



SUMMARY OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION: 16-27 SEPTEMBER 2013

The eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 11) convened from 16-27 September 2013, in Windhoek, Namibia. The eleventh meeting of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST 11) and the twelfth meeting of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 12) convened in parallel to the COP. Approximately 3,000 people from governments, UN agencies and other international organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society, participated in these meetings and associated events.

The COP also featured two half-day open dialogues with civil society organizations (CSOs) on 20 and 25 September, while a High-Level Segment, consisting of roundtable discussions among ministers and other officials, took place from 23-24 September. In addition, numerous side events, a meeting of Parliamentarians, the second Sustainable Land Management Business Forum and the Rio Conventions Pavilion (RCP) also convened over the two weeks. IISD coverage of the RCP can be found at: <http://www.iisd.ca/desert/cop11/pavilion/>

COP 11 delegates adopted 41 decisions. Among the nine decisions developed by the CST, delegates: agreed to establish a science-policy interface (SPI) to enhance the UNCCD as a global authority on desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) and sustainable land management (SLM); endorsed the Scientific Knowledge Brokering Portal (SKBP) to enhance knowledge management, including on traditional knowledge, best practices and success stories; approved the roster of independent experts; established two *ad hoc* working groups, one on the iterative participatory process on impact-indicator refinement and monitoring, and another to discuss options for providing scientific advice to the UNCCD; and called for a multi-stakeholder partnership model for launching a fellowship programme.

Delegates approved 12 decisions recommended by the CRIC, including on: best practices in the implementation of the Convention; UNCCD's interaction with the Global Environment

Facility (GEF); multi-year workplans of the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies; assessment of financial flows for implementation; assessing the implementation of the Convention against strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3, and against the operational objectives of the 10-year Strategy; performance and progress indicators, methodology, and reporting procedures; and ways of promoting and strengthening relationships with other relevant conventions and international organizations.

The Committee of the Whole (COW), forwarded 20 decisions to the COP for adoption, including on: new housing arrangements of the Global Mechanism (GM); follow-up of the Rio+20 outcomes; improving mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention; implementation of the comprehensive communication strategy; and revised procedures for accreditation of CSOs and private sector representatives to the COP.

For the first time at a meeting of the COP, the Secretariat was required to present budget estimates for every decision prior to its approval. Due to uncertainty about the budget implications of many of the negotiated decisions, progress in the contact group on programme and budget was slow and agreement was only reached late in the evening of the last day of the meeting with

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the approved budget for 2014-15 that represents zero nominal growth over the previous biennium. Among the 41 decisions adopted by COP 11, participants highlighted the consensus reached on establishing SPI and SKBP as tools to help the Convention become a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge, and launching an intersessional process to examine how to define the Convention's goals on combatting DLDD in relation to the Rio+20 outcome calling for effort to achieve a Land Degradation Neutral World (LDNW).

During closing statements delegates also highlighted that their decision to relocate the GM's headquarters to Bonn, Germany, with a liaison office remaining in Rome, Italy, was a long-sought resolution to institutional challenges. The closing of COP 11 also marked the conclusion of UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja's six-year tenure, and delegates thanked him for his contributions and welcomed his successor, Monique Barbut, former Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the GEF, as they looked forward to the directions that the COP 11 decisions and new leadership could take the Convention.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNCCD

The UNCCD is the centerpiece in the international community's efforts to combat desertification and land degradation in the drylands. It was adopted on 17 June 1994, entered into force on 26 December 1996, and currently has 195 parties. The UNCCD recognizes the physical, biological and socio-economic aspects of desertification, the importance of redirecting technology transfer to be demand-driven, and the importance of involving local communities in combating DLDD. The core of the UNCCD is the development of national, subregional and regional action programmes by national governments, in cooperation with UN agencies, donors, local communities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

NEGOTIATION OF THE CONVENTION: In 1992, the UN General Assembly (UNGA), as requested by the UN Conference on Environment and Development, adopted resolution 47/188 calling for the establishment of an intergovernmental negotiating committee for the elaboration of a convention to combat desertification (INCD) in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa. The INCD met five times between May 1993 and June 1994 and drafted the UNCCD and four regional implementation annexes for Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Northern Mediterranean.

COPs 1-10: The COP met annually from 1997-2001. During these meetings, delegates, *inter alia*: selected Bonn, Germany, as the location for the UNCCD's Secretariat and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) as the organization to administer the GM; approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding the GM; established an *ad hoc* working group to review and analyze the reports on national, subregional and regional action programmes; adopted a fifth regional annex for Central and Eastern Europe; established the CRIC; and supported a proposal by the GEF to designate land degradation as another focal area for funding.

COP 6 met in 2003 in Havana, Cuba. Delegates, *inter alia*, designated the GEF as a financial mechanism of the UNCCD, decided that a comprehensive review of the Secretariat's activities would be undertaken by the UN Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), and requested the Secretariat to facilitate a costed feasibility study on all aspects of regional coordination. COP 7 took place in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2005. Delegates reviewed the implementation of the Convention and developed an MoU between the UNCCD and the GEF. An intergovernmental intersessional working group was established to review the JIU report and to develop a draft 10-year strategic plan to enhance the implementation of the Convention.

COP 8 convened in Madrid, Spain, in 2007 and, *inter alia*, adopted a decision on the Strategy. Delegates also requested the JIU to conduct an assessment of the GM for presentation to COP 9. Delegates did not reach agreement on the programme and budget, and an Extraordinary Session of the COP convened at UN Headquarters in New York on 26 November 2007 to conclude this item.

COP 9 convened in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 2009. Delegates focused on a number of items called for by the Strategy and adopted 36 decisions, which addressed topics including: four-year work plans and two-year work programmes of the CRIC, CST, GM and the Secretariat; the JIU assessment of the GM; the terms of reference of the CRIC; arrangements for regional coordination mechanisms; the communication strategy; and the programme and budget.

COP 10 convened in 2011, in Changwon City, Republic of Korea. Delegates adopted 40 decisions, addressing, *inter alia*, the governance structure for the GM, by which parties agreed that the accountability and legal representation of the GM shall be transferred from IFAD to the UNCCD Secretariat.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (CST): The CST has convened parallel meetings at each COP. At CST 1's recommendation, the COP established an *ad hoc* panel to oversee the process of surveying benchmarks and indicators, and decided that CST 2 should consider linkages between traditional and modern knowledge. CST 3 recommended that the COP appoint *ad hoc* panels on traditional knowledge and on early warning systems. CST 4 submitted proposals to improve the CST's work, and CST 5 adopted modalities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the CST, namely through the creation of a Group of Experts. CST 6 continued discussions on improving its efficiency and effectiveness, among other agenda items. CST 7 considered land degradation, vulnerability and rehabilitation, among other issues. And CST 8 decided to convene future sessions in a predominantly scientific and technical conference-style format, which led to the convening of the UNCCD 1st Scientific Conference at CST 9.

The first Special Session of the CST (CST S-1) (2008) considered preparations for CST 9, elements of the Strategy related to the CST, the CST's four-year work plan and two-year costed work programme, and advice to the CRIC on measuring progress on the Strategy's Strategic Objectives.

CST 9 met concurrently with COP 9, during which the 1st Scientific Conference convened to consider the theme “Biophysical and socio-economic monitoring and assessment of desertification and land degradation, to support decision making in land and water management.” CST 9 also developed decisions to review the experience of the 1st Scientific Conference and to organize a 2nd Scientific Conference on the theme “Economic assessment of desertification, SLM and resilience of arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid areas.” In addition, the CST recommended two indicators—the proportion of the population in affected areas living above the poverty line and land cover status—as the minimum required subset of impact indicators for reporting by affected countries beginning in 2012.

CST S-2 (2011) considered the status of work on methodologies and baselines for the effective use of the subset of impact indicators, among other matters. CST 10 established two *ad hoc* working groups: one to continue the iterative participatory process on impact-indicator refinement and monitoring and assessment of impacts; and one to further discuss options for the provision of scientific advice to the UNCCD. CST S-3 (9-12 April 2013, Bonn, Germany) met concurrently with the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference, which discussed research and best practices in the face of DLDD and proposed methodologies for evaluating the costs and benefits of SLM.

COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION (CRIC):

The CRIC held its first session in Rome, Italy, in 2002, during which delegates considered presentations from the five UNCCD regions, and considered information on financial mechanisms in support of the UNCCD’s implementation and advice provided by the CST and the GM.

CRIC 2 (2003) reviewed implementation of the UNCCD, its institutional arrangements, and financing of UNCCD implementation by multilateral agencies and institutions. CRIC 3 (2005) reviewed the implementation of the Convention in Africa and considered issues relating to Convention implementation at the global level. CRIC 4 (2005) considered strengthening Convention implementation in Africa, improving communication and reporting procedures, mobilization of resources for implementation, and collaboration with the GEF.

CRIC 5 (2007) reviewed implementation of the Convention in regions other than Africa, how to improve information communication and national reporting, and the 2006 International Year for Deserts and Desertification. CRIC 6 (2007) reviewed the roles developed and developing country parties should play in resource mobilization, and collaboration with the GEF. CRIC 7 (2008) considered: the work plans and programmes for the Convention’s bodies; the format of future meetings of the CRIC; and indicators and monitoring of the Strategy, and principles for improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and format of reports submitted to the COP.

CRIC 8 (2009) reviewed the workplans of the institutions and subsidiary bodies of the Convention and reporting guidelines and indicators. Delegates also recommended adoption of the proposal for an online Performance Review and Assessment of

Implementation System (PRAIS). CRIC 9 (2011) considered, among other items, preliminary analyses of information contained in the PRAIS reports.

CRIC 10 (2011) discussed the strategic orientation of the Convention’s institutions and subsidiary bodies, adopted four operational objectives to assess the implementation of the Convention against performance indicators, and approved an iterative process on reporting procedures and the refinement of methodologies for the review and compilation of best practices. CRIC 11 (2013) reviewed progress in alignment of national action programmes with the Strategy. Delegates also considered input from the Intersessional Working Group for the Mid-term Evaluation of the Strategy (IWG) and the *Ad Hoc* Advisory Group of Technical Experts (AGTE) on “operationally delineating affected areas.”

COP 11 REPORT

UNCCD COP 11 opened Monday afternoon, 16 September 2013, in Windhoek, Namibia, and elected Uahekua Herunga, Minister of Environment and Tourism, Namibia, as its President. Don Koo Lee, former Minister of Korea Forest Service and COP 10 President, highlighted the Rio+20 outcome on a land degradation-neutral world as a significant achievement, and expressed optimism that COP 11 would make progress on a target-setting approach within an institutional setting.

President Herunga observed that COP 11 will benefit from being hosted in a country committed to addressing DLDD, underscoring that a target-setting and science-based approach is essential to finding lasting solutions.

Welcoming participants, UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja noted the UNCCD’s progress on: mobilizing science for policy development on DLDD; advancing measurability and monitoring; enhancing advocacy and outreach; improving the dialogue between science and policy; and improving the UNCCD’s institutional framework. He reiterated that achieving a LDNW is key to achieving progress on other issues, including the water-energy-food nexus and eradication of extreme poverty. He expressed hope for guidance to enhance the scientific base of the Convention, a target-setting approach, and monitoring action programmes at all levels.

Ireland, on behalf of the European Union (EU), explained he expected progress in three key areas: achieving a LDNW; strengthening the science on DLDD issues by reforming and strengthening the CST; and strengthening the Convention in a cost-effective manner to achieve maximum impact. He further indicated that monitoring and reporting frameworks should be simplified to facilitate their use.

Burkina Faso, on behalf of the African Group, said the UNCCD is at a critical juncture, citing: a shrinking financial base; the completion of the current Executive Secretary’s term; Canada’s withdrawal from the Convention; poor progress towards the target of having 80% of national action programmes (NAPs) completed by 2014; and the low level of support from developed countries for NAP preparation.

India, for the Asia-Pacific Group, emphasized, *inter alia*, the need to strengthen the regional coordination mechanisms

(RCMs) for an effective implementation of the Convention, as well as financial and capacity-building support to country parties for the alignment of their NAPs by December 2014. He expressed concern about the low allocation of funds to the land degradation focal area under the GEF vis-à-vis the other two Rio Conventions, as well as the limited funding for the region.

Antigua and Barbuda, for the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), expressed concern about the appointment of the new UNCCD Executive Secretary and requested an explanation from the UN Secretary-General on the reasons for not appointing Paula Caballero (Colombia). He said GRULAC opposed the alleged arguments of geographical imbalance in the leadership of the three Rio Conventions and a supposed lack of transparency during the selection process. He also lamented insufficient attention to his region's needs and priorities in the UNCCD context and emphasized the need for more streamlined and concise texts for national level discussions. He urged the UNCCD to focus on making the case for the economic feasibility of the use and value of drylands, in order to attract new and additional resources.

