Time frame	Responsibility	Partners
Participatory process	Intensify environmental education and awareness of civil institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create awareness strategy</li> <li>• Prepare materials</li> <li>• Carry out awareness activities</li> </ul>	National Subregional	2007	Subregional National focal points	UNCCD EU UNDP
Legislative and institutional	Strengthen legal and institutional arrangements of national coordinating bodies (NCBs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the capacities of NCBs in planning, coordinating, monitoring, networking and mainstreaming for effective implementation of NAPs</li> <li>• Develop and strengthen the capacity and organization of grassroots institutions to implement NAPs</li> </ul>	All levels	2007	Subregional Secretariat National	AU UNEP UNDP
Resource mobilization	Strengthen and intensify resource mobilization and coordination processes for effective implementation of the UNCCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mainstream</li> <li>• Build fund-raising and project planning capacity</li> <li>• Follow-up initiatives on Sustainable Land Managements (SLMs) e.g. TerrAfrica, Land Degradation Assessment for Drylands (LADA), etc.</li> </ul>	Subregional National	Ongoing	National focal points Governments Regional institutions Subregional	GM WB EU ADB GEF
Linkages and synergies with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)	Intensify linkages and synergies among the three Rio conventions by integrating as far as possible all three conventions into projects and programmes at community level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake/finalize National Capacity for Self-Assessments for the Rio MEAs</li> <li>• Set up a multidisciplinary group</li> <li>• Prepare and implement joint action programmes and projects at local level</li> </ul>	Community	2008	National focal points	UNCCD CBD UNFCCC TPNs UNEP UNDP
Measures for the rehabilitation of degraded lands and early warning system (EWS)	Develop and undertake area-specific programmes and projects addressing land degradation at local level using a holistic approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop skills in integrated project formulation and implementation</li> <li>• Evaluate impact of land degradation projects and programmes</li> <li>• Design and implement integrated area-specific projects and programmes</li> </ul>	National Community	2008	Subregional Secretariats National focal points Governments	WB IFAD GEF ADB EU

**Table (continued)**

Thematic area	Priority action(s)/objectives	Suggested activities	Level	Time frame	Responsibility	Partners
Monitoring and assessment	(a) Strengthen subregional, national and community monitoring and EWS facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire appropriate equipment</li> <li>Develop skills</li> </ul>	Subregional National Community	2008	Subregional Secretariat	FAO OSS CST
	(b) Complete and refine baseline data contained in country profiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop monitoring indicators</li> <li>Complete baseline data</li> <li>Develop a desertification atlas</li> </ul>	National Community	2008	National focal points	
Appropriate techniques, knowledge and know-how	Carry out demand-driven research; document and disseminate best practices and transfer technology for the enhancement of food security and poverty reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify, document and disseminate best practices</li> <li>Implement community exchange and training programmes</li> <li>Upscale and replicate best practices in communities</li> <li>Reactivate CST subregional committees</li> </ul>	Subregional National	2009	Subregional National focal points NGOs	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) CST

86. The workshop participants:

*Call upon* development partners to take into account the above Framework of Action in their strategies for providing support to the countries of Eastern and Southern Africa,

*Call upon* countries of Eastern and Southern Africa to work on the Framework of Action adding measures and indicators,

*Recommend* that countries report regularly to their respective subregional organizations (IGAD/SADC) on progress achieved with the implementation of the Framework of Action,

*Recommend* that the IGAD and SADC secretariats report to the relevant bodies of the Conference of the Parties on progress achieved with the implementation of the Framework of Action for implementation of the UNCCD in the countries of Eastern and Southern Africa.

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