

SUMMARY OF THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE NINTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION: 16-25 FEBRUARY 2011

The second special session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST S-2) and the ninth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 9) of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) convened in Bonn, Germany, from 16-25 February 2011. Approximately 550 government, intergovernmental and civil society organization representatives gathered at the World Conference Center Bonn to discuss the agenda items before the two UNCCD subsidiary bodies.

Key agenda items in both Committees were reviews of intersessional work to follow-up on decisions taken at the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 9), in October 2009, related to impact and performance indicators. The CST S-2 session, from 16-18 February, considered the status of work on methodologies and baselines for the effective use of the subset of impact indicators on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the 10-year Strategic Plan and Framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (the Strategy), along with: an assessment of the organization of the 1st Scientific Conference; preparations for the 2nd Scientific Conference; Science and Technology Correspondents (STCs); and progress made on the implementation of the knowledge-management system. CRIC 9, which convened from 21-25 February, considered: preliminary analyses of information contained in the reports of parties, UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations, and civil society organizations (CSOs) on implementation of the Convention against performance indicators; best practices in the implementation of the Convention; and improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and format of reports to be submitted to the COP. Delegates also engaged in an open dialogue with CSO representatives and an interactive thematic discussion on the outcome of the reporting process. Delegates were largely complimentary of the assessment and outcomes of progress

related to impact and performance indicators. The documents prepared by the Secretariat presenting preliminary analyses of the information contained in national reports, as uploaded into the Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS) portal, were well received, although delegates highlighted many areas for improvement of the reporting system and dissemination of the results. Participants also looked forward to the development of a knowledge-management system, the compilation of the best practices identified through the PRAIS reports, and the further refinement of the impact indicators, among others. On all of its agenda items, CST S-2 and CRIC 9 adopted reports summarizing delegates' ideas, suggestions and proposals, leaving the COP with a variety of options to pursue at its next session in October 2011.

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. The UNCCD was adopted on

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of the UNCCD	1
Report of CST S-2	3
CST S-2 Discussions and Recommendations	4
Closing Plenary	9
Report of CRIC 9	9
CRIC 9 Deliberations, Conclusions and Recommendations	11
CSO Open Dialogue on SLM Technologies Including Adaptation and Resilience	18
Thematic Interactive Sessions on the Outcome of the Reporting Process	18
Closing Plenary	19
A Brief Analysis of CST S-2 and CRIC 9	19
Upcoming Meetings	21
Glossary	22

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17 June 1994, and entered into force on 26 December 1996. Currently, it has 193 parties. The UNCCD recognizes the physical, biological and socioeconomic aspects of desertification, the importance of redirecting technology transfer so that it is demand-driven, and the involvement of local communities in combating desertification and land degradation. 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 NGOs.

NEGOTIATION OF THE CONVENTION: In 1992, the UN General Assembly, 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 in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa (INCD). 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. A fifth annex, for Central and Eastern Europe, was adopted during COP 4 in December 2000. Pending the UNCCD's entry into force, the INCD met six times between January 1995 and August 1997 to hear progress reports on urgent action for Africa and interim measures in other regions, and to prepare for COP 1. The UNCCD entered into force on 26 December 1996.

COPs 1-9: The first COP met in Rome, Italy, from 29 September - 10 October 1997, during which delegates, *inter alia*, selected Bonn, Germany, as the location for the UNCCD's Secretariat and the International Fund for Agricultural Development as the organization to administer the Convention's Global Mechanism (GM).

COP 2, which met in Dakar, Senegal, from 30 November - 11 December 1998, invited Central and Eastern European countries to submit to COP 3 a draft regional implementation annex. Parties met for COP 3 in Recife, Brazil, from 15-26 November 1999, and approved a long-negotiated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding the GM, among other decisions. COP 3 also decided to establish an *ad hoc* working group to review and analyze the reports on national, subregional and regional action programmes and to draw conclusions and propose concrete recommendations on further steps in the implementation of the UNCCD, among other decisions.

COP 4 convened from 11-22 December 2000, in Bonn, Germany, during which delegates, *inter alia*, adopted the fifth regional Annex for Central and Eastern Europe, began the work of the *ad hoc* working group to review UNCCD implementation, initiated the consideration of modalities for the establishment of the CRIC, and adopted a decision on the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council initiative to explore the best options for GEF support of UNCCD implementation.

COP 5 met from 1-13 October 2001, in Geneva, Switzerland, during which delegates, *inter alia*, established the CRIC, and supported a proposal by the GEF to designate land degradation as another focal area for funding.

COP 6 met from 25 August - 6 September 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, from 17-28 October 2005. Among their decisions, delegates reviewed the implementation of the Convention, developed a MoU between the UNCCD and the GEF, and reviewed the recommendations in the report of the JIU assessment of the Secretariat's activities. Discussion on regional coordination units ended without the adoption of a decision, and an Intergovernmental Intersessional Working Group was established to review the JIU report and to develop a draft ten-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention.

COP 8 convened in Madrid, Spain, from 3-14 September 2007, and, *inter alia*, adopted a decision on the ten-year strategic plan (the Strategy). Delegates also requested the JIU to conduct an assessment of the GM for presentation to COP 9. COP 8 delegates did not reach agreement on the programme and budget, however, and an Extraordinary Session of the COP convened at UN Headquarters in New York on 26 November 2007, to conclude this item. The final decision amounted to a 4% euro value growth in the budget for the biennium 2008-2009, with 2.8% to be assessed from all parties and 1.2% to be provided as a voluntary contribution by the Government of Spain.

COP 9 convened in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 21 September - 2 October 2009. Delegates focused on a number of items that were 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 (RCMs); the communication strategy; and the programme and budget.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: The Committee on Science and Technology has convened parallel meetings to each COP. At CST 1's recommendation, the COP established an *ad hoc* panel to oversee the continuation of the process of surveying benchmarks and indicators, and decided that CST 2 should consider linkages between traditional and modern knowledge. CST 2 established an *ad hoc* panel to follow up its discussion on linkages between traditional and modern knowledge. CST 3 recommended that the COP appoint an *ad hoc* panel on traditional knowledge and an *ad hoc* panel 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 conference-style format, which led to the first UNCCD Scientific Conference at CST 9.

The first Special Session of the CST (CST S-1) convened in Istanbul, Turkey, concurrently with CRIC 7, from 3-14 November 2008. The two-day CST S-1 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 socioeconomic 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, sustainable land management 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.

COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: The CRIC held its first session in Rome, Italy, from 11-22 November 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 met concurrently with COP 6 in 2003 to review implementation of the UNCCD and of its institutional arrangements, and review of information on the financing of UNCCD implementation by multilateral agencies and institutions.

CRIC 3 convened from 2-11 May 2005, in Bonn, Germany, and reviewed the implementation of the Convention in Africa, considered issues relating to Convention implementation at the global level, and made recommendations for the future work of the Convention.

CRIC 4 met concurrently with COP 7 in 2005, and considered strengthening Convention implementation in Africa, improving communication and reporting procedures; mobilization of resources for implementation; and collaboration with the GEF.

CRIC 5 convened in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 12-21 March 2007, to review implementation of the Convention in affected country parties in regions other than Africa. The meeting also addressed how to improve information communication and national reporting and reviewed the 2006 International Year for Deserts and Desertification.

CRIC 6 met concurrently with COP 8 in 2007, and reviewed the roles that developed and developing country parties should play in resource mobilization, and collaboration with the GEF.

CRIC 7 convened in Istanbul, Turkey, from 3-14 November 2008, during which delegates 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 convened concurrently with COP 9 in 2009 and, *inter alia*, 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 a Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS).

REPORT OF CST S-2

Klaus Kellner (South Africa), Chair of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), opened the second special session of the CST (CST S-2) on Wednesday, 16 February 2011. He highlighted the issues to be discussed during the three-day meeting included: progress made on studies and activities requested by previous COPs; the establishment of a knowledge management system; the strengthening of national, regional and global networks of experts; the refinement of impact indicators; and ways to improve the organization of the 2nd Scientific Conference. He said the STCs would meet with their Regional Implementation Annexes prior to the CST each morning and a contact group would convene on Wednesday and Thursday evening to prepare the report of the meeting.

UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja highlighted the need to improve the measurability of the impact indicators adopted at COP 9. He stressed that for the first time, at the end of 2011 the UNCCD will have the tools to support national monitoring and vulnerability assessments on biophysical and socioeconomic trends. Noting the crucial role of STCs, he called for their greater involvement in the UNCCD process.

Jurgen Nimptsch, Mayor, City of Bonn, highlighted other related meetings taking place in 2011 in Bonn, such as an international conference on water, energy and food security in December. Stressing that cities are drivers and victims of land degradation, he called for all cities in the world to take up the challenge to combat desertification.

Chair Kellner then opened the floor for statements by Regional Implementation Annexes and groups. Hungary, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States, emphasized the importance of the discussion on how to organize scientific input into the UNCCD, and the need to explore options, including possibilities for synergies with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). He said that, when developing indicators, work that has already been done on the national and regional levels should be taken into account. Bolivia, on behalf of the Group of Latin American and the Caribbean States, emphasized the benefits of pooling the knowledge of scientists from all regions, and noted the need to support contributions from the developing world.

Following these opening statements on Wednesday morning, CST Chair Kellner called delegates’ attention to the Provisional Agenda and Annotations (ICCD/CST(S-2)/1 and Corr.1), which delegates adopted without amendments. On the organization of work, Kellner indicated that the presentation of the refinement of the set of impact indicators would take place Wednesday afternoon rather than Friday, to ensure that regional groups could discuss this topic during their meetings.

Kellner also invited nominations for the Chair of the CST Contact Group. During the afternoon, the African Group proposed Moussa Hassane (Niger), who was accepted by the CST and chaired the Contact Group’s Wednesday and Thursday evening and Friday afternoon deliberations on the conclusions and recommendations of CST S-2. This report summarizes the discussions and recommendations, following the order in which they appeared on the agenda.

CST S-2 DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The discussion of most items on the CST S-2 agenda was opened with a presentation from the UNCCD Secretariat of the relevant background documents prepared for the meeting, followed by a presentation by a UNCCD consultant of research undertaken in relation to the agenda item, and then comments by CST delegates. These presentations and comments are summarized below, followed by a summary of the recommendations in the relevant section of the CST S-2 report.

A chapeau to all of the recommendations indicates that the conclusions and recommendations listed in the CST S-2 report are “a summary compilation of ideas, suggestions and proposals offered by various delegations during CST S-2.” It indicates that the report identifies potential actions that could be undertaken at the national, subregional, regional and international levels, “after consideration and appropriate decisions by the COP, in conformity with the provisions of the Convention.”

ASSESSMENT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNCCD 1ST SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE: On Wednesday, 16 February, Elysabeth David, Secretariat, introduced the document “Assessment of the organization and the outcomes of the UNCCD 1st Scientific Conference” (ICCD/CST(S-2)/2). Lakhdar Boukerrou, Florida Atlantic University, presented the assessment of the organization of the 1st Scientific Conference. He noted that the assessment relied on interviews, surveys and a review of documentation. The recommendations for future Scientific Conferences included: a COP decision calling for a scientific conference should provide a clear and well-defined orientation to the Secretariat regarding expected outcomes; a Conference steering committee representing relevant units of the UNCCD Secretariat should be put in place; there should be a clear and well-defined organization time frame; and the Secretariat and leading consortium should strive for stronger inputs from and participation by the affected regions and for a regional balance in preparations for and during the conference. The review also recommended that the Scientific Conference should be held every two years in the year preceding the COP and be held in regions on a rotating basis. It suggested that the format of the 1st Scientific Conference was appropriate for its purpose, with some modification required for the timing of outputs, and recommended that the consortium/lead institution should: be given clear terms of reference especially in terms of expectations, including for funding and resource mobilization; be announced at the end of the preceding Scientific Conference; and have a clear management and reporting structure.

The EU said the assessment had produced sound results and emphasized, *inter alia*, the need to clarify the role of the CST Bureau in organizing future conferences and the division of tasks between the UNCCD Secretariat and lead consortium for fundraising. Germany, Nigeria, Niger and Argentina inquired about the low-level of responses to the survey and participation in the assessment process. Argentina said it disliked the format of the 1st Scientific Conference, noting that it was modeled on the COP, and underscored that those who are eligible to receive funding for participation in the Conference should be from developing countries and affected country parties, especially in Africa.

Thailand, for the Asia and Pacific Group, highlighted the need for: more time for preparations; facilitating wider participation; promoting a science culture; addressing reporting indicators; producing guidelines for capacity building; organizing the conferences on a rotating regional basis; and providing documents to parties in a reasonable time frame. Mali highlighted the lack of translation and difficult access to the documentation. Bolivia, for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, noted that co-funding mechanisms were not successful and suggested creating an alternative mechanism to the consortium. The Dominican Republic suggested using existing scientific societies and publications on soil science, and Venezuela said practical knowledge of communities should be assessed in addition to science and technology.