Emphasizing the role of global monitoring in reaching the goals of Rio+20, Armenia, on behalf of the Central and Eastern European States, voiced concern about recommendations on some indicators that do not allow for differentiation of land degradation characteristics among countries, and said this should be addressed by strengthening scientific research across regions.

The Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa, on behalf of CSOs, called for greater financial support of CSOs to enhance their role in raising awareness and capacity building, and to halt the decrease in the number of participating CSOs. Citing drivers of land degradation, including land grabbing, agribusiness and mining, she called for a significant increase in GEF funding.

Delegates elected the following candidates as Vice-Presidents of COP 11: Mamadou Honadia (Burkina Faso) for African States; Choi Young Tae (Republic of Korea) and Heimata Louisa Karika (Cook Islands) for Asia-Pacific States; Ashot Vardevanyan (Armenia) and Dalia Gudaitiene Holiman (Lithuania) for Central and Eastern European States; Thomas Tichelmann (Ireland) and Christine Dawson (US) for Western European and Other States; and Thiago Cavalcanti (Brazil) and Mariano Espinoza (Costa Rica) for Latin American and Caribbean States. Karika was selected as COP 11 Rapporteur.

Delegates then established a Committee of the Whole (COW) and designated Chencho Norbu (Bhutan) as its Chair. The COP allocated the following agenda items to the COW: review of the Strategy; programme and budget; governance and institutional arrangements of the GM; follow-up on the outcomes of Rio+20; and the UN Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010-2020). The COP also agreed to accredit NGOs and private sector entities listed in Annexes I, II and III of document ICCD/COP(11)/20/Rev.1 as observers.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

COW Chair Norbu opened the first meeting on Tuesday, 17 September. After adopting the agenda and organization of work, the COW established two contact groups, the first on the

programme and budget for 2014-2015, and the second on non-budget issues. During two plenaries, on 26 and 27 September, COW Chair Norbu presented to the COP the outcomes of the Committee's deliberations, and the COP adopted 20 decisions based on the COW's work.

INDEPENDENT MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGY: The report by the IWG (ICCD/COP(11)/21) was discussed in the COW on Wednesday, 18 September. Several parties supported the recommendations, with: Viet Nam expressing hope they would lead to new indicators for monitoring DLDD; the Republic of Korea suggesting they would lead to discussions on the next phase of the Strategy; and the EU underlining that the purpose of the evaluation was not to modify but enhance the Strategy. Jordan stressed the need for more financial resources; Indonesia underlined a lack of financing, technological support and capacity building; and China advocated intergovernmental cooperation and involvement of the private sector. Cuba called for each of the report's recommendations to be reflected in COP 11 decisions. Morocco said parties need time to internalize and implement recommendations. Switzerland favored a pragmatic approach, including: considering best practices; accounting for countries' respective economic situations; and increasing the Convention's visibility. Algeria, on behalf of the African Group, called for a clear definition of reporting responsibilities. India said impact indicators need to be context-specific. Seychelles, on behalf of small island developing states (SIDS), called for the COP to consider SIDS in particular when addressing the recommendations.

The IWG report's recommendations were discussed in a contact group that met from Wednesday, 18 September, until Friday, 20 September. A draft decision was agreed in the COW on Friday, 27 September, and was adopted by COP the same day without amendment.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/COP(11)/L.14) requests the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the COP Bureau, to propose for consideration by COP 12, a process and potential terms of reference for developing a new strategy and plans to further improve the implementation of the Convention. The decision's annex lists decisions taken by COP 11 where the IWG's recommendations have been incorporated.

GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE GLOBAL MECHANISM: On Tuesday, 17 September, the Secretariat introduced document ICCD/COP(11)/3 on options for new housing arrangements for the GM, including potential co-location with the Secretariat. During discussions, many parties supported the Secretariat's recommendation to locate the GM with the Secretariat in Bonn, and called for reaching a final decision in Windhoek. Stressing the GM's mandate and the importance of preserving its independence from the Secretariat, Italy said resource mobilization would be more efficient if the GM were located in the UN agricultural hub in Rome, within IFAD, and offered a €100,000 housing contribution. He indicated "controversial and sometimes incorrect figures" in the report. Germany emphasized that a fully operational GM is its primary interest,

and highlighted arguments for a relocation to Bonn, including: cost-effectiveness; increasing synergies between the GM and the Secretariat; and fostering cooperation between the UNCCD and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Algeria, supported by Honduras, said some aspects of the report need to be reviewed in light of commitments expressed by Italy. Panama, with Peru, stressed the importance of considering the operational aspects of the GM's resource mobilization mandate. Belgium drew attention to issues not fully addressed in the report, including: legal modalities; the position of GM staff; and impacts on the functioning and independence of the GM vis-à-vis the Secretariat. Switzerland opposed the way the evaluation had been carried out, saying it reflected the Secretariat's preferences.

A contact group on GM-related matters, facilitated by Markku Aho (Finland), met from Wednesday, 18 September until the final plenary. On Thursday, 19 September, the contact group began consideration of a Facilitator's draft decision containing bracketed text on the various housing options for the GM. A Friends of the Chair on the GM group met from Monday, 23 September, until the evening of Wednesday, 25 September.

During the High-Level Segment on Tuesday, 24 September, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said it could be open to hosting the GM if this was welcomed by parties and the Secretariat. As delegates addressed the FAO statement in the evening contact group on Wednesday, 25 September, many opposed the insertion of new options for which costing had not been calculated in the Secretariat's report, and stressed that a decision should be taken at COP 11.

During the COW plenary on Friday, 27 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications of the draft decision are estimated at €350,890. The decision was agreed in the COW and adopted by the COP without amendment.

Final Decision: In its decision (ICCD/COP(11)/L.18), the COP relocates the GM to Bonn, to be co-located with the Secretariat, and to establish a liaison office in Rome with appropriate staff. The decision specifies that the purpose and functioning of the liaison office will be decided by the GM Managing Director in agreement with the Executive Secretary.

PROGRAMME AND BUDGET: Programme and budget for the biennium 2014-2015: The programme and budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (ICCD/COP(11)/6 and Corr.1, ICCD/COP(11)/7 and Corr.1, ICCD/CRIC(12)2-ICCD/COP(11)/CST/9) was introduced by the Secretariat in the COW on Tuesday, 17 September. Discussions on the budget resumed in the COW on Thursday morning. Noting additional funding does not guarantee effective implementation, Brazil opposed a budget increase, calling for improvements in cost efficiency and use of teleconference facilities. He also questioned the added value of new bureaucratic structures proposed by the *Ad Hoc* Working Group to further discuss the options for the provision of Scientific Advice focusing on DLDD (AGSA), describing the additional cost as "irresponsible." The US, with Trinidad and Tobago, called for a 3% decrease in the budget and urged fiscal discipline, saying her country is unable to increase financial support. Swaziland, on behalf of the African Group, opposed

any budget reduction and urged parties to pay their arrears. Cuba, Argentina, Mexico, Algeria, Peru and Colombia urged strengthening RCMs, and reflecting regional annexes' needs in workplan and budget allocations. Thailand urged synergies with other Rio Conventions, while India regretted the budgetary increase of less than 4.9% over the last biennium. Recalling the budget shortfall since COP 10, UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja reported that regional meetings had only been made possible with voluntary funding.

The contact group on programme and budget, with Sem Shikongo (Namibia) as facilitator, met from Friday, 20 September, until the final evening of COP 11. As it awaited the outcomes of decisions from other contact groups with budget implications, the group met daily to consider general questions relating to core budget requirements, special trust funds, indicative contributions, and implications of the core budget limitations. On Wednesday, 25 September, delegates from the budget contact group joined the CRIC contact group to negotiate a draft decision on collaboration with the GEF. The contact group continued meeting until 11:30 pm on Friday night, with discussions mainly focusing on the GM. In the evening of Friday, 27 September, the contact group reached consensus on a draft decision.

The draft decision on the programme and budget for the biennium 2014-2015 was agreed by the COW after 1:00 am on Saturday, 28 September, and adopted by COP.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/COP(11)/L.21) includes agreements to: approve the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 in the amount of €16,122,431, which represents zero nominal growth from the 2012-13 biennium; approve the staffing table for the programme budget; and adopt the indicative scale of contributions for 2014-2015. It further:

- decides to maintain the level of the working capital reserve at 8.3% of the estimated expenditures in the trust fund for the core budget;
- approves a contingency budget amounting to €2,073,550 for conference servicing;
- takes note of the estimated additional costs of up to €1,496,000, which will be incurred in the event COP 12 is held in Bonn;
- takes note of the funding estimates for extra-budgetary needs specified by the Executive Secretary (€7,281,000) and the GM (€11,578,150) for the biennium 2014-2015, and requests parties in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions; and
- approves a budget for the transfer of the GM to Bonn, on an exceptional one-time basis, amounting to €350,894, and authorizes the Executive Secretary to use the reserves of the trust fund for the core budget for this purpose.

Financial performance of the Convention's trust funds: The financial performance of the Convention trust funds (ICCD/COP(11)/9-13) was introduced by the Secretariat in the COW on Tuesday, 17 September. On financial performance of the Convention trust funds (ICCD/COP(11)/6 and Corr.1, and ICCD/COP(11)/7), the Secretariat reported a lag in contributions, calling on parties to honor their commitments. Regarding the

report on unaudited financial statements for the Convention trust funds for the GM, he said due to disputed expenses and unforeseen legal costs regarding appeals from employees, the Secretariat could not reach an agreement.

Final Decision: In this decision, which is included in the decision on programme and budget (ICCD/COP(11)/L.21), the COP takes note of the financial statements for the bienniums 2010-2011 and 2012-2013, the report on financial performance and the reports on the implementation of the work programmes for the biennium 2012-2013 of the Secretariat and the GM, and the status of contributions as at 1 September 2013. The COP also expresses appreciation to parties that have paid their contributions to the core budget and to the trust funds, and called on parties that have not paid to do so without delay.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE OUTCOMES OF THE UN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (UNCSD, or RIO+20): On Thursday, 19 September, the Secretariat introduced document ICCD/COP(11)/5 and Corr.1, explaining its contribution to the work of the UN Task Team assisting the Co-Chairs of the General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. The African Group, with the EU, advocated establishing an intersessional expert group. The EU and India suggested the group consider options for integrating the Rio+20 outcome in a new UNCCD strategy at COP 13. China suggested target setting must be based on consensus, scientific evaluation and effective institutional guarantees. Namibia, supported by Algeria and Armenia, said paragraph 17 of the Rio+20 outcome provides a clear mandate for the UNCCD to take action. He said he would table a draft decision for a specific protocol or annex to come out of COP 11. Emphasizing lack of clarity and scientific agreement on LDNW and zero net land degradation (ZNLD), the US proposed deletion of references to these concepts. Cuba, Argentina, Peru, Mexico and Brazil cautioned against prejudging the outcome of the post-2015 development agenda process, with Brazil also opposing expanding the UNCCD's mandate on land issues beyond drylands.

The issue was negotiated in a contact group that met from Thursday, 19 September, until the closing plenary. Delegates were unable to reach agreement on: whether using the DLDD and LDNW terminology of the Rio+20 outcome document in the UNCCD context was appropriate; and the UNCCD's mandate as it relates to the Rio+20 outcomes, which were developed in the context of a conference mandated by the General Assembly, not a treaty body. On Wednesday evening, 25 September, an informal open-ended drafting group was established to address this impasse. The group focused on the establishment of an intergovernmental working group, its role and responsibilities.

A draft decision was presented to the COW during its final plenary, and the Secretariat noted the financial implications of this decision are estimated at €188,000. In a statement after the adoption of the decision by the COW, Armenia, on behalf of affected countries from Central and Eastern Europe, pointed out that the decision does not reflect the interests of Annex V countries, which have land degradation issues outside arid zones. The COP subsequently adopted the decision.

Final Decision: In this decision (ICCD/COP(11)/L.19), the COP recognizes the Rio+20 outcomes and decides to establish an IWG consisting of representatives from each region and funded by voluntary contributions, to: "establish a science-based definition of land degradation neutrality in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas; develop options relating to arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas that parties might consider should they strive to achieve land degradation neutrality; and advise the Convention on the implications for its Strategy, programmes and resource requirements." The IWG is requested to take note of, among others, the post-2015 development agenda process and the SPI's work, and prepare a report for the COP Bureau 60 days before COP 12, and that this report should be sent for consideration by the CST and the CRIC prior to COP 12.

REVISED PROCEDURES FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF CSOs AND PRIVATE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES IN MEETINGS AND PROCESSES OF THE UNCCD: On Thursday, 19 September, the Secretariat introduced document ICCD/COP(11)/4 on revised procedures for the accreditation of CSOs and private sector representatives to the COP and their participation in meetings and processes of the Convention. CSOs lamented that, since COP 10, only annex region CSOs and private sector representatives have been allowed to register. She suggested stricter accreditation requirements, in particular on sustainability, to ensure private sector involvement is in line with the Convention's mandate.

