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Agenda item 3 (c)

The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention
Indicators and monitoring of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention

**The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of
the Convention**

Note by the secretariat*

Addendum

**Indicators and monitoring of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to
enhance the implementation of the Convention**

Summary

By decision 3/COP.8, the Parties and the Regional Implementation Annexes were invited to develop nationally and regionally relevant indicators for the implementation of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (The Strategy) for consideration at the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 7).

The present document contains a summary of the submissions received by Parties as at 31 July 2008, while the full texts of submissions is published on the UNCCD official web site.

* The submission of this document was delayed in order to take into consideration submissions received from Parties up to 31 July 2008.

The document compiled quite diversified views from Parties, especially on the selection of indicators and their alternatives. Parties did not always express views on the applicability of the proposed indicators at regional level. Parties agreed, however, that a limited set of agreed indicators should be established and integrated into a simple and efficient review system for implementation of The Strategy.

CRIC 7 may wish to consider this options presented in document, to request the secretariat to harmonize the views of Parties and to prepare, including through specialized expertise as required, a consolidated document for consideration by the CRIC at its eighth session.

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I. Background information

1. By decision 3/COP.8, the Parties and the Regional Implementation Annexes were invited to develop nationally and regionally relevant indicators for the implementation of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (The Strategy) for consideration at the seventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC).¹ By the same decision, the Executive Secretary was requested to consolidate these indicators with a view to harmonizing them as appropriate.

2. In this respect, it is recalled that Annex II to document ICCD/COP(8)/10/Add.2 contains draft indicators² for the operational objectives of The Strategy as proposed by the Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Intersessional Working Group (IIWG). These draft indicators were not endorsed by the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 8), but served as a reference for Parties in responding to the aforementioned request by the COP.

3. At the end of May 2008, the secretariat called for the submission by Parties of comments and views on indicators for the implementation of The Strategy, and circulated an annotated version of the aforementioned Annex II. By 31 July 2008, the secretariat had received submissions from 41 Parties³ and one special observer.⁴

4. The present document contains a summary of the submissions received by Parties, while the full texts can be found on the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) official website: <<http://www.unccd.int/cop/cric7/indicators.php>>.

II. General comments

5. Quite varied views were received from Parties, especially on the selection of indicators and their alternatives. Some countries suggested new versions of indicators, as compared to those proposed by the Chair of the IIWG.

6. In general, the work of the IIWG was commended, although there were several comments on the present formulation of the outcomes, as contained in The Strategy and adopted by Parties. These may reflect the need to have a common, solid understanding of the overall results to be achieved by implementing The Strategy, in order to identify the most pertinent and suitable indicators.

¹ It is important to note that the Committee on Science and Technology is requested by the same decision to prepare proposals on how best to measure strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of The Strategy. No provisions have been made in decision 3/COP.8 on the development of indicators on strategic objective 5.

² The term “draft indicator” is consistently used in this document to refer to those indicators proposed by the Chair of the IIWG in Annex II to The Strategy.

³ Afghanistan, Australia, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Comoros, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, European Community, Guinea, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Togo, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

⁴ Occupied Territory of Palestine.

7. Parties felt that the assessment of the operational objectives of The Strategy could be qualitative or quantitative, depending on the nature of the data and information available. A fair representation of both quality and quantity indicators is required, taking into account the institutional and technical structures and existing capacities of country Parties.

8. Views on baselines are also quite varied. A number of countries stated that baselines should be identified for all indicators in order to measure progress in implementation of The Strategy, and that the third reporting cycle⁵ already offered a solid ground in terms of availability of data to build upon. Others would prefer to establish sound baselines at the next reporting cycle, when reporting guidelines and indicators will have been agreed upon. It was recalled that the use of baselines and indicators would imply the definition of targets.

9. Not all Parties expressed views on the applicability of the proposed indicators at the regional level. This matter may require further consideration.

10. With regard to the means of verification, some submissions have suggested the use of an independent panel of experts to assist in the review of indicators. In others, it was recalled that the objectivity required in assessments could be obtained through the selection of correct indicators and reliable data.

11. With regard to the draft indicators proposed by the Chair of the IIWG and the review and monitoring process in general, the comments expressed by Parties could be summarized as follows:

(a) There is a need to integrate performance indicators into the overall structure of the review of the implementation of The Strategy, including the guidelines for national reporting and their main elements, the review and monitoring system at national and international level and the entities entrusted with such tasks, including the subsidiary bodies of the COP, and the results-based management (RBM) approach adopted for the Convention institutions;

(b) A simple and efficient review system should be established. To this effect, it was recalled that reporting on and reviewing the implementation of The Strategy against 21 outcomes and indicators might be too complex and expensive. Similar results might be obtained using a limited number of targeted indicators while some outcomes can be addressed by one single broader indicator;

(c) A limited set of agreed indicators should be used in order to enable comparison across countries and regions, with limited provision for variations in terms of standards and procedures. Variations should be fully documented;

(d) Due to the very nature of desertification and land degradation, data and information used for establishing indicators should be easy to collect and verify. Indirect indicators or proxy could be more effective and cost-efficient than direct measurements, and better target the outcome to be evaluated. Proxy indicators may also provide more objective information, as compared to interviews and experts' surveys;

⁵ It was noted that there is a similarity between the indicators proposed by the Chair of the IIWG and those utilized for the previous reporting cycles.