In response to the comments, Boukerrou said the survey and reminders had been sent to all participants of the 1st Scientific Conference and clarified that the recommendations of the assessment were based on responses to the survey, interviews and the consultants’ own evaluation of the documentation available.

On the dissemination of the 1st Scientific Conference outcomes, Chair Kellner said a special issue of the *Journal of Land Degradation and Development*, with 12 papers presented at the Conference, is available online with free access. The United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH) added that the issue comprises four papers from each of the three working groups, and said the *Journal* will also publish the proceedings of the Conference. Chair Kellner and the Secretariat said all comments have been noted and will contribute to the improvement of future Scientific Conferences.

Recommendations: In the final report (ICCD/CST(S-2/L.1), CST S-2 recommends that:

- the Secretariat put in place a conference steering committee to coordinate the organization of the conference;
- the lead institution/consortium establish an independent scientific committee composed of scientists from different regions to, *inter alia*, provide guidance and a neutral sounding board for messages to be shared with the press;
- the conference be held every two years, in years between the COP, and preferably following the CRIC to ensure participation of scientists and decision makers;
- working groups for the next scientific conference be established as soon as possible;
- the format of the conference be a plenary session followed by working groups based on the themes of the conference;
- the Secretariat seek the assistance of the lead institution/consortium to secure adequate funding for the conference and the attendance of scientists from developing and eligible countries; and
- the CST, with support from the Secretariat, call on the scientific community to consider potential themes for future conferences.

PREPARATION OF THE UNCCD 2ND SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE: On Wednesday, 16 February, Chair Kellner informed the CST that only one institution/consortium had submitted a proposal to organize the 2nd Scientific Conference, and that the Bureau had reviewed the proposal and raised some

concerns, which had been addressed in a revised proposal by that institution. However, he said the CST Bureau had not yet taken a decision to name the organizing body.

Nigeria suggested drawing lessons from other organizations on how to organize Scientific Conferences. Sudan asked what issues would be addressed at the 2nd Scientific Conference, and to what extent universities and the scientific community would participate in the conference. The EU suggested accepting the revised proposal by the institution that had made the original proposal, and said sufficient time should be made available for the preparations for the Conference. The US said its concerns had been addressed by the revised proposal, and a decision on the lead institution/consortium should be made as soon as possible.

Recommendations: The final report of CST S-2 notes the COP 9 decision that the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference be held in 2012 at a special session of the CST is to consider the theme “Economic assessment of desertification, sustainable land management and resilience of arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas.” It notes that balanced geographic representation of scientists is essential, and that regions are called upon to mobilize experts through the CST Bureau to contribute to the process on the theme of the conference. CST S-2 recommends that the Secretariat avoid the risk of duplication of effort with the ongoing economics of desertification/land degradation and drought (E-DLDD) initiative.

OUTCOMES OF THE UNCCD 1ST SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE: On Wednesday, 16 February, the Secretariat introduced this agenda item (ICCD/CST(S-2)/2), highlighting the 11 recommendations from the 1st Scientific Conference under three themes: strategies for monitoring and assessment of desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) and sustainable land management (SLM); the UNCCD as a scientific authority; and synergies between desertification, climate change and biodiversity.

The EU underlined that many elements of the recommendations have already been taken into account by the UNCCD, including SLM monitoring and assessment as part of the set of impact indicators for reporting on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the ten-year Strategy, and the E-DLDD initiative of the UNCCD Secretariat. He noted a need to clarify how the outcomes of future scientific conferences would be “operationally translated” and considered within the framework of UNCCD political processes.

Argentina, with Bolivia, for the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, said the recommendations of the Conference are not an agreed negotiated text and, with the US, noted confusion with the Secretariat’s introduction about the recommendation to establish an independent scientific body with the UNCCD becoming a global authority on scientific advice. Bolivia cautioned against repeating the error of the 1st Scientific Conference that produced only generic and non-binding recommendations at a high cost. The US, with Niger, favored holding the Scientific Conference separately from the COP, to ensure independence of the scientific advice. India stressed the importance of national experts’ networks. In this regard, Kellner highlighted the need for parties to provide updated information for the roster of experts.

Recommendations: The final report states that CST S-2 thoroughly discussed the results of the survey and the outcomes of the 1st Scientific Conference and considered the recommendations: of the regional discussions on the establishment of an independent, international, interdisciplinary scientific advisory mechanism and on science networking; on the sharing of local and scientific knowledge; and on monitoring and assessment.

MEASURES TO ENABLE THE UNCCD TO BECOME A GLOBAL AUTHORITY ON SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE PERTAINING TO DESERTIFICATION/LAND DEGRADATION AND MITIGATION OF THE EFFECTS OF DROUGHT: On Thursday morning, the Secretariat introduced measures to enable the UNCCD to become a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge on desertification, land degradation and mitigation of the effects of drought (CST(S-2)/4). Olanrewaju Smith, consultant, presented progress made following a COP 9 decision requesting the CST to assess how to organize scientific advice, highlighting, *inter alia*: a desk review of existing and available modalities for the provision of scientific advice within and outside the UNCCD and the preparation of an initial draft of a White Paper summarizing the findings of the review and suggesting possible options for strengthening the provision of scientific advice to the UNCCD. Options presented include: continuing business as usual; using established scientific networks; establishing an international network for drought, land degradation and desertification; using the IPCC or the IPBES to serve the UNCCD; and adopting a “Kyoto Protocol II option,” which would focus on integrating land issues into the climate change negotiations. Smith outlined the next steps, including preparation of a further draft of the White Paper to be opened for comments by parties and other stakeholders, and its presentation for discussion at UNCCD COP 10.

During the discussion, the EU requested information on the e-Forum that will be used to solicit comments from parties and on how parties would be able to contribute to the White Paper, and suggested exploring options to strengthen the Scientific Conferences and existing networks, and to link DLDD issues with the IPCC and IPBES. Senegal requested further information about how the Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands project (LADA) would fit into the proposed measures. Smith replied that LADA is a time-bound process, focused on a specific issue, and offers a tool for the UNCCD but not a model for a scientific mechanism.

Thailand, for the Asia and Pacific Region, suggested that criteria be established for the selection of e-Forum facilitators, and said that language differences might make it beneficial to have more than one facilitator. He also noted the need for technical support for the facilitator. Burkina Faso noted a role for subregional organizations in capacity building and provision of ideas. The US requested clarification on whether, based on the White Paper and the e-Forum input, a series of options will be presented to COP 10, rather than a single option. Mauritania noted the benefits of forming more synergies with academics. Chair Kellner asked delegates if the e-Forum approach for further input would be acceptable, and hearing no comments, said this approach would be used.

Kellner also invited delegates to discuss the COP 9 recommendation on the establishment of an independent, international, interdisciplinary advisory mechanism. UNU-INWEH said a side event on Thursday evening would present the results of an e-Forum on this subject, organized by UNU-INWEH together with DesertNet International. The US requested clarification on how this recommendation fits among those mentioned by Smith. Nigeria suggested that the e-Forum should focus on a platform to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each proposed option.

Recommendations: In the final report, CST S-2 recommends that: the Secretariat organize a global e-Forum to discuss and identify possible scenarios and assessment criteria and ensure participation in the assessment through regionally based facilitation; and the outcomes of the assessment process be presented in a document to CST 10 and be taken into account by parties in their regional discussions in preparation for CST 10.

The final report also states that CST S-2 discussed that different options be worked out for strengthening the provision of scientific advice by, *inter alia*: strengthening the organization of scientific conferences; the improvement of networking of scientific organizations at all levels, mobilized on DLDD, and on the basis of a thorough analysis of the gaps/needs in scientific matters related to DLDD; and linking to mechanisms dealing with DLDD, such as the IPCC and the IPBES in order to see how DLDD scientific issues could be included within those frameworks.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENTS: On Thursday, 17 February, the Secretariat presented progress on the development of recommendations on the role and responsibilities of the STCs (CST(S-2)/5 and Corr. 1), highlighting the roles of the STCs as to: enhance relationships with scientific communities nationally and globally; assist the national focal points (NFPs) in establishing a dialogue with scientists and technologists at national level, and assist the NFP in measuring progress in the implementation of the Convention and the reporting process. She noted the low response rate to the questionnaire sent to all NFPs to take part in the consultation on the role and responsibilities of the STCs.

The EU supported clear definition and formalization of roles and responsibilities of STCs, but suggested flexibility as they may play different roles depending on the countries. Niger said the causes of low responses to the questionnaire should be investigated and addressed. Mali lamented lack of communication means and of financial resources to conduct activities in the field. Venezuela, with Argentina, noting the good progress in the number of countries with designated STCs, asked for the questionnaire to be circulated again. Mexico suggested that the STCs organize with NFPs national events on the topics of the next scientific conference. Argentina recalled that when the questionnaire was circulated, NFPs were busy with the new Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS) reporting.

Chair Kellner urged parties to update the list of NFPs, STCs and the roster of experts. Delegates underscored, *inter alia*, the need for regularly updating the lists and making them available to scientists in the countries and that the well performing STCs and NFPs should be recognized for their good work.

Recommendations: In the final report, CST S-2 recommends that the survey on the roles and responsibilities of STCs be circulated again in order to receive more contributions from parties, and a compilation review of the re-circulated survey be presented for consideration and decision at COP 10. Further, CST S-2 invited parties to regularly update the list of STCs and roster of experts, through official channels, and emphasized that the process of communication with STCs needs to be clarified.

PROGRESS MADE ON THE KNOWLEDGE-MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, INCLUDING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, BEST PRACTICES AND SUCCESS STORIES ON DESERTIFICATION/LAND

DEGRADATION AND DROUGHT ISSUES: On Thursday, the Secretariat introduced the document (ICCD/CST(S-2)/6) on the implementation of the knowledge-management system, noting that the Secretariat had been developing the overall structure and architecture of the UNCCD knowledge-management system pursuant to decision 26/COP.9.

Patrick Breard, UNCCD Consultant, reported on the research plan related to the development of the UNCCD knowledge-management system. He outlined the research methodology, including participatory assessment and a bottom-up approach, desk review, technical review and interviews; and an online survey of potential target recipients including the scientific community, the CST and CST Bureau, policy makers, UN organizations, intergovernmental organizations, CSOs, media and the general public. He informed that the steps to be taken include: a side event on knowledge management at this meeting; an online survey and interviews; discussions at the regional meetings; definition of a taxonomy and metadata set for categorization or tagging; and identifying the resource requirements for the activity.

The EU recommended that the components and functions of the knowledge-management system and the respective responsibilities of the CST and CRIC should be clearly defined, and an over-complicated system should be avoided. The Philippines, with Mali, said the essence of a participatory approach is the balance between science-based and traditional knowledge. Switzerland, with Senegal, stressed the need for cooperation with other knowledge systems developed by the GEF, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and others. Mali said farmers should also be users of the knowledge-management system. Spain reported on his country's knowledge management initiatives under the National Action Programmes (NAPs), including an inventory and description of 130 soil conservation techniques. Niger said the challenge is to manage all the knowledge collected under the UNCCD, both scientific and traditional. Thailand, on behalf of the Asia and Pacific Region, said the knowledge-management system should help the region to implement the UNCCD through recommending best practices. Italy suggested making use of past experiences such as a knowledge clearing-house mechanism in Mediterranean countries. Mexico suggested that the UNCCD review and filter scientific publications to identify best practices.

The US highlighted the importance of increasing the ability to understand where best practices can be applied, based on sound knowledge of local soil conditions. The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) emphasized the need to take account of the specific characteristics of an area, and supported involving

the Reference Centers used for PRAIS, along with regions and subregions in the architecture of knowledge management. NGO BIOS, on behalf of NGOs, supported the Philippines and Mali, and said he agreed with the US that technology and best practices must be adapted to local conditions. Algeria noted the time that would be involved with building an operational knowledge management system, highlighted the value of the Spanish inventory and suggested imitating this example at the national level, and said a database should be on a country-by-country basis.

Botswana said he thought the discussion was supposed to be about the development, not implementation, of a knowledge-management system because such a system is not in existence, and asked how a system would be available to ordinary people who have contributed indigenous knowledge. Kazakhstan said a priority should be on the exchange of successful experiences, and a portal should allow people to find answers to their questions using the appropriate links.

Patrick Breard emphasized the need to identify a “quick win,” given that it could take a year and a half to have something big to show, making phasing an important part of the project. The Secretariat noted the need to build on existing projects and develop partnerships, and the interconnections between the knowledge management agenda item and other CST agenda items.