This agenda item was discussed in a COW contact group that met from Monday - Thursday, 23-26 September. Delegates debated: budgetary implications of developing a business engagement strategy; the need for the private sector to report to the Convention; the involvement of indigenous peoples, local communities and youth; and the composition of the CSO selection panel.

On Friday, 27 September, COW Chair Norbu introduced the draft decision. The Secretariat said the financial implications of this decision are estimated at €45,000. Brazil requested changing the wording indigenous "peoples" to "people" in accordance with language in other conventions. The decision was accepted by the COW and subsequently adopted by the COP, as amended.

Final Decision: In this decision (ICCD/COP(11)/L.12), the COP, *inter alia*:

- invites parties to promote the active involvement of CSOs, including indigenous people, local communities and youth, in the Convention process;
- requests the Secretariat and the GM to develop a business engagement strategy for consideration by the COP Bureau *ad interim* and by COP 12; and
- decides that the CSO selection panel should also include one representative from CSOs from countries belonging to each of the five UN regional groups.

THE 10-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN AND FRAMEWORK TO ENHANCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION (2008-2018): Review of progress in the implementation of the comprehensive communication strategy: On Thursday, 19 September, the Secretariat introduced document ICCD/COP(11)/2 on progress made in implementing

the communication strategy. The African Group suggested adopting an outreach programme on DLDD and developing a communication strategy to catalyze investment. CSOs urged support for participatory rural communication and education activities in local languages.

On Tuesday, 24 September, discussions in the contact group centered on the mandate of the Convention regarding the Rio+20 outcome, with delegates agreeing that awareness-raising initiatives should align with the Convention's mandate and its Strategy. Financial implications of the UNCCD recognition programmes were also debated, with the Secretariat stressing voluntary contributions for such programmes.

Presenting the draft decision to the COW on Thursday, 26 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications of this decision are estimated at €1,580,300 and that it would be further considered in the contact group on programme and budget. The decision was then agreed by the COW and adopted by the COP without discussion.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/COP(11)/L.3), *inter alia*, welcomes progress in advancing operational objective 1 of the Strategy, in particular initiatives to promote best practices in SLM, and calls for greater attention to awareness raising and educational activities on DLDD issues through the World Day to Combat Desertification, United Nations Decade for Deserts and the fight against Desertification, SKBP, Land for Life Award, the Drylands Champions programme, and other public outreach tools.

Improving mechanisms to facilitate regional coordination of the implementation of the Convention: On Thursday, 19 September, the Secretariat introduced document ICCD/COP(11)/14 on support by the Secretariat and the GM for the enhancement of regional cooperation. The African Group requested placement of the regional coordinating unit (RCU) at the UN Economic Commission for Africa, while Georgia noted interest by countries in Central and Eastern Europe to develop a RCM. Negotiations in the contact group that met from Monday, 23 September, until Thursday, 26 September, focused on financial implications of the RCM process, inclusion of IWG recommendations on RCMs, and incorporating references to new initiatives as tools to strengthen the implementation of the Convention. The COW considered the related draft decision on Friday, 27 September, and the Secretariat reported the financial implications of this decision are estimated at €763,000. The COW agreed on the decision without comment and it was subsequently adopted by the COP.

Final Decision: In this decision (ICCD/COP(11)/L.4), the COP recognizes the need to further improve the capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of RCMs and to ensure RCUs carry out their functions effectively. The COP also, among others:

- requests affected country parties under each annex to:
 - establish or revise the mandates for regional committees, RCUs and thematic programme networks, based on regional priorities; review, subject to availability of resources, existing subregional and regional action programmes to ensure they reflect regional priorities, prior to COP 12; and
 - improve financial support to RCMs to address their identified

priorities; and

- invites parties to consider the role of new initiatives, including the Changwon Initiative and the Kubuqi International Desert Forum, as tools to strengthen the implementation of the Convention and the Strategy.

THE UN DECADE FOR DESERTS AND THE FIGHT AGAINST DESERTIFICATION (UNDDD) (2010-2020):

On Thursday, 19 September, the Secretariat introduced a report on the activities supporting the UNDDD (ICCD/COP(11)/19). During discussions, some delegates highlighted national observance activities, and the African Group called for mainstreaming UNDDD activities with World Environment Day. Discussions in the contact group touched upon budgetary implications of the UNDDD Programme.

The COW considered the related draft decision on Thursday, 26 September. The Secretariat said the financial implications of this decision would be absorbed within the existing budget. The decision was subsequently adopted by the COP without comment.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/COP(11)/L.2) recognizes the importance of the Decade in raising awareness on the value of deserts, and the need to strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaboration among UN entities to scale-up observance activities.

OUTSTANDING ITEMS: Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure: On Thursday, 19 September, the Secretariat noted this agenda item has been outstanding since COP 2, and presented options for moving forward on COP decision-making processes as outlined in document ICCD/COP(11)/16. Algeria, joined by Argentina, said consensus should be the norm for the COP. This item was discussed and agreed in a contact group on Monday, 23 September.

During consideration of the draft decision on Thursday, 26 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications would be absorbed within the existing budget. The decision was then agreed in the COW and adopted by the COP.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/COP(11)/L.1) requests this pending rule of procedure to be included in the agenda of COP 12 and the Secretariat to report on the status of similar rules of procedure under other multilateral environmental agreements.

COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

Chair Mary Rowen (US) opened CRIC 12 on Tuesday, 17 September, and the Committee adopted the provisional agenda and organization of work (ICCD/CRIC(12)/1), as orally revised. Delegates established a contact group on CRIC matters and appointed Luis Estuardo Ríos González (Guatemala), as facilitator. The contact group held meetings from 18-27 September and developed 12 draft decisions, which were agreed in the CRIC and adopted by the COP on Thursday, 26 September. The remaining decisions on assessment of financial flows, the GEF and best practices were adopted by the COP on Friday, 27 September.

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND THE 10-YEAR STRATEGY: REPORT OF CRIC 11: The CRIC 11 report (ICCD/CRIC(11)/19 and

ICCD/CRIC(11)/19/Add.1) was discussed on Wednesday, 18 September. Côte d'Ivoire, on behalf of the African Group, and Jordan and Senegal, called for increased resource mobilization to enable the implementation of the Convention. Kiribati highlighted the complexity of the GEF funding process. On resource mobilization strategies, China called on the CST to increase cooperation with the FAO, while Mexico encouraged the Secretariat and the GM to participate in regional ministerial meetings on environment, food and agriculture. Japan underlined that agreeing to the activities presented does not mean endorsement of a budget increase. China expressed concern about limited reporting by parties and called for improved impact indicators and assessments at global and national levels.

Strengthening and enhancing the process of alignment and implementation of action programmes with the Strategy: The CRIC contact group considered this sub-item on Wednesday and Thursday, 18-19 September. Delegates were initially divided on specifying "adequate, predictable and timely" financing, with discussions addressing, *inter alia*, difficulties of accessing funds and concerns about shifting responsibilities. During the closing plenary on Thursday, 26 September, the Secretariat noted that the financial implications for this decision were estimated at €1,049,000, and said the programme and budget contact group would consider it. The CRIC agreed and the COP subsequently adopted the draft decision.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.1) addresses the need to: integrate NAPs into national development plans; facilitate and simplify access to financing, including through the GEF and climate financing; include private sector and grassroots organizations in the alignment process; and support the alignment and implementation of action programmes.

The draft decision further urges affected country parties to intensify their efforts to formulate and/or align, review and update their NAPs with the Strategy and adopt them as policy documents, and encourages them to, *inter alia*:

- develop action programmes at subnational level;
- use the NAP alignment process as a means to raise the awareness of policy makers; and
- while aligning their NAPs: address specific gaps in SLM; ensure coherence with other national sectoral policies and development plans at all levels; establish specific internal coordination mechanism; and apply a participatory process.

On ways to facilitate alignment programmes, the decision requests, *inter alia*:

- the Secretariat to continue: providing support for the alignment of action programmes; evaluating the effectiveness of these activities for 2014-15; providing technical support; raising awareness; ensuring high-level political advocacy; and facilitating the use and improvement of effective tools to guide the alignment process; and
- CRIC 13 to agree on a clear understanding of the integrated financing strategy/integrated investment framework processes and their relationships with the NAP alignment process, as well as to discuss a plan for the NAP alignment process *vis-à-vis* the overall SLM goals.

Assessment of the implementation of the Convention against the operational objectives of the Strategy:

The CRIC contact group began negotiating a draft decision on this item on Monday, 23 September, finalizing the text on Wednesday, 25 September. Delegates considered updates to operational objectives, outcomes and indicators and discussed appropriateness of DLDD references, as well as focusing on access to existing databases. Chair Rowen presented the draft decision to the CRIC on Thursday, 26 September, and the Secretariat said the financial implications would be absorbed within the existing budget. The COP adopted the decision.

Final Decision: With regard to operative objective 1 on advocacy, awareness raising and education, the decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.8) encourages parties to, *inter alia*: strengthen linkages among national stakeholders; streamline their awareness-raising efforts into national communication strategies; use mass media, and information and communication technologies, for further outreach; explore ways to communicate the term "desertification" to the general public, while sending a positive message; and support capacity building for communities.

With regard to operational objective 3 on science, technology and knowledge, the decision, *inter alia*: encourages affected country parties to increase their efforts to establish and/or strengthen DLDD monitoring and evaluation, as well as to strengthen national support for monitoring and evaluation systems.

With regard to operational objective 4 on capacity building, the decision, *inter alia*: requests the GM to assist affected country parties in assessing their financial needs for capacity building; encourages affected country parties to further mainstream DLDD issues in national capacity-building initiatives carried out by science, technology and research institutions; and encourages parties to support the involvement of CSOs in the national reporting process and to assist them in developing the relevant capacities when required.

Assessment of the implementation of the Convention against strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3:

The CRIC contact group discussed this sub-item on Tuesday and Wednesday, 24-25 September. Parties agreed that while information from national focal points may assist the Secretariat to simplify reporting templates, this exercise should be based on the information already provided. The draft decision was presented to the CRIC on Thursday, 26 September, and the Secretariat said the financial implications of the decision would be absorbed within the existing budget. The CRIC agreed, and the COP adopted the decision without comment.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.3) invites, *inter alia*:

- affected country parties to: make further efforts towards increasing the coverage of spatially explicit data; strengthen their institutional coordination at the national level with a view to improving data accessibility; and use available and internationally recognized datasets;
- developed and developing country parties in a position to do so, as well as financial and technical institutions, to provide technical and financial support to affected country parties; and

- CRIC to continue collaborating closely with the CST in harmonizing data and methodologies to establish a baseline for the assessment of the implementation.

Assessment of financial flows for the implementation of the Convention: The CRIC contact group negotiated a draft decision on this sub-item Wednesday and Thursday, 25-26 September. Delegates disagreed on whether an individual public-private partnership demonstrating successful resource mobilization for combating desertification activities should be recognized in CRIC decisions. During the final plenary on Friday, 27 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications of this draft decision are estimated at €250,000. The CRIC agreed to the draft decision, and the COP subsequently adopted it.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.10) invites all country parties, in the context of public-private partnerships, to support private sector investment in SLM in drylands. It invites developed country parties and multilateral institutions to increase the adequacy, timeliness and predictability of the resources provided to affected country parties and relevant subregional organizations, and requests the GM to continue assisting affected country parties and subregions in developing their integrated investment frameworks and to identify domestic, foreign and innovative sources of funding for their implementation. It urges affected country parties, with assistance of the GM, to increase their efforts to establish integrated investment frameworks with the aim of 50% of affected country parties having established such frameworks by 2014.

The decision invites affected country parties to, *inter alia*:

- step up their efforts in submitting project proposals, including those that promote synergistic implementation of the Rio Conventions at the national, subregional and regional levels, to multilateral financial institutions, facilities and funds;
- step up their efforts to commit resources from their public budgets and encourage private investments for the implementation of NAPs; and
- adopt an integrated financial strategy as a tool to increase financing of SLM.

Multi-year workplans and performance of the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies: These sub-items (ICCD/CRIC(12)/2 and ICCD/CRIC(12)/3) were introduced on Wednesday, 18 September, in the CRIC and subsequently discussed in the COW budget group. Several parties, including China, welcomed the multi-year workplans. Cuba raised concerns about language in the workplans relating to the LDNW target, stating provisions for DLDD in *The Future We Want* are translated into the sustainable development goals (SDGs), and DLDD issues are included in the post-2015 development agenda, and that negotiations on these issues are taking place in New York and are beyond the UNCCD's mandate.

During consideration of draft decision on Friday, 27 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications would be absorbed within the existing budget. The CRIC agreed to the decision, and the COP subsequently adopted it without comment.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.12) requests the Secretariat, GM, CST and CRIC to use the workplan outlined

in the decision on the six operational objectives of: advocacy, awareness raising and education; policy framework; science, technology and knowledge; capacity building; financing and technology transfer; and management and services. The decision provides multiple targets to be reached by 2015 for each operational objective. The decision further requests: the GM to increase capacity-building support to affected country parties in accessing funding; the GM and Secretariat to prepare multi-year workplans (2016-2019); and the Secretariat to integrate these plans into a comprehensive multi-year workplan for the Convention to be considered at COP 12. It decides performance review and performance indicator criteria for the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies.