(e) The legal status of indicators, as well as the role and the capacity of focal points, should be considered in choosing the set of indicators;

(f) A link between the performance of The Strategy (how The Strategy is being implemented through timely delivery of relevant output) and its impact on combating desertification and land degradation (the effect of its operational objectives and their outcomes on enhancing implementation of the Convention) is still missing. Excessive focus on performance indicators would only distract from the real objective of the review;

(g) Solid scientific methodology and procedures are also required, to give full credibility to the review and monitoring process. More active involvement of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) was called for, both in the selection of indicators and in the review of information, particularly as it relates to operational objective 3. The support of the CST would also be required in the definition of common, consistent standards for monitoring and assessment. Similarly, the assistance of the Global Mechanism (GM) for operational objective 5 has been suggested.

III. Specific comments on draft indicators

A. Operational objective 1: Advocacy, awareness raising and education

Outcome 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.

12. Some Parties noted that Outcome 1.1 doesn't fully match operational objective 1 (OO1), since it addresses DLDD issues and their synergies with climate change and biodiversity.

13. Others pointed out that both "processes" and "actors" are targeted in OO1. The rationale behind this might be that "actors" are to be influenced to carry out "processes" which make people aware of the necessity to "adequately address" DLDD. There is a need better to define "stakeholders" or "actors".

14. Other Parties observed that even effective communication and awareness raising cannot ensure that processes will be established to address DLDD adequately.

Draft indicator O-1: Percentage of key stakeholders at international, national and local levels who are aware of DLDD issues and the synergies with climate change adaptation/mitigation and biodiversity conservation.

15. Some Parties believed that grassroots-level activities should also be reflected in the indicator, in order to measure the effectiveness of the action, and suggested the creation of an additional indicator for this purpose. In this specific case, "awareness" was defined as "the knowledge of the problem and of its implications by concerned social actors or communities".

16. The complexity of measuring public awareness on this topic was also addressed. Some Parties suggested conducting national surveys; others preferred to target relevant governmental

bodies, research institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as this would be easier and equally effective. However, some country Parties find measurement by interview expensive, and argued that it is difficult to obtain useful information through interviews on a continuous basis.

17. A number of countries mentioned that it was difficult and/or unrealistic to measure “awareness”. If this draft indicator were retained, therefore, it would be preferable to focus on effectiveness of communication rather than on the level of awareness. Others expressed the view that awareness should be measured in terms of its impact on action taken, such as resource allocation to address DLDD, or the number of articles in newspapers and programmes on radio/television on DLDD issues. A common baseline was deemed necessary in order to assess progress at national level as well as to allow comparison among countries.

18. Some Parties suggested alternative indicators: “Number of DLDD-related issues in the public debate on environment and sustainable development”, “Inclusiveness of DLDD in political documents”, “Number of joint reports, communications, declarations between key stakeholders at all levels”, “Number of meetings organized for national stakeholders, and the size or volume of activities that could be undertaken in terms of synergy between climate change and desertification”.

Outcome 1.2: DLDD issues are addressed in relevant international fora, including those pertaining to agricultural trade, climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, rural development, sustainable development and poverty reduction.

19. One Party questioned the fact that Outcome 1.2 alludes to “adaptation to climate change”, while “mitigation” (that is, carbon sequestration through afforestation) should equally be considered.

Draft indicator O-2: Percentage of relevant official international documents and decisions that contain substantial statements, conclusions and recommendations on DLDD issues.

20. A few Parties suggested that the word “percentage” could be replaced by “number”.

21. Certain Parties felt that the indicator should include documents at national, regional or global levels. Others stated that a reference framework and a timeframe should be established, including through a database of relevant international documents, projects, programmes and events. Parties’ views on this issue are quite varied; some countries deemed that the secretariat or an independent company could be tasked with the selection of documentary sources, while others strongly affirmed that the choice belongs only to national focal points.

22. According to certain Parties, the selection of the documentary sources to be considered should be done systematically on an annual basis, and the inventory could start with key institutions and organizations and later expanded. Others deem that broadening the scope of the inventory should be avoided. At any rate it seems that objective criteria to identify keywords and substantial references are needed.

23. Some Parties suggested a supplementary indicator: “Assessing the scientific engagement in the desertification issue and the reflection of this in policy forums, so as to evaluate the link between communities and possible increased scientific support to the Convention”.

Outcome 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 are addressed in their advocacy, awareness raising and education initiatives.

24. Some countries affirmed that this outcome comprises two different actions and requires two separate indicators: “engagement as stakeholders in the Convention processes” and “addressing DLDD in their advocacy, awareness-raising and education initiatives”. The term “Convention processes” needs to be better defined.

Draft indicator O-3: Number, type, and area of DLDD related work (advocacy, awareness raising, education) of CSOs and science and technology institutions.

25. Parties thought that many science and technology institutions are not often engaged in advocacy and awareness-raising activities, but rather in education. The intensity of their activities can be assessed by the number of peer-reviewed papers, although it overlaps with draft indicator O-10. The increase in magnitude needs to be expressed quantitatively (that is, in terms of number of organizations, number of various activities, funds invested in these activities). It was questioned whether this indicator could actually reflect the volume of field activities and their impact.