Chair Kellner then invited CRIC 9 Chair Chencho Norbu to present the CRIC’s expectations on a knowledge-management system. Norbu highlighted the importance of documenting and sharing best practices. On impact indicators, he expressed the hope that the CST would refine the indicators and that they would become practical and applicable at the local level.

Bolivia requested the Secretariat to consolidate the information on best practices, feed them into a database, and make them available to all the countries. The League of Arab States highlighted the importance of making information available to regional organizations. Mongolia stressed the importance of establishing the knowledge management system in subregions, and asked about how to establish such a system. Botswana asked about the link between the CST and CRIC. Mali asked whether there are any supporting measures for collecting and sharing data on best practices.

In response to the question on the knowledge management system, Norbu said the work should start from the national level, then at subregional, regional and global levels. On the link between the CRIC and CST, he said the two bodies have been working together very closely pursuant to their respective mandates under the guidance of the COP. Regarding support to collection of data, he said the Secretariat has provided training. Chair Kellner underlined the importance of Recommendations 8 and 11 of the 1st Scientific Conference, on sharing of local and scientific knowledge, tools and methods, and on a science networking mechanism.

Recommendations: In the final report, CST S-2 welcomes the survey on knowledge management needs that will be launched by the Secretariat. It recommends that the respective roles and responsibilities of the CST and CRIC need to be clearly defined in regard to the development process of the knowledge management system undertaken under the supervision of the CST and the compilation and review process on best practices

undertaken under the supervision of the CRIC. It acknowledges the work of the Secretariat towards the development of the UNCCD knowledge management system, and encourages parties, UN agencies, intergovernmental and civil society organizations and other stakeholders to participate actively in defining the content. The report highlights the need to complement existing knowledge management systems, and stresses the necessity of engaging in partnership building in the development and implementation of the system. The report also indicates that the Secretariat should take into consideration the technology and capacity limitations that end-users may have.

ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF IMPACT INDICATORS RELATED TO THE MEASUREMENT OF STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 1, 2 AND 3 OF THE STRATEGY:

Consideration of the Status of Work on Methodologies and Baselines for the Effective Use of the Subset of Impact Indicators on Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 3: On Friday, 18 February, delegates addressed agenda items on issues associated with the development and implementation of impact indicators related to the measurement of strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Strategy. The Secretariat introduced a progress report on the status of work on methodologies and baselines for the effective use of the subset of impact indicators on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 (ICCD/CST(S-2)/7). She recalled that the minimum subset of indicators adopted at COP 9 on which affected countries are requested to report in 2012 are (1) the proportion of the population in affected areas living above the poverty line and (2) land cover status. The Secretariat further informed delegates on the findings of an e-Forum public review held between October and December 2010, highlighting that ten contributions were received, expressing concerns about the definition of affected areas, and about the capacity of countries to report on the two indicators.

The EU recommended, *inter alia*: developing guidelines for reporting against the indicators; using biophysical indicators in all affected countries; and, with Argentina, clarifying the definition of affected areas. The US stressed the importance of pursuing scientific refinement of these two indicators together with the larger set of indicators. China called for more methodological work on land cover status particularly in relation to the use of the water efficiency indicator, and suggested developing a plan to increase the reporting capacity of countries.

Mali highlighted difficulties in comparability due to different data availability in countries. Argentina suggested that land use could be used to report on land cover status and that a baseline should be established. Thailand, for the Asia and Pacific countries, requested clarification on the definition of impact indicators and on who will provide technical backstopping to countries, and preparation of guidelines for reporting. Gramin Vikas Trust, India, called for a bottom-up approach to the development and application of indicators.

Noting that much of the arable land is being transformed for constructing buildings and for other purposes in his country, Bosnia suggested that loss of arable land be an indicator. Cuba highlighted the need to spread the results from the LADA project, and noted that lack of the necessary infrastructure to

apply indicators is a challenge in developing countries. Nigeria underlined the need to develop policies and measures to apply indicators.

Senegal said vegetation cover is an important indicator, but land degradation is not just an issue of losing vegetation. Venezuela underlined the need to have a full definition for sub-humid and arid areas. The Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Land (ACSAD) suggested making the area of soil erosion an indicator. Italy proposed the LADA project be more involved in the reporting of indicators. Mali highlighted the need to have teams to assess and analyze the data. Mexico suggested that countries with the capacity should help those without such capacity in the application of indicators. The Centre for Sustainable Development (CENESTA) highlighted the need to eradicate poverty in order to address desertification, and said the work on indicators should be done in collaboration between the government and civil society organizations.

Recommendations: In the final report, the CST took note of the progress made on the work on methodologies and baselines for the effective use of the subset of impact indicators on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3, as well as the preliminary findings of the scientific peer review on the refinement of the set of impact indicators. The CST also took note that two main alternatives were identified for reporting on “land cover status”: (a) those based on indicators derived from land cover/land use maps, and (b) those using biophysical indicators. CST S-2 recommends:

- biophysical indicators be used;
- a stratified approach to reporting on land cover status be provisionally adopted, taking into account the different levels of technical capacity of affected countries;
- the UNCCD Secretariat continue work on methodologies for measuring, monitoring and reporting on the “proportion of the population in affected areas living above the poverty line,” addressing the topics related to the establishment of the poverty line and to the spatial disaggregation of the data in line with the outcomes of the scientific peer review of the provisionally accepted set of UNCCD impact indicators; and
- all proposed indicators be measured in affected country parties, the operational use of the term “in affected areas” be refined through input from the scientific community and used to interpret the impact indicator measurements, and the Secretariat further work on this issue in collaboration with the scientific community in view of CST 10.

The CST further recommends:

- indicators be compiled as far as possible from sources typically accessible to, and in use by, national actors, and internationally compiled indicators could constitute the basis for default monitoring in the case of data gaps at the national level for the first reporting process;
- the Secretariat, under the guidance of the CST Bureau, produce reporting templates and guidelines for the effective use of the subset of impact indicators to be presented at COP 10;
- in preparing reporting guidelines for the parties, the Secretariat engage stakeholders on a continuous basis to clearly identify their needs;
- the Secretariat, under the guidance of the CST Bureau, with input from the scientific community, further refine the

glossary of terms and definitions for the effective use of the subset of impact indicators; and

- an overview be compiled of the number of affected countries and regions already measuring the subset of impact indicators, the related applied methodologies and the existing experiences and capacities, and the capacity needs of those countries and regions and the potential for harmonized approaches.

Progress Made on the Refinement of the Set of Impact Indicators for Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 3: On Wednesday, 16 February, Barron Orr, University of Arizona, presented a White Paper titled “Scientific review of the UNCCD provisionally accepted set of impact indicators to measure the implementation of strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3” (ICCD/CST(S-2)/INF.1), as part of the consideration of the agenda item on progress made in the refinement of the set of impact indicators related to the measurement of objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Strategy (ICCD/CST(S-2)/8). The proposals made by the scientific review include, *inter alia*, further clarifying impact indicators and their harmonization and standardization; clarifying a minimum set of indicators and ensuring mechanisms for local/national conditions; establishing a scientific framework; clarifying desired data output; national monitoring; defining “affected areas”; identifying synergies with parallel activities of the other conventions; establishing an *ad hoc* technical expert group, and institutional partners group; supporting subnational analysis; and attaching importance to testing, indicator sensibility, a readiness scheme, common definitions and evolutionary process. He invited all participants to provide input through an e-Forum at <http://eforum.unccd.int>.

The Secretariat presented the iterative process for the refinement of the set of impact indicators, noting that the scientific peer review is incorporated in the White Paper, which is open for comments until March 2011. Delegates generally welcomed the progress made in the refinement of the indicators, highlighting several issues including: the need to involve farmers and other stakeholders; the importance of the local-scale perspective; and making capacity and resources available to countries to measure the indicators.

The EU agreed on the proposed roadmap and suggested that the pilot testing be linked with existing exercises on land degradation assessment. Kyrgyzstan, with Mali, stressed the need to communicate with farmers when developing indicators. The Dominican Republic underscored assessing soil conservation practice effectiveness from the producers’ point of view. Argentina said the indicator on affected zones is difficult to measure. Nigeria highlighted the need to work with national institutions to test the applicability of indicators. India called for a flexible, step-by-step approach to the impact indicators system. Yemen suggested using different indicators in countries facing different desertification impacts. Algeria said in some countries it is difficult to collect data even on simple indicators. Iran suggested more work on socioeconomic indicators. Spain called for the participation of relevant international organizations in the pilot testing of impact indicators.

Orr responded to comments mentioning, *inter alia*, local participatory processes to relate local indicators with global and national level indicators.

On Friday, 18 February, the CST returned to this agenda item. The Secretariat introduced the discussion of a pilot tracking exercise, which he said is part of the refinement of impact indicators, as agreed at COP 9. He called attention to Figure 2 in document ICCD/CST(S-2)/8, which offers a schematic view of the iterative process for the refinement between 2010 and 2013.

Spain said it would be useful to have more information about how the pilot tracking exercise would take place. China highlighted its experience and emphasized the value in identifying trends. India inquired about the roadmap and criteria for the pilot tracking exercise, and asked how it would harmonize with the definition of poverty. Thailand said countries with ready data are also countries with the capacity to implement the tracking. Algeria said it was difficult to find a representative African country that could be used in this pilot. He said those countries that are in a position to participate without support from the UNCCD should do so by using their own funds, and indicated that Morocco and Algeria are in such a position.

The US noted that three activities have been proposed to take place on parallel tracks: continued refinement, pilot testing, and GEF support for a data management system. He said that, given the status of the effort to refine indicators, it would not be good to dedicate resources to test the indicators while they are under discussion, and stressed that, "if the indicator cannot be measured with sufficient precision to detect change with existing resources, it must be rejected." Kazakhstan suggested adding a drought indicator, so there would be indicators monitoring social, nature and climate change trends.

Barron Orr said the pilot exercise is not designed to test the indicators only but also to learn about the process and if the process is on track. Kyrgyzstan said there should be a simpler way, and the way farmers use their land should be taken into account.

The Secretariat introduced the section of the document ICCD/CST(S-2)/8 on streamlining cooperation with the GEF on impact indicators. FAO informed delegates that the LADA programme has started testing indicators and will report at COP 10 on how LADA can support UNCCD work on impact indicators.

Recommendations: The CST S-2 report notes that progress made in the refinement of the set of impact indicators through scientific peer review was welcomed, and that it was recommended that a role be built into the UNCCD process for periodic scientific peer reviews. It notes that all interested stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to the review process by participating in the global e-Forum launched by the Secretariat (<http://eforum.unccd.int>), and it notes the recommendation that the Secretariat also carry on the review process through official channels.

The report notes that some alignment between the UNCCD set of impact indicators and the GEF portfolio level indicators would be beneficial, and indicates that closer involvement of the GEF, through its Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP), was recommended in the iterative process for refinement of the UNCCD set of impact indicators. It notes that interest was expressed in the establishment of an *ad hoc* advisory group of technical experts, as well as an institutional partners group. It recommends that the Secretariat develop proposals for the establishment of these groups for consideration at COP 10.

The report summarizes the CST S-2 discussion of the use of the terms "impact indicators," "harmonization," "standardization," "minimum" and "limited" and recommends meanings. In relation to the final two terms, it recommends initiating the development of a mechanism where the minimum set of globally harmonized indicators can be systematically complemented by regionally, nationally and/or locally relevant and developed indicators.

The report notes the recommendation that the initial framework be an amended driving forces-pressure-state-impact-response (DPSIR) framework integrated with ecosystem services provisions, and that the initially selected framework be regularly re-evaluated for appropriateness. It notes the recommendation that a scheme for categorizing indicators be adopted, based on their "readiness" for operational use, and that tests be undertaken as soon as possible to assess the feasibility of the proposed refinement impact indicators in meeting the objectives of the indicator set under the hierarchy resulting from the refinement process. The report also notes the "necessity was emphasized of offering the possibility" to affected country parties to report voluntarily on impact indicators from the entire set.

INFORMATION ON REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC INITIATIVES: On Friday, 18 February, Chair Kellner opened the floor for the agenda item on information on regional scientific initiatives. Cuba outlined activities carried out since 1996 in Latin America and the Caribbean to promote exchange of experiences on science and technology in relation to desertification and drought with the integration of climate change and biodiversity issues. She informed about the third meeting organized under the regional initiative, which will take place in Cuba in July 2011.

CLOSING PLENARY

Chair Kellner called the closing plenary of CST S-2 to order at 6:06 pm on Friday, 18 February. He invited participants to further discuss the agenda item on information on regional scientific initiatives, but no comments were made from the floor.

Chair Kellner then informed delegates that, during the CST contact group meeting held Friday afternoon, all the square brackets in the draft report of CST S-2 had been removed and some changes had been made. The revised draft report was distributed, and Kellner read out all the changes. Delegates adopted the report.