IMPROVING THE PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION AS WELL AS THE QUALITY AND FORMAT OF REPORTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE COP: Consideration of the overall report on the fourth reporting and review process:

The Executive Secretary's report ICCD/CRIC(12)/7 was introduced on Wednesday, 18 September, in the CRIC. Many parties, including Algeria, Jordan, Brazil, Argentina and Colombia, noted the difficulty of measuring progress given the low number of submissions. South Africa, Panama, Costa Rica, Tanzania, Morocco and Thailand attributed poor reporting to, among other reasons, the complexity of the PRAIS system and difficulties in collecting data. Many emphasized the need for more human, technological and financial capacity to allow countries to provide information in a timely manner. Guinea-Bissau and Benin stressed the need for involvement of regional bodies to assist with disaggregated statistics. Guatemala underlined the need to adjust PRAIS to enable policy-relevant analyses.

On Tuesday, 24 September, the CRIC contact group modified a draft decision on the iterative process relating to the assessment of implementation, including performance and impact indicators, methodology and reporting procedures, discarding the initially attached annex of the IWG report (ICCD/COP(11)/21). In subsequent negotiations on Wednesday, parties discussed the Secretariat's role in addressing some parties' difficulties with sustaining national data collection and processing.

During consideration of decision on Thursday, 26 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications are estimated to be €96,000. The CRIC approved the decision and it was subsequently adopted by the COP.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.7) requests the Secretariat to, *inter alia*: develop special narrative sections to report on additional voluntary indicators and/or specific actions taken by countries to combat DLDD; simplify PRAIS, including requirements for financial reporting, and reduce the overall number of performance indicators; and ensure data and information from the reporting process are available and accessible to all. The decision also:

- invites the Secretariat, when reducing the number of indicators, to pay particular attention to e-SMART (economic, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) criteria and results from previous reporting process; and

- urges the Secretariat to improve the functioning of the PRAIS database.

Consideration of best practices in the implementation

of the Convention: The reports on: “Promoting the analysis and dissemination of best practices” and “Accessibility of best practices,” (ICCD/CRIC(12)/4-ICCD/COP(11)/CST/7 and ICCD/CRIC(12)/5) were introduced in the CRIC on Wednesday, 18 September. China shared his country’s experience through the Kubuqi International Desert Forum. Bhutan proposed regional experience-sharing workshops on PRAIS reporting. Argentina warned about property rights risks in storing information on best practices and SLM on the PRAIS portal. Senegal urged regions to enhance dissemination of best practices. Cambodia emphasized capacity building and financial support for national reporting. Egypt urged parties to translate recommendations into action on the ground. Switzerland called for the Secretariat to assign responsibility for managing the SLM best practice database to the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT).

A draft decision on consideration of best practices in the implementation of the Convention was first discussed in a Joint CST/CRIC meeting on Thursday, 19 September. CRIC contact group negotiations on this item began on Wednesday, 25 September, and were dominated by divergent views on whether an individual public-private partnership demonstrating successful resource mobilization for combating desertification activities should be recognized in CRIC decisions. During consideration by the CRIC on Friday, 27 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications of this decision are estimated to be €88,000. The CRIC agreed, and the COP adopted the decision without comment.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.9) requests the Secretariat and the GM to facilitate consultations among relevant organizations with a view to defining a framework for all thematic topics, including by providing access to best practice databases through the SKBP and to propose a revised timeframe and the resource requirements for the compilation of best practices to CRIC 13. The decision further requests the Secretariat, *inter alia* to:

- complete the selection of the primary recommended database for a thematic topic, SLM technologies including adaptation;
- develop a UNCCD policy to access data and information provided by parties and other reporting entities; and
- facilitate cooperation between partners of the SKBP and the institution(s)/database(s) that will be tasked with the compilation and dissemination of relevant best practices.

PROMOTION AND STRENGTHENING OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER RELEVANT CONVENTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES:

Relevant documents under this agenda item (ICCD/CRIC(11)/19 and Add.1, ICCD/CRIC(12)/INF.1 and ICCD/CRIC(12)/CRP.1) were first discussed on Wednesday, 18 September, in the CRIC. Parties welcomed efforts to promote synergies among the three Rio Conventions and emphasized focusing on: increasing efficiency and resource mobilization; ensuring

national implementation efforts for each convention are complementary; and harmonizing reporting formats. Jordan proposed assigning a liaison officer to coordinate relationships among all the Conventions’ organs. Argentina cautioned against the Secretariat’s “non-conventional” approach in elaborating its multidisciplinary documents, referred to as advocacy papers. On advocacy, awareness raising and promotion of the Convention, Zimbabwe proposed the establishment of an “open and non-political” global platform allowing stakeholders to have a say on DLDD issues and the implementation of the Convention.

Delegates in the CRIC contact group worked on a draft decision on Monday and Tuesday, 23-24 September. Consultations took place, including throughout Monday night, on the appropriate utilization of recommendations from “Global Drylands: A UN system-wide response” (ICCD/CRIC(10)/INF.1) and the proposed action plan for coordinated action in the drylands (ICCD/CRIC(12)/INF.1). During consideration of the draft decision by the CRIC on Thursday, 26 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications are estimated to be €696,000. The CRIC agreed to the decision and the COP adopted it without comment.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.2), *inter alia*:

- encourages the Secretariat to enhance its cooperation with UN agencies, organizations and treaties that are members of the UN Environmental Management Group, based on the recommendations in the report “Global Drylands: A UN system-wide response;” and
- requests the Secretariat to: assist country parties to promote partnerships to develop and implement national drought management policies; assess and report on the effectiveness of existing advocacy policy frameworks; and foster dialogue among stakeholders at CRIC 13 in the context of existing advocacy policy frameworks on substantive thematic issues.

COLLABORATION WITH THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY: Report by the GEF on its strategies, programmes and projects for financing the agreed incremental costs of activities concerning desertification:

The GEF report (ICCD/CRIC(12)/6) was first discussed on Wednesday, 18 September. Several parties called for expanding resource allocations to UNCCD focal points and improving direct accessibility to funds at all levels. Costa Rica said an alliance with the GEF allowed his country to transfer funds directly to farmers. Guatemala asked for a reassessment of co-financing required under the GEF and increased technical support and, with Tunisia, called for streamlining the bureaucratic process.

The CRIC contact group, joined by delegates from the budget contact group, negotiated a draft decision on this item from 25-27 September. Discussions focused on eliminating GEF references in other CRIC decisions and removing requests to the GEF incompatible with its mandate and decision-making structures. Parties disagreed on the timeliness of the request to the GEF, noting unresolved discussions on this matter among GEF donors.

On Friday, 27 September, the CRIC considered the draft decision and the Secretariat said the financial implications would be absorbed within the existing budget. The CRIC agreed to, and the COP adopted, the decision without comment.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.11) requests the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the CEO of the GEF, to prepare draft amendments to the existing MoU between the UNCCD and the GEF and report on proposed draft amendments to COP 12. The decision, *inter alia*: requests the Secretariats of the GEF and the UNCCD to engage in consultations on harmonizing the disbursement of funding for enabling activities with the deadlines for the alignment and the reporting and review process; calls on parties to align their programming of GEF resources at the national level, taking into account the priorities of subregional and regional action programmes; and invites parties to utilize GEF financial resources in their implementation of activities geared towards the objectives of the Convention, taking into account the outcome of Rio+20 relating to DLDD.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES OR INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS TO ASSIST THE COP IN REGULARLY REVIEWING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: This item was introduced in the CRIC contract group on Wednesday, 25 September. A draft decision was considered on Thursday, 26 September, and the Secretariat said the financial implications would be absorbed within the existing budget. The decision was agreed by the CRIC without comment and subsequently adopted by the COP.

Final Decision: In this decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.4), parties, *inter alia*:

- decide that the intersessional session of the CRIC to provide recommendations on priorities to be included in their programme of work and budget for the following programming biennium;
- request the Secretariat to use the outcomes of intersessional deliberations of the CRIC to inform the drafting of decisions and recommendations for consideration by the COP; and
- request the Secretariat and the GM to synthesize the outcomes of intersessional meetings, including on best practices, into information and capacity-building materials to guide parties in their efforts to enhance the implementation of the Convention.

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR CRIC 13: The CRIC contact group discussed this item on Wednesday, 25 September. During the consideration of the draft decision by the CRIC on Thursday, 26 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications of this decision are estimated to be €42,500. The CRIC agreed and the COP adopted the decision without comment.

Final Decision: The final decision ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.5 lists six agenda items with seven sub-items for CRIC 13.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE 13TH SESSION OF THE CRIC: This was considered by the CRIC on Thursday, 26 September, and the Secretariat said the financial implications of this decision would be considered further during the negotiations on the programme and budget. The CRIC agreed to, and the COP adopted, the decision without comment.

Final Decision: The decision (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.6) states that CRIC 13 shall be held over five days during the period 8-27 November 2014, in Bonn, Germany, or in a venue with UN conference facilities in the event that no party makes an offer to host that session and meet the additional cost.

CRIC CLOSING SESSION: During its closing session, on Friday, 27 September, the CRIC concluded consideration of all decisions. Delegates also elected by acclamation the following delegates as Vice-Chairs to the Bureau of CRIC 13 and 14: Richard Mwendandu (Kenya); Warapong Waramit (Thailand); Yuri Kolmaz (Ukraine); and Patrick Wegerdt (EU). In closing, Chair Rowen noted that COP 11 had been one of the most productive of the ten COPs she has attended. Chair Rowen then thanked other CRIC officials, the Secretariat, and participants for their hard work. She adjourned the meeting at 7:42 pm. During the closing COP plenary, delegates elected Philbert Brown (Jamaica) as the CRIC 13 and 14 Chair.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Chair Antônio Rocha Magalhães opened CST 11 on Tuesday, 17 September. After adopting the agenda and organization of work (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/1), the Committee also adopted the final report of the third special session of the CST (ICCD/CST(S-3)/7). A joint contact group between the CRIC, CST and AGTE, facilitated by Nicholas Hanley (EU), was established and met throughout the week to discuss best practices and knowledge sharing.

ROSTER OF INDEPENDENT EXPERTS: On Tuesday, 17 September, the Secretariat introduced the roster of independent experts (ICCD/COP(11)/15). On the proposal to revise and update details of existing national experts and propose new roster candidates, Japan and Argentina voiced concerns regarding the length and accessibility of the roster. Cuba, Niger, Pakistan and Switzerland suggested the Secretariat prepare a study analyzing its usefulness. Chair Magalhães referred the matter to the CST contact group, also facilitated by Nicholas Hanley, for further discussion throughout the week.

During consideration of the decision by the CST on Friday, 20 September, Brazil, opposed by the US, requested to include reference to the roster of independent experts as an additional source of scientific advice. After some debate, the US conceded to allow this inclusion.

Final Decision: Among other issues, this decision (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.2) recognizes the need to improve the quality of services provided to parties through implementing the Convention in line with the Strategy, and notes the need to involve the scientific community by: inviting parties to propose new candidates; urging parties to confirm current experts and nominate new experts through national focal points; and requesting the Secretariat to set up web-based facilities and validate and manage the roster of experts.

CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS MADE IN THE ORGANIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL, INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENTIFIC ADVICE IN THE CONVENTION PROCESS: On Tuesday, 17 September, the Secretariat introduced documents ICCD/COP(11)/CST/3, ICCD/COP(11)/CST/INF.1 and ICCD/COP(11)/CST/INF.2. Mariam

Akhtar-Schuster (DesertNet), AGSA Chair, presented the AGSA's recommendation for a modular approach to an integrated SPI. She explained the proposed approach could include a science-policy platform, regional science and technology hubs, and an Independent Group of Scientists (IGS).

The EU stressed the need to enhance synergies among existing science-policy platforms including the CST, the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Morocco, Switzerland, Iran, Cameroon, Argentina, Cuba and others said adopting the recommendations could undermine and duplicate work of existing UNCCD advisory bodies. Switzerland suggested merging the SPI and IGS to form a permanent working group under the CST.

Argentina noted that UNCCD Scientific Conferences are not inclusive events and, as such, an IGS drawing mostly from them would not be a representative forum for informed policy-making. While supporting the proposed regional approach, Brazil noted it would be expensive, complex and result in additional bureaucracy. Italy proposed further work to refine AGSA's recommendations. Israel called for emphasis on the "P" in SPI.

Methods to enable the UNCCD to become the leading authority on DLDD scientific research were further discussed in the CST contact group throughout the week. By the morning of Friday 20 September, the contact group had yet to reach consensus on an exact model, but delegates did reach agreement on an SPI body, the form and function of which will be reviewed at COP 13.