26. Almost all Parties agreed that assessment of CSO involvement is important, but that the cost of this assessment should be compared to the value of the results achieved. In this regard, a specific indicator for CSO activity would be required, although such activity would be hard to measure.

27. It was affirmed that this being a national indicator, the assessment of growth in the volume of advocacy, awareness raising and education should be performed by countries’ institutions.

B. Operational objective 2: Policy framework

Outcome 2.1: Policy, institutional, financial and socio-economic drivers of desertification/land degradation and barriers to sustainable land management (SLM) are assessed and appropriate measures to remove these barriers are recommended.

Draft indicator O-4: Percentage of affected country Parties that have assessed policy, financial and socio-economic drivers of desertification/land degradation and barriers to SLM, and recommended appropriate measures to remove these barriers.

28. Parties noted that the fact that “SLM” is not mentioned in OO1 implies that SLM would not need awareness raising, advocacy and education. Conversely, specific sensitization is required on this rather complex concept before any barrier to its application is removed. The

major barrier to the adoption of SLM measures is the lack of recognition that biodiversity and ecosystem services are capital for those dryland communities that depend on land productivity. Also, the combination of a multi-faceted problem (desertification) with a generic solution (SLM) is unfortunate. SLM measures can be adopted only once socio-economic policy drivers are removed.

29. Some Parties indicated that clear definitions of the terms “assessment” and “appropriate measures to remove barriers” are needed for the application of this indicator. A specific study would be required, to be conducted by an independent body on a representative sample (targeting national and local governments, scientific bodies and NGOs). It is necessary to collect qualitative information, including on the methodology that has been used, taking into account its capacity to distinguish between activities of national/local government bodies and activities carried out by other actors, as well as the existence of a legally-binding legislative framework.

30. In this regard, it was indicated that policies should be assessed, as a key measure for removing barriers to SLM. Governments tend to announce the adoption of new policies, but little information is provided on their implementation and the results achieved. To this effect, the indicator should register only sustained and permanent actions. One Party suggested a cycle of assessment, in order to reconsider the drivers against the efficacy of the measures adopted to remove the barriers.

31. Certain countries felt that the application of the indicator requires the definition of a set of criteria and a common methodology which has not yet been defined. Thus, this indicator would be of limited utility at the regional level.

32. Other Parties stated that specific indicators are required for the three successive processes: (1) Identification of the indirect, socio-economic policy drivers, (2) Formulation of the policy measures to remove them, (3) Implementation of the policy.

Outcome 2.2: Affected country Parties revise their national action programmes (NAPs) into strategic documents supported by biophysical and socio-economic baseline information, and include them into integrated investment frameworks.

Draft indicator O-5: Number of affected country Parties that have revised their NAPs into strategic documents and integrated them into development planning and relevant sectoral and investment plans and policies.

33. One country questioned the relevance of Outcome 2.2, since NAPs are already based on biophysical and socio-economic baseline information. Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2 could be addressed simultaneously, that is, using one indicator for both outcomes.

34. In other submissions it was suggested that whether or not the revision of the NAPs included consideration of biophysical and socio-economic baseline information should be checked. Determining common baselines for all affected countries, to be used for evaluation of revision of NAPs, would not be easy. Baselines can refer to a number of regionally-agreed indicators such as gross domestic product per capita, human development index, number of protected areas and so on.

35. Other Parties objected that since the implementation of the NAP requires a number of institutional, legislative and organizational measures, including funding, specific and differentiated baselines should be developed. The biophysical baseline could be defined in terms of the productive capacity of a region, using climatic and agricultural production indicators. The socio-economic baseline should include information on levels of income in regions with defined productive capacities.

36. The extent of desertification/land degradation in affected countries and the significance of the NAP within the internal development policies and plans should also be assessed. Relevant sectoral and investment plans would include information on regional levels of income and on linkages between investment plans in various economic sectors.

Outcome 2.3: Affected country Parties integrate their NAPs and SLM and land degradation issues into development planning and relevant sectoral and investment plans and policies.

37. Many Parties objected that Outcomes 2.2 and 2.3 actually overlapped each other, and should be combined or addressed through one single indicator. Others suggested that the indicators for Outcome 2.2 should focus on the revision of NAPs, and those for Outcome 2.3 on the integration of NAPs into overall development planning.

Draft indicator O-6: Number of developed country Parties and their bilateral development agencies which apply the CCD marker (as part of the Organization for Economic Development (OECD) Rio markers) to screen their aid activities against the objectives of the Convention.

38. This draft indicator gathered some fairly critical comments on its relevance to Outcome 2.3. Some countries considered that it would be more suited for Outcome 2.4.

39. Were Outcomes 2.2 and 2.3 to be addressed through a single indicator, this indicator could reflect the operationalization of the NAP by specific government entities, through budgeted and time-referenced programmes.

40. A number of reformulations of this indicator were offered: “Number of affected countries reporting on the SLM priorities and which have included NAP priorities into development planning and relevant sectoral investment plans and policies”, “Reporting of national activities and issues integrated into national development plans and policies, as a percentage of the total issues reported in the NAP, with reference to constraints and barriers”.

41. One country expressed a need for better clarification of aid activities aimed at the prevention of land degradation, because “land” and “land degradation” have different definitions in the aid policies of developed Parties, and these definitions may not always be consistent with the definition given in the Convention.