In closing, Chair Kellner thanked the CST Bureau members, UN Conference Services, the UNCCD Secretariat and the interpreters for their hard work and contributions. The EU said that the EU and its Member States welcome the work on development of impact indicators and on independent science, thanked the German Government for hosting the meeting, and the CST Bureau for its leadership. Chair Kellner gavelled the meeting to a close at 7:02 pm.

REPORT OF CRIC 9

The ninth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 9) opened on Monday 21 February. CRIC 9 Chair Chenchu Norbu (Bhutan) recalled the successful rate of submission of national reports through the Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS), highlighting: the participatory approach for reporting adopted by the country parties; the systematic use of best

practices for sustainable land management (SLM); and SLM as the point where climate change and biodiversity objectives meet those of combating desertification and land degradation.

Friedrich Kitschelt, Director General, Africa and Global and Sectoral Affairs, on behalf of Dirk Niebel, German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, recalled the high price of inaction in relation to desertification and land degradation and welcomed the economic assessment of desertification initiative launched by the UNCCD. He said the work of the CRIC should not be seen as an administrative exercise, but rather as an opportunity to increase transparency and democratic governance for affected people and the public at large to see whether resources are used in the most effective way. In this regard, he stressed the need to look at all resources, both external and domestic, and at development effectiveness rather than aid effectiveness.

COP President Francisco Armando Gandia, Undersecretary of Environmental Policies Coordination, on behalf of Juan José Mussi, State Secretary for Environment and Sustainable Development, Argentina, highlighted his country's commitment to the Convention and the importance of arid and semi-arid lands for agricultural production in Argentina. He said PRAIS represents an innovation from previous reporting as it allows comparison of data. Recalling the upcoming UN General Assembly (UNGA) high-level event in September 2011 to address desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of the global sustainability, he underscored the importance of the Convention's contribution to this event and of seeking links with climate change.

UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja said PRAIS has moved the UNCCD into the realm of measurability, by providing an interface through which progress can be monitored, and ensures that it will provide feedback that will influence policies and work of institutions addressing desertification and land degradation. He acknowledged that PRAIS carries some complexity and pledged to improve the template for future reporting cycles.

Christian Mersmann, Managing Director of the Global Mechanism (GM), reported that the GM had mobilized resources and launched programmes and activities in forestry, climate change and trade, including organizing knowledge management workshops. He said the Secretariat and the GM are working together in developing a common financial strategy, which will be reported to COP 10. He highlighted the GM's work to facilitate South-South cooperation, and looked forward to a balanced end to the evaluation of the GM.

Young-hyo Ha, Deputy Minister of the Korea Forest Service, Republic of Korea, discussed efforts that his Government is undertaking to ensure a successful COP 10. He emphasized that SLM holds the key to reverse land degradation and should be guided through the green growth paradigm. He said there is a need to prove through impact assessment that desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) are linked to ecosystem services, and supported consideration for how DLDD can be integrated into policy discussions.

An additional high-level address was presented on Wednesday, 23 February, by Kossivi Ayikoe, Minister of Environment and Forests, Republic of Togo. Looking forward to the UNGA high-level event in September 2011 on desertification, he said

environmental and sustainable development objectives cannot be met without actions to combat desertification and land degradation. He reiterated Africa's commitment to PRAIS and to follow-up on results emerging from it. He welcomed efforts to support SLM under the GEF 5th replenishment (GEF-5) and called for financing and a partnership platform for Africa.

Following the opening statements on Monday, 21 February, CRIC 9 Chair Norbu invited representatives of regions and groups to offer statements. Argentina, for the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China), said emphasis should be given to mobilization and channeling of adequate and predictable financial resources as well as facilitating its direct access. He, *inter alia*: invited the Secretariat and the GM to continue their efforts to mobilize financial resources to address and improve the actions of the regional coordination units; said priority should be given to all efforts to raise awareness of the issue and welcomed the organization of the UNGA high-level event and the launching of the UN Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification in 2010; and welcomed the amendment to the GEF Instrument by the recent GEF Assembly to list the UNCCD among the conventions for which the GEF is serving as a financial mechanism. He said the COP Bureau's assessment of the GM will be an additional element to help parties make a decision at the next COP.

Algeria, for the African Group, said there is no doubt that the Convention has made progress in the past three years under the leadership of Executive Secretary Gnacadja. He said the African Group is convinced that investment strategies will be the springboard to more funding, and said the financial crisis is not a sufficient justification for lack of funds in a time when new funds are being established, including for climate change. He expressed encouragement for the GM initiatives in the framework of its South-South capacity-building activities, and welcomed progress by the GEF in the allocation of resources through its System for Transparent Allocation of Resources.

India, for the Asian Group, said SLM holds the key for development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. He said the RCMs and thematic programme networks need to be strengthened, and support should be facilitated for national scientific institutes to provide cutting edge research.

Belarus, for the Central and Eastern European countries, highlighted the need for: improvement in preparation of national reports; strengthening capacity building; and financial resources and development of simple financial procedures for enabling activities. He stressed the importance of: cooperation between the Secretariat and the GM; establishment of an RCM for the Annex 5 countries; and strengthening the role of STCs in the implementation of the Convention.

Argentina, for the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC), recognized improvements in financing the UNCCD. Noting that PRAIS is useful, he acknowledged difficulties in national reporting and expressed hope that methodologies in measurement and data collection would be improved. Hungary, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States (EU), expressed appreciation for the unprecedented exercise of reporting on performance indicators, review of financial flows and the adoption of a standardized system in line with results-based management. He noted the need to improve PRAIS and recommended increasing the reliability of

the data by, *inter alia*, adopting a simpler template and a clearer definition of performance indicators.

UNEP highlighted the benefits of the green economy concept, for which the use of scientific and local knowledge is vital. He underscored that UNCCD could play a role contributing to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio 2012). Gramin Vikas Trust, India, on behalf of CSOs, called for sound financial system to support greater participation of CSOs in the UNCCD's meetings and implementation.

CRIC 9 Chair Norbu then called delegates' attention to the Provisional Agenda (ICCD/CRIC(9)/1 and Corr. 1), which was adopted. Bashir Nwer (Libya) was elected Rapporteur for the 9th and 10th sessions of the CRIC.

This report summarizes the discussions and recommendations, following the order in which they appeared on the agenda.

CRIC 9 DELIBERATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the introductory statements and adoption of the agenda, CRIC 9 delegates proceeded to conduct plenary discussions on its agenda items. Two contact groups were established on Monday. Contact Group 1 began its consideration of the assessment of implementation and review of financial flows on Monday, chaired by Naser Moghaddasi (Iran), and concluded its work on Thursday. On Tuesday, Contact Group 2 began its work on improving the quality and format of the reports and other matters, chaired by Armando Alanis (Mexico), and completed its work on Thursday.

A chapeau to all of the recommendations indicates that the conclusions and recommendations listed in the CRIC 9 report (ICCD/CRIC(9)/L.1) are "a summary compilation of ideas, suggestions and proposals offered by various delegations during CRIC 9." It indicates that the report identifies potential actions that could be undertaken by parties and other stakeholders, "after consideration and appropriate decisions by the COP, in conformity with the provisions of the Convention."

ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AGAINST PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

On Monday, Chair Norbu introduced this agenda item and said discussions will be based on ICCD/CRIC(9)/13, ICCD/CRIC(9)/INF.6 and ICCD/CRIC(9)/INF.13. The Secretariat presented the preliminary analysis of information contained in reports from affected and developed country parties, United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations and the GEF on operational objectives 1 (ICCD/CRIC(9)/3), 2 (ICCD/CRIC(9)/4), and 3 (ICCD/CRIC(9)/5) of the Strategy. She reported that 89 affected country parties, 12 developed country parties, 11 accredited CSOs, the GEF and the GM submitted reports by the deadline of 12 November 2010. Thirteen more reports, submitted after the deadline, were not included in the preliminary analysis. She highlighted the analytical framework developed by the Secretariat to review the information submitted for the 2011-12 reporting cycle and said the information constitutes a robust baseline.

Thailand said operational objective 1 of the Strategy on advocacy, awareness-raising and education should be targeted at policy-makers and land-users. Argentina, for GRULAC, noted that the method of national reporting is too complicated

for the parties and, with Costa Rica, said a paragraph in the document ICCD/CRIC(9)/3 regarding the low percentage of the population that is informed about DLDD in the Latin American and Caribbean region, and a paragraph about DLDD not being a priority in that region should be removed.

Japan expressed concern that more than 20% of affected country parties have not yet adopted National Action Programmes (NAPs), which are a condition for Japan to consider assistance. Colombia said the PRAIS format for reporting is rigid and should be made more flexible. Panama highlighted the need for funds. Ukraine, for Central and Eastern European countries, stressed the need for a common methodology on assessment of measures taken. Côte d'Ivoire underlined the need for a uniform methodology in preparing national reports, and appealed for GEF funding for capacity building in developing countries.

Cuba lamented that time and resources were not sufficient to allow for participatory national level reporting and appropriate training. She said that attempts to do comparisons at this stage are not wise as the methodology is still being tested. Algeria stressed the pilot nature of this first reporting cycle. He stated that the timeline set for reporting was not appropriate and called for simpler methodologies. Mexico suggested considering separately DLDD activities from the activities on DLDD synergies with climate change, to avoid overestimation of this indicator. The League of Arab States called for more capacity building and knowledge transfer, and for more support from the GEF and innovative finance from the GM. Morocco highlighted the difficulty to evaluate the number of activities involving the media and the need to avoid double counting of people informed through such activities among reporting cycles. He also called for more flexibility regarding reporting on integrated financial strategies. Tunisia thanked the Secretariat for mandating regional centers to assist countries in meeting their reporting deadlines, but lamented insufficient funding received from the Secretariat. Costa Rica said the process for the fourth national reporting cycle was rushed and indicated a number of shortcomings, including difficulties with the format and unclear information regarding the role of Reference Centers, but overall he said PRAIS is a good instrument. He asked how the financing raised for the reporting process was spent. Venezuela said it needed more training for the reporting process.

The Secretariat said one-third of financing was from the fourth GEF replenishment (GEF-4) (US\$2.8 million), one-third from national budgets, and one-third from core budget allocations of the Secretariat and GM along with an EU contribution of €600,000, with an estimated cost of US\$56,000 per report. He acknowledged that limited understanding of methodologies presents a challenge, along with the complexity of templates. He said PRAIS has been extended until December 2011, and a survey will be undertaken of those who did not contribute reports to learn why. Parties were reminded that the mid-term evaluation of the Strategy will come soon after COP 10, and that lessons from the PRAIS process could be incorporated into further thinking about the Strategy.

Monday's discussion on operational objective 4 of the Strategy (capacity building) was based on the "Preliminary analysis of information contained in reports from affected and developed country parties, United Nations agencies and

intergovernmental organizations and the Global Environment Facility on operational objective 4 of The Strategy” (ICCD/CRIC(9)/6).

The EU noted significant gaps and methodological problems in the reports and urged the Secretariat to address them before formulating recommendations on directions to be taken. Israel recommended discussing at COP 10 whether national reports refer to government initiatives only or initiatives by all stakeholders. GRULAC requested correcting the regional imbalance to reflect the efforts made in the Latin America region. Iran stressed the need for capacity building in the area of alignment of NAPs, Regional Action Programmes (RAPs) and Sub-regional Action Programmes (SRAPs) with the Strategy and in integrated financing strategies (IFS). Equatorial Guinea underscored the need to look at the efficiency of capacity building to increase the value of this indicator. India said the main challenge for the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) is how to mainstream it in national development and budgetary processes, and stressed that the main bottleneck for SLM is capacity building at all levels. Algeria, for the African Group, stressed that the figures submitted from African countries in the reports are real and recorded and should not be questioned. Tanzania highlighted the need for a mechanism to be brought to the COP to look for funds for increasing capacity building at local and national levels, as identified in the NCSAs.

Jordan called on the GEF and other international bodies to increase their efforts in supporting their capacity-building needs. Viet Nam called for an improved reporting process in PRAIS 2. Zambia and Panama called for supporting country parties with capacity building. Thailand stressed the need for qualitative as well as quantitative capacities.

Conclusions and Recommendations: On Operational Objective 1: Advocacy, Awareness-raising and Education, the final report (ICCD/CRIC(9)/L.1) indicates that:

- some parties noted contributions made by local stakeholders towards awareness raising and education should be taken into account during the next reporting cycle by developing appropriate data collection methodologies;
- developed country parties in particular are invited by some parties to step up their efforts to raise awareness on DLDD and its synergies with climate change and biodiversity and on communication and education issues in order to increase the level of understanding, and consequently of support, needed to implement the UNCCD effectively, while some other parties noted that all parties should be invited to step up their efforts in this area;
- the methodology for computing the percentage of national awareness needs to be clarified; and
- the CST is requested to provide advice on how to intensify and streamline actions towards increasing the involvement of science and technology in the Convention process.