During consideration of the draft decision by the CST on Friday, 20 September, the Secretariat added the financial implications of this decision are estimated to be €420,000. The decision was approved by the CST and adopted by the COP.

Final Decision: In its decision (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.3), the COP establishes a SPI to ensure science-policy dialogue that will be reviewed at COP 13:

- with the mandate of analyzing, synthesizing and translating relevant scientific findings and recommendations from DLDD-related scientific conferences and scientific networks;
- comprising members of the CST Bureau, five nominated Regional Implementation Annex scientists, ten scientists elected by the CST Bureau with consideration for a balanced disciplinary and regional balance, and three observers, with one each from a CSO, international organization and a relevant UN organization; and
- co-chaired by the CST Bureau Chair and a scientist selected by the SPI members.

The COP further, *inter alia*: encourages the formation of an independent consortium of scientific networks on DLDD and regional science and technology platforms to interact with the SPI; invites parties to promote targeted scientific research on DLDD, cooperate at national, regional and international levels, and harness traditional knowledge; and invites parties to make voluntary and in-kind contributions to support the SPI.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROGRESS REPORT OF THE UNCCD FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME: On Tuesday, 17 September, the Secretariat presented the report on the progress of the fellowship programme (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/8), which was then sent to the CST contact group for further discussion throughout the week.

Final Decision: In this decision (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.1), welcoming initial pledges and commitments by potential partners of the fellowship programme, and the Partnership Agreement and Governance Manual for establishing the programme, the COP invites: broadening the partnership; linking the programme with capacity-building activities of the Secretariat; and considering collaboration with other Rio Conventions in support of the UNCCD fellowship programme.

IMPROVEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, BEST PRACTICES AND SUCCESS STORIES: Introducing the sub-item on the SKBP on Wednesday, 18 September, Chair Magalhães invited comments on document ICCD/COP(11)/CST/6 and its progress report (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/INF.4). Elysabeth David, UNCCD Secretariat, said it aims to develop an online portal that aggregates knowledge from existing repositories, and described the current pilot phase.

Many parties, including Morocco, Argentina, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Costa Rica and Yemen, raised concerns regarding: internet access at the local level; language issues; and the system's ability to capture traditional knowledge and local practices. Tunisia said the objective of the undertaking cannot be achieved without commitment at the national level, and Namibia suggested adding mobile phone functionality to increase accessibility. Turkey suggested countries carry the responsibility of local language translations. Mexico, Italy and China called for greater regional knowledge sharing. Further discussions took place on this issue in the CST contact group throughout the week.

There was no separate decision on this sub-item.

Promoting the analysis and dissemination of best practices: Chair Magalhães introduced this sub-item on Wednesday, 18 September, based on decisions 21/COP.10 and 15/COP.10, and relevant documents (ICCD/CRIC(12)/4-ICCD/COP(11)/CST/7 and Corr.1 and ICCD/COP(11)/CST/6). CRIC Vice-Chair Hussein Nasrallah (Lebanon) facilitated the discussion.

Brazil requested clarification on the CST's work to identify and recommend topics on which the CST requires advice. Japan called for the UNCCD to build partnerships with relevant decentralized organizations to facilitate knowledge transfer to the lowest level. Argentina supported calls for increased collaboration with WOCAT but voiced concerns over intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples. The US recalled that ownership and control of intellectual property remains in the hands of the countries hosting the information, not the UNCCD. Further discussions took place on this issue in the CST contact group throughout the week.

During consideration of a draft decision on this item by the CST on Friday, 20 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications are estimated to be €477,000.

Final Decision: In its decision (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.4), the COP requests the Secretariat to: continue active partnership-building activities with organizations and networks that maintain content repositories on knowledge and expertise relevant to the UNCCD; improve the website through regular updates, enhanced navigation and search functionalities, and access to languages other than English; and to continue developing the SKBP through promoting knowledge brokering and information exchange initiatives at national, regional and international levels. The COP also invites interested organizations that maintain regional-level relevant repositories to cooperate in the pilot implementation of the SKBP, and requests the UNCCD Executive Secretary to report on progress made regarding in implementing this decision at COP 12.

ADVICE ON HOW BEST TO MEASURE PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 1, 2 AND 3 OF THE STRATEGY – RESHAPING THE OPERATION OF THE CST IN LINE WITH THE STRATEGY: On Wednesday, 18 September, Gunilla Bjorklund (Sweden), AGTE Chair and AGTE member Juan Puigdefabregas (Spain) presented the AGTE's final recommendations (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/2). They highlighted: operational delineation of affected areas; global, national and local indicators; a conceptual indicator-integration framework; monitoring and evaluation mechanisms; linking across scales; and technical and resource requirements for current and future work.

The EU suggested using global indicators in the absence of national data, the US called for further clarification of indicators, and Japan urged refining definitions and methodologies. Algeria suggested considering indicators used by the Sahara and Sahel Observatory. India opined low reporting levels stem from a lack of appropriate datasets and of understanding of affected areas. Sudan, Morocco, Cuba and Egypt said affected areas should be defined broadly, and Recommendation 1 on operational delineation of affected areas be mandatory. Argentina warned this would include categories outside the mandate of the UNCCD. The Philippines proposed defining and considering seasonal aridity, which his country suffers from. FAO indicated the importance of the AGTE's discussion of multilevel indicators and requested more work be undertaken on this topic.

The joint CRIC-CST contact group met throughout the week to further discuss these issues. As negotiating time wound down on Friday afternoon, discussion focused on ways to implement the delineation of areas affected by DLDD, and revising provisionally-adopted impact indicators. On the delineation of areas, delegates expressed differing views, and contact group Chair Hanley referred the text to the CST.

The draft decision was considered by the CST on Friday, 20 September, and the Secretariat noted the financial implications of this decision are estimated to be €184,000.

Final Decision: In this decision (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.6), the COP decides to maintain the strategic objectives of the Strategy while requesting revision of impact indicators by linking them to operational objectives and ensuring they are easily measurable. The COP also decides to, *inter alia*: establish a monitoring and evaluation approach consisting of indicators,

a conceptual framework, and indicator-sourcing mechanisms at the national level; use the term "progress indicator" rather than "impact indicator;" refine indicators through peer review; and require reporting for indicators that are part of standardized global datasets. On national indicators, the COP invites affected parties to develop and implement a new indicator framework to track progress and report at multiple scales, and encourages parties to establish targets using progress indicators while taking into account regional and national specificities.

RESHAPING THE OPERATION OF THE CST IN LINE WITH THE STRATEGY: Review of the outcomes of the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference: The CST considered this sub-item on Thursday, 19 September. Jonathan Davis, Chair of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), outlined the preliminary outcomes of the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference, held in April 2013, in Bonn, Germany, contained in document ICCD/COP(11)/CST/4. He also presented recommendations contained in documents ICCD/COP(11)/CST/INF.3 and Corr.1. Yemen called for a unified definition of DLDD, while the EU highlighted language barriers. Morocco lamented the low survey response rate. South Africa, with Italy, called for efforts to publish research presented at the conferences. Tunisia remarked that the first two conferences had not provided compelling evidence to decision makers and funding entities about the role of scientific research on DLDD and, with Mali, suggested this be the focus of the 3rd Scientific Conference. SAC Chair Davis suggested the SPI could help improve the conversation between science and policy makers. The topic was considered further in the CST contact group.

There was no separate decision on this sub-item.

Assessment of the organization of the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference: Chair Magalhães opened the discussion on the sub-item on independent assessment of the organization of the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference on Thursday, 19 September (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/INF.5 and ICCD/COP(11)/CST/4). Rachel Schutte, Consultant, provided an overview of the assessment methodology, highlighting, *inter alia*, gender and regional balance, the need for early confirmation of the Conference date and venue, and "decoupling" conferences from the CST process to free up resources for implementation.

Commenting on the report, Japan said the UNCCD must undertake more and better communication of conference results to improve voluntary funding contributions. Ethiopia and Uganda indicated side events should be better organized. The topic was considered further in the CST contact group.

During consideration of this draft decision by the CST on Friday 20 September, the Secretariat said the financial implications of this decision are estimated to be €782,600.

Final Decision: In this decision (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.7), the COP calls upon the Global Risk Forum Davos to share information on mobilization of partnerships with other organizations and institutions, and lessons learned in preparing the 2nd Scientific Conference. The COP also, *inter alia*: invites scientists to publish their research findings; requests

the Secretariat to facilitate publication of fact sheets, policy briefs, and targeted outcomes; and make all conference outputs available through the UNCCD website.

Organization of Future UNCCD Scientific Conferences:

On Thursday, 19 September, Chair Magalhães presented the assessment of UNCCD Scientific Conferences (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/4) and recommended future conferences be held intersessionally. The topic was considered further in the CST contact group.

Final Decision: This decision (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.7), which is included in the decision on the UNCCD 2nd and 3rd Scientific Conferences, calls on the COP to, *inter alia*: hold future UNCCD Scientific Conferences intersessionally in conjunction with CST sessions; focus its agenda only on specific thematic topics selected for the UNCCD Scientific Conference and its preliminary outcome review; add an extra day to the CST intersessional to allow contributions to the CRIC review against strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3; and request the SPI to translate the conference outcomes into CST recommendations, assess the conferences in supporting UNCCD decision-making processes, and propose future conference topics.

CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT MULTI-YEAR WORKPLAN FOR THE CST (2014-2017): On Thursday, 19 September, the Secretariat introduced document ICCD/CRIC(12)/2-ICCD/COP(11)/CST/9, noting the CST is only to discuss the objective on science, technology and knowledge. Argentina noted RCUs do not have the capacity to implement activities in the workplan and, supported by the US and Brazil, questioned why the workplan lacked reference to the SKBP. Morocco suggested adding capacity building to the operational objective on advocacy, awareness raising and education. The topic was considered further in the CST contact group.

During the closing CST session, Brazil expressed concern that there were still ongoing discussions on the concept of land degradation neutrality and the Rio+20 outcomes and requested the deletion of reference to this topic in the draft decision, and parties agreed.

Final Decision: In this decision (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.5), the COP decides to include reshaping CST operation in line with the Strategy on the agenda of CST S-4, which includes preparation of the 3rd Scientific Conference, the preliminary outcomes of the 3rd Scientific Conference, and preparation for the 4th Scientific Conference on “Towards achieving land degradation neutrality in the context of sustainable development.”

In the related decision on the venue and date of the CST S-4 special session (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.8), parties decide to hold it no later than April 2015 in Bonn, Germany, or in another venue with UN conference facilities should no party make an offer to host the session and meet financial costs. The COP requests the Executive Secretary to facilitate participation by eligible science and technology correspondents.

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR CST 12: On Friday, 20 September, Chair Magalhães reported on discussions of the CST workplan contained as part of document ICCD/CRIC(12)/2-ICCD/COP(11)/CST/9 and explained the related draft decision

on the draft multi-year workplan of the Convention institutions and subsidiary bodies would be tabled in the CRIC. The Secretariat said the financial implications of this decision and possible ways of meeting them will be considered by the contact group for the programme and budget.

Final Decision: In this decision (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.9), the COP decides that CST 12 shall be held over four working days, and will discuss:

- progress on measures to enable the UNCCD to become a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to DLDD and mitigation of drought effects, especially regarding the SPI;
- progress made in measuring progress regarding strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3;
- the CST 4 report, review of the 3rd Scientific Conference and assessment of its organization;
- progress on preparation for the 4th Scientific Conference and organization of future conferences;
- progress made in improving knowledge management, including traditional knowledge, best practices and success stories, and progress made related to the roster of independent experts;
- developments related to the UNCCD fellowship programme; and
- providing a draft four-year workplan of the CST (2016-2019).

CST CLOSING SESSION: During its closing session on Friday evening, 20 September, the CST forwarded nine draft decisions to the COP for adoption (ICCD/COP(11)/CST/L.1-9). Chair Magalhães then reported on discussions of the CST workplan contained as part of document ICCD/CRIC(12)/2-ICCD/COP(11)/CST/9 and explained the related draft decision on the draft multi-year workplan of the Convention institutions and subsidiary bodies would be tabled in the CRIC.

The CST nominated and elected by acclamation the following delegates as Vice-Chairs to the Bureau of CST 12: Fouad Chehat (Algeria), Allaadeen Mohammed Al Sharjabi (Yemen), Hamid Custovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), and Sonia Gonzalez (Peru). During the closing plenary, the COP elected the Western European and Other States nominee, Uriel Safriel (Israel), as Chair for its 12th session by acclamation.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

The High-Level Segment took place on Monday and Tuesday, 23-24 September. COP President Herunga welcomed delegates and introduced Namibian Deputy Prime Minister Marco Hausiku to deliver statements by Prime Minister Hage Geingob and President Hifikepunye Pohamba. Hausiku commended outgoing UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja for his efforts to integrate DLDD and soil issues in the Rio+20 outcome and pledged Namibia’s support under the incoming leadership of Monique Barbut. UNCCD Executive Secretary Gnacadja highlighted COP 11’s unique opportunity to establish a new paradigm to achieve the vision of a LDNW. Veerle Vandeweerd, Director, Environment and Energy Group, UNDP, on behalf of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, underscored that healthy land is a prerequisite for food and water security and averting political instability.