Outcome 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.

Draft indicator O-7: Number of developed country Parties development initiatives that have integrated UNCCD objectives

42. Some submissions called for a clear identification of “development initiatives” through information on investment, targeted area, timeframe and sustainability of the initiatives. Also, the term “national sectoral and investment plan” should be better defined. Clear guidelines and format for this indicator would be required for its application. Certain countries felt that it would require the definition of a set of criteria to evaluate the documents, and highlighted the difficulty in identifying relevant sources of information and collecting the material required

43. Some Parties stated that this indicator would be a replication of indicator O-6, and recommended the use of draft indicator O-6 for Outcome 2.4.

Outcome 2.5: Mutually reinforcing measures among desertification/land degradation action programmes and biodiversity and climate change mitigation and adaptation are introduced or strengthened so as to enhance the impact of interventions.

44. For a better interpretation of this outcome, it was suggested that the word “conservation” be added after “biodiversity”. It was also noted that this outcome pertains to the planning phase, not to the implementation phase. This should be reflected in the indicator chosen.

Draft indicator O-8: Number of initiatives for joint implementation efforts of the UNCCD, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity (CBD)/Number of adaptation programmes in drylands operational at local and national level which integrate desertification and adaptation.

45. One Party noted that combating desertification is actually part of the adaptation measures, and that the indicator should be better formulated.

46. For a correct application of this indicator, actions which simultaneously address desertification and biodiversity conservation, desertification and climate change adaptation and/or mitigation should be listed and classified according to their contribution to the objectives of each convention (that is, the contribution to reducing land degradation, increasing carbon sinks, adapting to climate change and conserving biodiversity and ecosystem services). Separate treatment of information on targeted and indirect actions is also required.

47. In order to properly address the issue of synergy among conventions, it was suggested that national reports could include a specific section containing an assessment of all activities relevant to the implementation of the three conventions with reference to the level, function and impact of synergistic principles applied by them. Other Parties called for “joint reporting” on synergistic implementation of the three conventions.

48. National programming for joint implementation of the three conventions and the expected benefits for each of them should be assessed in terms of deliverables. Consideration of the investment flows and number of beneficiaries should be reflected in the outcomes and achievements. Reference was made in the submissions to supporting measures and mechanisms

for fostering joint implementation at international and national levels. While coordinated action would be required at national level, including through specific coordination mechanisms, equitable distribution of the support from developed Parties should also be achieved.

49. It was recommended that the magnitude and level of intervention should be assessed through the following indicator: “Number and scale of initiatives for joint implementation efforts of the UNCCD, UNFCCC and CBD/Number of adaptation programmes in drylands operational at local and national level which integrate desertification and adaptation”.

50. It was also suggested that sub-indicators be developed, such as “How many times an action and/or measure proposed under the UNCCD explicitly addresses adaptation to/mitigation of climate change and/or loss of biodiversity”.

51. Some Parties favored simple and low-cost assessment of joint actions relating to Rio conventions through the Rio markers. Other forms of joint implementation at national and local levels would require extensive work on the part of affected Parties.

52. One simple indirect indicator for this outcome could be: “Number of operational forums at the national, regional and international levels for sharing experience from the three conventions”.

C. Operational objective 3: Science, technology and knowledge

Outcome 3.1: National monitoring and vulnerability assessment on biophysical and socio-economic trends in affected countries are supported.

53. It was mentioned that the first step toward improving the capacity of countries to deal with science and technology issues would be the adoption of a shared logical framework for indicators for reporting on biophysical and socio-economic statuses and trends.

54. Some Parties interpreted this outcome as: “A national system for monitoring the indicators of the direct (biophysical) and indirect (socio-economic policy) drivers of DLDD is in place, and also an institution to assess monitoring results and quantify trends in these drivers, and their long-term operation is secured”.

55. Others suggested that indicator(s) developed for Outcome 3.2 could also cover Outcome 3.1.

Draft indicator O-9: Number of reports from affected Parties submitted to the COP/CRIC (and available to policy makers and other end users) that contain information on biophysical and socio-economic trends in affected areas;

Alternative draft indicator O-9⁶: Increase in number of affected countries relaying their national reporting on relevant indicators and effective monitoring system for land degradation and desertification.

⁶ For a number of outcomes, the Chair of the IIWG also proposed “alternative indicators”.

56. The problem of adopting consistent monitoring systems in affected countries was addressed, in order to dispose of comparable information. The multitude of local environmental and social conditions and baselines, as well the diversity of national capacity to assess and monitor land degradation and desertification, could be overcome only by providing the relevant information together with the methodology used to produce it. It was therefore suggested that the type of data, data collection protocols and methodology used to process them, should be incorporated in the definition of the indicator. Also, the same sources of data should be used consistently, and if new sources are identified, a brief analysis and interpretation of the possible differences between the two types of information would be needed.

57. Regardless of the national entity in charge of monitoring, it was felt important to indicate how the sustainability and maintenance of these long-term monitoring and assessment activities are secured, in terms of both capacities and resources required.

58. One Party suggested the following alternative to draft indicator O-9: “Number of affected countries relaying their national reporting on relevant and agreed indicators and on an effective monitoring system for land degradation and desertification”.