On Operational Objective 2: Policy Framework, the final report indicates that:

- some country parties underlined the need for further analysis of the reasons why alignment of NAPs with the Strategy has not received sufficient priority from affected country parties;
- with regard to the quantity of synergistic planning/programming of the three Rio Conventions, or mechanisms for joint implementation, a clear definition of initiatives and

programmes to be included in the computation of the indicator needs to be provided in order to provide more coherent information;

- affected country parties and Annexes are urged to intensify their efforts to align their NAPs, SRAPs and RAPs with the Strategy;
- affected countries parties are also urged to set aside financial resources made available by the GEF for NAP alignment as part of the enabling activities;
- eligible affected country parties urge the GEF in collaboration with the UNCCD institutions to simplify procedures to access this facility through most direct and simplified channel, with minimum transitional costs;
- some parties suggested that the COP may wish to request the Secretariat to continue liaising with the GEF on possible global support programme that complements the work undertaken and financed under the enabling activities;
- some parties stated that the Secretariat and the GM may incorporate, in the Joint Work Programme of the next biennium, efforts towards providing additional technical and financial support to NAP, SRAP and RAP formulation and/or alignment; and
- some parties emphasized the need to encourage the parties to the three Rio Conventions to consider the need to implement at the national level synergistic planning/programming of the Conventions within their respective mandates.

On Operational Objective 3: Science, Technology and Knowledge, the final report indicates that, *inter alia*:

- some parties called for providing adequate technical and financial support to the eligible affected country parties to establish integrated DLDD-specific national monitoring systems;
- parties look forward for the Secretariat to use the information provided by the parties in this reporting process to develop a knowledge-sharing database as part of PRAIS on the Convention website, with a view to making it available in 2011; and
- the CST is invited to provide advice on how best to carry out knowledge-based review and gap analysis in the process of aligning NAPs with the Strategy.

On Operational Objective 4: Capacity-Building, the final report states, *inter alia*:

- some country parties invited developed country parties, the GEF and other multilateral institutions to provide support to those affected country parties that reported they lacked the capacities required for effective implementation of the Convention;
- some parties requested the Secretariat to continue consultations with the GEF in order to enhance the implementation of the NCSAs and to mobilize additional funding for national level capacity building initiatives; and
- parties may wish to consider requesting the GM to provide additional and adequate support to affected countries in assessing their financial needs for capacity building and incorporate them into integrated investment frameworks.

REVIEW OF FINANCIAL FLOWS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: The Secretariat introduced the documents on operational objective 5 on financing and technology transfer (ICCD/CRIC(9)/7 and

ICCD/CRIC(9)/INF.13) on Monday, 21 February, noting that the documents contain the synthesis and preliminary analysis of information submitted by affected and developed country parties, the GEF and GM on the subject.

The GM introduced the documents on financial flows for the implementation of the Convention (ICCD/CRIC (9)/8 and Corr.1, and ICCD/CRIC(9)/INF.12), noting these had been prepared by the GM at the request of the Secretariat, pursuant to decision 13/COP.9 in cooperation with the GEF, UNEP and the Secretariat, and they present the analytical framework for undertaking a preliminary analysis of financial flows for the implementation of the Convention for consideration of CRIC 9.

The EU said further qualitative analysis is needed on the difficulties encountered by country parties regarding the establishment of integrated investment frameworks, in order to provide guidance for the achievement of the related target. On the preliminary analysis of information on financial flows, the EU said that, due to methodological shortcomings in the evaluation and an unclear depiction of results, the document offers no reliable basis on which to make conclusions or recommendations. He requested the Secretariat and the GM to prepare a more comprehensive document before COP 10.

Swaziland recommended analyzing why only 30% of resources go to the NAP and evaluating whether the IFS in place are effective in mobilizing resources. Argentina, with Guinea, underscored the importance of IFS. He suggested that PRAIS allow consideration of the degree of progress reached by each country rather than only whether or not an IFS is in place. GRULAC noted regional imbalances that are prejudicial to his region. He expressed hope that this indicator will provide predictability and transparency to GEF financing. Panama stressed the need to have structures in place at the country level to investigate what the actual percentage of a project goes to DLDD activities. Côte d'Ivoire, on behalf of the African Group, called for, *inter alia*, creating IFS; stronger synergies with other conventions; increasing South-South cooperation; and follow-up on funding.

India noted several of its national programmes that are related to SLM, and asked for clarification on how the programme's related contributions could be included in the framework. Guatemala said integrated investment frameworks could be useful for many countries.

Conclusions and Recommendations: The introductory paragraphs for this section in the final report (ICCD/CRIC(9)/L.1) indicate that, *inter alia*:

- parties welcomed the availability of data on financial flows despite some methodological uncertainty that point to double counting;
- more in-depth analysis of the functionality and efficiency of existing investment frameworks is needed, and a more accurate definition for the term "integrated investment framework" was requested to assist parties to provide more accurate information;
- linkages between the NAPs and the integrated investment frameworks were highlighted and the two processes need to be looked at together during the alignment process. Reporting on progress in the implementation of the investment frameworks should be considered in the future; and

- some parties noted that despite the positive trends within the GEF, an imbalance in the distribution of allocations still prevails and should be addressed. Some parties noted that co-benefits deriving from the implementation of multi-focal area projects should be made use of to the extent possible. On Operational Objective 5: Financing and Technology Transfer, the report states that, *inter alia*:
- some country parties invited affected country parties to increase their efforts in establishing Integrated Investment Frameworks (IIFs) with the aim of have at least 10 affected country parties establish one every year until 2014;
- some parties invited developed country parties and multilateral institutions to provide additional support to eligible affected country parties in their efforts to establish integrated investment frameworks;
- some parties expressed the wish that the GM and the Secretariat focus on providing support to affected country parties in devising their IIFs, and invited them to broaden their support to concrete implementation activities and projects for affected country parties;
- affected country parties are invited to step up their efforts to submit project proposals to multilateral financial institutions; and
- some parties called on the Secretariat, the GM and the GEF to provide guidance for the resource assessment and planning at the national level, and also to facilitate the formulation of appropriate project proposals.

On "Analysis of Information Contained in Reports from Affected and Developed Country Parties, UN Agencies and Intergovernmental Organizations and the GEF on Financial Flows for the Implementation of the Convention, and Financial Commitments and Investments Related to the Implementation of the Convention," the report indicates that:

- some parties underlined that the analysis should have better distinguished between different categories of countries, and underlined the need for the GM to further refine its analysis on financial flows;
 - some parties recommended that synergistic implementation of the Rio Conventions be addressed more systematically in all regions;
 - some parties asked the GM to assist the affected country parties in exploring the non-traditional and innovative channels of financial resources, while other parties considered that the emphasis should be placed on the provision of new and additional financial resources by developed country parties; and
 - while confirming the important role played by international financial institutions and bilateral cooperation agencies in UNCCD financing, the analysis showed that domestic finance is often found to match or even exceed external finance, and South-South cooperation also indicates potential input for the implementation of the UNCCD.
- In the section "Common Conclusions and Recommendations," the report indicates, *inter alia*:
- subsidiary bodies and Convention institutions are urged to include consideration of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the final report of CRIC 9 in their respective 2012-2013 work programmes;

- some parties have underlined the importance and the need to improve communication between the Secretariat and the parties through officially designated NFPs; and
- some parties requested the Secretariat and the GM to consult with parties and relevant entities involved for the development of the proposals for the revised reporting template.

CONSIDERATION OF BEST PRACTICES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the review and compilation of best practices in sustainable land management technologies, including adaptation (ICCD/CRIC(9)/9, ICCD/CRIC(9)/INF.6 and INF.13). He reported that 89 national reports were uploaded on PRAIS before the 12 November 2010 deadline, describing 238 best practices.

In the discussion, many delegates welcomed the creation of the experience-sharing platform and knowledge management system and underlined the importance of disseminating best practices. Ukraine requested translation in all UN languages and called on the Secretariat, GM and CST to assist countries in increasing their access to best practices for all actors, including farmers. The EU highlighted the added value of this exercise and its links with other existing initiatives. He recommended: clarifying the scope of the knowledge-management system and, with Japan, the respective responsibilities of the CST and CRIC in it; simplifying the template and allowing qualitative descriptions of best practices; and not restricting each reporting cycle to one thematic topic. Argentina underscored the value of the methodology developed by LADA and WOCAT (World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies) for compiling best practices. Guatemala requested clarification on who is to validate the information provided by CSOs at country level. Japan preferred a single framework for best practices instead of the experience-sharing platform and the knowledge-management system, and referred to the Convention on Biological Diversity's Clearing-House Mechanism as a useful framework.

The African Group called for cooperation with the African countries in collecting and disseminating information on best practices. Recognizing the importance of best practices, Mexico highlighted the need for a database, qualitative analysis, dissemination and exchange of information, and boosting capacity at the local level.

Kyrgyzstan said information on best practices in the fields of scientific land management and scientific livestock breeding should be made available to farmers so as to prevent land degradation. South Africa recognized the progress made in making use of best practices, and stressed the importance of their quantitative and scientific analysis and dissemination. Jordan highlighted the important role of regional centers in dissemination of best practices.

Armenia said best practices should be based on ground experience and on science. India informed that Asia has submitted 61 best practices, and underlined the need to have methodologies for validating best practices, and to upscale them. Pakistan stressed the need to upscale best practices at national, subregional and regional levels, and underlined the importance of regional consultations and South-South cooperation. Panama said the methodology for data collection is not the best methodology, but PRAIS is a good tool. Egypt supported promoting South-

South cooperation. Morocco said it is important to use the database to conduct an in-depth analysis.

Jamaica said mechanisms for reporting by CSOs are critical and must be developed and agreed on. He also said awareness raising should be a common activity throughout all the themes. Togo said best practices in land management are very important because they are linked to food security. Antigua and Barbuda said there should be consideration of adding a reporting area for South-South cooperation and making reporting options open without expiry deadlines. He also highlighted links between SLM and Rio 2012 and carbon sequestration.

Zambia suggested that the Secretariat consider opening a suggestion box on the PRAIS portal to the global public. Jordan, Armenia, Senegal and Costa Rica called for the CST to evaluate the best practices for their further dissemination to all stakeholders. The Philippines suggested institutionalizing best practices through the creation of ecosystem-oriented centers of excellence. Colombia underscored the need to link the best practice exercise to the monitoring of financial resources, and stated that monitoring of how best practices are contributing to SLM is costly. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) highlighted the importance of confronting governance issues, which are difficult to tackle but often at the root of the success or failure of SLM practices. Djibouti stressed the need to take into account the priorities of affected populations in the drylands. Chile questioned whether the best practices cover the whole set of tools required to combat desertification and land degradation, and cautioned that the concept of green economy should not replace that of sustainable development. China stressed the need to further clarify the definition and standards of best practices, and the need for methodology to disseminate such practices.

Several speakers supported South-South sharing of information on best practices. The US said it would make its e-extension information on best practices available through the PRAIS portal. Grenada said best practices are a key in achieving SLM, and underlined the need to involve all the stakeholders, including farmers, NGOs and the government, and the need for capacity development and financial resources. NGOs said best practices should be made available to local communities.

Conclusions and Recommendations: On the "Review and Compilation of Best Practices in Sustainable Land Management Technologies, Including Adaptation," the final report (ICCD/CRIC(9)/L.1) indicates that CRIC 9 recommended, *inter alia*:

- the Secretariat should revise the templates for submission of best practices with a view to simplifying and making them more flexible and compatible to the extent possible with existing templates;
- the Secretariat should review the classification of best practices on sustainable land management technologies, including adaptation, with a view to considering additional and integrating existing information;
- the Secretariat should continue facilitating consultations between the Bureaus of the CRIC and the CST in order to develop validation and evaluation criteria for best practices and related methodologies; and
- adequate technical and financial support should be provided to the eligible affected country parties for replication and scaling-up of the documented best practices.

IMPROVING THE PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNICATION OF INFORMATION AS WELL AS THE QUALITY AND FORMAT OF REPORTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES:

On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented the iterative process related to the assessment of implementation, including performance indicators, methodology and reporting procedures (ICCD/CRIC(9)/10) and options to increase synergies in monitoring the Rio Conventions (ICCD/CRIC(9)/INF.9). Panama stressed the importance of a better method for data collection for the fifth reporting cycle. Spain said it was disappointed not to see, in the CRIC documentation, recommendations for the improvement of PRAIS made by countries and through the regional Reference Centers, and said, with Colombia, that one limitation of PRAIS is that it does not allow for qualitative information to be included. GRULAC said that PRAIS' drawbacks include: time for submitting the reports was too short; it was difficult to obtain funds and those obtained were insufficient; some questions on the choice of the regional Reference Centers remained unanswered; and access to the PRAIS portal was difficult at times. Algeria underscored the value of PRAIS and the usefulness of the document. Belarus welcomed the transition to quantitative and comparable data through PRAIS, recommended making the country reports publicly available for awareness-raising, and stressed the need to continue improvement of the system with the support of the CST and expert groups.