SPECIAL STATEMENTS AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL ON BEHALF OF REGIONAL AND INTEREST GROUPS:

The representatives from regional and interest groups thanked outgoing Executive Secretary Gnacadja for his leadership of the Convention, and looked forward to working with Executive Secretary designate Barbut.

Fiji, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, called for, *inter alia*: empowering RCUs; maintaining current budget levels and improving the UNCCD's cost efficiency; and ensuring robust DLDD funding in the next GEF replenishment. Lithuania, on behalf of the EU, said science and technology should be prioritized if the UNCCD is to become a global authority on DLDD. He noted that IPBES could promote a global and integrated approach, with land degradation as a major issue, and stated that all COP decisions must contain a cost assessment.

Burkina Faso, on behalf of the African Group, called on the COP to produce efficient, operational strategies with measurable targets, and supported the GM's co-location with the Secretariat. India, on behalf of Asia-Pacific States, indicated support for a mechanism that can invigorate and streamline scientific efforts and the Changwon Initiative. Panama, on behalf of GRULAC, called for being precise when using the term land degradation. He reiterated GRULAC's concern over the selection process for the UNCCD Executive Secretary, and underscored that improved dissemination of best practices is key to moving forward on DLDD. Belarus, on behalf of the Central and Eastern European States, highlighted that the UNCCD brings together countries that deal with drylands as well as other land degradation issues, giving the Convention strength and complexity. Israel, on behalf of the Northern Mediterranean Region, said the region has accepted the invitation of Turkey to establish an RCU and looks forward to cooperation with the Secretariat in this regard.

Both ENDS, on behalf of CSOs, lamented that COP discussions and documents seldom reference specific DLDD drivers, which she said are related to unsustainable practices of large agribusiness. The National Youth Council of Namibia, on behalf of Youth, said young people aim to ensure "those who come after us will find our world in the best condition to farm, live and make a living."

ROUNDTABLE I: THE ROLE OF THE UNCCD IN ACHIEVING A LDNW IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

COP President Herunga introduced the session, which was co-chaired by Bernice Adiku Heloo, Deputy Minister for Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, Ghana, and Susheel Kumar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, India. The session was moderated by Clare Short, former Secretary of State for International Development, UK.

Keynote speaker Uriel Safriel, Blaustein Institute for Desert Research, Israel, elaborated on the meaning of LDNW, and described the vicious cycle of biophysical processes driven by land users through persistent productivity losses leading to poverty and causing social, economic and political problems. He underscored that awareness raising should start at the community level. Timo Mäkelä, European Commission, said COP 11 was a "make or break" meeting and called on the UNCCD to solve

its institutional issues and build a framework for gathering and sharing scientific knowledge. Edna Molewa, South African Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, stressed that concerted international effort is needed to implement a LDNW by 2030, and said other conventions must involve themselves in DLDD issues to facilitate real progress.

ROUNDTABLE II: OVERCOMING HURDLES OF SCALING UP AND DISSEMINATING GOOD PRACTICES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UNCCD IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS:

Neville Gertze, Namibian Ambassador to Germany, and Michel Mordasini, Assistant Director-General of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, co-chaired this session. Moderator Dennis Garrity, UNCCD Drylands Ambassador, said scaling up was "where this Convention should come alive."

Keynote speaker Chris Reij, World Resources Institute, said scaling up drylands re-greening projects entails: identifying and analyzing re-greening successes; working at the grassroots; ensuring top-down meets bottom-up; developing a good communications strategy; and developing agroforestry value chains. Yacouba Sawadogo, a farmer from Burkina Faso, described his efforts in combatting desertification and the film about his life: "The Man who Stopped the Desert." Salif Ouédraogo, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Burkina Faso, noted that hurdles to SLM include weak capacity, illiteracy, financial constraints, poor monitoring and oversight systems, lack of investment in SLM mechanisms, and land insecurity.

Igor Kachanovsky, Deputy Minister, National Resources and Environmental Protection, Belarus, emphasized integrated approaches to agricultural and industrial development. Mudiyansele Uthpala Dayananda Basnayake, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Renewable Energy, Sri Lanka, said additional research and development is critical for SLM. Ambassador Carlos Manuel Rojas Lago, Ministry of Agricultural Affairs, Cuba, noted the potential of the Latin American Initiative on Science and Technology to promote regional cooperation in applied sciences for SLM. Responding to presentations, Franklin Moore, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Africa, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), described national policy-making as "the place where bottom-up and top-down meet," and warned that, for extremely poor farmers, initial financial support may be needed to encourage investments in SLM and innovation.

ROUNDTABLE III: ECONOMICS OF DESERTIFICATION, LAND DEGRADATION AND RESTORATION:

Onno Adalbert Hückmann, Ambassador of Germany to Namibia, and Lahcene Kaid-Slimane, Ambassador of Algeria to Namibia, co-chaired this session. Hückmann introduced the international Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) initiative. Keynote speaker and Moderator Richard Thomas, ELD scientific coordinator, UN University, presented the initiative's interim findings. He said recommendations included: establishing Payments for Ecosystems Services schemes; encouraging voluntary payments for conservation; creating micro-finance schemes; establishing research, policy and

stakeholder platforms; and improving data availability. Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson, GEF, noted that land is the meeting point for environmental issues, and said the GEF wants to work together with the UNCCD to catalyze action and break down silos.

Maria Teresa Kralikas, Minister for General Direction of Environmental Matters, Ministry of Foreign Relations, Argentina, said development of value-added products for smallholders has been policy-driven in the case of Argentina. Jean-Pierre Thebault, Ambassador for the Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France, urged breaking silos, including among conventions, mind-sets, and governmental departments. Respondent Michael Mack, World Business Council on Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and CEO, Syngenta, noted that subsistence farmers are “small businesses-in-waiting.” Welcoming the ELD report, he said its focus on fact-based analysis would contribute to more cost-benefit assessments of land degradation.

FINAL DISCUSSION BY MINISTERS ON THE WAY

FORWARD: COP 11 President Herunga opened the final session of the High-Level Segment. Hanifi Avci, General Director, General Directorate of Combating Desertification and Erosion, Ministry of Forests and Water Affairs, Turkey, announced Turkey’s offer to host COP 12 in 2015.

Monique Barbut, incoming UNCCD Executive Secretary, supported synergies between conventions and said she would ensure the UNCCD’s indicators work together with those found in other Rio Conventions. FAO declared FAO could be open to consider hosting the GM if this were welcomed by parties and the Secretariat.

ENDA, for CSOs, said a responsible private sector will be critical. Zenab for Women in Development, Sudan, for CSOs, said parties should focus on drivers of land degradation, including the mining industry, deforestation and large scale agriculture. She urged the UNCCD to only engage with businesses committed to sustainable livelihoods and healthy ecosystems.

SLM Business Forum Chair David Nuyoma outlined the Forum’s Declaration, which included commitments to: participate in the implementation of the Convention and Strategy; monitor, measure and communicate impacts of business activities on land; and incorporate SLM into business operations.

Concluding the session, COP President Herunga summarized discussions from the roundtables and highlighted that the Convention should, *inter alia*, emphasize recognition of land and soil as foundation of the food-security and poverty-reduction nexus and thus provide impetus for countries to mobilize resources and scale up SLM, and shift from a reactive to a more proactive stance to involve prevention and planning at national level.

UNCCD Executive Secretary Gnacadja assured delegates that the outcome of the High-Level Segment would be presented to the COP for its consideration, and noted that this COP will be remembered for welcoming a farmer to give a keynote address at a high-level event.

Complete *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* coverage of these discussions is available at <http://www.iisd.ca/vol04/enb04250e.html> and <http://www.iisd.ca/vol04/enb04251e.html>.

INCLUSION OF ACTIVITIES OF CSOS WITHIN THE OFFICIAL PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COP: OPEN DIALOGUE SESSIONS

Two half-day open dialogue sessions with CSOs took place on Friday, 20 September, and Wednesday, 25 September.

1ST DIALOGUE SESSION – RESOURCE

MOBILIZATION: Discussing national experiences, Marioldy Sanchez Santivañez, Asociación para la Investigación y el Desarrollo Integral (AIDER), Peru, lamented that the dryland forests of Peru fall outside of remit of the UNFCCC because of a definitional issue, and therefore are not eligible for REDD+ (Reduced emissions from avoided deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries) projects. Fatima Ahmed, Zenab for Women in Development, Sudan, said empowering rural women helps alleviate poverty, improve food security and enhance SLM. She lamented difficulties NGOs face in accessing GEF funding. Eileen de Ravin, UNDP’s Equator Initiative, said mobilizing resources is not only about funding, and recommended the Initiative’s publication, “The Power of Local Action,” as a useful resource on scaling up successful local practices. China, while recognizing the significance of CSOs, underscored the importance of the private sector in DLDD. Stressing the importance of CSO involvement in grassroots activities, UNEP reported that CSOs play a lead role in 30% of UNEP/GEF projects on land degradation, biodiversity and climate change, and an active role in 67% of projects.

Discussing resource mobilization at the international level, Lee Sung-Gil, Future Forest, said cooperation among Korean and Chinese NGOs and local governments helped create the “Korea-China Friendship Great Green Wall,” a 16 km long and 0.6 km wide windbreak of trees to combat dust storms in the Kubuqi desert. Christian Houdus, DRYNET, highlighted: reductions of UNCCD funding of civil society over time; the need for a cautious approach to private sector investment under the UNCCD; and ambiguity over the concept of ZNLD, which could be understood as a compensation mechanism offering a “license” to degrade. He said bringing CSOs into discussions on donor funding guidelines could enable more organizations to qualify for financing. Jean-Marc Sinnassamy, GEF, described resources available to CSOs via the GEF. Turkey called on delegates to increase voluntary contributions and noted other avenues to help CSOs, such as workshops and training. He also said parties should invite CSOs to be members of national coordination units.

2ND DIALOGUE SESSION – CAPACITY BUILDING:

Kenneth Ganeb and Vivian Kinyaga, Desert Research Foundation of Namibia, and Maria Tharacky Namupala, the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa, presented on capacity-building initiatives in the subregion. Nahid Naghizadeh, CENESTA, Iran, highlighted capacity-building activities to align Iran’s NAP with the Strategy, including capacity-building workshops for community level stakeholders.

Fatima Kaba, ENDA-TM, Senegal, described efforts to develop a platform through which CSOs could develop a common vision and build capacity to participate in political events, such as the COP. Wang Wenbiao, CEO Elion, China, described his company's desertification-control activities in the Kubuqi Desert, and encouraged CSOs to combine public and market interests in their work. Nathalie van Haren, Both ENDS, the Netherlands, presented on the re-cultivation of saffron on degraded cotton fields in Turkey and an organic rooibos tea cooperative in South Africa, both resulting in improved ecological, social and economic benefits. She offered recommendations for delegates on ways to facilitate CSO work and increase their capacities.

During discussions, Settar Aslan, President, Trade Union of Turkish Agriculture and Forestry Laborers, said global environmental problems are the result of "aggressive production methods," and stressed without global action, "we are doomed to fail." The Philippines requested the Secretariat insert CSO funding into the COP work programme. Burkina Faso said that the private sector, government and civil society must work in solidarity. Kenya said his country's NAP has been mostly driven by CSOs, while India stated CSOs implement 25% of India's integrated watershed management programme activities. The US lauded presenters for offering suggestions on how delegates can assist their work. Senegal and Peru said Senegalese CSOs are involved at the highest levels and called for funding and capacity support. Patrice Burger, CARI, France, said good practices are often context-specific and may be difficult to replicate globally. Closing the session, COP Vice-President Tichelmann noted such dialogues offer opportunities for delegations to build their capacity as much as for CSOs to build theirs.

Complete *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* coverage of these discussions is available at <http://www.iisd.ca/vol04/enb04249e.html> and <http://www.iisd.ca/vol04/enb04252e.html>.

CLOSING PLENARY

At 8:34 pm on Friday, 27 September, COP 11 President Herunga convened the closing plenary and invited the COP to finalize remaining draft decisions. The COP elected Uriel Safriel (Israel) as Chair of CST 12, as well as any intersessional meetings, and Philbert Brown (Jamaica) as CRIC 13 and 14 Chair. The COP adopted, without discussion, a draft decision on the credentials of delegations (ICCD/COP(11)/L.17), and took note of the related report (ICCD/COP(11)/22).

CRIC: CRIC Chair Rowen reviewed the report of the CRIC and its recommendations, after which the COP adopted, without discussion, the draft decisions that it had not yet considered.

On the multi-year workplans of Convention institutions and subsidiary bodies (ICCD/CRIC(12)/L.12), Brazil stated that, because references to DLDD in all decisions are to be implemented in accordance with the Convention, and setting targets and making recommendations against its own mandate would be impossible, the need to remove the acronym "DLDD" from the documents is not necessary.