59. Other options were also formulated: “Increase in number of affected countries relaying their national reporting on relevant indicators and on an effective monitoring system for land degradation and desertification”, “Increase in activities based on the relevant indicators as reflected in the country [annual] reports”.

Outcome 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.

60. Some Parties deemed that this should be the first outcome of OO3, since baselines are required to monitor any kind of changes. Therefore, Outcomes 3.2 and 3.1 should be merged, but addressed separately; first, drivers to be assessed and indicators used in this assessment should be agreed upon, and then the time from which these indicators are measured which will serve to define the baseline.

Draft indicator O-10: Number of internationally recognized reports on biophysical and socio-economic trends.

Alternative draft indicator O-10: Increase in number of country Parties reporting on relevant reliable indicators and its associated baseline values.

61. Some Parties reiterated that achieving Outcome 3.2 is a precondition for Outcome 3.1. Draft indicators O-9 and O-10 could then be merged. Other Parties would prefer reference to “national reports” rather than “internationally recognized reports”.

62. While some Parties stated that only countries can decide on the information to be included in national reports, others would like to have common guidelines based on existing experience with similar processes. Some convergence of opinion, however, was found in the submissions with regard to the starting time for determining baselines in the review of implementation of The Strategy, which should be jointly agreed upon. Other countries expressed the view that an agreement on a set of core indicators has to be achieved, including the definition

of the baseline, as a precondition for the review process to be undertaken. The indicator chosen should then take into account national baselines and national attempts to harmonize scientific approaches.

63. One Party formulated an alternative indicator: “Country reports on data collected and integrated into baseline information at the national level and assessments in the following years are collected, analysed by the CST to be formulated and reviewed, and published at the international level”.

Outcome 3.3: Knowledge on biophysical and socio-economic factors and on their interactions in affected areas is improved to enable better decision-making.

64. Some Parties questioned the relevance of Outcome 3.3, since Outcome 3.2 already aims at enabling better decision-making. Others recommended the consistent use of terminology, and were wondering whether “factors” is used here as a synonym for “driver”. Basic knowledge of the drivers and their interaction is already available, summarized and assessed by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

65. Another Party interpreted this outcome as: “Knowledge on direct (biophysical) and indirect (socio-economic and policy) drivers of DLDD and their interactions is acquired by decision-makers at all levels. Thus their capacity to address desertification effectively is improved”.

66. It was also indicated that a preliminary outcome could be identified: “Awareness-raising campaigns and education programmes on desertification drivers and their interactions have been planned and carried out, targeting decision-makers at all levels”, for which the related indicator would be straightforward.

Draft indicator O-11: Percentage of decision-makers at global, regional, sub/regional and national levels who can explain interactions between biophysical and socio-economic factors;

Alternative draft indicators O-11: Knowledge management system of the CST in place and used; Thematic Programme Networks (TPNs) satisfy user needs; Number of scientific reports, published papers, experts, scientists, networks and bodies dealing with interaction between biophysical and socio-economic factors in affected areas; Procedures on decision-making as well as institutional and legislative frameworks are available.

67. One Party felt that prior to applying draft indicator O-11, the identification, description and assessment of driving forces and their relevance was required. Descriptions of case studies and success stories would enable a better decision-making process. This would require a set of criteria for defining the profile of those in charge of the tasks. Furthermore, it would entail an effort to build national capacities in order to comply with the tasks. This indicator is applicable in the medium term.

68. A number of alternatives were offered: “Information on biophysical and socio-economic factors is available and utilized by decision-makers at global, regional, subregional and national

levels”, “Number of scientific reports, published papers, networks, institutions and committees dealing with interactions between biophysical and socio-economic factors in affected areas, decision-making, and available pertinent legislations”, “Number of scientific reports, published papers, experts, scientists, networks and bodies dealing with interaction between biophysical and socio-economic factors in affected areas”, “Procedures for decision-making are available, as well as institutional and legislative frameworks”, “Improvements in measures by comparisons between one state and another at intervals and defining any positive changes of direction”, “NAPs and plans for projects addressing desertification reflect knowledge of the different drivers of desertification and their interactions”.

Outcome 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.

69. Certain countries would have liked the phrase “and mitigation” after the word “adaptation”. They also questioned the term “restoration” and would have preferred reference to “prevention of desertification” and to “rehabilitation of degraded land” instead. It was also noted that the wording “in affected areas” is redundant.

Draft indicator O-12: Percentage of decision-makers at global, regional, sub/regional and national levels who can explain interactions between climate change adaptation, drought mitigation, and restoration of degraded land in affected areas;

Alternative draft indicators O-12: Number of scientific reports, published papers dealing with cause-effect relation between biophysical and socio-economic factors in affected areas; Good practice guidelines for prevention and rehabilitation of degraded lands and related economic activities are available.

70. Some Parties feel that, in general, draft indicators relating to outcomes 3.3 and 3.4 are useful not for directly measuring knowledge improvement, but for measuring knowledge transfer to decision-makers. The alternative indicators would better address Outcome 3.4, with the exception of the alternative indicator referring to the “cause-effect relation between biophysical and socio-economic factors”, which was found irrelevant to the outcome.

