



United Nations

ICCD/CST(S-4)/1



Convention to Combat Desertification

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Committee on Science and Technology

Fourth special session

Cancun, Mexico, 9–12 March 2015

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Provisional agenda and annotations

Note by the secretariat

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
2. Combating desertification/land degradation and drought for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices:
 - (a) Diagnosis of constraints: vulnerability of agro-ecosystems and populations in affected regions;
 - (b) Responses: land-based approaches to adaptation and knowledge transfer;
 - (c) Monitoring and assessment: how to evaluate the effectiveness of adaptation interventions.
3. Provision of scientific advice on the topic: “Explore the options to achieve land degradation neutrality in the context of sustainable development”.
4. Adoption of the report of the Committee on Science and Technology.

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II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Venue

1. Pursuant to provisions contained in decision 28/COP.11, the fourth special session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST S-4) will take place in Cancun, Mexico from 9 to 12 March 2015.

Logistical arrangements

2. A few weeks before the opening of CST S-4, the secretariat will distribute an information note (document ICCD/CST(S-4)/INF.1) detailing registration and security procedures, as well as other logistical arrangements for the session.

Participants

3. Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Convention provides that the CST shall be multidisciplinary and open to the participation of all Parties. Pursuant to the provisions of article 22, paragraph 7, of the Convention, it is anticipated that sessions of the CST will also be open to observers in accordance with the rule of procedure.

Documentation

4. A list of documents prepared for the fourth special session of the CST is contained in annex I. In addition to the usual hard copy distribution, official documents will also be made available on the website of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification at <<http://www.unccd.int>>.

1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

5. The CST will have before it the annotated provisional agenda as contained in the present document to consider for adoption. A tentative schedule of work for the current session is set out in annex II.

Purpose of the session

6. Pursuant to the provisions contained in decision 13/COP.8, paragraph 1 (a) and decision 21/COP.11, paragraphs 19 and 20, the Conference of the Parties (COP) decided that each future intersessional session of the CST shall be organized in a predominantly scientific and technical conference-style format and that it shall focus its agenda only on the specific thematic topics selected for the UNCCD Scientific Conference and on the review of its preliminary outcome.

7. The CST S-4 will therefore be held in conjunction with the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference and focus its agenda on the thematic topic of that conference as agreed in decision 18/COP.10, paragraph 13: “Combating desertification/land degradation and drought (DLDD) for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices”.

Agenda

8. By its decision 27/COP.11, the COP decided to include a number of items on the agenda of CST S-4. These have been taken into account in the provisional agenda as prepared by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Bureau of the CST.

Organization of work

9. The CST may wish to consider the following scenario for CST S-4: at the opening session on 9 March 2015 the Chair of the CST would call for the adoption of the agenda and organization of work. The UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference would begin in the morning and address the theme “Combating DLDD for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices” (i.e. agenda item 2). It will be organized into three main sessions: (a) diagnosis of constraints; (b) responses; and (c) monitoring and assessment. Each session of the scientific conference will start with plenary presentations followed by parallel workshops and a wrap-up session. The CST would resume its work in the afternoon of 12 March 2015 with the consideration of agenda items 3 and 4.

2. Combating desertification/land degradation and drought for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices

10. As per decision 18/COP.10, the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference will address the theme “Combating DLDD for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices.”

11. Global changes are expected to aggravate DLDD as well as the vulnerability of populations, particularly those living in drylands. The UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference will therefore focus on how to anticipate the impacts of climate change and land degradation in order to be able to promote adaptive and sustainable land management approaches to reduce poverty and environmental degradation while achieving sustainable development.

12. As mentioned in paragraph 9 above, the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference will be organized into three sessions: (a) diagnosis of constraints; (b) responses; and (c) monitoring and assessment.

(a) Diagnosis of constraints: vulnerability of agro-ecosystems and populations in affected regions

13. During the first session of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference, it is expected that participants will discuss how to best characterize and understand the vulnerability and adaptive capacities of ecosystems (in particular agro-ecosystems) and populations in affected regions, including regions newly vulnerable to the consequences of climate change.