India, for the Asia and Pacific Group, said PRAIS is a good beginning according to the needs of the Strategy, but needs to be re-engineered into a more user-friendly system, and highlighted the need to capture intersectoral activities and programmes with a wide variety of projects. He suggested that the reporting period should be flexible between calendar and fiscal years. He said data analysis is as important as data collection and transmission. The EU said the PRAIS format could benefit from simplification and should have more room for qualitative remarks. Benin said PRAIS is a tool that will lead parties to decisive progress.

Honduras said PRAIS has brought about a paradigm shift in submitting reports. Saint Lucia said reports from other actors do not always include the necessary information, and there should be advocacy directed towards these actors. Chile underscored that regional Reference Centers' capacity is based on having information available to them. Equatorial Guinea highlighted difficulties due to the internet situation in his country. The Central African Republic said the next reporting cycle should offer parties enough time to prepare the reports and provide resources to help countries properly document their reports. Morocco and Zambia stressed the need to allow more qualitative answers rather than only "yes" and "no" options, given that this information will be made public. ACSAD suggested that regional Reference Centers could provide assistance in drafting the reports.

The Secretariat noted that PRAIS is still ongoing and that additional input will be added to the analysis for COP 10. She said the new GEF funding scenario makes funding available for NAP alignment and national reporting. She added that data quality checks need to be embedded in the process, and suggested that parties could agree to a mechanism whereby information can be evaluated after it is submitted. On

subregional and regional reporting, she said country parties and Regional Implementation Annexes should identify the entities that could be officially nominated to do reporting at these levels.

On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the discussion on the draft template and reporting guidelines for CSOs for the 2012-2013 reporting cycle (ICCD/CRIC(9)/11) and highlighted their possible consideration and adoption at COP 10.

The African Group stressed the need to increase the capacity of African NGOs. The EU observed, *inter alia*, that CSOs should have the opportunity to provide qualitative assessment and, with India and Chad, called to renew the accreditation procedures. Guyana suggested adding reporting on utilization of funds that have been made available to CSOs. India stressed that CSO reporting should be done through the NFP for integrated reporting at the national level. Congo said CSOs should be given the opportunity to provide information not only on best practices but also on indicators and financial flows.

Guinea Bissau, Niger and Kenya highlighted the importance of providing capacity building and financial resources to CSOs. Niger requested the Secretariat to renew the accreditation of CSOs to the UNCCD and said it is not useful for each CSO to prepare a separate report. Norway welcomed the CSOs' participation in reporting, and said the reporting should be transparent and easily available to parties. Welcoming input from CSOs, Zambia suggested that the reports of the CSOs should be reviewed by the NFPs of their respective countries before they are submitted. Grupo Ambiental para el Desarrollo, Argentina, suggested that CSOs that are not accredited to the UNCCD should also make contributions through those that are accredited.

In response to the issues raised, the Secretariat clarified that reporting by CSOs does not require accreditation, and noted the reports provided by CSOs should go through the NFPs, which will contribute to the country reports.

On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the document on status of implementation, potential role and need for alignment with the Strategy of subregional and regional action programmes to combat desertification (ICCD/CRIC(9)/12). The African Group requested that the Secretariat and GM take immediate action including providing necessary funding for the alignment SRAPs and RAPs into the Strategy. He said that the African Group is anxious to re-activate thematic programme networks (TPNs), with the hope that the Secretariat would take action so that these TPNs can lead to RAPs.

The EU noted that the upcoming COP 10 will provide an opportunity for using SRAPs and RAPs to reach the goal of UNCCD and, with Jamaica and Panama, called for GEF funds to support the alignment. India said: the alignment should be conducted in parallel with the gap analysis; this exercise needs financial resources; and a regional workshop on this subject should be organized. He further stressed the need to review and revitalize TPNs and suggested that the next biennium programme include activities on SRAPs and RAPs. Pakistan stressed the need for financial resources to revitalize TPNs. Argentina, for GRULAC, reported that the regional programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean are getting stronger, through the establishment of the regional coordinating units and adoption of the Strategy.

Cuba said her country attaches a great value to SRAP and RAP and, with Panama, underlined the importance of regional meetings. Noting that no SRAP has been aligned with the Strategy and many countries have not yet aligned their NAPs, Equatorial Guinea requested that the Secretariat consider carefully what alignment should be done first. Chile reiterated that RAP and SRAP are an integral part of the Convention, and asked whether the GEF is the right mechanism for funding. The Economic Community of Central African States, also for the Central African Forests Commission, outlined their SRAP-related activities and support received from the GM, including capacity-building workshops. Antigua and Barbuda highlighted the unique problems of small island developing states. Tunisia, with Algeria, outlined activities related to a Maghreb-wide programme with support from the GM and called for funding support. Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS) noted the ongoing SRAP process in West Africa, which she said will be aligned in March 2011, and said the reference in the report indicating that there is little or no real commitment to pursue alignment should reflect this. OSS said it has provided technical and scientific information to its member states.

Conclusions and Recommendations: On “Consideration of the Iterative Process Relating to the Assessment of Implementation, Including Performance Indicators, Methodology and the Reporting Procedures,” the final report (ICCD/CRIC(9)/L.1) states that, *inter alia*:

- parties identified the need to further improve the PRAIS reporting framework, including reporting templates and methodologies;
- some countries considered inappropriate, in the analysis, the making of comparisons between countries and regions and formulating subjective statements and recommended that the COP clearly outline how the Secretariat should use future PRAIS data;
- calls were made for further capacity building in national monitoring, support to countries that have not submitted their reports, and provision of adequate financial assistance for the next reporting cycle;
- the Secretariat and the GM are requested to include in the documentation for COP 10 information on the bottlenecks experienced by countries that did not submit a report by the extended deadline;
- some parties noted that the reports generated by the PRAIS portal do not represent a good tool for awareness-raising at national level;
- the Secretariat and the GM are requested to adjust the next reporting and review process to take into account feedback; and
- some parties requested an improved mechanism for accessing financial resources from the GEF, and urged increased coordination for the development and revision of impact indicators and of methodologies and tools for reporting on these indicators.

On “Options to Increase Synergies in Monitoring the Rio Conventions,” the final report indicates that the CRIC agreed that synergies in reporting under the Rio Conventions should be considered at CRIC 10 with the view of formulating recommendations for consideration at COP 10.

On the “Draft Template and Reporting Guidelines for Civil Society Organizations (2012-2013),” the final report indicates that some parties recommended:

- with regard to the content and format of future reporting process, and starting in 2013-2014, CSOs communicate to NFPs and institutional focal points of other reporting entities, as applicable, information on performance indicators relating to CSOs’ involvement in the implementation of the Strategy, and financial flows towards the implementation of the Convention;
- the Secretariat devise templates and reporting guidelines for CSOs on the basis of the reporting principles and structural elements already approved for the other reporting entities and the guiding criteria;
- capacity-building needs for CSOs are taken into consideration in future initiatives in support of the reporting process;
- developed country parties and international financial organizations, including the GEF, continue supporting the process; and
- NFPs and institutional focal points of subregional and regional organizations, and of other reporting entities, as appropriate, facilitate exchanges and cooperation with CSOs with particular regard to the reporting and review process under UNCCD.

On the “Status of Implementation, Potential Role and Need for Alignment with the Strategy of Sub-regional and Regional Action Programmes to Combat Desertification,” the final report states that, *inter alia*:

- parties were encouraged to coordinate more with relevant subregional organizations through the RCMs in an effort to promote SRAP and RAP alignment and implementation;
- parties requested the Secretariat to prepare for COP 10 templates and reporting guidelines for subregional and regional organizations to report on SRAP and RAP implementation;
- some country parties invited development partners, especially the GEF, to consider providing technical support for the implementation of SRAPs in those regions that comprise eligible country parties; and
- some parties requested the Secretariat, in collaboration with the GM, to develop specific guidelines to assist country parties in developing, aligning and implementing SRAPs and RAPs.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES OR INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS TO ASSIST THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES IN REGULARLY REVIEWING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION:

The GM reported that the GM and the Secretariat jointly: have initiated the preparation and updating of their 2012-2015 workplans and the corresponding costed two-year work programmes for submission to COP 10; have started consultation with the affected regions, through the RCMs, on the preparation of regional work programmes; and will prepare a common fund-raising strategy. She also reported the GM’s activities relating to its mandate, including: elaboration of criteria and guidelines for the allocation of financial resources from the GM; implementation of the performance and impact indicators; and compilation of data and information on the financial resources mobilized and technology transferred.

The EU said that they are encouraged by the joint work by the GM and the Secretariat. The African Group urged making the information on the implementation of the joint programme of the GM and Secretariat transparent. He said the GM should focus on mobilization of financial resources in Africa, the joint programme should focus on helping Africa, and the GM should support South-South cooperation. Noting that 12 African countries still do not have NAPs, he urged the GM and the Secretariat to help these countries develop NAPs before COP 10.

GRULAC stressed the importance of the joint work on regional coordination units, and said this should be accompanied by financial and technical resources. Cuba said there should be adequate supervision of the GM, and the GM's main work is to mobilize financial resources. Kyrgyzstan thanked the GM for assisting Central Asian countries in implementing a project on land use management. Pakistan expressed appreciation of the joint work of the GM and the Secretariat, and underlined the importance of a joint programme and a common fund-raising strategy at the regional level. Swaziland thanked the GM and the Secretariat for the efforts made in the joint work, especially in establishing the RCMs. However, he said, such work was not very transparent and ignored the implementation of NAPs, and he looked forward to seeing real actions on the ground.

The League of Arab States expressed hope that there would be coordination, and noting that some countries do not yet have NAPs, suggested that the Secretariat should consider targeting those countries. Kazakhstan asked why the UNCCD cannot bring in private sector actors and suggested that the Convention should look for new ways to promote this. Egypt asked for information on the criteria for selecting programmes and priorities. Chad said it is not acceptable for only 12 countries to be selected for aligning their NAPs, and said all countries should start at the same time. Tanzania thanked the GM for its assistance in developing its integrated financing strategy. He said there is concern that, after the pilot phase, other countries will not be assisted.

Chile suggested focusing on the products the countries require. Benin asked when the GEF funding would be available. Morocco emphasized the need to measure the impact of the support that parties are getting for the implementation of NAPs. Burundi said all countries should align their NAPs at the same time, so they can have the same evaluation criteria. India said: there should be a realistic common fund-raising strategy so that parties can meet expectations; allocation of resources from the GM needs to be more transparent; and the reporting process should be adjusted from its current project orientation to capture cross-sectoral programmes. Guyana said GEF funds are accessible only by submission of funding proposals and urged countries to submit their proposals as soon as possible.

In responding to the questions and comments on governance, transparency and criteria for the allocation of resources to countries, the GM urged parties to make use of the tools available to them within the Convention to monitor and guide the priorities of the GM, such as the reports submitted by the GM and the approval of the regional work programmes. The Secretariat clarified that the objective of its programme is to bridge the gap for NAP alignment until the GEF-5 financing and that the amount secured for this programme is very limited: €200,000 for all countries.

Conclusions and Recommendations: On the "Update on Progress Made in the Implementation of Paragraphs 1 to 3 and 5 to 8 of Decision 6/COP.9," the final report (ICCD/CRIC(9)/L.1) indicates that parties:

- called for improved predictability, consistency and transparency in the mobilization, allocation and use of voluntary contributions and core resources for the activities of the UNCCD bodies, the GM and the Secretariat;
- highlighted the importance of a common fund-raising strategy which will be jointly prepared by the Secretariat and the GM for submission at COP 10;
- requested the GM to provide, in its submission to COP 10, further details on the financial resources allocated per country and on the use of these resources; and
- invited the GM, in collaboration with the Secretariat and other relevant partners, to clarify the concept of financing for DLDD and UNCCD implementation with the view to facilitating a common understanding, and supporting systematic follow-up of the global status and trends in financial flows in the future.

On "Review of Draft Modalities, Criteria and Terms of Reference for the Mid-term Evaluation of the Strategy," the final report contains a paragraph addressing this topic, indicating that CRIC 9 agreed that this item be considered at the tenth session of the CRIC, with the view of formulating targeted recommendations for consideration at COP 10.