71. Conversely, one Party suggested another alternative indicator: “Number of scientific reports and published papers dealing with cause-effect relations between climate change adaptation, drought mitigation and rehabilitation of degraded lands in affected areas is enhanced to develop tools to assist decision-making”.

72. Some other Parties preferred the original indicator, which is to be based on national, regional and global documentation, because it is more impact-oriented than the alternative indicators. There are many publications available, but they might have very little impact, be difficult to interpret and not be targeted.

73. Some countries suggested that the alternative indicators be improved in order to make them more impact-oriented: “Number of scientific reports and published papers dealing with the cause-effect relation between biophysical and socio-economic factors in affected areas

disseminated in non-scientific circles”, “Good practice guidelines for prevention and rehabilitation of degraded lands and related economic activities are available and used for assisting decision-making”.

74. Some feel there is no reason to select just one indicator amongst those proposed, because they could all be relevant depending on the specific situations of countries. It could be relevant to create a new indicator to measure improvements in knowledge of biophysical, social and economic issues, interactions among them and including climate change adaptation actions, drought mitigation, and so on. Indeed, draft indicators for Outcomes 3.3 and 3.4 seem to measure only the transfer of knowledge to decision makers.

75. It was reported that the subject of good practice guidelines for prevention and rehabilitation of degraded lands and related economic activities has been partially covered in Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports.

Outcome 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.

Indicator O-13: Percentage of decision-makers at global, regional, sub/regional and national levels who can tell best practices and success stories of combating desertification/land degradation

76. Some Parties pointed out inconsistencies in the use of terms (“policy makers and end-users” versus “decision makers”). Others called for clarification of the term “knowledge-sharing systems”; this could include meetings, seminars and workshops, but also publications, updating of information in web pages and so on. Also, it was noted that the availability of such systems does not mean that the knowledge is effectively shared, and requests for more action-oriented indicators were voiced.

77. Several Parties felt that this indicator is impractical, since determining the percentage of such decision makers would be difficult and very expensive.

78. Some Parties felt that an indirect indicator would better serve the purpose. Actual use of relevant knowledge could be assessed through site visits or specific reports. The cost-effectiveness of the exercise, and the availability of resources, should be evaluated prior to any review.

79. Other Parties called for a more active involvement of the CST in this field, through identification and assessment of knowledge-sharing systems most relevant to desertification. Information on this matter should be included in official sources (national, subregional and regional reports, NAPs and so on).

80. A number of alternative indicators were proposed: “Percentage of decision makers at the global, regional, subregional and national levels who consider the knowledge-sharing system to be effective”, “To report to the CST all functioning or initiated knowledge-sharing systems at the

various levels for traditional knowledge, end-users, best practices and success stories regarding combating desertification and land degradation, together with the number of decision makers aware of such knowledge-sharing systems, and who have used such systems”, “Number of permanently-established forums which are operational”, “Percentage of community members at the national level who have knowledge of best practices, particularly in respect of traditional knowledge”, “Percentage of community members who apply best practices”.

Outcome 3.6: Science and technology networks and institutions relevant to DLDD are engaged to support UNCCD implementation.

Draft indicator O-14: Number, type and expertise of science and technology institutions, organizations and networks dealing with specific knowledge domain that support the UNCCD.

Alternative draft indicator O-14: Identified and well-known organization that function as platforms for regional transfer of knowledge and technology.

81. Views on this indicator are rather divergent. A number of countries tended to support the alternative indicator, while a few other countries suggested that a judgment as to whether an organization was “well known” would be subjective. It was recalled that the CST had already been engaged in the “survey of networks”, which turned out to be very expensive and of limited utility. Other Parties felt that the indicator should be more straightforward and should address the “Increasing numbers of research institutions ... engaged in research commissioned by the CST”.

82. Certain countries opposed the idea of using the “size of a list” as an indicator, and would have preferred to have solid information on activities carried out by such networks and organizations (similar to the formulation of draft indicator O-10).

83. A number of alternative indicators were proposed: “Number of references made within the reports and decisions of the UNCCD to such specific knowledge (publications, studies and so on) shared or diffused by those networks”, “Funds targeted by science organizations for DLDD issues”, “Technologies and know-how made available by science organizations”, “Number, type and expertise of science and technology institutions and organizations using and dealing with networks relating to desertification/land degradation to support UNCCD implementation.”

D. Operational objective 4: Capacity building

Outcome 4.1: Countries that 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 at the national and local levels.

84. Some countries expressed the view that NCSA is not necessarily the appropriate instrument to address the capacity needs of affected countries in attending to their DLDD issues, and reported that the support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for capacity-building at national level is quite limited.

Draft indicator O-15: Number of countries implementing NCSA action plans.

85. A number of countries favoured merging draft indicators O-15 and O-16. Outcome 4.2 could therefore be disregarded.

86. In this regard, a Party suggested that if Outcome 4.1 were “Countries have self-assessed and have identified their capacity needs for addressing their DLDD issues”, the indicator could be: “Number of countries to have implemented self-assessment of capacity needs for addressing their DLDD issues, and to have reported on the methodologies they used for this assessment (including, inter alia, NCSA) and on the results of the assessment”. Consequently, Outcome 4.2 would read “Based on their identification, countries have addressed their capacity building needs for effectively dealing with their DLDD problems”, and the related indicator could be: “Number of countries engaged in building their capacity, as described in their national reports including information on specific actions taken and resources invested”.