(b) Responses: land based-approaches to adaptation and knowledge transfer

14. During the second session, it is expected that participants will discuss how to build efficiently on available knowledge, success stories and lessons learned to promote the implementation of better adapted, knowledge-based practices and technologies.

(c) Monitoring and assessment: how to evaluate the effectiveness of adaptation interventions

15. During the third session, it is expected that participants will discuss the new monitoring and assessment methods available to evaluate the effectiveness of those practices and technologies that provide improved insights on whether or how their implementation should be scaled up.

16. More information on the conference topic can be found in document ICCD/CST(S-4)/2, which contains the executive summary of a pre-conference report prepared under the guidance of the Scientific Advisory Committee for the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference and with inputs from a multidisciplinary panel of experts. The main conclusions of the pre-conference report will be presented at the scientific conference for discussion. Document ICCD/CST(S-4)/2 also summarizes the activities undertaken during the preparation phase of the conference.

17. Conclusions from the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference will be discussed in a closing plenary session. Pursuant to the provisions of decision 21/COP.11, paragraph 16, the Bureau of the CST, in conjunction with the Science-Policy Interface and in consultation with Parties and regional groups, will review the outcomes of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference prior to CST 12. A report on the organization and outcomes of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference, including policy-oriented recommendations, will be prepared for consideration at CST 12 by the Bureau of the CST with the support of the consortium on Scientific and Traditional Knowledge for Sustainable Development and the secretariat, and in consultation with the Scientific Advisory Committee for the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference.

3. Provision of scientific advice on the topic: “Explore the options to achieve land degradation neutrality in the context of sustainable development”

18. The COP, by its decision 21/COP.11, paragraph 26, decided that the topic to be considered by the UNCCD 4th Scientific Conference shall be “Explore the options to achieve land degradation neutrality in the context of sustainable development”.

19. The CST S-4 will be informed about progress made on this topic at the level of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals and the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities, as well as by the Intergovernmental Working Group (IWG)¹ and the Science-Policy Interface². The Committee might wish to consider how to bring forward the provision of scientific advice on this topic. Document ICCD/CST(S-4)/2 contains a brief summary of progress made.

4. Adoption of the report of the Committee on Science and Technology

20. The draft report on the CST S-4 will be prepared and submitted to the final meeting of CST S-4 on 12 March 2015, for its consideration and, as appropriate, adoption.

¹ Established by decision 8/COP.11.

² Established by decision 23/COP.11.

Annex I

Documents before the Committee on Science and Technology at its fourth special intersessional meeting

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
ICCD/CST(S-4)/1	Provisional agenda and annotations. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CST(S-4)/2	Report on the preparation of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference on “Combating desertification/land degradation and drought for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices” and progress made on the topic: “Explore the options to achieve land degradation neutrality in the context of sustainable development”. Note by the secretariat
ICCD/CST(S-4)/INF.1	Information for participants

Annex II

Tentative organization of work

Monday, 9 March 2015	
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	3 p.m. – 6 p.m.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening of the fourth special session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST S-4) - <i>Welcoming address by a representative of the host country</i> - <i>Statement by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification</i> - <i>Statement by the Chair of the CST</i> - <i>Statements by the representatives of regional and interest groups</i> • Adoption of the agenda and organization of work (ICCD/CST(S-4)/1) • UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference on: “Combating desertification/land degradation and drought for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices”: (ICCD/CST(S-4)/2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diagnosis of constraints; - Responses; - Monitoring and assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference (<i>continued</i>)

Tuesday, 10 March 2015	
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	3 p.m. – 6 p.m.
UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference (<i>continued</i>)	

Wednesday, 11 March 2015	
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	3 p.m. – 6 p.m.
UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference (<i>continued</i>)	

Thursday, 12 March 2015	
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	3 p.m. – 6 p.m.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference (<i>continued</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provision of scientific advice on the topic: “Explore the options to achieve land degradation neutrality in the context of sustainable development” (<i>ICCD/CST(S-4)/2</i>)Adoption of the report of the CSTClosure of the session