COW: COW Chair Norbu reported on the progress of the work of the COW, and delegates proceeded to adopt, without discussion, the decisions approved by the COW. Delegates also agreed to include: the Chair's summary report of the interactive

dialogue sessions as an annex to the report of the COP decision (ICCD/COP(11)/L.5); the Namib Declaration as an annex to the report of the COP (ICCD/COP(11)/L.20); the programme of work for COP 12 (ICCD/COP(11)/L.9), which concluded COP 11's consideration of the recommendations for its work; and the declaration of CSOs as an annex to the COP 11 report (ICCD/COP(11)/L.7).

Following the distribution of the draft decision on programme and budget for the biennium 2014-2015 (ICCD/COP(11)/L.21), the COW was called to order for a final time at 1:08 am, Saturday, 28 September. Delegates agreed to the decision without comment. Chair Norbu then introduced the draft decision on the follow-up to the outcomes of Rio+20 (ICCD/COP(11)/L.19) which was agreed. He closed the COW at 1:12 am.

COP: The COP adopted the draft decision on the date and venue of COP 12 (ICCD/COP(11)/L.6), which indicates COP 12 will be held in Turkey in 2015.

Responding to the adoption of the draft decision on the inclusion of activities of NGOs within the official programme of work of the COP open dialogue sessions (ICCD/COP(11)/L.7), Viviane Kinyaga, Desert Research Foundation of Namibia, on behalf of CSOs, urged a bottom-up approach to improving living conditions. She opposed agribusiness, genetic crop manipulation, and mining activities in national parks. She said the roster of independent experts should include CSO members, and experts should be included on the roster without having to go through national focal points. The COP adopted the draft decision on the interactive dialogue sessions (ICCD/COP(11)/L.5) without discussion, and the report on the Declaration by the SLM Business Forum (ICCD/COP(11)/L.8). The report on the tenth Round Table of Members of Parliament (ICCD/COP(11)/L.13) was also adopted, with Benjamin Amadhila, on behalf of Parliamentarians, reading the Declaration on "The role of Members of Parliament in the efforts to combat DLDD: Parliamentary contributions to achieving a LDNW in the context of the post-2015 Development Agenda."

After suspending the meeting to wait for the completion of the programme and budget negotiations, the COP President reopened the closing plenary at 1:18 am and invited the COW Chair to present a summary of remaining decisions for COP adoption. Following adoption of decisions on the programme and budget (ICCD/COP(11)/L.21) and follow-up to the outcomes of Rio+20 (ICCD/COP(11)/L.19), Armenia, on behalf of Central and Eastern European States, stated that the decision does not take into account the interests of Annex V countries, which have land degradation outside arid zones. The Republic of Korea welcomed the decision on Rio+20 outcomes, including the establishment of an intergovernmental working group to define LDNW, among other tasks, but expressed disappointment that the decision did not include a target-setting approach, which he said could strengthen the Convention.

Delegates adopted decisions on Procedures and institutional mechanisms for the resolution of questions on implementation (ICCD/COP(11)/L.15), annexes containing arbitration and conciliation procedures (ICCD/COP(11)/L.16) and the Namib Declaration on a Stronger UNCCD for a Land Degradation

Neutral World (ICCD/COP(11)/L.20) without comment. The Namib Declaration, which the decision takes note of and decides to annex to the COP 11 report, is a statement from the Government of Namibia highlighting that since COP 11 is the first COP since Rio+20, parties had agreed “new and refreshed momentum is required to address our planet’s environmental and social challenges” regarding DLDD. Based on deliberations at COP 11, the Namibian Government made declarations on six thematic areas:

- Strengthen UNCCD leadership for the future we want: Namibia notes a “responsibility” to indicate there was differing momentum in willingness to address the Rio+20 outcomes in the UNCCD context, and feels “much stronger and dedicated leadership is required to secure the future we want.”
- Address drought mitigation as a matter of priority: As droughts can severely impact and reverse achievements on SLM, an increased emphasis on drought mitigation must be given.
- Advance the SPI: The Declaration advocates that the SPI established at COP 11 will enhance policy directives under the Convention.
- Focus on local communities: Namibia urges all parties and relevant institutions to direct resources and efforts into more meaningful and dedicated actions to ensure sustainable livelihoods and food security.
- Engage with the private sector: Recognizing the role of the private sector towards innovative strategies and relevant technologies for establishing the business case for reversing land degradation and enhancing land restoration, partnerships must be fostered.
- Empower women in SLM: Women are critical pillars in achieving the Convention’s strategic objectives, and Namibia will advance the Windhoek Initiative on Women’s Empowerment during its COP Presidency.

Delegates then adopted the report of COP 11 (ICCD/COP(11)/L.11). The Republic of Korea introduced the resolution on the expression of gratitude to the Government and people of the Republic of Namibia (ICCD/COP(11)/L.10), which delegates adopted with a round of applause.

CLOSING STATEMENTS: UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja highlighted the successes of COP 11, including: the SPI and the proposal to use a global data set for monitoring; the convening of the second SLM Business Forum with 75 private sector representatives in attendance; agreement on the housing for the GM; and an outcome to follow-up on the Rio+20 outcome on LDNW. He said the UNCCD objectives will remain close to his heart and said he is confident that his successor will “keep our common goal moving forward.”

In their closing statements, speakers thanked Luc Gnacadja for his contributions to the Convention and looked forward to working with incoming Executive Secretary Monique Barbut.

Armenia, on behalf of affected countries in Central and Eastern Europe, said the course the Convention is taking is of concern for his region, noting not all affected countries

are in arid areas. He said the current direction will not let the Convention achieve its goal to be a global authority.

India, for the Asia-Pacific Group, emphasized his region’s priority for strengthening the regional coordination mechanisms. He said global environmental problems are dynamic, and we may need to look beyond the Convention text to recognize land degradation globally.

Burkina Faso, on behalf of the African Group, said the spirit of flexibility shown by parties should be commended and encouraged in the future. He reiterated his region’s request to the Secretariat and financing partners to support affected parties with NAP alignment and drawing up of implementation reports.

The EU said COP 11 saw the adoption of many difficult but important decisions that will bear on the future of the Convention and fulfillment of the Strategy. He said the decision to move the GM to Bonn with a liaison office in Rome should not be underestimated in terms of its potential to improve the effectiveness of the Convention.

Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of GRULAC, reaffirmed his region’s support for incoming Executive Secretary Monique Barbut despite concerns over the selection process. He declared a new era in the work of the Convention had begun with the COP 11 decisions, and reiterated calls for increased support for regional annexes.

Fiji, for the Group of 77 and China, indicated his hopes that outstanding housekeeping issues can be resolved quickly to ensure implementation deficits on SLM and DLDD are addressed and monitored, but he noted many parties will require support in this regard.

Jamaica thanked delegates for electing him as the new CRIC Chair, and emphasized the full support of parties is needed to ensure progress towards the CRIC’s and Convention’s mandates.

President Herunga stated that COP 11 represented an important opportunity to capitalize on the momentum from Rio+20 regarding DLDD issues, and said a path for determining the role of the UNCCD in achieving “the world we want” had been laid. He applauded parties for moving forward on the SPI and GM, and highlighted the inclusive approach to collaboration with CSOs, the private sector and other groups during COP 11. He thanked parties for their hard work and adjourned the meeting at 2:34 am.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF COP 11

THE UNCCD IN “THE LAND OF THE BRAVE”

I would like to remind you that you have come to what we Namibians like to call “The Land of The Brave”, and I challenge each one of you to take brave and bold steps over the next two weeks towards achieving sustainable land use. Uahekua Herunga, COP 11 President and Namibian Minister of Environment and Tourism

Set against the Namibian landscape, which in remote places features large chasms that can make sure footing a matter of survival, the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification presented parties

with the opportunity to move the Convention onto stronger footing in a number of issue areas. But did COP 11 take the bold steps, as called for by its host, and live up to his challenge?

One area where the UNCCD seeks to take these bold steps is in bridging bottom-up and top-down processes in the pursuit of sustainable land management (SLM). Along these lines, the World Resources Institute's Chris Reij captured the attention of many in his keynote presentation during the High-Level Segment as he described the success of farmers in the drylands. Reij identified five necessary steps for success in SLM: identify and analyze re-greening successes; work at the grassroots; ensure top-down meets bottom-up; develop a good communications strategy; and develop agroforestry value chains. Can these steps for success also apply to the UNCCD at the international level?

This brief analysis explores the COP 11 process and outcomes within the context of Reij's presentation to see if UNCCD delegates were able to take the necessary "brave and bold" steps for success.

IDENTIFY AND ANALYZE RE-GREENING SUCCESSES

In "The Land of The Brave," building a bridge across a seemingly insurmountable chasm requires a strong structure built on a solid foundation. In the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), a similar requirement became particularly apparent during discussions on the science-policy interface and sharing of best practices. In this case, delegates were not only addressing the question of how to bridge the chasm between those who research desertification and land degradation and those who need the results translated into policy.

Many participants highlighted that one accomplishment of the past six years, under Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja's tenure, has been the focus on generating scientific advice for the UNCCD. The UNCCD's 10-year Strategy called for the convening of scientific conferences as well as for the CST to provide advice to the COP on impact indicators. At COP 11, delegates turned to considering proposals for establishing a science-policy interface (SPI).

Many participants thought that the decision to establish an SPI provides the UNCCD the best opportunity yet to help it identify and analyze desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) processes and successes, and to translate this knowledge into appropriate policy recommendations. Some participants were particularly pleased because, as they pointed out, the UNCCD occupies an important place in bringing a holistic approach to SLM policy, in the midst of an expanding number of land-and soil-related partnerships and initiatives. Some held out hope that, with a few ingenious strokes, the SPI could turn the fortunes of the Convention, through building a new foundation on solid science, using existing scientific research, determining gaps in current findings, and combining the wealth of knowledge present in the many success stories that national delegations and CSOs report on during COP sessions.

In Windhoek, discussions turned in many cases to focus on "what works" in relation to the Convention's effort to identify the global extent of land degradation (impact indicators) and the level of activity to address it (performance indicators). Delegates agreed that data should "make sense" and be high quality: "We

don't want the UNCCD to look bad due to poor reporting or because we are unable to report on the data requested in our reporting framework," summarized one participant. Various speakers emphasized the need for flexibility, making use of existing databases, and lack of capacity in some countries, underscoring the focus on what works given different national circumstances or "[what is] as appropriate"—a phrase that became the compromise trademark attached to many decisions of COP 11.

WORK AT THE GRASSROOTS

Ever since the beginning, the UNCCD has been referred to as a "bottom-up" Convention, with input from non-governmental organizations, civil society and land users particularly recognized as important input. Chris Reij's presentation highlighted this point, especially when he related the experience of Yacouba Sawadogo, a farmer from Burkina Faso whose experience has been documented in the film "The Man Who Stopped the Desert." Yacouba also addressed the High-Level Segment, which participants pointed to as evidence in and of itself of the Convention's ability to bring bottom-up grassroots efforts together with the top-down to explore the requirements for implementing the UNCCD.

Open dialogue sessions with CSOs have been fixtures of the UNCCD COP since its first session, and a number of speakers at the COP 11 open dialogue sessions highlighted their continuing value of bringing in grassroots perspectives to COP decision making. At the conclusion of the dialogues, COP 11 Vice-President Tichelmann who was chairing the discussion noted its value as a capacity-building opportunity for delegates, and another delegate lauded presenters for explaining the relationships between CSOs and local people, and offering suggestions on how delegates can assist in this work. The growing number of side events and the activities at the Rio Conventions Pavilion also brought discussions about grassroots-level efforts within the COP 11 security perimeter.

The difficulty remains in translating and transmitting these lessons to busy delegates under time pressure to negotiate COP decisions. Participants highlighted that this perennial challenge for multilateral environmental agreements is all the more acute for a convention that seeks to develop international collaborative approaches for an issue that manifests itself locally. The UNCCD's ability to ensure that "top-down meets bottom-up" is therefore a critical step in this model, if delegates are to heed the caution from one COP 11 CSO that "anything for us without us is against us."

ENSURE TOP-DOWN MEETS BOTTOM-UP

In the apt words of one COP 11 delegate, "the national level is where top-down meets bottom-up." Discussions in the CRIC on NAP alignment and difficulties in national reporting took on increased importance in this light. Regional-level activities were also identified as bridges between the top and bottom, noting activities such as the Great Green Wall for the Sahel and the Sahara, in particular, as an example that has fostered learning and the exchange of best practices. Delegates also noted the important role of the global level in facilitating national level

action and regional projects, including the Global Mechanism's efforts to support affected countries in assessing their financial needs for capacity building and integrating them into an integrated investment framework.

COP 11 participants also pointed to one of the UNCCD's newest efforts as a key mechanism for building a bridge to connect actors at all levels: the Science Knowledge Brokering Portal (SKBP). Some said that they thought the plenary discussion on the SKBP elicited more universal interest and support than any other UNCCD initiative. Many delegates expressed their support for the prospect of developing "our own portal," which would build on existing content repositories to facilitate UNCCD stakeholders' access to knowledge concerning DLDD. Likewise, the decision on best practices aims to provide an open, centralized best practice repository that would make available a wealth of knowledge around the world.

DEVELOP A GOOD COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

One of the biggest challenges in "The Land of the Brave" is communication across vast expanses with virtually no physical link. Overcoming this challenge in an international organization would not only ensure survival, but can provide a vital impetus for growth. As many speakers and presenters of case studies have alluded to over the past eleven COPs, a strength of the UNCCD lies in the myriad of practices across countries and on all continents, where local communities have devised strategies to cope with drought and desertification. Inspiring examples that are now showcased through the UNCCD's Land for Life Awards and stories told by the Drylands Champions, among others, hold the promise of a wealth of building bricks to erect a lasting structure.

The challenge is communicating these practices across the expanse of an entire globe, where a quarter of the world's land is degraded and over a billion people are struggling either with drought or the threat of desertification. If the Convention can manage to "get the message across" through its communications strategy and other efforts to cultivate mechanisms to identify, analyze and transmit the best practices across the "divide" of geographical limitations, it will similarly position itself as a leading convention on communicating successful stories—in itself a priceless service.

DEVELOP VALUE CHAINS

Just as a value chain is a chain of activities that a company performs in order to deliver a product or service, the UNCCD is involved in a chain of activities to build linkages with other intergovernmental processes and the private sector.

In *The Future We Want*, the outcome from Rio+20, the international community recognized "the need for urgent action to reverse land degradation. In view of this we will strive to achieve a land degradation neutral world in the context of sustainable development." Rio+20 also called for the development of a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs), which are currently under discussion at UN Headquarters in New York within the context of the UN's post-2015 development agenda. Given the success of the 10 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in mobilizing international action around

shared objectives, the field of proposed SDGs is very crowded. While many delegates supported an SDG calling for a "land degradation neutral world" (LDNW), COP 11 delegates were informed that up to 200 proposals have already been presented for the next set of approximately 10 goals. Each goal will comprise a number of targets, and delegates were encouraged to develop proposals for land degradation-related options that could be incorporated into larger targets on food security and water, for example.

The chasm between parties proved to be very wide on this agenda item, and negotiations on the details by which the COP could advance the LDNW goal were among the most difficult in Windhoek. The resulting compromise reflects the diverging views among negotiators, which stretched along a spectrum from "let's seize the momentum," to "let's not preempt outcomes of the post-2015 development agenda discussions," and "let's not incorporate undefined concepts like green economy or LDNW in a legally-binding treaty body's decisions." For some countries, incorporating a decision from the non-legally binding Rio+20 process into a legal treaty instrument proved difficult, as did the implications of a target for the "world" in a Convention that indicates its scope extends only to dry sub-humid, semi-arid and arid lands.

During the final hours of COP 11, parties agreed to establish an intergovernmental working group to establish a science-based definition of land degradation neutrality in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas; develop options that parties might consider "should they strive to" achieve land degradation neutrality; and advise the Convention on the implications for its Strategy, programmes and resource requirements. Several speakers at the closing plenary expressed disappointment that COP 11 delegates had not been "braver" in this decision, but they nonetheless recognized the possibilities the decision offered.

Intergovernmental targets, while important in building political momentum and public awareness, will ultimately have to find linkages in consumption and production patterns, including supply chains, within the "real world." This reality was brought home to delegates by the SLM Business Forum. Participants realized that a new player had joined them in the COP halls—the private sector, including agribusiness—which led to an unprecedented demonstration by NGOs and demands for transparency in partnerships between the private sector and the Secretariat.

What some said was an inevitable, but still unanticipated at COP 11, development presents delegates with an opportunity and a dilemma. The opportunity comes in the chance to sensitize a critical group of actors to the tenets of the Convention. The dilemma remains that the ultimate audience for the Convention—the people in the drylands—may be at a disadvantage in dealing with this actor while at the same time international efforts to assist them would benefit from resources that private-public partnerships could bring. COP 11 and subsequent COPs may well have a new challenge on their hands: redefining the rules of the game to ensure that the most vulnerable are protected in the search for innovative new sources of financing and science and technology solutions to "save" the drylands. In this regard,

many participants indicated they would be closely watching the implementation of the COP 11 decision requesting the Secretariat and the GM to develop, before COP 12, a business engagement strategy that outlines the objectives, modalities and conditions of UNCCD partnerships with business and private entities.

ON THE PATH TO A BRAVE NEW WORLD?

While the COP did not take the “brave and bold steps” that some delegations would have preferred, one noted that delegates did assign themselves and the Secretariat a number of tasks that could realistically be achieved by COP 12. Many highlighted that successful projects on the ground encourage further success, and the same principles could work at the global level as well. If delegates come to COP 12 with a better picture of the extent of DLDD on the ground-based on parties’ collective monitoring and reporting, a portal that can help actors at all levels quickly access relevant information, and a post-2015 development agenda that includes efforts to address land degradation, the decisions taken in “The Land of the Brave” could catalyze further success for the Convention.

But the steps outlined by Reij are interactive and not linear, and the addition of the international, regional and subregional levels increases the complexity of an already multidimensional issue, making success more elusive than the simplicity of the steps might suggest. Nonetheless, with a change in leadership, close links to activities on the ground, and the possibility for successes in the coming biennium, the UNCCD may actually take “brave and bold steps” that both Reij and Herunga identified for achieving sustainable land management.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

First International Conference on Global Food Security:

The conference will explore the economic, social, biophysical, technological and institutional drivers of current and future global food security. The conference will address, *inter alia*: enabling trade and market policies for local and global food security; sustainable intensification of food production systems; novel ways of feeding nine billion people; land sparing, land sharing and trade-offs; agricultural production as feedstock for renewables; lost harvest and wasted food; nutritional security; and labeling, certifying and striving for quality and sustainability of food production. **dates:** 29 September - 2 October 2013 **location:** Noordwijk, Netherlands **contact:** Nina Cosgrove **email:** customerservice-foodsecurity13@elsevier.com **www:** <http://www.globalfoodsecurityconference.com>

Launch Workshop of the Global Soil Partnership for Central America and the Caribbean: The workshop will focus on the theme of prevention and restoration of degraded soils in the region, and will feature sessions on: the Global Soil Partnership, and regional initiatives; national presentations on status, priorities and needs for sustainable soil management; establishment of the Regional Partnership and development of a Plan of Action; and a field trip to model farms. **dates:** 30 September - 3 October 2013 **location:** Havana, Cuba **www:** <http://www.fao.org/globalsoilpartnership/gsp-events/detail/en/c/197686/>

World Food Day 2013: “Sustainable Food Systems for Food Security and Nutrition” will be the focus of World Food Day in 2013. The official World Food Day theme gives focus to World Food Day observances and helps increase understanding of problems and solutions in the drive to end hunger. **date:** 16 October 2013 **location:** worldwide **www:** <http://www.fao.org/getinvolved/worldfoodday>

2nd Global Soil Week: This event will convene under the theme “Losing Ground?” It will consider what “losing ground” implies for food, water and energy security and it will bring together practitioners, policy makers, scientists and representatives from civil society organizations to share knowledge and experience on soil- and land-related issues and to make plans to advance the global agenda for sustainable development. The event will be organized around four thematic threads: Material Cycles; Sustainable Land Management and Soil Engineering; International Soil Policy and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and Responsible Land Governance, **dates:** 27-31 October 2013 **location:** Berlin, Germany **contact:** IASS Potsdam **email:** info@iass-potsdam.de **www:** <http://globalsoilweek.org/>

19th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change: UNFCCC COP 19 and CMP 9 and the subsidiary bodies will convene in Warsaw, Poland. **dates:** 11-22 November 2013 **location:** Warsaw, Poland **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** <http://www.unfccc.int>

Global Landscapes Forum: This Forum will convene on the margins of UNFCCC COP 19 and is co-organized by the Collaborative Programme on Forests (CPF) and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Research Program on Climate Change Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS). The Forum will focus on four main themes: investing in sustainable landscapes and livelihoods; landscape policy and governance; synergies between adapting to, and mitigating climate change in landscapes; and landscapes for food security and nutrition. **dates:** 16-17 November 2013 **location:** Warsaw, Poland **contact:** Bruno Vander Velde **phone:** +62-811-8006-150 **email:** b.vandervelde@cgiar.org **www:** <http://www.landscapes.org/>

IPBES-2: The second meeting of IPBES will address, *inter alia*: the initial work programme; financial and budgetary arrangements; and rules and procedures for the operations of the Platform, including for the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel. **dates:** 9-14 December 2013 **location:** Antalya, Turkey **contact:** UNEP Secretariat **email:** secretariat@ipbes.net **www:** <http://www.ipbes.net>

Land Transformations: Between Global Challenges and Local Realities: The 2014 Global Land Project Open Science Meeting will synthesize and discuss the role of the land system as a platform for human-environment interactions, connecting local land use decisions to global impacts and responses. Conference themes include: rethinking land change transitions; the role of human decision making on land use as both a driver and response to global environmental change;

land systems changes to mitigate global environmental change impacts and adapt to increasing demands for food, fuel and ecosystem services; and ways in which alternative approaches to governance of land resources can enhance the sustainability transition. **dates:** 19-21 March 2014 **location:** Berlin, Germany **www:** <http://www.glp-osm2014.org/>

World Day to Combat Desertification 2014: The day is celebrated on 17 June, to mark the conclusion of negotiations on the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). **date:** 17 June 2014 **location:** worldwide **contact:** UNCCD Secretariat, Awareness Raising, Education and Communication Unit **phone:** +49-228 815-2800 **fax:** +49-228 815-2898 **email:** arce@unccd.int **www:** <http://www.unccd.int/en/programmes/Event-and-campaigns/Pages/default.aspx>

International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) 2020 Conference: The conference will bring together policy makers, practitioners and scholars to discuss how resilience can be strengthened for food and nutrition security. The conference will: articulate an intellectual framework for resilience; identify key emerging shocks that pose the biggest threats to food and nutrition security; assess experiences through case studies; identify key approaches and tools to build resilience to shocks; set priorities for action by different actors and in different regions; and identify knowledge and action gaps in research, policy and programming that need to be met or scaled up in order to successfully build resilience to food and nutrition insecurity. Participation in the conference is by invitation only. **dates:** 15-17 May 2014 **location:** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia **contact:** IFPRI Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-862-5600 **fax:** +1-202-467-4439 **email:** ifpri@cgiar.org **www:** <http://www.ifpri.org/event/building-resilience-food-and-nutrition-security>

CRIC 13: CRIC 13 will be held for five working days in November 2014 in Bonn, Germany, or in any other venue with UN conference facilities in the event no party makes an offer to host the session. **dates:** November 2014 (to be determined) **location:** to be determined **contact:** UNCCD Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2800 **fax:** +49-228-815-2898 **email:** secretariat@unccd.int **www:** <http://www.unccd.int/>

Fourth Special Session of the CST and UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference: CST S-4 will convene back to back with the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference and is expected to take place no later than April 2015. The meeting will be held in Bonn, Germany, unless another party offers to host the meeting. Organized by the Scientific and Traditional Knowledge for Sustainable Development (STK4SD) Consortium, the 3rd Scientific Conference will address the theme of combating DLDD for poverty reduction and sustainable development, and the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices. **dates:** to be determined **location:** to be determined **contact:** UNCCD Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2800 **fax:** +49-228-815-2898 **email:** secretariat@unccd.int **www:** <http://www.unccd.int/>

UNCCD COP 12: The next meeting of the UNCCD Conference of the Parties is tentatively scheduled for late 2015. **dates:** to be determined **location:** Turkey **contact:** UNCCD Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2800 **fax:** +49-228-815-2898 **email:** secretariat@unccd.int **www:** <http://www.unccd.int/>
For additional meetings and updates, go to <http://land-l.iisd.org/>.

GLOSSARY

AGSA	<i>Ad Hoc</i> Working Group to further discuss the options for the provision of Scientific Advice focusing on desertification/land degradation and drought issues
AGTE	<i>Ad Hoc</i> Advisory Group of Technical Experts
COP	Conference of the Parties
COW	Committee of the Whole
CRIC	Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention
CSOs	Civil society organizations
CST	Committee on Science and Technology
DLDD	Desertification, land degradation and drought
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GM	Global Mechanism
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IWG	Intersessional Working Group for the Mid-term Evaluation of the Strategy
LDNW	Land degradation neutral world
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAP	National Action Programme
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
PRAIS	Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation Systems
RCM	Regional Coordination Mechanism
RCU	Regional Coordination Unit
Rio+20	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLM	Sustainable land management
SKBP	Scientific Knowledge Brokering Portal
SPI	Science-Policy Interface
Strategy	Ten-year Strategic Plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008-2018)
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
WOCAT	World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies
ZNLD	Zero net land degradation