87. If the NCSA is not completed, the indicator should also consider the level of implementation, including the number and the nature (projects, policies, partnerships and so on) of the activities undertaken, and the results achieved. Some other means of verification were suggested.

88. Other Parties suggested that the indicator should take into account monitoring, level, efficiency, effectiveness, verification and reporting of the implementation of the action plans. Only a well-structured monitoring process could take into consideration the specificity of each country and evaluate whether its capacity needs were successfully or unsuccessfully addressed.

89. An amendment to this draft indicator was suggested: “Number of countries implementing NCSA action plans with annual country reports on the different steps of implementation of components of the action plan”.

90. Other submissions referred to the need better to articulate “capacity needs” in terms of personnel and extent of expertise as a result of addressing capacity building. Some countries noted that additional specific indicators are required for this purpose.

Outcome 4.2: Those countries that have not previously undertaken capacity needs assessments engage in relevant assessments processes to identify capacity needs for tackling DLDD at the national and local levels.

Draft indicator O-16: Number of countries (without NCSA process) that implement action plans to develop the identified necessary capacity to tackle desertification/land degradation issues at the national and local levels.

91. Some Parties noted that the “action plans” in the above indicator text do not refer to NAPs, but to actions of identifying capacity needs. Each action requires resource mobilization, and countries could be invited to report on resources mobilized for implementing different components of The Strategy, and their sources.

92. A successful implementation of the NAP is proof of a country’s capacity. What is needed are indicators measuring the success of NAP implementation. Some Parties expressed the view that the indicator should take into account the results achieved by other regional and

international organizations. Thus, other means of verification could be: action plans, implementation reports, or a database and analysis implemented on a national, regional or international basis. The indicator could measure not only the resources allocated to implementation of the action plan, but also the timeframe and the efforts (in terms of actors/institutions or sectors involved) made to achieve the desired target.

93. Other Parties stated that the “assessment process” as referred to in Outcome 4.2 consists of impact assessment of measures and policies applied in order to improve the capacity of local groups to deal with DLDD, including raising their awareness of risks and of ways of dealing with these processes (as defined in the NCSA guidelines). A number of assessments have been conducted on this matter, and recommendations made. The indicator should therefore target the results achieved on the ground.

94. An optional indicator was proposed: “Number of countries (without NCSA process) that engage in relevant assessments to identify necessary capacity to tackle desertification/land degradation issues at the national and local levels”.

E. Operational objective 5: Financing and technology transfer

95. One Party made a general comment, stating that the GM should be in a position, and should be called upon, to check the validity of the indicators under OO5.

Outcome 5.1: Affected country Parties develop integrated investment frameworks for leveraging national, bilateral and multilateral resources with a view to increase the effectiveness and impact of interventions.

Draft indicator O-17: Number of affected country Parties whose development plans/investment frameworks reflect leveraging national, bilateral and multilateral resources for combating desertification and land degradation.

96. Some countries felt that the term “leveraging” implied a change of a current state; thus the trend – its direction and magnitude – is critical and should be reflected in the indicator. It was suggested that countries should decide on the instruments they wish to use for reporting their resource leveraging and the activities targeted by this leveraging, while they should indicate the instrument and/or the methodology used. The need for a baseline for this indicator was mentioned in one submission. It was also suggested that the funds made available through sector-wide approaches (SWAp) or budget support practices should be taken into account.

97. Data regarding total investments per year should be available at the level of the entity responsible for implementation of the Convention. Nevertheless, the problem of differentiating investment in DLDD from that addressing other multilateral environmental agreements exists. It was suggested that how this problem is addressed in other sectors should be looked at.

98. One Party suggested that indicator O-17 should be complementary to O-18, if it refers only to the volume of financial resources. The indicator should be the volume of financial resources allocated internally for combating DLDD.

Outcome 5.2: Developed country Parties provide substantial, adequate, timely and predictable financial resources to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought to support domestic initiatives.

Draft indicator O-18: Volume of financial resources for measures to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought, provided by developed country parties according to agreed commitments, investment plans and payment schedules.

99. Some Parties pointed out that the indicator should express not only the amount of financial resources provided, but also whether or not the financial resources provided were congruent with the action programme in terms of volume and time. This may require ad hoc evaluations.

100. It was also indicated that developed country Parties should report on their international development aid targets, specific projects being implemented and their expected results, the area involved and the populations concerned. The total amount of aid should be expressed both in absolute terms (the currency used could be either US\$ or euros) and as a percentage of the gross domestic product. Indirect investment should also be taken into consideration.

101. Other Parties considered this indicator to be clear and suitable. The indicator should be based on resources requirements by developing countries and funding provided by their development partners, and should be as simple and readable as possible. Others suggested adding a specific indicator for GEF funding.

102. Some other Parties believe that more in-depth analysis of financial flows is required, and called for assistance from the GM and OECD. It was frequently stated that the indicator should differentiate direct from indirect funding, and that more specific indicators would be required. Also, the forthcoming funds relating to “global commons” should be considered.

103. Information contained in this indicator should also allow for assessing the geographic distribution of resources, at least for the most relevant sources of funding. Conversely, the definition of quantitative baselines (in term of amount of financial aid from developed Parties) regardless of the economic and social conditions of the recipient countries would be inappropriate, because the Convention calls for the mobilization of adequate, timely and predictable financial resources.