REVIEW OF INPUT FROM THE CST: On Tuesday, CST Rapporteur Lawrence Townley-Smith (Canada) introduced the document on input from the CST on impact indicators (ICCD/CRIC(9)/15). The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said it will continue to work with the UNCCD on standardization of indicators, and looked forward to a renewed and more vigorous relationship with the UNCCD. Panama highlighted the importance of forest cover as an indicator. Ukraine, for Central and East European countries, and with Mexico, supported the establishment of an advisory group of technical experts. Ukraine further supported the development of a glossary of terms and definitions as described in the document, and drew attention to the need to clarify the term "in affected countries." The US expressed concern about the limited coordination between the development of reporting tools for the impact indicators and the necessarily iterative development of the indicators themselves, and urged the Secretariat and organizations responsible for the development of reporting tools to improve such coordination.

Concerning mandatory indicators, Morocco suggested defining parameters within the scope of these indicators. Mexico called for pilot projects to assess impact indicators to be initiated as soon as possible. India highlighted the importance of: a standardized approach for assessing land cover status; capacity building, including strengthening national institutions and ability to access to information systems; establishing a methodology for applying biophysical indicators; a more transparent approach in the analysis of the two indicators; and sufficient funds. Cuba urged developing a clearer definition of drylands.

Conclusions and Recommendations: On "Input from the CST on Impact Indicators for Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Strategy," the report (ICCD/CRIC(9)/L.1) indicates that the input

of the CST on impact indicators for strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Strategy to CRIC 9 are contained in document ICCD/CRIC(9)/15.

CSO OPEN DIALOGUE ON SLM TECHNOLOGIES INCLUDING ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE

On Wednesday, UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja noted that open dialogue sessions in the past have provided a mechanism to integrate the participation of CSOs and to channel their input into deliberations, and said this plenary represented the first time a CSO dialogue had been organized during the meeting of a UNCCD subsidiary body.

The open dialogue was moderated by Patrice Burger, Center of Actions and International Realizations. Valentin Ciubotaru, BIOS, Moldova, presented on “Knowledge Sharing in Sustainable Land Management in Moldova.” He emphasized the need to: link farmers and researchers; use a variety of dissemination methods; share knowledge with children and youth, including through education programmes; and build partnerships at the local, district and national levels. He highlighted the need for: analyses of traditional knowledge; “clean” businesses; and development of SLM guidelines.

Subrata Bhattacharyya, Gramin Vikas Trust, India, presented a sustainable land management project for food security, poverty alleviation and ecosystem development in India. He outlined the main elements of the project, which integrates soil and water conservation, agroforestry and horticulture development to reduce land degradation and improve livelihoods.

Calvin James, Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development, presented two projects from his region under the framework of the Partnership Initiative on Sustainable Land Management: one project on reducing poverty and land degradation via integrated agroforestry and ecotourism in the Maya Golden Landscape in Belize, and another in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on female farmers training.

During the ensuing discussion, Lesotho said CSOs are valuable to Convention implementation and they are able to implement projects within a short span of time. Noting there are ten CSOs at the national level and 100 throughout the whole country working in the field of desertification control, China introduced its experience in working together with these CSOs by providing them with financial support, tax exemption and reduction, and awards. Grenada said CSOs are an engine in implementation of the Convention and they should be provided with capacity and financial resources.

Cape Verde said, in his country, the government provides support to CSOs and they participate in combating desertification in areas of agriculture, forestry and livestock breeding. Kyrgyzstan expressed concern about the small number of CSOs participating in this meeting. Moderator Burger answered that only 18 CSOs were provided funding to attend this meeting and he appealed to countries, especially donors, to provide funding to enable participation of CSOs in future UNCCD meetings. Highlighting the importance of this dialogue session with CSOs, the EU noted that the EU has a tradition of involving CSOs, and has implemented many projects at the country level with CSOs.

Moussa Halilou, Coordinator, Comité National des Collectifs des ONGs sur la Désertification (CNCOD), Niger, presented proposals for the improvement of the PRAIS portal. He highlighted, *inter alia*: carrying out an assessment on capacity-

building needs of CSOs; adapting the template of the report to CSOs; facilitating the exchange and cooperation between CSOs and NFPs; and providing accredited CSOs with documentation in an appropriate time frame to allow preparation of the reports.

Stéphanie Faure, Coordinator, French Working Group on Desertification, presented a report by a panel of French NGOs on experiences with CSO involvement and recommendations to improve CSO reporting to UNCCD, including adopting an integrated approach and improving the PRAIS content. She stressed: the need for the UNCCD to have quantified objectives to measure what investments should be made and what have been made; links with the other Rio Conventions, and a campaign for civil society actors to be more active in the field.

Viet Nam suggested that CSOs could consider how to increase their contribution to policy as an issue to take up in the next five years. UNDP highlighted the opportunity for CSO funding through the GEF’s Small Grants Programme. Argentina said he would propose that the CSOs be involved with the regional coordination units. Burkina Faso emphasized the need to involve the private sector.

THEMATIC INTERACTIVE SESSIONS ON THE OUTCOME OF THE REPORTING PROCESS

On Thursday, CRIC 9 delegates participated in interactive discussions on three topics. The sessions were chaired by Conrod Hunte (Antigua and Barbuda).

Sem Shikongo (Namibia) moderated the interactive session on “Outcome of reporting on operational objectives 1-5: NAP alignment including SRAP and RAP.” Delegates said NAPs have not been aligned due to lack of political will, institutional structure, turn-over of focal points, lack of financial resources and capacity, and difficulty with the methodology for the alignment. One party said countries have ratified the Convention, adopted the Strategy and formulated NAPs, which is an indication of the parties’ political will. In summary, Shikongo noted that countries may be viewing alignment as a “project” rather than a national priority, even though parties have called for this activity, noted that some had indicated that countries do not need to wait for the NAP alignment process to conclude before they begin implementing the Strategy, and highlighted that countries can use the alignment process as an opportunity to revise their NAPs.

Manfred Konukiewitz (Germany) moderated the interactive session on “Financial flows for the implementation of the Convention: going for innovative financing for SLM.” Participants shared country-level experiences and addressed issues such as: the use of subsidies and tax exemptions to promote private investments; the need to link SLM to trade; the opportunity for SLM in climate change adaptation and mitigation; that quick fixes do not work when developing innovative financing mechanisms; and that the concept of green economy can help realize the potential of innovative financing. In summary, Konukiewitz noted there was an emphasis on tapping domestic resources as well as external aid money, and discussions also addressed a role for private investment. In this regard, he said the challenge is to leverage private investments through small, targeted public and seed money. He said he would take the issue of SLM to the discussions on the green climate fund, and highlighted the need to ensure that land issues are represented in climate discussions.

Mohamed Ismail (Arab Maghreb Union) moderated the interactive dialogue on best practices on SLM technologies, including adaptation. Delegates emphasized the need to look at the needs and constraints of local populations and stakeholders in this regard, with some noting that they are users as well as providers of SLM techniques. The requirements of documenting, testing and disseminating best practices present a challenge, especially when local populations have limited capacity and resources. The role for capacity building and education, to help users assimilate lessons learned, was emphasized by many speakers, as was the value of demonstration plots and extension services. One speaker also cautioned that “best practices” should be carefully identified, as many practices have been identified to increase agricultural production, but not necessarily in a sustainable way. Another speaker suggested focusing on “suitable technology” that is suitable for a local community’s conditions and needs. A role for the media in popularizing technologies was noted, and another speaker added that finding the bridges and links for dissemination of knowledge and simplification of the procedures is important. Another speaker said if we want to motivate donors, technologies must be profitable, which is the motivation to transfer technology.

CLOSING PLENARY

On Friday, 25 February, CRIC 9 convened in plenary at 8:30 pm to consider the draft report of the meeting, as prepared by the two contact groups and translated into all UN languages and distributed at 8:00 pm (ICCD/CRIC(9)/L.1). Delegates approved the 134 paragraphs in a paragraph-by-paragraph reading. On the paragraph inviting developed country parties to increase their support for the establishment of partnership agreements with, and synergistic activities in the Rio Conventions, delegates added a reference to the establishment by the UNCCD Secretariat and the UN Environment Management Group of a network on land issues in drylands, at the suggestion of Iran.

At the end of the report, under a final section titled “Annex, [to be completed],” the African Group informed delegates that it had submitted a proposal to the Secretariat calling on parties to submit suggested activities for the celebration of the UN Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (UNDDD), and for the Secretariat to compile and submit these suggestions to COP 10, and proposed that the document be included as an annex to the report. A number of countries said this proposal did not follow the rules of procedure, since they had not seen the text. Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja said the celebration of UNDDD is already on the COP 10 agenda and suggested that the African proposal be submitted to COP 10 for consideration and action, which was agreed.

Following the adoption of the report, as amended, Algeria for the African Group, India for the Asia-Pacific Group, Argentina for GRULAC, Ukraine for Central and Eastern European countries, the EU and its Member States, and CENESTA for the CSOs thanked the meeting organizers and participants for a well-conducted meeting. UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja congratulated delegates for their accomplishments and the positive atmosphere, and assured them that the recommendations made by CRIC 9 will be taken up at COP 10. CRIC 9 Chair Norbu closed the meeting at 10:35 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CST S-2 AND CRIC 9

What would happen if a global convention could measure its parties’ implementation actions and progress on the ground? Would this result in the long anticipated shift from establishing its institutions and raising awareness about implementation? Nine years ago, UNCCD COP 6 was heralded as marking the UNCCD’s transition from awareness raising to implementation as it, among other issues, identified criteria for the CRIC to review UNCCD implementation. Four years after that, parties at UNCCD COP 8 identified strategic objectives for the Convention, giving parties a clearer idea of their shared vision for its implementation goals. Four more years along, the UNCCD and its subsidiary bodies are finally in a position where they have tools and data to measure progress in combatting desertification and dryland degradation.

The discussions in Bonn at both CRIC 9 and the special session of the CST sought to enhance the tools and mechanisms to generate and capture information on desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) from all stakeholders—governments to scientists to civil society organizations—and to organize it in policy-relevant formats that can assist decision makers. This analysis examines the progress made in this regard, specifically in bringing science into the Convention, improving the transparency and utility of national reporting through the new Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS), and advancing the DLDD agenda more broadly on the global sustainable development stage.

SCIENTIFIC ADVICE FOR DECISION MAKING

The 1st Scientific Conference succeeded in engaging scientists with the Convention and filling the CST conference room, but as preparations get underway for the 2nd Scientific Conference, which will seek to contribute analyses on the much anticipated topic of the economic assessment of desertification, many CST participants noted the importance of learning from both the successes and mistakes in Buenos Aires to improve the CST’s scientific profile. CST S-2’s suggestions for the next Conference included establishing a steering committee composed of the CST Bureau, the UNCCD Secretariat and the lead institution, recommending that the Secretariat seek the assistance of the lead institution to secure adequate funding, and ensuring that adequate geographical representation is achieved. Many noted that a window of opportunity to engage the interest of the scientific community opened as a result of the 1st Scientific Conference, but cautioned that it must be capitalized on if scientists are to remain focused on the UNCCD’s policy needs and not look for other outlets for their expertise.

The highly-praised consultant’s report on the “Scientific Review of the UNCCD Provisionally Accepted Set of Impact Indicators to Measure the Implementation of Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 3,” which was presented at CST S-2, helped bring the role of scientific contributions to the UNCCD into perspective. The question of how to measure, on a global scale, the extent of land degradation and its drivers moved into a new era at COP 9, with the adoption of a limited set of required and voluntary impact indicators. The discussion at CST S-2 focused on how this measurement will be conducted in practice, demonstrating the difficulties in translating the details for operationalizing scientific advice for all of the UNCCD’s 194 parties into a

policy outcome. The deliberations surrounding the report and the process to test and refine the indicators revealed that the CST is still grappling with the operationalization of scientific advice, which is not always a straightforward exercise.

While many expressed envy of the mechanisms that have been established to conduct independent scientific analyses of climate change and biodiversity issues—the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and nascent Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), respectively—there was acknowledgement that the creation of such an independent body for land issues is not a likely scenario in the near future. Nevertheless, delegates noted that possibilities exist through these two bodies to incorporate land issues into their scientific reviews, particularly during the negotiations to formally establish the IPBES beginning later this year.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS FOR DECISION MAKING

In his opening statement to the February 2011 meetings of the UNCCD subsidiary bodies, Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja told delegates that the decisions taken at COP 9 in 2009 had changed the nature of the national reporting process: these reports are no longer just “for the shelves.” Now, eighteen months after COP 9, CRIC 9 delegates found that a significant number of parties and organizations had submitted reports under the new PRAIS. These reports provide a large body of data through which to analyze implementation, as well as experience with the national reporting system and proposals for improvements.

