



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy: Senior Policy Advisor for International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA)

Consultancy reference number: CCD/24/C/64

Background

Established in 1994, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management. The mandate of the Convention and its 197 Parties is to support a future that avoids, reverses desertification/land degradation and minimizes effects of drought (DLDD) in affected areas at all levels – and to achieve a Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Droughts are the most far-reaching of natural disasters, causing short and long-term economic and ecological losses as well as significant secondary and tertiary impacts. To reduce societal vulnerability to droughts, there is a need to overcome the prevailing structures of reactive, post hazard management approaches and to move towards proactive and risk management approaches.

Against this backdrop, spearheaded by the governments of Senegal and Spain, a group of like-minded countries in partnership with various stakeholders took the initiative to form an International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) to catalyze a political momentum to achieve a transformational change of actions and mindsets towards drought resilience - a transformation in the way the impacts of drought are managed which is essential to reduce this existential threat to many parts of the world. The initiative was launched on 7th of November 2022 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt at the margins of the UNFCCC COP 27 in a high-level event, jointly convened by Senegal and Spain.

The International Drought Resilience Alliance is a collaborative platform that supports countries, cities, and communities to combat drought proactively. The alliance will promote effective and efficient preparedness and adaptation measures that go beyond disaster response to reduce vulnerability to drought, in support of the drought-related international cooperation that already exists under the umbrella of the UNCCD. The alliance seeks to act as a global facilitator for drought management focused on systemic risk. To reduce systemic risks and avoid new ones, there must be a shift from dealing with drought impacts reactively to getting ahead of the curve and addressing underlying risk drivers. Socioeconomic and environmental vulnerability of exposed systems must be reduced and impacts of land degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change are mitigated as part of a transition from reactive to prospective and proactive drought risk management.

In the next two years, the UNCCD Secretariat will support the Alliance in the operationalization of its work and ensuring coherence and consistency with the fulfilment of all relevant COP decisions related to drought.

Objective of consultancy

Provision of high-level advice on how to enhance visibility of IDRA and UNCCD COP16, and facilitate participation of countries and partners in IDRA activities particularly at UNCCD COP 16.

Duties and Responsibilities

The UNCCD secretariat is looking for a high-level representative of International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) with a vast knowledge of multilateral processes, environmental, sustainable development diplomacy and cooperation, and the UNCCD to advise on high-level policy and strategies to promote the objectives of the Alliance, and to assist the UNCCD Secretariat to prepare for the Conference of the Parties ("COP") 16 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia December 2-13, 2024 where the drought resilience will have a central role. COP 16 is envisioned as a strategic moment to accelerate action on land



restoration and drought resilience. For IDRA, COP 16 represents a unique opportunity to engage more partners and leaders, and to scale up the mobilization of resources for the agenda.

IDRA is a coalition of the will chaired by the Governments of Spain and Senegal, and which has more than 50 members. The alliance seeks to (i) To generate political momentum to make drought resilience a priority to be mainstreamed in national development and cooperation policies; (ii) To catalyze the consolidation of regional initiatives (programs) that facilitate action, innovation, technology, and traditional knowledge transfer, and resource mobilization for drought resilience at different levels; (iii) To promote full engagement of stakeholders, including the private sector, for increasing drought resilience and (iv) To facilitate knowledge sharing and networking with other alliances and platforms to increase synergistic impacts of those working to enhance drought resilience.

On the road to COP 16, and under the direct supervision of the Deputy Executive Secretary, the Senior policy advisor/ will assist the co-chairs of the alliance and the UNCCD Secretariat to fulfill its core objectives and to create political awareness on the importance of investing on drought resilience, engage strategic partners, contribute to scale up innovative solutions considering the land-nature-drought-climate nexus, support in the organization of strategic events for COP 16, give strategic advice on land-drought diplomacy, give strategic advice on how IDRA can support COP 16 presidency, support the mobilization of resources for flagship initiatives, support IDRA's outreach strategy to engage more countries, media, NGOs, subnational governments, and private sector as members and or supporters of the alliance and its activities.

Considering the above, the Senior Policy Advisor will perform the following activities:

1. Assist the Secretariat and the co-chairs in raising awareness with global leaders, Influencers, the Media, Non-Governmental Organizations, private sector on the importance of investing on drought resilience and the opportunities to scale up and accelerate action at COP 16 in Riyadh.
2. Support the Secretariat and the Co-chairs in preparing the Steering Committee meeting which will happen at margins of UNGA in New York.
3. Support the Secretariat and the Co-Chairs in designing and preparing IDRA's Presidential event for COP 16
4. Assists the Secretariat and the Co-chairs identifying opportunities to enhance drought resilience in the Riyadh Action Agenda
5. Give strategic advice to the Secretariat and the Co-chairs on how IDRA could leverage and support the Saudi presidency in scaling up drought resilience agenda at COP16.
6. Support the secretariat and the co-chairs to announce the mobilization of resources for flagship initiatives in areas such as the Central American Dry Corridor, Great Green Wall and Great Green Wall South, Aral See, and others
7. Give strategic advice to the Secretariat and the co-chairs on how to elevate drought resilience and land restoration agendas at strategic global meetings including the G20, CBD and Climate COPs, and will also be highlighted in future international meetings of these bodies and other UN and global bodies
8. Perform such other tasks as requested by the Secretariat of the UNCCD.

Contractual terms

The service of the selected consultant is estimated to be for 6 months between August 2024 and February 2025. Payment is defined upon submission of deliverables. The consultancy is home based however if needed missions will be organized and paid separately by the organization. All products resulting from this contractual arrangement are the exclusive property of the UNCCD.

Requirements

- Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in sustainable development, economics, law, environmental studies, public policy, natural resources management, or related area. A first-level university degree in combination with qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.



- A minimum of fifteen years of progressively responsible experience in sustainable development, environmental law and policies, economics, environment, or related field. Demonstrated experience in establishing and maintaining professional networks is desirable.
- Extensive experience in multilateralism, particularly in environmental multilateral negotiations.
- Extensive experience in working with governments in international fora.
- Excellent understanding and solid knowledge of UNCCD process and other environment intergovernmental processes.
- Extensive experience working with multiple stakeholders, particularly Governments, NGOS, private sector in a multilateral setting.
- Fluency in English is required; knowledge of French and Spanish is desirable. Knowledge of another UN official language is an advantage.

Special notice

Only individuals who can act as independent, individual economical operators are qualified to apply. Individuals who can provide their services only on account of an institution or enterprise not in their individual capacity are not eligible under this procedure.

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations Secretariat and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultant and individual contractor is responsible for determining tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

Submission of application

Applications should be submitted by e-mail to staffing@unccd.int with a UNCCD Personal History Form¹, CV and cover letter, specifying the reference number: [CCD/24/C/64](#).

The deadline for applications is **28 August 2024**. Only applications submitted by the deadline and with complete documentation will be taken into consideration.

Due to the volume of applications received, receipt of applications cannot be acknowledged individually. Please address your application as indicated above and please do not address or copy your application to an individual at the Secretariat or Global Mechanism. Candidates who do not receive any feedback within three months of the deadline should consider their application as unsuccessful.

Date of issuance: 21 August 2024

¹UNCCD P-11 form in electronic fill-in .pdf OR .docx format available: <https://www.unccd.int/convention/opportunities/vacancies/guidelines>