104. A reformulation of indicator O-18 was offered: “Volume of financial resources for measures to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought, provided by developed country Parties to affected country Parties of all implementation Annexes according to agreed commitments, investment plans and payment schedules”.

Outcome 5.3: Parties increase their efforts to mobilize financial resources from international financial institutions, facilities and funds, including the GEF by promoting the UNCCD/SLM agenda within the governing bodies of these institutions.

Draft indicator O-19: Number and type of funding sources from international financial institutions, facilities and funds, including the GEF, for combating desertification/land degradation.

105. It was proposed that this indicator be revised to indicate the potentials and constraints of tapping international financial funding facilities from the point of view of the affected country Parties. As in the case of indicator O-18, some Parties felt that a baseline is not necessary for this indicator; it would in any case be quite difficult to establish.

106. One Party stated that “number and type of funds” was not an appropriate indicator for GEF funding; GEF funding responds to its investment and management policies, including its performance evaluation. Others considered that if the GEF were to be addressed with a specific indicator, then the World Bank and the regional development banks should also have separate indicators. One Party stated that the evaluation of funding sources other than the GEF involves evaluation of GM activities; it would be better, therefore, if this indicator were merged with draft indicator O-20. Others felt that the volume of investments facilitated through the action of the GM should be equally assessed.

Outcome 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, and other financing mechanisms for climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and for hunger and poverty reduction.

107. One Party suggested that this outcome would be better reworded as: “Innovative sources of finance and financing mechanisms are identified to combat desertification/land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought *and in this way also to adapt to and mitigate climate change, to conserve biodiversity and to reduce hunger and poverty. Such sources will also be generated by the private sector, market-based mechanisms, trade, foundations and civil society organization (CSO), and other financing mechanisms, for climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, and hunger and poverty reduction.*” Then the related indicator would be easily identified.

Draft indicator O-20: Reported cases on innovative models (private sector, market/based mechanisms, trade, foundations and CSOs etc.) for financing of land degradation or desertification.

108. Some Parties find it difficult to classify sources of financing as being innovative when leveraging funds often require new and varied approaches. There is no need, therefore, for any such classification.

109. One Party stated that the indicator is suitable provided that actions addressing DLDD are differentiated from those addressing the targets of other Rio conventions. Also, the source and the terms and conditions of funding should be clearly indicated in the national report. A broad indicator could be the level of private financing for jointly addressing the Rio conventions. Adaptation and development funds could also be taken into account.

Outcome 5.5: Access to technology by affected country Parties is facilitated through adequate financing, effective economic and policy incentives and technical support, notably in the framework of South-South and North-South cooperation.

Draft indicator O-21: Number and type of technical support measures received from South-South and North-South cooperation.

110. One Party believed that this information could be included in draft indicator O-18. Others stressed that economic and policy incentives are so relevant that they would require separate indicators. The indicator would be more adequate if “Financing, Economic and Policy Incentives” is added after “Technical Support”.

111. It was also stated that beyond the quantity of technical support measures, their cost and effectiveness should also be taken into consideration. The development of an indicator to specify the level of local expertise used or developed as a means of technology transfer was also proposed.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

112. An agreement on a common set of indicators would make it possible regularly to monitor DLDD and assess progress made in the implementation of The Strategy at all levels, if used within an efficient system for review and monitoring of the Convention. In this context, meeting the operational objectives of The Strategy must lead to the achievement of its strategic objectives. It will contribute to effective implementation of the Convention, and will create synergies with the other Rio conventions.

113. The role of the subsidiary bodies to the COP should be harmonized and strengthened in such a manner that an integrated monitoring and assessment system would be developed aiming to ensure constant linkages between operational and strategic objectives.

114. The assessment will consist of determining the extent to which problems have been addressed and targets have been met while serving to adjust policies and strategies. It remains essential to ensure that national policies and programmes dovetail with the strategic orientations of The Strategy.

115. The CRIC at its seventh session may wish:

(a) To consider the Parties’ written input on draft indicators for the operational objectives of The Strategy, as well as the exchange at the seventh session of the CRIC, and to make targeted recommendations on their specificity, relevance and applicability;

(b) To request the secretariat to harmonize the views of Parties and to prepare, including through specialized expertise as required, a consolidated document on a set of performance indicators, for consideration by the CRIC at its eighth session;

(c) To request the secretariat, in the preparation of the consolidated document, to take into consideration previous work undertaken on this matter within the UNCCD process,

including at national, regional and international levels, plus the impact indicators for strategic objectives of The Strategy as revised by the CST and for the other elements of the proposed review and monitoring system, and the deliberations of CRIC 7;

(d) To request the secretariat with the required support of concerned international organizations, to make use of commonly accepted methodologies⁷ for the assessment of such draft indicators, to provide full information on their applicability, and to seek harmonization with assessment practices for sustainable land management;

(e) To invite the Bureau of the CRIC, according to its mandate, to assist in the preparation of such a consolidated document with a view to circulating the outcomes and draft recommendations contained therein, and to facilitate consensus building among Parties in time for review of the document at CRIC 8 and COP 9.

⁷ For instance, the Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART) assessment could be applied.