Friedrich Kitschelt, on behalf of German Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Dirk Niebel, highlighted the importance of this shift in national reporting in his welcoming address to CRIC 9. He called on participants not to view their work as an administrative exercise. As turmoil and democratic aspirations within many global regions filled the newspapers and airwaves in Bonn, alongside continuing news about global economic crises and budget austerity measures, Kitschelt called on parties to use the new monitoring and assessment system to increase transparency and democratic governance for affected people and the public at large to see whether resources are used in the most effective way. In an era of increasing transparency, characterized by Wikileaks and a proliferation of social media outlets, the development of PRAIS and the discussions in Bonn have enhanced the tools and mechanisms to generate and capture information on DLDD from all stakeholders and organize it in a policy-relevant format that can assist decision makers.

With 89 affected country parties (a respectable 53% of the total) and 12 developed countries submitting national reports, in addition to reports from accredited CSOs, the GEF and the GM, the first reporting cycle under PRAIS was largely applauded by those in Bonn. While difficulties with the reporting templates, the limited time given for submission of the reports, and the sub-optimal level of capacity support received by some countries and regional Reference Centers were cited as factors limiting participation in the reporting, affected country parties largely supported the results. In their discussions of the Secretariat’s analyses of the national reports, some participants suggested that PRAIS holds the potential to not only enhance implementation

of the Convention and provide a tool for countries to base their policies on quantitative measurements, but to also, through its web-based portal, expose what the Convention is doing to the full range of UNCCD stakeholders—from governments and UN agencies to scientists, the private sector and local actors. Participants also pointed to the analysis of the PRAIS data related to financial flows for implementation as a useful step toward developing a common understanding of the real financial status and resources available to the Convention from all funding sources, a subject that has traditionally divided developing and developed countries.

Another element seen as contributing to the increased transparency of implementation of the Convention was the participation of civil society organizations in PRAIS, which was welcomed by both affected and developed party delegates. The details of CSOs’ participation in future reporting, however, have still not been worked out, and consideration of issues such as the representativeness of the accredited CSOs to the UNCCD and the CSOs’ direct reporting versus through the national focal points will play a role in determining the significance of this participation and the added dimension they can bring to the PRAIS data set.

DLDD BEYOND THE UNCCD

While the new monitoring and assessment tools discussed in Bonn will help the parties look deeper into DLDD issues and implementation, participants also noted that there are numerous opportunities to advance the DLDD agenda more broadly on the global sustainable development stage. A number of processes within the Convention could help its issues resonate with a wider audience, including the Assessment of the Economics of Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (E-DLDD) initiative, for which an initial partnership meeting convened in December 2010 in Bonn, and 2nd Scientific Conference, which will focus on an economic assessment of desertification. The data gathered through PRAIS on best practices and the work on a knowledge management tool, among other initiatives, could also raise the profile of the Convention as a source for sustainable land management information.

Opportunities to enhance implementation through synergies at the UN level highlighted in Bonn include the Environment Management Group’s examination of UN system-wide activities and investment opportunities in the drylands, scheduled to be delivered to COP 10. Some also suggested that a focus on land issues could be advocated as part of the IPBES process. And many interventions highlighted that the high-level event at the opening of the UN General Assembly in September will look towards putting DLDD on the agenda for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) in 2012.

On the question of financing for implementation, the possibilities to address agriculture and land issues through the climate change negotiations and funding sources were mentioned as a possible opportunity to spark action, although many thought this would depend largely on what happens in the climate change negotiations. A more immediate funding option could come from the Global Environment Facility’s fifth replenishment (GEF-5). At the GEF General Assembly in May 2010, the GEF instrument was amended to make the GEF available to serve as a financial mechanism of the UNCCD, and set-aside funds have been made available under GEF-5 to support countries in their reporting

under the UNCCD. However, in spite of many questions raised in Bonn, neither CST S-2 nor CRIC 9 advanced the general consensus on how to streamline the cooperation with the GEF and confusion remains regarding how parties will access the funding.

THE ROAD AHEAD

The decisions at COP 9, paired with computing technologies that could only be dreamed about when the Convention was first negotiated, have produced a preliminary data set that parties recognize can allow them to start looking more closely at what countries have individually and collectively accomplished. The meeting in Bonn brought them closer to answering what could happen if a global convention could measure its parties' implementation actions and progress on the ground. However, despite the many lessons learned and recommendations for improvement of PRAIS and the Scientific Conference, for example, delegates leaving Bonn noted that they had not narrowed the number of options proposed as priorities, leaving COP 10 with a very full plate to fully implement the potential of these mechanisms.

Discussions in Bonn alluded to another topic that will also hold COP 10 delegates' attention. Many opening statements in Bonn expressed delegates' hope that the evaluation of the GM would result in a decision that could resolve the issue of the existing and potential reporting, accountability and institutional arrangements for the GM, and that this issue would not overshadow other COP agenda items as it has in the past. Many statements at CRIC 9 raised hope that the move to measurability of implementation would keep delegates' eyes on the "people who are living far away in the drylands," as the Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Desertification, Bo Kjellén, often implored delegates to do as they crafted the treaty 17 years ago.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

GEF Caribbean Expanded Constituency Workshop

(ECW): The ECW will bring together the GEF focal points from the Caribbean countries, focal points from the main Conventions (Biodiversity, Desertification, Climate Change and POPs), representatives from civil society and representatives from GEF agencies. The purpose of the meeting is to keep these stakeholders abreast of GEF strategies, policies and procedures and to encourage coordination. **dates:** 1-3 March 2011 **location:** Belize City, Belize **contact:** GEF Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-473-0508 **fax:** +1-202-522-3240/3245 **email:** secretariat@thegef.org **www:** <http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/4055>

Second PrepCom for UN Conference on Sustainable

Development (UNCSD): This event will consider the UNCSD themes of green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and the institutional framework for sustainable development. **dates:** 7-8 March 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-96-4260 **e-mail:** uncsd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org>

UNGA Thematic Debate on LDC IV: This informal thematic debate on the contributions of the UN General Assembly to the Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC IV) will focus on "Investment in and financing of Productive

Capacities in LDCs." **date:** 11 March 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Armanatha Nasir, Office of the President of the General Assembly **email:** nasir2@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/65/initiatives/ldcs.shtml>

GEF STAP V: This meeting will review progress on the current Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) work plan, identify new areas for work plan inclusion, and prepare for the May 2011 GEF Council meeting. It is likely the meeting will have a strong emphasis on climate change as well as adaptation and climate resilience. **dates:** 17-18 March 2011 **location:** Vienna, Austria **contact:** STAP Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-974-1311 **email:** stapsec@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/stap/Events/STAPMeetings/tabid/3615/Default.aspx>

GEF Eastern Europe Expanded Constituency Workshop

(ECW): The ECW will bring together GEF focal points in the Eastern European region, focal points from the main Conventions (Biodiversity, Desertification, Climate Change and POPs), representatives from civil society and representatives from GEF agencies. The purpose of the meeting is to keep these stakeholders abreast of GEF strategies, policies and procedures and to encourage coordination. **dates:** 22-24 March 2011 **location:** Kiev, Ukraine **contact:** GEF Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-473-0508 **fax:** +1-202-522-3240/3245 **email:** secretariat@thegef.org **www:** <http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/4056>

UN Climate Change Conference – Bangkok: These meetings are the first formal round of climate change negotiations in 2011 and include: the 16th session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP 16); the 14th session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA 14); and workshops pursuant to the Cancun Agreements and to other decisions, as appropriate. **dates:** 3-8 April 2011 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** http://unfccc.int/meetings/intersessional/bangkok_11/items/5887.php

GEF Asia Expanded Constituency Workshop (ECW):

The ECW will bring together GEF focal points from Asian countries, focal points from the main Conventions (Biodiversity, Desertification, Climate Change and POPs), representatives from civil society and representatives from GEF agencies. The purpose of the meeting is to keep these stakeholders abreast of GEF strategies, policies and procedures and to encourage coordination. **dates:** 5-7 April 2011 **location:** Da Lat City, Vietnam **contact:** GEF Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-473-0508 **fax:** +1-202-522-3240/3245 **email:** secretariat@thegef.org **www:** <http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/4057>

GEF South America Expanded Constituency Workshop

(ECW): The ECW will bring together GEF focal points from South America, focal points from the main Conventions (Biodiversity, Desertification, Climate Change and POPs), representatives from civil society and representatives from GEF agencies. The purpose is to keep these stakeholders abreast of GEF strategies, policies and procedures and to encourage coordination. **dates:** 27-29 April 2011 **location:** Cartagena, Colombia **contact:** GEF Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-473-0508 **fax:** +1-202-522-3240/3245 **email:** secretariat@thegef.org **www:** <http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/4084>

GEF Central America Expanded Constituency Workshop (ECW): The ECW will bring together GEF focal points from Central American countries, focal points from the main Conventions (Biodiversity, Desertification, Climate Change and POPs), representatives from civil society and representatives from GEF agencies. The purpose of the meeting is to keep these stakeholders abreast of GEF strategies, policies and procedures and to encourage coordination. **dates:** 2-4 May 2011 **location:** Panama City, Panama **contact:** GEF Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-473-0508 **fax:** +1-202-522-3240/3245 **email:** secretariat@thegef.org **www:** <http://www.thegef.org/gef/node/4083>

40th GEF Council Meeting: The GEF Council functions as the main governing body of the GEF. **dates:** 23-26 May 2011 **location:** Washington DC, US **contact:** GEF Secretariat **phone:** +1-202-473-0508 **fax:** +1-202-522-3240/3245 **email:** secretariat@thegef.org **www:** <http://www.thegef.org/gef/meetingdocs/97/403>

UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies June 2011: The 34th sessions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) will take place in June 2011, along with meetings of the *Ad Hoc* Working Groups. **dates:** 6-17 June 2011 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** UNFCCC Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-1000 **fax:** +49-228-815-1999 **email:** secretariat@unfccc.int **www:** http://unfccc.int/meetings/unfccc_calendar/items/2655.php?year=2011

Land Day 4: This event will be the fourth such event organized by the UNCCD Secretariat, and will take place in parallel to the UNFCCC subsidiary body meetings to provide a forum for UNFCCC and UNCCD decision-makers to exchange ideas. **date:** 11 June 2011 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** Yukie Hori, UNCCD Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2800 **fax:** +49-228-815-2898 **email:** secretariat@unccd.int **www:** <http://www.unccd.int>

Sixth Forest Europe Ministerial Conference: This conference is organized in the framework of the pan-European policy process for the sustainable management of the continent's forests. **dates:** 14-16 June 2011 **location:** Oslo, Norway **contact:** Liaison Unit Oslo **phone:** +47-64-94-8930 **fax:** +47-64-94-8939 **email:** liaison.unit.oslo@foresteurope.org **www:** <http://www.foresteurope.org/eng/Events/>

World Day to Combat Desertification: The 2011 celebration of this annual observance will be organized under the theme "Forests Keep Drylands Working." **date:** 17 June 2011 **location:** worldwide **contact:** UNCCD Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2800 **fax:** +49-228-815-2898 **email:** secretariat@unccd.int **www:** http://www.unccd.int/media/pressrel/showpressrel.php?pr=press07_02_11

UNGA High-Level Event on Desertification: The UN General Assembly called for this high-level event on "addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication," in order to help raise awareness at the highest level, reaffirm the fulfillment of all commitments to the Convention and its 10-year Strategic Plan and Framework (2008-2018), and ensure a higher priority for desertification, land degradation and drought at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio 2012). **date:** 20 September 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York

contact: Melchiade Bukuru **phone:** +1-917-367-4081 **email:** bukuru@un.org **www:** http://www.unccd.int/media/newsflash/newsflash_001_2011.php

UNCCD COP 10: The tenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the UNCCD is organized by the UNCCD Secretariat and hosted by the Government of Republic of Korea. **dates:** 10-21 October 2011 **location:** Changwon City, Gyeongnam Province, Republic of Korea **contact:** UNCCD Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2800 **fax:** +49-228-815-2898 **email:** secretariat@unccd.int **www:** <http://www.unccd.int/>

GLOSSARY

ACSAD	Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Land
CENESTA	Centre for Sustainable Development
COP	Conference of the Parties
CRIC	Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CST	Committee on Science and Technology
CST S-2	Second Special Session of the CST
DLDD	Desertification, land degradation and drought
E-DLDD	Economics of desertification/land degradation and drought
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GM	Global Mechanism
GRULAC	Latin American and Caribbean Group
IFS	Integrated financing strategies
IPBES	Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LADA	Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands
NAP	National Action Programme
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NFP	National Focal Point
OSS	Sahara and Sahel Observatory
PRAIS	Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System
RAP	Regional Action Programme
RCM	Regional Coordination Mechanism
Rio 2012	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)
SLM	Sustainable land management
SRAP	Sub-regional Action Programme
STAP	GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel
STCs	Science and Technology Correspondents
Strategy	Ten-year Strategic Plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008-2018)
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCSD	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio 2012)
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly