

REPORT ON:
THE 12TH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES
THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION
ANKARA- TURKEY, OCTOBER 2015



The Civil Society Organisation Members at COP12 of the UNCCD

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Introduction

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is one of the three most important environmental conventions under the framework of “Agenda 21” of the United Nations Environment and Development Conference in Rio, 1992. The convention was signed on the 17th of June, 1994 in Paris and came into force with the signature of 115 countries on the 26th of December, 1996. Now 195 countries and the European Union became parties to the convention.

The UNCCD is the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management. The Convention addresses specifically the arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, known as the drylands, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples can be found. The Convention’s 195 parties work together to improve the living conditions of drylands people, to maintain and restore land and soil productivity, and to mitigate the effects of drought. The UNCCD is particularly committed to a bottom-up approach, encouraging the participation of local people in combating desertification and land degradation.

The Conference of the Parties (COPs) is the supreme decision-making body of the Convention and it makes decisions with the participation of the representatives of country parties to the convention. The Conference of the Parties, high level body of the Convention, was held annually from 1997 to 2001 (COP 1 - COP 5), and since 2001 the Conference of Parties are held every two years.

The Twelfth (12th) session of the Conference of the Parties (COP12) of UNCCD took place in Ankara, Turkey from 12 to 23 of October 2015. In addition, the 12th session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST12) and the 14th session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC14), were held in parallel to the COP12.



The COP12 of UNCCD brought together about 6,000 participants including representatives from government officials, United Nations bodies and agencies, civil society organisations, local communities’ organisations, trade unions, business and media members.

During COP12 of UNCCD, delegates from the UNCCD’s Parties discussed on developing relevant decisions on desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD), including how to pursue the target to achieve land degradation neutrality (LDN) and how to align the UNCCD’s goals and Parties’ action programmes with the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The participation of civil society organisations had an effective role during COP, CRIC, CST meetings and their associated decisions through organising CSOs preparatory and daily meetings, side events, publications, Open Dialogue Sessions, various statements, interventions, weblogs, demonstrations and social networks.

From Iran, Nahid Naghizadeh, representative of Centre for Sustainable Development (CENESTA, accredited NGO in UNCCD) attended to the 12th session of the Conference of Parties (COP12) and prepared the following report on the most important topics that have been discussed and followed during this conference.

Thanks to all organisers, funding agencies and in particular to the UNCCD Secretariat and CSO panel members for providing this valuable opportunity for me to participate in the COP12 of UNCCD.

Work Carried Out Prior to the COP12 with the CSOs in the Network or Constituency

Organising Preparatory Workshop on Sustainability of Development in Drylands: Increase the Synergy between the Three Rio Conventions

This workshop was the preparatory national meeting of Desertif'actions – International Forum on Civil Society in Montpellier, France. The workshop held by CENESTA, (member of Drynet) and support of Forest, Rangelands and Watershed Organisation (FRWO). The workshop held in FRWO in April 2015 and the number of workshop participants was 25 persons including: CSOs representatives, Indigenous and Local Communities representatives from drylands in particular from Central Desert of Iran, national focal points (representatives) of 3 Rio conventions (CBD, UNCCD & UNFCCC), 1 from academic society, 4 experts & authorities from relevant organisations to SLM & synergy issues.

The Desertif'actions 2015 was a global multi-actor event, therefore Drynet members from various regions organised to implement country preparatory workshops in 3 axis of this event.

CENESTA as one of the Drynet members organised a one day participatory workshop in Aix 2 based on prepared ToR for the national preparatory workshop on “**Sustainability of development in drylands: Increase the synergy between the three Rio conventions**”.

http://www.desertif-actions.fr/pdfda2015/autre_pdf/Terms%20of-references-EN-v3.pdf

This was the first multi- stakeholder workshop focusing on “**synergy of three Rio Conventions**” with participation of NGOs, CBOs, experts from government organisation and national focal points of Rio Conventions. **Summary English report of the workshop is available on:** <http://www.desertif-actions.fr/en/forum-workshop#div4>

Annex 1. Full Persian Report of the workshop



Participation in Desertif'action 2015 – International Forum of Civil Society

Desertif'action 2015 is the civil society International Forum dedicated to land degradation and combating desertification. This forum brought together over 300 participants including civil society members, local authorities, scientists, high-level government officials, donors and heads of the international and multilateral organisations from 57 countries, held in Montpellier, France from 10 to 13 June 2015. All participants shared their concerns and built common positions on desertification and land degradation based on the outcomes of the country preparatory meetings that organized at least in 12 countries such as Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo, Ivory Coast, India, Iran, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Chad, Tunisia and a regional meetings in Middle East and an e-forum with 380 people from 46 countries. The forum focused on 3 axes including:

- Desertification and Land Degradation: Integrating climatic evolutions into decision making and action taking;
- Development Sustainability in Drylands: Creating greater synergy between the three Rio Conventions;
- A Pluralistic and Organized Civil Society: Having a true impact and doing what needs to be done;

During the 3 days of the forum participants worked collaboratively in a form of panel discussions, work groups, public awareness and cultural and scientific events in Montpellier.

[The final declaration of Desertif'actions:](#)

http://www.desertif-actions.fr/english/declaration/Da15_Final-declaration-EN.pdf

More information on the event: <http://www.desertif-actions.fr/en>



**Climate change and the preservation of drylands:
time to act!**

**"STAND FOR
YOUR LANDS"
NOW!**

Collaboration in Drynet¹ Activities Prior to COP12 of UNCCD

Prior to the COP12 Drynet members had close collaboration to be ready for active participation in COP12 of UNCCD. CENESTA as one of the Drynet members & member of the Board, had active participation in the following relevant topics for COP12:

Drynet side event entitled Climate Change Adaptation in Drylands: Actions from the Drynet

Collaboration for preparing the arrangements and agenda of the side event by Drynet members including: TEMA, EMG, CARI, CENESTA and SCOPE. In this side event, Drynet members will showcase some of initiatives from local communities to demonstrate how local land users contribute to the resilience and SLM of natural resources. <http://dry-net.org/drynet-side-event-presentations/>

Drynet joint publication: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in Drylands, Actions by Drynet Members

Joint collaboration of Drynet members for preparing Drynet publication (Drynet booklet) for distribution at COP12 of UNCCD. The title of the booklet is: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in Drylands, Actions by Drynet Members;

<http://dry-net.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Climate-Change-Mitigation-and-Adaptation-in-Drylands.pdf>

Collaboration to DryNet Position Paper on Land Degradation Neutrality;

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/ldn-position-of-drynet-print.pdf>

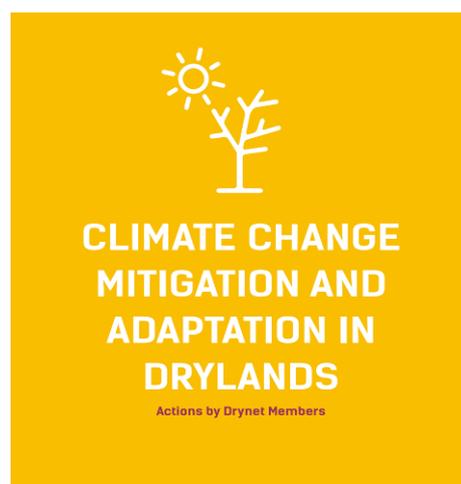
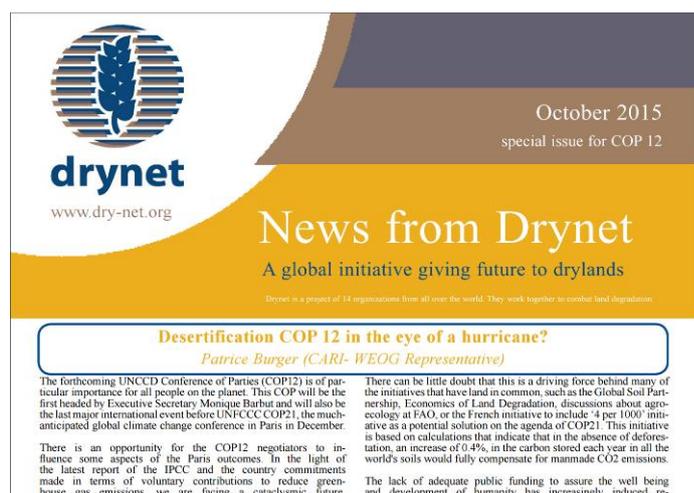
Drynet Global Newsletter - October 2015 Special Issue for COP12

Preparing an article for the Drynet Global Newsletter, Oct. 2015 Special Issue for COP12 of UNCCD. Title of the CENESTA's article:

Sustainable Territory-Based Range Management Plan (STBRM)

A Model for Resilience of Indigenous & Community Conserved Areas & Territories (ICCAs)

<http://dry-net.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Drynet-newsletter-COP-12.pdf>



¹ ***Drynet is a network of NGOs working to support communities affected by land degradation and drought to develop their capacities, strengthen their networks and lobby for more supportive policies in drylands in 15 countries formed in 2007.***

Activities carried out during the COP12 of UNCCD

Civil Society Organisations Preparatory Meeting

Prior to the official meetings of the UNCCD COP12, Accredited CSOs had opportunity to participate in the CSOs Preparatory Meeting that took place from 10 to 11 of October 2015 at the conference venue. I also had this opportunity to attend to this meeting and to the COP12 of the UNCCD as CENESTA representative (Iranian accredited NGO to UNCCD) from 10 to 21 October 2015.

TEMA Foundation, the Turkish civil society organisation with the collaboration of UNCCD CSO panel took the responsibility and prepared a practical agenda for this meeting.

<http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/CivilSociety/Agenda%20Preparatory%20Meeting.pdf>

A sum of 35 CSO representatives from all over the globe participated at COP12 of the UNCCD with financial support of the Governments of Switzerland and Turkey. The CSOs representatives were very active to fulfil the civil society engagement and their full participation during the Twelfth (12th) session of Conference of the Parties (COP12) of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).



The Preparatory Meeting of Civil Society Organisations, 11 October 2012, COP12 of the UNCCD

During the preparatory meeting, the CSOs panel members managed the meeting based on the finalised agreed agenda, and gave an outline and information on COP12 events and its background documents to the participants. This meeting assisted CSOs representatives including Cenesta representative for more organised collaboration, active participation and exchange of COP12 information of the following items:

- Participatory and team working in preparing the CSOs collective statements and interventions in high priority discussed topics during COP12 of the UNCCD including CST, CRIC, COW, High Level Segment, HLS Roundtables, Opening session, Closing session, etc.;
- Formation of regional working group on the CSOs actions on SLM practices, NAPs for the CSOs Open Dialogue Session (ODS), "Demystifying LDN with CSO contributions";

- Organising Land Rights Interactive Discussion, Dialogue with CSOs, High Level Segment;
- Participation and interventions at the various side events of COP12 of the UNCCD;
- Teamwork for preparing various position papers on LDN & LDNF and other hot priority topics;
- Teamwork for preparation CSOs ECO newsletter;
- Meeting and discussion with officials and authorities at all levels (national, regional and international).

Following the discussion of the above mentioned items in CSOs preparatory and daily meetings, The CSOs representatives decided to make a difference in COP12 negotiation process with their full and effective participation and indicate their points of view, concerns and demands in the most important hot topics of the conference focusing on Soil, alignment of UNCCD's goals and its National Action Programmes with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), LDN Fund, Sustainable Land Management etc. In addition the CSOs preparatory meeting emphasized the importance of the forthcoming UNFCCC COP21 event in Paris, on climate change and its relation with desertification and land degradation. UNFCCC COP21 is an important opportunity for COP12 negotiators to influence to the content of Paris agreement, parties contributions to reduce greenhouse gas emission, increase the communities resilience and adaptation strategies and reduce the global warming.

Considering all these important issues, the representatives of Civil Society Organisations prepared their opening statement that delivered by Duygu Kutluay, on behalf of civil society organisations participating COP12 of UNCCD.



Discussion of Asian Countries CSOs Representatives



CSOs Preparatory Meeting, 11 Oct. 2015



CSOs Preparatory Meeting, 11 Oct. 2015

Opening of the 12th Conference of Parties

The 12th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP12) on UNCCD started on Monday afternoon, 12 October in Ankara, Turkey. The host country, Turkey. A moment of silence was observed for the families and all those who lost their lives in deadly bomb explosions that took place in Ankara.

The president of COP, Dr. Veysel Eroğlu, Minister of Forestry and Water Affairs, Turkey, noted climate change, desertification and drought are the most important challenges in the world that effect 1.5 billion people.

Executive Secretary, Ms. Monique Barbut, highlighted the current increasing situation of desertification and land degradation in the globe and noted desertification and land degradation not only are causing food, energy and water insecurity, but also intensify the threats such as forced migration and conflict. Ms. Barbut highlighted the inclusion of the Land Degradation Neutrality in sustainable development goals and stated, Land is now playing a greater role in climate change debates (emission reduction and carbon sequestration) and is recognized as the missing piece in climate negotiations, therefore land rehabilitation is inseparable and essential part of the “Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)” of the parties in the context of the climate COP. She noted, if land degradation neutrality is adopted as a target by country parties, the UNCCD won’t need to change its strategy in 2018. She also mentioned to the increasing number of accredited civil society organisations to the conventions as a larger group of actors and other stakeholders such as trade unions, parliamentarians, business, etc. for integrating their strength into convention’s decision making bodies. Ms. Barbut noted, we are building a powerful movement aimed for the implementation of the convention and we should play an important role to improve food, energy and water security, and achieving sustainable development goals through combating desertification and mitigation of climate change issues.

After the opening remarks, regional and country representatives as well as the speakers from various organizations and groups made their opening statements with focusing on urgent action on combating desertification, land degradation, drought, soil and climate change issues as well as strengthening the convention and considering the role of land based approaches to climate change adaptation and combating desertification. They also welcomed to the adoption of the LDN target in the framework of the SDGs and land degradation neutral world by 2030.

TEMA Foundation, on behalf of the civil society organizations delivered the CSOs opening statement in the opening session of COP12, in this statement they highlighted the role of communities to improve land management and noted their concern on the role of private sector in LDN investments.



The CSOs Opening Statement at UNCCD COP12

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/12/the-cso-opening-statement-at-unccdcop12/>

Mr President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you all on behalf of TEMA Foundation and Turkish civil society, to Turkey, the homeland of the Anatolian people who love their soils with a deep passion. Hoşgeldiniz (welcome)! Since 1992 TEMA Foundation has effectively promoted sustainable land management in Turkey and ensured that the issue is addressed in public policy. In 2012 TEMA was among the first the Land for Life Award for these efforts.

For these reasons, we are honoured to see you all here in our country for UNCCD COP 12 and to contribute as the local NGO focal point. We would like to thank our CSO colleagues, UNCCD Secretariat and other participants for the condolences and solidarity they extended in these hard times our country is going through. We are honoured today to be delivering the opening statement of CSOs attending this Conference.

2015 is the international year of soil. The UN has drawn attention to the vital importance of the conservation of the soil, which is under enormous pressure due to the increasing needs of the expanding world population and the persistence of economic models that exploit and pollute the natural resources. These unsustainable patterns of development only lead to more poverty and inequality, displacement, migration and civic disruption, with devastating impacts on the most vulnerable segments of the population specifically women and children.

This year we have witnessed the biggest migration flow in the World. It is estimated that there will be 200 to 350 million environmental refugees by 2050. Sustainable land management and land rehabilitation are more crucial than ever for human well-being. Ensuring sound governance of land and prevention of land conflicts has become an imperative.

Because the livelihoods of so many are directly dependent on the quality and productivity of land and its resources, degradation of land is not only a menace to ecosystems and biodiversity, it is also a direct threat to food security, sustainability, poverty alleviation, and to the political stability of entire regions of the world.

This September, 193 countries came together in New York to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 15 specifically calls for the protection, restoration and sustainable management of land-based ecosystems. Target 15.3 envisages the achievement of a Land Degradation Neutral World by the year 2030.

As CSOs, we welcome the concept of LDN and the fact that soils have received the deserved focus among SDGs. However, we believe that it is important to sharpen the concept and clarify the thinking so that LDN can become a valued tool to advance the wellbeing of people and the health of ecosystems, and not one that could be used to undermine people's tenure security and livelihoods, destabilise communities, or provide a license to degrade. Questions of measurement of impacts, equity and governance must be addressed.

It is clear to all that additional financial resources are needed to achieve LDN, but any funding mechanism should allow communities to improve land management and not promote transfer of land to third parties.

Commercial and political pressure on land is increasing every day and foreign investment in land is a major threat to smallholder agriculture globally, especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Private public



partnerships that lead to alienation of land from its traditional users will in effect be using public funds to impoverish the lives of land users. The FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure should be adhered to in all cases.

2015 is the year when a new climate deal will be decided in Paris, during the 21st COP of UNFCCC. The significance of sound land management to stabilising the climate is increasingly recognised in these negotiations. Not only does 95% of all our food come from the soil, but it is a massive carbon sink that regulates our climate.

As civil society, we kindly request from all the delegations here to make the decisions and processes as participatory as possible and ensuring that the voice of civil society contributes to shaping the decisions made by this COP. Last but not least, it is important to remember that this convention will be implemented by the people. And it is our duty to help them embrace and appropriate this. **Thank You.**

Delivered by Duygu Kutluay, from TEMA Foundation, on behalf of the civil society organizations

Collaboration in preparing CSOs collective statements & interventions

Collaboration and participation in preparing the CSOs statements and interventions on hot topics discussed issues on various sessions of COP12 such as CST, CRIC, COW, High Level Segment, HLS Roundtables, Opening Session, Closing Session, etc., was another part of CSOs representatives' activities during the COP12 of the UNCCD. The CSOs representatives including CENESTA's representative participated in preparing various statements through brain storming in CSOs daily meetings, team working or give their points of view and inputs for preparing those documents.



CSOs Daily Meetings

The CSOs Open Dialogue Sessions

Open Dialogue Sessions (ODS) are unique feature of the UNCCD and its commitment for promoting the civil society organisations participation, where CSOs and Parties of the UNCCD meet during the COP and discuss their experiences and contributions and debate the burning concerns of CSOs.

Open Dialogue Session: “Demystifying the LDN with CSO contributions”

The first Open Dialogue Session of COP12, entitled “Demystifying the LDN with CSO contributions” held in 15 October and provide opportunity to participants to present how LDN could be applied at local and national levels. The members of the first Open Dialogue Session consisted the CSO representatives from different regions such as Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. The regional representatives described various examples demonstrating local initiatives on CSOs involvement in NAP process, community reforestation, water harvesting, conservation of nature, community resilience, sustainable land and soil management, restoration, adaptation to climate change and combating desertification by local land users aiming the heart Land Degradation Neutrality and focusing on sustainable livelihoods of local communities from different regions of the globe.



The session moderated by Noel Oettle of Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG) from South Africa. The keynote address given by Jonathan Davies from IUCN, by providing an excellent critique of Land Degradation Neutrality and pointing out some of the challenges that face the global community in achieving the SDGs, emphasizing considering strengthening of natural resource governance, ensuring human rights, gender equity and tenure security. He noted, Land Degradation Neutrality concept should not be seen as a ‘license to degrade’ and LDN should consider sustainable land management practices such as ecosystem based adaptation, agro-ecology, forest landscape restoration, sustainable pastoralism, agroforestry, indigenous and community conserved areas (ICCAs) and protected areas.

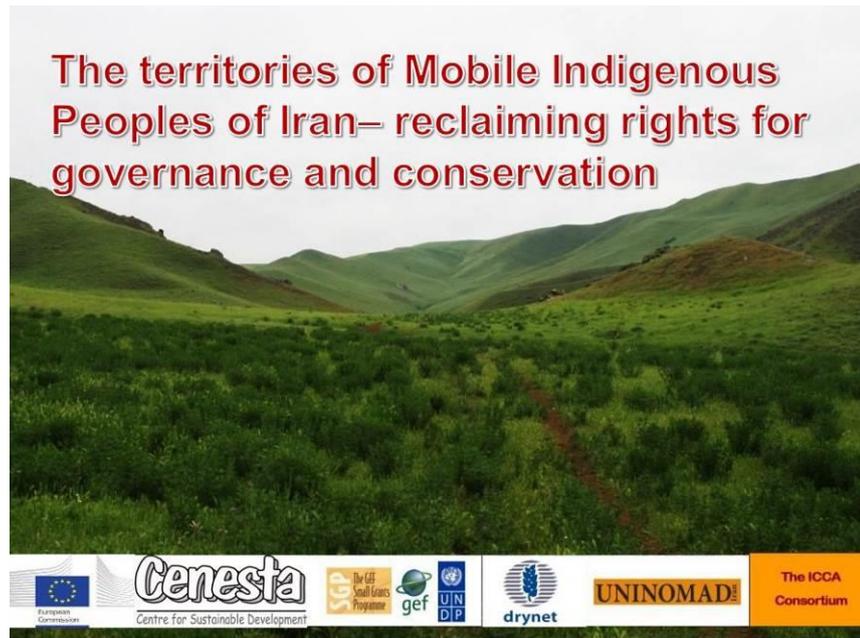
Presentations from regional representatives: Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe focused on CSOs and local land users efforts and initiatives on sustainable land management practices as the heart of Land Degradation Neutrality and highlighted the importance of their partnership with other stakeholders in addressing the right design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation process of Land Degradation Neutrality and achieving aims of the Convention.

Cenesta representative collaborated in the Asian regional presentation by giving inputs and highlighting “The Territories of Mobile Indigenous Peoples of Iran– reclaiming rights for governance and conservation” .

After panel presentations several parties shared their points of views in terms of LDN and appreciated the CSOs role for achieving Land

Degradation Neutrality in their countries, but due to the absence of many country parties in CSOs Open Dialogue Session on LDN debate, it raised a big question mark and evidence that parties not only do not pay attention to the essential role of local land users and CSOs as the heart of LDN planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation process! but also to the negative short and long term impact in restoration and conservation of natural resources, ecosystems and sustainable livelihoods to local land users.

<http://dry-net.org/open-dialogue-session-at-cop-12-demystifying-ldn/>



Patrice Burger (CARI, France) urged achievement of the SDGs, noting that uncertainties around the LDN concept should be addressed

Attending and interventions at the side events during COP12 of the UNCCD

- Presentation and intervention at the side event organised by Drynet Partners 13 October, on: **Climate Change Adaptation in Drylands: Actions from the Drynet;**

This side event focused on sustainable land management and climate change adaptation and held through presentations, displayed examples of local land users contributing to the resilience of local communities and SLM of natural resources.



The speakers at the side event were:

- **Nahid Naghizadeh, CENESTA Iran**
- **Cem İskender Aydın, TEMA Turkey**
- **Noel Oettle, EMG South Africa**
- **Tanveer Arif, SCOPE Pakistan**
- **Patrice Burger, CARI France**

For detailed information on presentation of each speaker, please follow the links below.

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/13/presentations-from-the-drynet-side-event-october-13/>

Nahid Naghizadeh, CENESTA Iran:

- Coping with Climate Change and Droughts: How the Abolhassani Tribal Confederacy reinvented their system of natural resource management within their Customary Territory.

Cem İskender Aydın, TEMA, Turkey:

- Soil- climate change relationships and TEMA's work on enhancing soils carbon holding capacity.



Noel Oettle, EMG, South Africa:

- Participatory adaptation by small-scale rooibos tea farmers in the arid west of South Africa.

Tanveer Areef, SCOPE, Pakistan:

- Building climate change resilience among the dryland communities in Tharparkar Pakistan.

Patrice Burger, CARI, France:

- Stand for your lands, now! Lessons learned from the Desertif' Actions 2015 CSO forum in Montpellier, and their relevance for adaptation to climate change.

- Participation at the side event organised by WOCAT, 13 Oct. **UNCCD Reporting of SLM Best Practices New and Adapted System by WOCAT;**
- Participation at the event held in Rio Convention Pavilion, by UNDP Equator Initiative & Partners, 14 Oct. **Day for Indigenous Peoples and Local Community Sustainable Land Managers;**
 - **Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Implementation of the Rio Conventions: Combating Desertification, Climate Change & Biodiversity Loss Post-2015;**
 - **Building Resilience in Drylands Ecosystems: Multi Stakeholder Engagement for Social-Ecological Resilience;**
- Participation at the side event organised by Ministry of the Environment of Japan, Green Development and Tourism of Mongolia, Global Environmental Forum, Arid Lands Research Centre of Tottori University, Institute of Geography & Geo-ecology and Mongolian Academy of Sciences, 15th Oct. on: **Community Based Arid Rangeland Management—Towards Ecological Risk Reduction and SDGs—**
- Participation at the side event co-organised by OSS, IRD, SREC & CARI, 15 October on: **Implementing Effective and Sustainable Land Degradation Neutrality** and debate: **Changing the Game of Combating Land Degradation: How Land Degradation Neutrality Can Help?**



- Participation at the event on: Women’s Empowerment for A Land Degradation Neutral World, UNCCD COP12, Gender Day, 16 Oct. **Session 1: Ensuring Women Land Rights for A Sustainable Future & Session 4: Where Are the Women in Decision Making?**
- Intervention at the side event organized by IUFRO, UNCCD, GM and FAO, 16 Oct., 2015 on: **The Contribution of Forests and Trees to Food Security and Land Degradation Neutrality in Drylands**
- Intervention at the side event organized by IUCN, 16th Oct. on: **Nature-Based Solutions to Desertification— Integrating landscape Management Approaches for Land Degradation Neutrality;**



CSOs and the 12th Session of the Committee on Science and Technology

The Committee on Science and Technology (CST) is one of the subsidiary bodies of the UNCCD. During COP12 of the UNCCD the 12th session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) took place in parallel to the COP.

On behalf of the CSOs Panel a group of CSO representatives participated in CST sessions for following up the discussions and share the position of CSOs related to science, local knowledge and technology. They had an active role on advocating CSOs greater involvement in future scientific conference and ensuring greater



input from CSO networks to support knowledge sharing on DLDD and SLM, including through the SKBP (*Scientific Knowledge Brokering Portal*). Representatives of this group delivered three statements on behalf of the CSOs and also made two text proposals to CST decisions L1 and L2 as follows:

- L1 – Outcomes of Cancun Conference: for the parties to support the strengthening of networks, including civil society organization networks.
- L2 – Improving the efficiency of the CST: to consider civil society organizations in the process of selection of experts for the implementation of SPI mechanisms.

Marioldy Sanchez, the CSOs observer to the SPI, interacted with SPI members for sharing the perspective of CSOs and the importance to involve them as partners in the process of linking science to policy.

CSOs representatives also emphasized, “The participation of civil society in the future institutional arrangements for scientific advice that will be discussed in this COP can contribute to the efficiency of the CST and ensure the consideration and use of locally and traditionally held knowledge for achieving the goal of LDN”.

In prepared statements for CST on behalf of CSOs, Marioldy Sanchez noted the importance of dialogue between science and policy for decision-making and focused on improving the relationship between the scientific and decision-making sectors and civil society, institutionalization of multi-stakeholder participation, operationalization of the concept of LDN based on the local communities practices, considering CSOs as key partners in the process of collection, analysis, dissemination and accessibility of best practices at local level and recommended the consideration and use of locally and traditionally held knowledge for achieving the goal of LDN.

Yair Levy, stated, the CSO panel welcomes the improvement proposals from the CST. Awareness about newly created challenges should nevertheless be stressed. Improving the efficiency of the CST

could add administrative burden to the convention's process. The important work of the mandated SPI may translate in additional bureaucracy for diplomacy and overheads for CSOs.

More than ever, the availability of accessible tools and applicable methodologies to reach LDN at various scales allow all stakeholders to heed the convention's call for action.



CSO statements for the Committee on Science and Technology (CST)

<https://civilsocietyatunccdop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/13/cso-cst-statement/>

<https://civilsocietyatunccdop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/15/cso-panels-cst-statement/>

Linking scientific knowledge with decision-making

(a) Work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2016-2017

<https://civilsocietyatunccdop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/15/cso-statement-at-the-cst-plenary-session-of-15102015-10-13h/>

The CST developed six decisions for COP consideration, regarding the outcomes of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference on improving the efficiency of the CST, improving knowledge dissemination, and the work programme of the Science-Policy Interface (SPI), among other issues that are as follows:

Six Developed Decisions of The Committee on Science and Technology for COP Consideration	
Ref. #	Final Decision
ICCD/COP(12)/CS T/L.1/Rev.1	The engagement of the SPI (Science Policy Interface) with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and other relevant bodies and initiatives; parties' use of policies and strategies that support both LDN and climate change adaptation; and greater input from CSO networks to support knowledge sharing on DLDD and SLM, including through the SKBP (<i>Scientific Knowledge Brokering Portal</i>).
ICCD/COP(12)/CST/L.2	The COP, <i>inter alia</i> , calls for: future scientific meetings on DLDD to be decoupled from official sessions of the CST; the SPI mandate, as contained in decision 23/COP.11, paragraph 3, to be extended to enable the SPI, under the leadership of the CST Bureau, to <i>inter alia</i> : provide the CST with clear and well-defined thematic guidance on scientific knowledge requirements for implementing the UNCCD; identify the most optimal way to address these knowledge requirements; select experts known for their expertise in DLDD; and the CST, with the support of the SPI, to regularly monitor the short-, medium- and long-term impacts of the scientific work carried out for the UNCCD.
ICCD/COP(12)/C ST/L.3/Rev.1	The COP, <i>inter alia</i> , calls for: the further use and strengthening of the WOCAT reporting system; an enhanced "capacity-building and awareness-raising" thematic topic by the Secretariat through the Capacity Building Marketplace; and continued development of the SKBP.
ICCD/COP(12)/ CST/L.4/Rev.1	The COP, <i>inter alia</i> , calls for the SPI to: continue its engagement with IPBES, especially on the Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment; encourage greater involvement from the roster of experts; and develop policy briefs, including policy-oriented options, on the topics covered in the work programme.
ICCD/COP(12)/CST/L.5	Recalling Article 24, paragraph two of the Convention, the COP, <i>inter alia</i> , requests the Secretariat to facilitate the notification of experts from the roster of independent experts of the activities and opportunities to, among others: participate in scientific events, including technical expert meetings and international and regional conferences; and act as reviewers of science-based products elaborated under the SPI; participate in international expert panels and assessments on DLDD. The decision notes that experts shall express their views in their own name and not in the name of the UNCCD. The decision also requests the Secretariat to integrate the roster of independent expert's database into the SKBP and encourages parties to propose new experts in order to achieve a better gender balance, and to include more experts from the social and economic sciences, especially experts on traditional and local knowledge, know-how and practices.
ICCD/COP(12)/CST/L.6	The COP calls for CST 13 to focus, <i>inter alia</i> , on the review of the work conducted by the SPI during the biennium 2016-2017 and on its overall achievements since its establishment in order to decide on the future functioning of the SPI. The decision also calls for CST 13 to be organized in such a way as to facilitate a thematic dialogue between the parties and the SPI regarding the policy implications of the scientific outputs, and to enable the formulation of policy-relevant recommendations.

CSOs and 14th Session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC)

Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) is one of the subsidiary body of the UNCCD. During COP12 of the UNCCD the 14th session of Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) took place in parallel to the COP.

On behalf of the CSOs a group of CSO representatives actively participated at the CRIC meetings through giving statements and interventions for influencing the final decisions of the CRIC.

Emmanuel S. SECK from 'ENDA' (CSO from Senegal), at CRIC meeting on **Consideration of Best Practices: Promoting the Analysis and Dissemination of Best Practices** gave an intervention for CSOs and shared examples of best practices on sustainable Land management. He stated, for the decades civil society organisations gained experience in working with people, research institutes and states in SLM practices such as sustainable agriculture, agroforestry, land restoration, land regeneration, sanitation and it is necessary to establish "Communities of Practice" to better value the diversity of best practices and ensure sustained interaction.

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.wordpress.com/page/6/>



Panel on Identification of Recommended Databases of Best Practices. L-R: **Herve Trebossen**, OSS; **Pietro Laureano**, IPOGEA; **Emmanuel Seck**, ENDA; **Sally Bunning**, FAO; **Mary Rowen**, Chair, CRIC; **Radhika Ochalik**, UNCCD Secretariat; **Massimo Candelori**, UNCCD Secretariat; and **Hanspeter Liniger**, WOCAT.

<http://www.iisd.ca/desert/cric11/18apr.html>



On behalf of the CSOs, Patrice Burger, from CARI gave a statement and thanked the UNCCD for supporting civil society members. He stated CSOs panel surprised due to stopping funding for the CSOs panel in 2016 and continued, after that date the panel may not continue to operate unless there are voluntary contributions. He recalled the work of the CSOs panel since its establishment especially the last two years and the progress of CSOs contribution in various sectors including regional representation in the five UN regions. Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe, European countries and other groups. Beside CSOs

acknowledge of financial contribution from Switzerland, he stated the present panel created by

decision of COP9 and improved by COP10 and COP11 decisions and it is a tool that has seriously increased the efficiency of CSOs participation and create participatory spirit at all events of the convention. At the end they stated: Mr President, we simply say, voluntary support to the work of the panel by one country is not a feasible option. We therefore call on other countries carry their part of the responsibility.

<https://civilsocietyatuncdcop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/13/cso-statement-pronounced-today-in-cric/>

The CRIC developed eight decisions for COP consideration, regarding, *inter alia*: collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (GEF); establishment of national-level voluntary LDN targets within National Action Programmes (NAPs) and national reports, including funding to support national target-setting towards achieving LDN; actions to achieve the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008-2018) (the Strategy); procedures for communication of information to be submitted to the COP, including on progress indicators for trends in land cover, land productivity, and carbon stocks; and a results framework against which the CST, CRIC, Global Mechanism (GM) and Secretariat will organize their work for the period 2016-2019.

High Level Segment, Dialogue with CSOs, Private Sector and Parliamentarians

The High-Level Segment started from 21-22 October, including an opening session by President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, ministerial roundtables entitled "Translating Land Degradation Neutrality into Action," "Mainstreaming Drought Management Policy in National Agendas and Mitigating the Effects of Drought," and "Climate Change Resilience through Sustainable Land Management." The second day of the high-level segment followed by three dialogue sessions with civil society organizations (CSOs), private sector, and parliamentarians.



Opening session, High level Segment

Opening session of the High Level Segment addressed by President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, he stated that a new approach to nature is needed for humanity to find lasting solutions to climate change and desertification and called for global solidarity and collaboration to combat desertification, land degradation and climate change issues.

Gyan Chandra Acharya, on behalf of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, urged Parties to support LDN, as it promotes climate change resilience and supports the poor and most vulnerable.

Monique Barbut, the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, noted the speed and dedication it took to build the Giza pyramids, emphasizing that parties have to be ambitious and build “metaphorical pyramids” of SLM. She cautioned that climate change will exacerbate land degradation, and can lead to increased conflict and extremist activity.

The session followed by Regional and interest groups’ statements from G-77/CHINA, the AFRICAN STATES, the ASIA-PACIFIC STATES, CEE, GRULAC and the EU mostly focusing on implementing LDN to achieve the SDGS in particular to SDG 15.3, alignment of the 10-year Strategy with the LDN target, increased finding on land degradation, synergies among three Rio Conventions, and expectation of COP12 for a science-based definition of LDN and integrating the LDN target into the Convention.

CSOs Statement to the High Level Session on Boosting Stakeholder Engagement in the implementation of the UNCCD

Addressed by Noel Oettlé, Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG), South Africa

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. I have the honour today to address the Conference on behalf of the civil society organisations attending this, the Twelfth Conference of the Parties of the UNCCD.

It is our privilege and our challenge to work closely with land users in our countries, to be able to understand something of their circumstances. Article 5 (d) of the UNCCD calls on Parties to ‘promote awareness and facilitate the participation of local populations, particularly women and youth, with the support of non-governmental organizations, in efforts to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought’, and this is our calling.

Healthy soils support healthy crops. They absorb far greater quantities of rain, recharging ground water and sustaining life in a multitude of forms. They limit erosion and siltation and buffer against droughts, floods and landslides. These truths we hold to be self-evident.

We know the impacts of the changing climate upon the land and the people, and we engage with them in their endeavours to adapt to these changes. We also observe how some land users exploit land and water resources in order to enrich themselves at the cost of the earth itself.

In August this year Istanbul hosted a symposium of Islamic thinkers and leaders, who formulated a declaration on climate change. They stated:

“We are but one of the multitude of living beings with whom we share the Earth;



We have no right to oppress the rest of creation or cause it harm;

Intelligence and conscience bequeathed to us, as our faith commands, to treat all things with care and awe of their Creator, compassion and utmost good”

These words speak to us all, believers and non-believers alike. They move us to act, and they move us not to act if our actions will exploit and even destroy.

In a world gone mad with materialist consumption it is tempting to conclude that the only way to engage stakeholders in sustainable management of the land is to buy their participation with incentives and the promise of profit. Much as these elements are important, we misunderstand our own nature if we limit our engagement to them. Our profound curiosity and our desire to engage in social intercourse and action are great motivators. So too is our pleasure in creation, which finds expression in producing crops and shaping landscapes. At this conference we have been shown wonderful images of Turkish agricultural landscapes that have been nurtured by generations of farmers.

When soil is in good heart, the land is a great teacher and a generous provider. Many land users are caring stewards of the soil. Engage the whole person, in the context of their identity and community, and land users will gain new insights and act on these to take better care of the soil and water that nourish and sustain them.

In this time of global excess and ostentatious wealth, we are told that there are not enough resources available to fund SLM. In this context, we welcome and encourage the engagement of all sincere contributors to the global efforts to sustain the land. The public sector, the private sector and the voluntary sector all have vital roles to play if we are to stop the madness of our “land degradation negative” world. All should be subject to ethical codes and accountable for any negative impacts of their actions on the environment or on land using communities.

It is not only the land that is eroding: globally, communities are also eroding as young people abandon the land for the promise of a better life in the cities, where nostalgia for a simpler, greener life engulfs many. Voters and governments must reshape economic policies, and education systems to create more enticing land-based opportunities for young people. Equally importantly, young people must be enabled to enjoy and develop a deep love for nature. We must create platforms for young people to learn about and experience the land in all its wonder.

One of the Equator Award winners for Sustainable Land Management represented at this COP was a co-operative of farmers that has used its trade links to create value and generate wealth whilst also caring for the land. Its trading partners and consumers in the global north contribute in a very direct way to sustaining the environment of the farming community, and creating a land-based future for the young people who would otherwise migrate to the urban jungle.

What enables the success of triple bottom line enterprises like the Heiveld Co-operative? Internally it requires collective vision and ambition, awareness and knowledge of the environment and its interconnectedness, and also transparent and equitable governance. Externally it requires a sound regulatory environment, honest trading partners and consumers willing to reward producers for the social and environmental benefits that they are generating.

In conclusion, let us take inspiration from nature itself: within infinite complexity lies infinite resilience. We need not blindly embrace so-called innovative solutions whose glowing promise has not yet been dulled by reality. As a global community we have plentiful solutions. Let us demonstrate our commitment and put them to work.

High Level Segment, Roundtables

The afternoon of 20 October dedicated to the Ministers and other head of states held roundtable discussions to identify possible solutions to water scarcity, land degradation and desertification while upholding efforts to mitigate the effects of drought and preventing further degradation. The round tables had the themes:

Roundtable 1. From Global to Local: Translating LDN into Action

The roundtable 'Translating LDN into Action' focused on importance of the SDGs for efforts to address DLDD, domestically land degradation initiatives, LDN as a global objective, emphasizing to existing challenges such as sand storms, food security, soil depletion, extended drought, extreme weather incidents, impact of increased refugees to natural resources, etc., and suggesting building "collaboration frameworks" to exchange information, integrated approaches, incorporating scientific and traditional knowledge to fight land degradation. The EU highlighted the availability of EU funds for DLDD, Germany stressed that LDN implemented at the country level provides a common goal to monitor progress and Switzerland called attention to WOCAT.

CSOs emphasized preventing land degradation rather than land rehabilitation and declared CSOs concern about the possible outcomes of a financing system of LDN which is essentially based in private sources.

CSOs Statement at the Roundtable 1: From Global to Local, Translating Land Degradation Neutrality into Action

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/22/csos-statement-at-the-round-table-1-from-global-to-local/>

I would like to remind us that "**land degradation neutrality**" is a concept, an inspirational concept that should become an objective for the UNCCD and help to raise the concerns of land in the current international debate on climate change. It is a hypothetical state whereby the amount and quality of land resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services, as well as the enhancement of food security remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems. It is not a reality in any country in the world at this time, and as such it is an aspirational concept.

For the CSO community, this concept is promising. It aims to promote sustainable development of affected lands and the people living in these lands.

However, concept is one thing. Transforming it in a public policy and defining its modalities of implementation is another.

It is clear that one of the main restrictions to promoting sustainable land management is the absence of adequate financing, hence the attraction of private funding to support the fight against desertification.

Mr. Chair, the CSO community is very much concerned about the possible outcomes of a financing system of LDN which is essentially based in private sources.

To begin with, **financing LDN should not primarily be directed at rehabilitation initiatives, but should focus on the crucial aspects of preventing and reducing land degradation**, i.e. sustainable land management (SLM).

This is the most cost-effective approach to conserving the global commons. Without concerted efforts to conserve healthy ecosystems, we will only partly address LDN.

Another important consideration is that financing LDN mechanisms should not only be directed to the rehabilitation of large scale areas, driven by a business model that seeks for profitable commercial investment. Financing LDN must also contribute to the objective of reducing poverty and food insecurity as stated in the UNCCD.

And of course, financing LDN should primarily focus on supporting efforts by small-scale farmers whose livelihoods are critically affected by land degradation: they should be first beneficiaries and also active actors in achieving land degradation neutrality.

Mr. Chairman, the CSO community refuses to see the land rights of populations being endangered by financing LDN systems.

We want neither to see land increasingly becoming a commodity in financial or speculative markets, nor the private sector taking over responsibilities which are actually the duty of states and public stakeholders: to foster and finance sustainable land management.

In other words, we do not want to see LDN as a license to degrade the soils in other areas, or to see an unbalanced consideration between financial profit and environmental and social concerns.

Delivered by Tanveer Arif on behalf of CSOs



Roundtable 2. Drought Adaptation: Mainstreaming Drought Management Policy in National Agendas and Mitigating the Effects of Drought

In drought and adaptation roundtable, the keynote address given by India on the importance of rainwater harvesting on drought management and promotion of people's awareness to cope with the drought in vulnerable communities. Delegates discussed the importance of developing national policies for drought prevention, preparedness, regional forecasting centres supported by WMO and integrating traditional knowledge with modern technologies as well as "drought risk reduction" policies at the international level. The EU and CSOs called for innovative drought management policies, emphasizing the need to involve local communities in formulation of drought related policies and programmes and their implementation.

CSOs Statement at the Round Table 2: Drought adaptation, Mainstreaming drought management policy in national agendas and mitigating the effects of drought

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/22/csos-statement-on-drought-adaptation-working-group/>

Globally, drought is an insidious hazard of nature, referred as a "creeping phenomenon" and its impacts vary among regions. Drought is a cyclical phenomenon, with some cycles taking extremely long, and with climatic change affecting the duration and intensity of these phenomena. Drought often results in severe production shortfalls and food and nutritional insecurity in the world's poorest countries and drylands communities who have developed efficient pastoral and mixed cropping systems adapted to the difficult conditions of drylands and sustained their livelihoods for centuries.

Drylands have an immense scientific, ecological, economic and social value. They take up 41.3% of the land surface, 40% of the world's population and 44% of all the world's cultivated systems.

Having this in mind and the impact of drought on drylands communities and its unavoidable cost, we as CSO community call for urgent and immediate attention of all policy and decision makers to enable our dryland societies to be more resilient in the face of drought.

With regards to the governance of drought and climate change issues, an effective and enabling policy should be developed to promote local governance systems and mechanisms to reduce drought risk. It is crucial to strengthen the customary institutions and building the capacities of drought affected communities to ensure their participation in the governance system. Foremost, involving drylands communities in decision and policy making process at all levels is key to an effective reaction to droughts and other environmental tensions.

Furthermore, **Strengthening Community Resilience to cope with the drought and other natural disasters should be the key objective. Therefore, a better understanding of the indigenous knowledge of drylands communities, their local adaptation resilience strategies and innovations and know-how to manage their drylands territories is crucial.** Participatory documentation on drought affected communities on their valuable biodiversity would provide a credible database with respect to communities rights.

Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems for Climate Resilient Development and adaptation to climate change in particular at local levels is crucial. Therefore, these early warning systems should be easily accessible for drought-affected communities. The high diversity of

domestic flora & fauna and local genetic resources resistance to drought and environmental tensions should be strongly promoted and pressure to shift the natural ecosystems (lands) for agricultural, industrial, business and other development purposes should be halted.

Earlier approaches to range ecology in drylands should be halted and adequate attention should be given to introduce the concept of non-equilibrium ecosystems (NEE) as the basis for range management in drought affected areas and communities. Furthermore recognition of Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) and governance of those area should be given to drought affected communities.



In conclusion we as CSOs want to draw your attention once more to drought affected communities, who are the stewards of drylands with their precious indigenous knowledge, customary laws, practices and spiritual and material sense of ownership. Practically and ethically, they should be deeply involved in policy and decision making process as well as in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of SLM to cope with the drought and climate change issues.

Delivered by Remi Hemeryck on behalf of CSOs on October 20, 2015

Roundtable 3. Land-based adaptation to climate change: resilience through sustainable land management

The discussion of this roundtable focused on the effects of climate change at all levels and its close relation with other socio-economic and ecological consequences. Delegates described about their policy frameworks and land management systems in different types of ecosystems by various techniques such as soil erosion control, agroecology and addressed to strengthening local and indigenous adaptation and resilience strategies, early warning systems, etc., CBD Executive Secretary, highlighted the weakened resilience and adaptation of lands and peoples due to loss of ecosystems and biodiversity. Several delegates suggested applying the World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy, need for detailed spatial information, national land audit, considering the role of consumers and the private sector, the importance of a monitoring, reporting and verification system and the importance of land tenure security.

CSOs Statement at the Round Table 3. Land-based adaptation to climate change: resilience through sustainable land management

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/21/cso-statement-on-the-land-based-approach-to-climate-change-resilience-through-sustainable-land-management/>

Mr. Chair, members of the round table, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you. I'm speaking on behalf of the CSOs present here on the COP12 in Ankara.

The impacts of the climate change threaten to the largest extent the livelihoods of the small-scale farmers that are usually not able to compensate for the seasonal agricultural losses caused by extreme weather conditions and other immediate climate change effects. These effects could potentially lead to increased food insecurity and deterioration of the conditions of the natural resource base within the local communities.

The sustainable land management (SLM), as well as combating poverty were and still are the main focus of the UNCCD. Not only does it improve the resilience of the land and increases the soil fertility, it influences the lives of the local communities that are cultivating the lands, contributing to their economic stability, diversifying the activities of the people and the resources they depend upon. Effectively, it builds the resilience of the communities against climate change effects.

The ecosystem services, which could be protected and restored through SLM, are a source of different benefits, including economic benefits that do not necessarily come from the agriculture use. The ecosystems also provide for various services that could be used as tools for climate change resilience. These refer to ecosystems where the vegetation protects the land against water and aerial erosion, but also other types of land degradation.

Having this in mind, the SLM could provide for numerous ways of strengthening the resilience of land and people against the emerging climate change effects, but also contributing to strengthening the local communities, support to local culture and securing livelihoods for small farmers. On the other hand, the SLM and reinforcement of the ecosystem services are also the textbook example of the co-dependence and perplexity of the two issues: climate change and land degradation.

Dear Mr. Chair, for that matter, there is a necessity of appropriation of UNCCD and further advocacy and mainstreaming of the agroecology policy frameworks on both local and national level, but also on the level of the UNCCD. Additionally, due to the increased benefits of the SLM, the financial resources should focus on the implementation of the SLM activities, which will subsequently lead to climate change resilience, strengthening of the local communities and protecting the land users, while also affecting the biodiversity and ultimately contributing to the land degradation neutrality.

We as CSOs want to draw attention to the importance of the holistic approach to land protection that involves land users, landowners and local communities in general. However, this holistic approach is only possible with the support of the national governments through establishing adequate policies that enforce SLM, and the UNCCD that provides framework for worldwide cooperation on this issue.

Finally, we would like to ask the parties whether there are contributions that UNCCD's can make to UNFCCC COP that will happen in a month in Paris and what are the synergies that need to be stressed, especially regarding finance. Climate and desertification thematic, not only within the UN Convention, need to walk hand by hand.

Thank you, Mr./Ms. Chair, *Speech delivered by Carolina Gomes, IABS*

Dialogue with CSOs on Land Rights, High Level Segment

On Wednesday, 21 October, COP 12 delegates participated in dialogues on land rights. CSOs and delegates discussed land rights and the need for actions to ensure tenure security and recognition of customary land rights.

The panel members of the dialogue: Mr. Kevin Kamuya, from Utooni Development Organization; Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim from the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC) and Mr. Michael Taylor from the International Land Coalition. The dialogue chaired by Barbara Thomson, Deputy Minister, Environmental Affairs, SOUTH AFRICA, and moderated by Paddy Woodwrth. Some highlights of the dialogue are as follows:

- Recognition of the customary and communal land rights by national laws;
- Recognition of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities governance over their customary territories;
- Ending "land grabs, through regularizing tenure of squatters;
- Tackling weak governance and corruption in land governance systems;
- Clear links between land grabs, marginalization, poverty and radicalization;
- Undertaking participatory reform and multi stakeholder discussion on land tenure systems and equitable land rights,

The Key Outcomes of the Dialogue with CSOs on Land Rights at the High Level Segment of the UNCCD COP12

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/24/key-outcomes-of-the-discussion-at-the-high-level-segment-of-the-unccd-cop12/>

To undertake adequately the problem of land rights it is necessary to do the following:

1. Secure land rights are a prerequisite to achieving LDN;
2. The implementation of land tenure systems for the dry lands must become participatory and multi-stakeholder process, locally appropriate and more strategic; not only taking into account the dynamic nature of the dry land ecology, but also considering the dynamic nature of the multiple users who depend on dry lands.
3. Narrowing the gap between land which indigenous peoples and local communities claim and land which governments recognize as owned and controlled by communities is a vital step.
4. Recognize collective rights of land users, especially regarding the livelihoods of pastoralists, indigenous peoples and women, as a first step to supporting community-based management systems to prevent degradation and restore land
5. Give access and rights to land for men and women, especially vulnerable and indigenous peoples, in an equitable manner to achieve the eradication of poverty.
6. Tackle the weak governance and corruption endemic to the land governance system in many countries which often favor the status quo and harm the interests of poor people.
7. Champion reforms and investments to document all communal lands and prime lands that are individually owned.
8. Democratize and secure land rights are key to continue sustainable management of natural resources, and to sustain indigenous peoples and local communities traditional knowledge.
9. Challenges of undocumented land particularly in Africa which results in land grabs and corruption in land allocation

10. Mapping the land can help the restoration of the land, and land tenure
11. All relevant international obligations should prioritize the protection, maintenance and restoration of natural ecosystems while respecting customary and sustainable land use.
12. Restoring degraded lands should not be a step towards land grabbing, but rather improved tenure security for Indigenous Peoples and local communities
13. Governments should develop legal principles and guidelines for ensuring social protection, food security, security of indigenous peoples and local communities, land tenure, ecological integrity, transparency and accountability, in order to overcome social and historical inequities.
14. Building on growing consensus on what has been done, now is the time for action.



Dialogue with Private Sector on Incentives for Investment in Sustainable Land Management, High Level Segment

On incentives for SLM investment, representatives from the private sector discussed constraints and opportunities for private sector engagement. Some highlights of the dialogue are as follows:

- Chair Benedetto Della Vedova, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, ITALY: Development is a shared challenge across all sectors of society;
- Moderator Peter Bakker, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD): The private sector is also looking to support SDG implementation, including on land degradation;
- Rifat Hisarciklioğlu, Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges, Turkey: Ankara Declaration, recognizes the economic impacts of land degradation and the financial and social benefits from SLM;
- Bey Soo Khiang, APRIL Group, Indonesia: The company's objective of conserving one hectare of high-value natural forest for every hectare of concession land;
- Jai Schroff, India: It is unfair to expect subsistence farmers to be concerned with the LDN goal, the private sector can provide appropriate technological and capacity requirements to reduce water stress and manage wastewater. The UPL water technology allows for water storage in the topsoil and reduced leakage, resulting in increased yields and reduced fertilizer use;
- FAO: indicating to the private sector's role in providing advocacy, outreach and technical, besides financial, support;
- The International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR): underscored the potential of bamboo for SLM and LDN;
- KYRGYZSTAN: It is difficult for its small-scale agricultural sector to contribute to the LDN target;
- Panelists: Governments should provide “appropriately structured” tax and legal frameworks to incentivize private sector actors to engage in land rehabilitation and restoration;
- The AFRICAN UNION: Welcoming private sector engagement on regional land initiatives such as Africa Land Policy Initiative & the Great Green Wall for the Sahara & the Sahel;
- CSOs called for multi-stakeholder partnerships to mobilize financial resources for LDN implementation.

Dialogue with Parliamentarians on Framing of Legislation to Protect and Rehabilitate Land, High Level Segment

During this session the parliamentarians discussed and stressed the role of legislation in addressing DLDD issues in particular on the following issues:

- The best practices, funding and research on land rehabilitation;
- Spatial planning at national and local levels;
- Urgent need for clear legislation on sustainable use of water;
- Practical suggestion to deal with DLDD, including the implementation of appropriate legislation and capacity building;
- Need to understand the importance of environmental problems;
- Oil fund that supports implementing laws and plans on DLDD and water resource management;
- Cooperation among all stakeholders for achieving the LDN target;
- Reversing land degradation to achieve the goals of the Rio Conventions and finance mobilization

<http://www.iisd.ca/vol04/enb04265e.html>

The Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and Land Degradation Neutrality Fund (LDF)

The issue of, Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD) and its socio-economic and environmental vulnerability in the world in particular in drylands are amongst the common challenges of humankind which needs special and urgent attention. Therefore, DLDD as a global challenge is being recognised increasingly by international community and in particular by the UNCCD focusing its mandate to promote sustainable land management (SLM) and to combat DLDD.

In this context, the heart of the two-week multi-stakeholder meetings, debates and discussions of the COP12 of the UNCCD was focused on the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), inclusion of LDN with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular goal 15.3, Land Degradation Neutrality Fund (LDF), NAP alignment with the UNCCD 10-year strategy and SDGs, setting the national LDN targets and the implementations and monitoring process of the LDN.

The civil society organisations as indispensable partners of the UNCCD and as one of the main stakeholder to promote SLM practices and to combat DLDD with close involvement of local and indigenous communities, had an active role within the multi-stakeholder discussions on LDN, its inclusion with SDGs (goal 15.3), and LDF.

The CSOs beside welcoming to the concept of the LDN as an opportunity to the UNCCD, focused on their concerns by developing and disseminating various position papers, publications, interventions and statements in various sessions of the COP, CST, CRIC, Open Dialogue Discussion; Dialogue in High level Segment, debates, meetings, side events, etc.

The following documents are a part of the CSOs efforts to address their common concerns in terms of LDN and LDF.

DryNet position on Land Degradation Neutrality DryNet position on Land Degradation Neutrality Fund

<https://civilsocietyatunccdco12.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/ldnf-flyer-drynet-print.pdf>



Reflections on LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY

Description:	<p>The following descriptions are based on the Report of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the follow-up to the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20):</p> <p>"Land Degradation Neutrality... is a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources, necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security, remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems."⁷</p> <p>LDN thus means maintaining or improving the condition of global land resources. The overall goal is to preserve the amount of healthy and productive land resources over time and in line with national sustainable development priorities related to poverty reduction, food and water security, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.</p> <p>Achieving LDN requires that land degradation is avoided through sustainable land management (SLM) and accompanied by land restoration where appropriate. LDN explicitly recognizes the unacceptable costs of inaction in terms of food and human security, economic development and environmental sustainability.</p>
Facts & Figures:	<p>At the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012, the international community established an Open Working Group (OWG) to develop a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs) to be integrated into the UN development agenda beyond 2015.</p> <p>One of the SDGs proposed is the "Protection and promotion of sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, to halt desertification, land degradation and biodiversity loss" (Proposed Goal 15 and its Target 15.3), which builds upon the concept of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN).¹¹</p> <p>Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</p> <p>Target 15.3: By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world</p> <p>The long-term aim of the LDN project supported by the Republic of Korea is to contribute to an agreement among UNCCD country parties by the 2017 Conference of the Parties (COP 13), during which every country could adopt its own national voluntary targets for LDN.</p>
CSO Concerns:	<p>As CSOs, we welcome the concept of LDN as an opportunity to raise the profile and visibility of UNCCD among other Rio Conventions and the fact that soils have received the deserved focus among SDGs through LDN target. However, we believe that it is important to sharpen the concept and clarify the thinking so that LDN can become a valued tool to advance the well being of people and the health of ecosystems.</p> <p>Concerns about the term 'neutrality'</p> <p>The area within which the neutrality of land degradation to be achieved has to be defined. There is vagueness about the delimitation of the 'measuring unit', i.e. whether it is the political borders of a nation state or the natural borders of ecosystems.</p> <p>To achieve Land Degradation Neutral World (LDNW) means ensuring that the rate of restoration is at least of equal magnitude as the rate of degradation. This is an attractive concept for securing sustainability of land-based resources. However, it should not become a tool giving decision-makers and extractive industries the right to degrade as long as they can rehabilitate an equivalent area elsewhere.</p> <p>There is a potential geographical complication: not only might one 'banked' hectare not be of the same quality as the hectare lost, but it also might be in a location where the services provided by the hectare are not as valuable as they would have been at the original site.</p> <p>Concerns about the benchmark</p> <p>The characteristics of the associated degraded and restored land that are allowed under the zero net land degradation concept must be clearly defined.</p> <p>Land degradation is a process of persistent decline in the provision of land-related ecosystem services as well as decline in the actual amount of soil¹². The global extent of land degradation is increasing as more land is used for cultivation or cleared for other purposes. Estimates of the actual extent of land degradation are notoriously uncertain, with estimates ranging from 15% to 63% of all land, although a recent estimate suggests that roughly 20 to 25% of all used land is being degraded to some extent¹³. Some of this uncertainty can be explained by the divergent perceptions of what constitutes degraded land and how it can be measured.</p>



If the "measuring unit" for LDN focuses on the land area that is already degraded, and the benchmark is the status of the 'measuring unit' before degradation took place, restoration will be better focused on restoring ecosystem functioning.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment suggests that degradation occurs when land does not return to its expected level of productivity after a stress is removed. For example, if land is less productive because of drought, but recovers after rains return, the phenomenon is not one of land degradation.

Concerns about measurement

In its current conceptual form, LDNW does not articulate a clear definition of 'land degradation'. Poor definition has long been a challenge in the implementation of the UNCCD. We anticipate that it will prove considerably more problematic in a regime committed to 'neutralizing' degradation, as the concept necessarily implies a netting of all losses and gains.

If degradation is considered as a binary concept which implies that land should be categorized as either 'degraded' or 'not degraded' for accounting purposes, vital nuances will be lost, given that complex processes are constantly at work in the landscape and degradation and restoration may be happening simultaneously in the same land unit. For example, land that is being rested from grazing whilst being invaded by alien plants may be recovering in terms of soil loss, but degrading in terms of ecosystem functioning.

Concerns about Governance

Sustainable Land Management (SLM) means "the use of land resources, including soils, water, animals and plants, for the production of goods to meet changing human needs, while simultaneously ensuring the long-term productive potential of these resources and the maintenance of their environmental functions"^{vi}. However, market failures, low market access and weak penetration of financial services also contribute to unsustainable land management. In the absence of adequate governance, lifting these barriers alone may not lead to sustainable land management.

Significant knowledge barriers persist and these include a systematic failure to integrate science with local knowledge. Understanding of the ecosystem services related to sustainable land management is particularly weak, particularly in relation to risk management, and these services are often unrewarded and even dis-incentivised.^{vi}

Achieving land degradation neutrality requires widespread adoption of sustainable land management practices combined with renewed efforts to restore degraded land. Robust indicators of both SLM and land restoration will be required to monitor genuine sustainability. Additionally, progress towards a Land Degradation target should be monitored via indicators of both governance and poverty.

The question of equity must be addressed. Achieving LDN should not open the way for land grabbing practices and be at the expense of the poor, who might lose access to land if it is "restored" in ways that increase its productive and economic value.

Concerns about Funding

The recent UNCCD Scientific Conference on the Economics of Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought estimated that Land Degradation costs approximately USD490 billion per year which is estimated to be much higher than the cost of prevention.

Between 2003 and 2012, the GEF approved 96 projects under its "land degradation focal point," providing \$346 million in funding supplemented by \$1.85 billion in co-financing (including bilateral aid). This spending amounted to about four percent of GEF funding between the years 1991 and 2011— certainly a disappointing result for those who believe that healthy land is key to advancing a large variety of development and environmental goals. During the same period that land degradation received four percent of GEF funds, climate change received 31 percent and biodiversity 37 percent. It is important to remember that land is vital to prevent biodiversity loss and climate change.

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ⁱ http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/Rio+20/IWG%20on%20Rio+20/ADVANCE%20DRAFT%20IWG%20Report_01_June_2013.pdf

ⁱⁱ <http://global-mechanism.org/feature-story/land-degradation-neutrality-%E2%80%93-what-is-all-the-noise-about>

ⁱⁱⁱ Adeel, Z., Safriel, U., Niemeijer, D. and R. White. 2005. Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Desertification Synthesis, World Resource Institute, Washington, D.C.

^{iv} Bal, Z., D. Dent, L. Olsson, and M.E. Schaepman. 2008. Proxy global assessment of land; Boer, B.W. and I.D. Hannam, 2008. "Drafting Legislation for Sustainable Soils: Judicative principles towards sustainable land use and protection of soil quality", Local Land and Soil News, Bulletin of the European Land and Soil Alliance, 26/27 II/08, 6-9).

^v UN Earth Summit, 1992

^{vi} https://web.law.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/microsites/climate-change/welton_-_land_degradation.pdf

Financing LDN: What Makes Sense? Position Paper from UNDDC CSOs

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/20/financing-ldn-what-makes-sense/>

Several questions exist for financing and implementing the LDN concept. The civil society mainly recommends UNCCD to ensure that LDN is financed in a coherent, a sustainable and ethical way and to ensure project implementation as an opportunity for people and ecosystems.

Land is a vital component of the environment and is crucial in global and local development issues. Land forms the basis of the ecosystems by hosting habitats of biodiversity, providing ecosystems services and producing food. Moreover, land is dignity and identity of indigenous peoples and local communities and is rooted in the livelihoods of those communities that compose 47 % of the world population.

Combating land degradation is not an option but an injunction for the future, to face climate change, desertification, and biodiversity loss and food security issues. Combating land degradation in the drylands, so-called combating desertification, is essential to address the concerns of one third of the world population, living on 44 % of the world's land surface. Combating land degradation in drylands is thus a priority, yet has not been effectively addressed by national governments and has not received funding at the scale that is required.

Amongst the 'three sisters', the Rio multilateral environment agreements, the UNCCD is explicitly dedicated to combating desertification, land degradation and poverty in drylands, as stated in its Article 1. Combating land degradation is considered as a public good.

Reversing land degradation by striving for a land degradation neutral world (article 206 Rio +20, The Future We Want) can only be achieved by massive action involving all stakeholders. The objective of achieving Land Degradation Neutrality is an opportunity to energise and organise those actions. And necessarily the three dimensions of avoiding land degradation, reducing land degradation and rehabilitating degraded land should all be taken into account! But the question remains: how to finance and implement Land Degradation Neutrality in a way that preserves the environment, enhances food security and reduces poverty?

About financing and implementing LDN, the civil society strongly insists upon:

- The integrity and cohesion of local and indigenous populations, which must not be undermined, and their land rights must not be weakened;
- The financing of LDN, which should not become a vehicle to transform the land of family farmers and traditional land users into a good in financial or speculative markets
- The responsibility of states and public stakeholders in financing and implementing LDN, which must not be taken over by private sector;
- A sound balance between global environmental concerns and social concerns related to local land using communities.

In the context of financing and implementing LDN, civil society recommends the UNCCD:

To ensure that LDN is financed in a coherent, sustainable and ethical way:

- Public investments in land are essential because land is vital for human well-being and sustainable livelihoods, and requires responsible actions from states;
- All Parties are encouraged, in a transparent manner, to create national working groups to allocate public funds to LDN, composed of government officers, scientists, technical advisors, community-based organisations and civil society;

- Several options are provided for financing LDN: close collaboration with the scientists of the SPI, the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the UNCCD CSO network is necessary because these people possess profound technical and project experience and local level knowledge. An independent impact study of the financing options must assure a selection of the most viable options that provide the least risk to indigenous peoples and local communities;
- Coherence is created with the Climate Change and Biodiversity Conventions regarding financing LDN, as it is included in cross-cutting SDGs. Resources for financing LDN should also come from these Conventions;
- Criteria are established for private investors in land-based resources, to assure that social and environmental concerns are adequately addressed. The establishment of these criteria, as well as the different steps in the process of financing LDN (such as the cash flows and project selection) need to be transparent;
- Robust and long-term responsibility are ensured on the part of the UNCCD in any and all systems established for the financing of LDN;
- A steering committee with decision making power is established in which UNCCD accredited NGOs and scientists are represented in all financial mechanisms;
- A minimum percentage of the total budget is allocated to a 'small grants' facility that is accessible to local civil society.

To ensure project implementation as an opportunity for people and ecosystems:

- SLM should remain the priority when setting up financing systems for LDN, and should receive priority support before restoration. LDN involves both aspects, but it is crucial to ensure that resources are not used inefficiently to restore degraded landscapes;
- Caution must be exercised when financing rehabilitation projects so as to ensure that degradation problems are not displaced to other areas;
- Stimulation of or support for land grabbing, land commoditisation and commercialisation and land speculation by financing LDN must be avoided at all costs, and local land rights (formal and informal) must be respected at all times.
- Internationally acknowledged standards and criteria must be respected when financing LDN, and their effective implementation must be guaranteed, especially (but not limited to) the 'Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests' and the principle of 'Free, Prior and Informed Consent';
- An independent grievance mechanism must be created that can easily be approached by local land users regarding LDN projects and land users rights;
- All Parties are encouraged to build the capacities of local people and strengthen land governance institutions to ensure a sound framework to enable effective LDN projects;
- Indigenous mobile pastoralists, fisher folks and small-scale farmers must be protected. Also local food production systems and family farming have to be promoted to ensure sustainable restoration of land in ways that address the socio-economic and environmental perspectives;
- Land tenure of land-using communities must be strengthened and formalised in cooperation between governments, local authorities, CSOs and CBOs;
- Establishment of an LDN outreach and support unit for local people and communities to ensure that they are provided with full and unbiased information and to ensure that decision making processes are informed by real time intelligence from the ground;

- Farmers, technicians and scientists who possess sound knowledge of SLM practices must be assisted to promote and spread their know-how at local level, while the UNCCD and its member states provide general guidelines and resources on LDN objectives;
- Regular assessments must take place to evaluate the impacts of financing LDN projects at different stages, with strong and binding obligations regarding the continuation of the project. The findings of such assessments must also be used to inform the design of future projects to be financed by the LDN system (including Social, Environmental & Human Rights Impacts Assessment, -Plan and -Impact Evaluation).

About the LDN fund – according to our current information:

We need to acknowledge that the LDN Fund, as how we perceive it, is only addressing the restoration of land and not LDN, and presents several failures.

According to the CSOs, this way of financing LDN is not acceptable because:

- Rehabilitation is only one of the three dimensions that must be considered to achieve LDN. If the establishment of an LDN fund is to be considered, preventing and reducing land degradation must also be addressed.
- The percentage allocated to small-scale farmers is neither known nor guaranteed. Therefore the envisaged fund may be directed to rehabilitation of large scale areas. Driven by a business model that seeks for profitable commercial investment, it may not contribute to the objective of reducing poverty and food insecurity, which are core objectives of the UNCCD.
- The envisaged fund may be focused on mitigation of climate change and not adaptation: it must promote family farming and ecological and sustainable agriculture, and not only high added value commercial agricultural models.

By UNCCD CSOs

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DryNet Position Papers on LDN and LDNF, Reflections on LAND Degradation Neutrality Fund

<https://civilsocietyatunccdop12.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/ldnf-flyer-drynet-print.pdf>



Reflections on LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY FUND

Introduction: During 2015 the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund was introduced in international debates on land degradation and restoration. The Land Degradation Neutrality Fund will be officially discussed during the UNCCD 12th Conference of the Parties in Ankara and probably will be launched during the UNFCCC 21st Conference of the Parties in Paris in December. This document is based on oral presentations of the UNCCD Secretariat and on the White Paper "Land Degradation Neutrality Fund" of the Global Mechanism and UNCCD that was presented on 10 June 2015 in London during the Global Landscapes Forum.

Proposed Land Degradation Neutrality Fund: Because the livelihoods of so many are directly dependent on the quality and productivity of land and its resources, degradation of land is not only a menace to ecosystems and biodiversity, it is also a direct threat to food security, economic growth and poverty alleviation of people and communities that are living in degraded areas.

Worldwide, 2 billion hectares of land have been degraded, according to estimates made by the UN. Every year an additional 12 million hectares, equivalent to the size of Bulgaria or Benin, is degraded worldwide. Much of this degradation takes place in order to sustain the current global economy.

To rehabilitate degraded land the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Global Mechanism¹ are proposing to establish a Land Degradation Neutrality Fund (LDNF). According to the White paper of UNCCD and GM, this Fund is to counter what the GM "exploit-deplete-migrate" growth paradigm that it claims characterises the management of the world's natural resources. This paradigm is allegedly pushing the world's land based resources towards a critical tipping point, which will have massive impacts on economic and financial systems. The Fund is intended "to be instrumental in halting the expansion of land degradation." Specifically, the Fund focuses on the "scaling up of the many viable business models based on upgraded land that generate suitable financial returns while contributing to broader food, water and energy security goals"

According to the White Paper, the LDNF is based on a coordinated investment platform established as a public-private partnership (PPP) among private institutional investors, international finance institutions and donors. Its objective will be to support the transition to land degradation neutrality through land rehabilitation, while generating revenues for investors from sustainable production on rehabilitated land.

Land degradation and the SDGs: In September the UN General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals and its targets. Target 15.3 is: "By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a *land degradation-neutral world*."

Related international discussions: In May 2013 the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of National Food Security (VGGTs) were adopted by the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS)² as a response to the vast and growing number of conflicts over land between local communities, governments, investors and plantation managements due to the expansion of plantation agriculture on land previously used by local communities in order to meet increased world demand of food, fibre and biomass for fuel.

In October 2014 the CFS approved the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI). The Principles are a more detailed elaboration of the VGGTs for investments in agriculture and food systems that addresses all types of investment in agriculture and food systems - public, private, large, small - and in the production and processing spheres. They provide a framework that all stakeholders can use when developing national policies, programmes, regulatory frameworks, corporate social responsibility programmes, individual agreements and contracts.³

Land degradation in numbers:	2.000.000.000 hectares	Of degraded land worldwide are available for rehabilitation. (an area larger than South America)
	500.000.000 hectares	Of degraded land is abandoned agricultural land
	12.000.000 hectares	Of land is degraded additionally every year by human activities



Proposals on how to make the LDNF a vehicle for people and ecosystems:

General:

Investing in degraded land by restoration is of great importance. However, based upon our experiences with similar financial mechanisms like the Clean Development Mechanism, REDD+ and the Green Climate Fund, we have some proposals regarding the LDNF which we believe must be addressed explicitly so that the Fund will contribute to the UNCCD mandate and strategic plan which stipulates that its mission is: "to forge a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability".¹⁹

- Self-selected, representative civil society observers (NGOs, pastoralists' and farmers' organisations, women's groups, academics, and journalists) must be enabled to participate at the strategic (Board) level of the LDNF to ensure civil society participation in decision-making.
- LDNF must guarantee a robust and widely endorsed FPIC assurance mechanism²⁰ is in place and operational. The LDNF must adopt 'best of class' models in this regard (e.g. such as adopted by some commodity round tables). A detailed information disclosure policy must be adopted that is founded on the position that all documentation submitted to LDNF will be accessible to the public, with possible exceptions with regard to specific type(s) of information that may be articulated in this policy.
- All projects supported by the LDNF must ensure Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of all land using individuals and communities, especially those with traditional and customary land and land user rights and who depend on such land.
- Assure ex-ante transparency to ensure that all relevant local stakeholders are able to engage in the process from its earliest stages.
- A project/ investment monitoring system must be articulated that monitors the effects and impact of the investment on local people before, during and after the project implementation phase (Social, Environmental & Human Rights Impacts Assessment, a Social, Environmental & Human Rights Management Plan, and a Social, Environmental & Human Rights Impact Evaluation)
- A transparent and independent grievance mechanism must be established, with both an ombudsman and a complaint facility.
- A fair compensation system must be established for local land users (pastoralists and farmers) when their access to the land is denied due to activities that are within the framework of LDNF supported projects (whether this is annual or seasonal access).
- An LDNF outreach and support unit for local people and communities must be established to ensure that they are provided with full and unbiased information and to ensure that decision making processes are informed by real time intelligence from the ground.
- A minimum percentage of the total budget should be allocated to a 'small grants' facility that is accessible to local civil society.
- A transparent accreditation process must be established for financial intermediaries, and the advice and feedback of other stakeholders should be actively sought regarding the performance of these financial intermediaries.

Local People and communities:

- Security of land user rights is a precondition for sustainable land use, halting land degradation and obtaining the support of local people for rehabilitation initiatives. If this dimension is not addressed in a comprehensive manner, the LDNF is at risk of being counterproductive and exposing already marginalised communities to external destructive pressures and to land conflicts.
- In order to serve the mandate of the UNCCD, the LDNF must develop the capacity to facilitate locally initiated, community-based initiatives to restore degraded land
- The LDNF should be designed and governed in a manner that ensures that its policies, staffing and operational procedures and measures ensure full checks and balances are in place to respect traditional, customary and other land rights, including land user rights, in view of the risk that the Acquisition Phase (as presented in the LDNF Investment model) might result in the legitimatisation of illegal land grab and fuel land conflicts between investors and local communities.
- The LDNF must develop safeguards that explicitly refer to international human rights standards and national legislation.

The Global Context:

The LDNF is intended to contribute to the achievement of the Land Degradation Neutrality target of the SDGs. However, Drynet has a number of questions for the Secretariat and the Parties to the Convention:



- What is the justification for establishing another specialised fund at the international level next to the GEF?
- What is the added value of establishing a new fund, as compared to utilising existing funds? Would a refocusing of priorities of these existing funding channels and/or other financial instruments (e.g. New Development Bank, Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, Green Climate Fund, Climate Investment Funds, WorldBank Group, regional development banks, etc.) not be more appropriate and cost efficient? It would be unfortunate if the institutional and governance knowledge and experience of these institutions was not brought to bear on the complexities of funding land restoration on a large scale.
- How will LDNF ensure that it benefits from best practices, guidance and lessons learnt generated through other key international institutions and initiatives (e.g. Climate Investment Funds, Adaptation Fund, Green Climate Fund, Global Environmental Facility, agro-commodity round tables)?
- How will the LDNF contribute to the UNCCD's primary focus on improving the living conditions by and for people in drylands and strengthening their position in rehabilitation efforts?
- What is the definition and what are the criteria of 'land degradation' within the LDNF context? Is the LDNF considering projects in drylands only, or also in the rest of the world?

Structure of the LDNF:

Drynet believes that before the concept of the LDNF is further developed, some fundamental structural and governance questions must be adequately answered:

- What will be the institutional basis for the LDNF, and how is its governance structure envisioned?
- How will a balance in the governing / decision making procedures of the LDNF be ensured between the financiers, the beneficiaries, and eventual implementing agencies?
- Which institutions and/or parties will oversee the implementation the LDNF? Will the LDNF be an autonomous institution, or will it be governed by UNCCD and/or GM representatives?
- How will the Fund support and facilitate the development of viable locally initiated community-based initiatives and/or projects?
- What provisions will be put in place to ensure decision-making processes of the fund being independent from the interests of applicants for funding under LDNF?
- What formal role will civil society (NGOs, pastoralists' and farmers' organisations, women's groups, academics, journalists) have in the governance structure of the LDNF (as is the case in climate investment funds)?
- What kind of safeguard policies and accountability mechanisms will be in place when a LDNF supported project violates the rights of, and works against the well-being of local people and/or communities? What measures will be put in place for redress for people that are harmed by such project?
- Whilst LDNF may decide to mandate other parties or implementing entities to disburse LDNF financial resources (financial intermediaries), the LDNF will remain accountable for the use of such funds. What are the policies and measures to ensure the principles and policies of the Fund are applied when mandating other parties or implementing entities?

Drynet:

In 2007, fifteen Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) from all over the world joined forces in a programme called Drynet to work together in countering land degradation in drylands. Drynet believes that local organisations and communities living in drylands should be at the heart of this effort. However, these organisations and communities are often not adequately involved in drafting and implementing policies and projects that affect their livelihoods. To change this, Drynet provides a supportive framework that links CSOs working in 22 countries around the globe. These CSOs promote - at home and internationally - the interests and activities of people and communities in managing and using drylands in a sustainable way.

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¹ The Global Mechanism is a specialized body of the UNCCD that supports countries to mobilize financial resources and increase investments in sustainable land management, helping reverse, control and prevent desertification, land degradation and drought.

² VGGTs: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2801e/i2801e.pdf>

³ RAI: <http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-home/resaginv/en/>

⁴ <http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/Pages/About-the-Convention.aspx>

⁵ The FAO Governance of Tenure Technical Guides are a good example: Technical Guide 3 addresses "Respecting Free, Prior and Informed consent - Practical guidance for governments, companies, NGOs, indigenous peoples and local communities in relation to land acquisition"

CSOs Meeting with the GM on the Work on the LDNF

<https://civilsocietyatunccdco12.wordpress.com/2015/10/16/cso-meeting-with-the-global-mechanism-on-the-work-on-the-land-degradation-neutrality-fund-15-october-2015/>

On Thursday evening, October 15 2015, the CSOs had the opportunity to meet with the representatives of the Global Mechanism (GM) and discuss the issue of the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) fund.

The representative of the GM has given a short presentation on the work of the GM on the process of preparation of the LDN fund from the very idea of creating the funding platform to the current activities that are being undertaken by the GM.

- Initially, the LDN was perceived as something that could be invested in by different types of investors.
 - Investors would channel the funds managed by private sector, by structuring the fund on a multilayer level with different shareholders. This kind of fund would enable pooling of resources.
 - This type of funding has been already previously used successfully on the market.
 - 2 billion of hectares of land are worldwide available for rehabilitation.
 - However, it is important what will be done with the land after rehabilitation.
 - There are different sustainable land use models – four phases to manage land for rehabilitation.
 - The funds would be channelled in two ways: to land owners and land users and to land operators.
 - Capital structure of the fund consists of several items: land assets, capital, financial instruments and rehabilitation activities.
 - So far, certain sponsors for creation of the fund have shared their expression of interest.



After the short presentation of the LDN preparation process, the representatives of the CSOs have managed to share their concerns regarding the subject to which the GM has tried to provide adequate response. Here is the short summary of the information received from the GM representatives.

Investors to the fund – criteria for complying

Investors that make commitment for responsible investment would have to report according to certain standards – what type of investments they have been making so far and what are the environmental and social impacts of their investments. So far there are no specific standards created for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

These investors would mainly be impact investors, e.g. pension funds, etc.

As for the return expectations, some investors would agree to expect a return rate which under the market value; some investors would only expect a comparative profit.

Criteria for investments – how would the sustainability be achieved?

Firstly, by introducing an advisory board and creating a clear set of operational guidelines.

Secondly, an advisory committee will be formed after the fund is being created for operational purposes.

Thirdly, the fund would be completely managed by an independent managing entity, but it will be anchored to the LDN.

The governance structure of the LDN fund

One of the possibilities of the fund format is a platform. However, there could be different possibilities. In terms of governance, there would be a board of directors, consisting of main investors of the fund, trustees, others that can help in decision-making. The board delegates the decision to the investment committee, consisting of more technical staff from the same investment institutions screening the investment proposals. But this has not been decided yet. It is not foreseen a seat in the board would be given to UNCCD. Alas, having a seat in the board could ensure contributions in the decision-making. The previously mentioned advisory committee could include representatives of the CSO, UNCCD staff, etc.

Governance within the fund – possibility of sub-funds

Existence of sub-funds has still not been decided. There is a possibility of having sub-funds that could specialize in certain issues, since it might be proven to be overly complicated to have one fund manager.

The GM can anticipate that the fund would start firstly operating on global level, and later on expand. One other aspect that needs to be taken into consideration is the financial liquidity.

The CSOs raised a concern that the fund would use the “brand” of the UN to acquire profit. So far the UN has been well renowned. However, now there is a rising trend of including the private sector in all the sectors of UN. On the other hand, it is necessary to acknowledge that the main driver of the private sector is making profit.

The entire Convention from its beginning was based on the fact that sustainable land management is less expensive than restoration.

What is now being discussed in the UN is awareness raising. Another powerful dynamics in the market is the investor pressures on businesses. The largest companies around the world today are owned by the pension funds. These types of investors are particularly careful where they allocate their investments. By this, they can generate the set of values for their clients and companies where they are investing in.

The risk of challenging the “brand” of the UN could be avoided with the right set of partners. Additionally, other UN agencies have already been undertaking similar things.

Why do we need such a fund in the first place?

The amount of the degraded land is a huge challenge; public investments would never be sufficient to get a grip of this issue. How do we resolve this issue without detriment to the initial idea of

serving against land degradation? It is well acknowledged by all that the private sector is there to make profit, but how can we address this issue in a way that would fit the idea of LDN?

What is the logic behind a company seeking to put resources into the fund?

The issue is that there are certain types of investors that would like to commit to sustainability; they are forced by the pressures from the market, international community, etc.

The intention is to convene a broad coalition of partners that would like to commit to land restoration – working together for a common objective. There are already a number of initiatives that do not come from the UN, but they strive to increase food security, restore forests, etc.

There are several expressions of interest (initiatives) enlisting the activities that are being already undertaken and that are interested in joining for the same cause.

Operationalization of the fund

At this stage, there have been certain smaller funds directed toward different projects. One example is the example of Norwegian fund investing in Nicaragua and the cattle ranchers. The way the cattle ranchers have previously managed the land was not sustainable, it led to erosion and different detriment to the land, which consecutively led to reduced number of cattle. For that matter, the Norwegian fund had made a leasing agreement with the ranchers and land owners/ users and planted teak trees on the degraded land. In order to compensate the landowner, the benefit sharing agreement is made based on the part of the profit from thinning the trees. After the leasing agreement ends, the land is returned to the landowners, upgraded. Additionally, the communities were allowed to grow food in between the trees.

These small farmers usually do not have the access to carbon market. For that reason, the landowner has also managed to increase their revenues. Additionally, the planted trees were only covering the 60% of the land.

Due to time restrictions, the CSOs and the GM representatives agreed to continue the discussion during the second week of the COP in order to acquire a complete picture of the idea behind the LDN fund. The GM representatives welcome the CSOs to provide inputs and opinions. However, one of the additional concerns of the CSO representatives was that little new information was received since the last discussions on this issue in July 2015.

The CSOs Meeting with the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD

Today there was a meeting between civil society organisations and the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD Ms. Monique Barbut.

Meeting Ms. Monique Barbut, as a powerful and dynamic person, is always pleasant and encouraging for civil society. Main points of discussion in meeting revolved around the hot issue of this years COP “Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)”. Civil society discussed their concerns with Monique and she replied accordingly.

Civil society now hopes Ms. Barbut will present their concerns to the United Nations strongly and there would be some useful steps taken against *desertification* and *land degradation neutrality*. She firmly said that doing nothing is not an option and implementation of LDN requires funding from private sector. She informed that there will be an ethics committee to ensure that people’s land rights and human rights are not to be affected by LDN implementations. She ensured continuously working with CSOs.

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/15/the-csos-met-with-monique-barbut-the-executive-secretary-of-unccd/>



Open Letter to Mrs Barbut, UNCCD Executive Secretary

Dear Mrs. Barbut,

The “Land Restoration Project” that you are trying to promote seems a fantastic opportunity to us. Restoring up to 500 million hectares of land all over the world is what we call a very ambitious target. It could strongly contribute in solving many of today’s key issues that humanity will be facing in the near future: climate change, lack of food sovereignty, threats of forced migrations, floods, conflicts, biodiversity risks, under development. To summarize, your project is nothing less than contributing to ensure human life on Earth.

We, as the Danaya association, therefore strongly appreciate your willingness to push for appropriate decisions in this direction. We fully support your efforts in “standing for it”.

Nevertheless, we are afraid there might be some “bugs” in the way this project is currently being developed: amongst other issues, the main concern is the financing of this project. We understand that you are confronted to a supposedly lack of public financing (in our view a lack of public motivation) which leads to no other choice but mainly promote private financing. Maybe one could think that the source of financing is just a detail. But as you well know, “the devil lies in the details”

What is the main driver of a private company? We would say, ‘to earn as much money as possible’, which is completely understandable, as this is their role. Of course, they can be a bit motivated to act for the long term general interest: but only if it does not have negative impacts on their financial interest. How can we ask them to pay interest on the money they will borrow from the LDN Fund, raising profits to pay the dividends, and on top of that, spending money on land restoration? Having said that, many concerns arise from this ascertainment: risk of land grabbing, as well as environmental, social and human risks, (the list raised by the CSO’s is long enough...). The biggest risk is that it could be inefficient and that it could simply not work the way it is envisaged.

On the other hand, using mainly public financing and working on this project together with the CSO’s eliminates most of the issues. You mentioned there is not enough public money? And how much is necessary? Two billion USD a year? One should see the OECD study showing that states provide grants to oil companies every year for a total amount of 500 billion USD: we only need 0.5% of this amount to finance the project... One could say...that is “peanuts”! Not talking about the estimated 20 000 billion USD that is lost every year for tax-evasion.

Mrs. BARBUT, we are pretty sure that, by changing the economic model, most of (if not all) the CSO’s would be ready to fully support your project and work closely with you to help you achieving it.

Bernard TERRIS – Association DANAYA, bernard.terris@danaya-france.org

Final Remarks of the COP12 of the UNCCD

The two-week meeting of the twelfth session of the Conference of Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP12) was held in Turkey, Ankara with adoption of 35 decisions. The 35 decisions in which need the strong commitments of all stakeholders of the UNCCD including country parties, CSOs, CBOs, UN and international organisations and private sector for a participatory process collaboration for achieving the target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goal in which calls for combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world by 2030.

In final plenary of COP12, the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, focused on the importance of land with its multiple roles and at the same time its vulnerability. She stated the COP 12 has provided a clear message on the importance of addressing land degradation to be brought to the COP21 of the UNFCCC in Paris. The regional groups highlighted the importance of SDG target 15.3 to the Convention. South Africa and Brazil welcomed the Ankara Initiative and Declaration, and called for its effective implementation and support of developed countries to fulfil their commitments in this regard. Turkish COP Presidency called for stronger South-South cooperation to be facilitated by the Secretariat, and Asia and Pacific States, noted the need to strengthen actions to achieve LDN, with support from the GEF and the GM at global and national levels.

Key Remarks of the CSOs Final Statement

The final statement of CSOs community of the UNCCD, focused on CSOs collective responsibility to ensure that the people of the drylands do not become the victims of the ultimate injustice of human-induced calamities that would add to the precariousness of natural conditions. They addressed the importance of food security, gender inequality, and long line of refugees in drylands and called for high consideration of the international community to these issues.

The CSOs recalled the absence of the CSOs in contact groups which is not in the spirit of participation of the UNCCD. The CSOs thanked the parties for considering CSOs views on strengthening the links between technology, policy making, SLM, resilience & adaptation of communities in CST committee.

They also appreciated HLS dialogue with CSOs and drawing the attention of country parties of the HLS for securing land rights as a prerequisite to achieving LDN. They addressed securing land tenure systems for the drylands through locally appropriate, participatory and multi-stakeholder processes; recognition collective rights, land ownership and local land governance systems by indigenous peoples and local communities, avoid land grabbing, developing legal principles & guidelines for ensuring social security of IPs and LCs, ecological integrity, transparency and accountability, in order to overcome social and historical inequities.

The CSOs welcomed to the adoption of the LDN as a potentially powerful concept and urged the CST and SPI as well as scientists to define and agree upon a universal definition of LDN and its scope, and its benchmarks and indicators at all levels from global to local.

At the end CSOs added any funds that are mobilized must be specifically targeted and must governed transparently and not left in the hands of the private sector, which is driven by the profit motive. In all cases, neutrality in terms of land degradation must first serve the populations that the Convention is intended to protect. It should offer these nearly two billion people opportunities for productive work and better incomes, in ways that can make them proud of their contribution to two major issues of global concern: climate change and poverty, and bolster their rights to benefit from the land.

The CSO Final Statement at COP12 of the UNCCD

<https://civilsocietyatunccdcop12.wordpress.com/2015/10/26/cso-final-statement-at-unccd-cop12/>

Mr Chair, Dear delegates of the Parties, dear colleagues of the UNCCD, ladies and gentlemen,

The CSOs that took part in COP12 are pleased to take the floor and share the views and concerns of the accredited CSOs to the UNCCD, and indeed of the wider CSO community.

Firstly, we have to thank those Parties that have enabled support for the participation of 35 CSOs by providing funding for the UNCCD, and enabled the selection of these observers by a panel, based on specific criteria. The process of selection and effective work undertaken before and during the COP enabled more contributions of substance to be made from civil society than has been the case in the past.

The discussions at COP12 have taken place in the context of emergent global challenges in an era in which humanity is endangering the ecosystems on which we all depend. This demonstrates that a change of trajectory which arises in the minds of people, and is informed by some indisputable facts. Those who in the past thought themselves immune to environmental disasters elsewhere in the planet are rediscovering they are part of a human community that has to face its destiny. Our awareness of a world with finite limits is a necessary element for our effective cooperation to conserve its scarce resources.

It is the responsibility of this Convention and thus our collective responsibility to ensure that the people of the drylands do not become the victims of the ultimate injustice of human-induced calamities that would add to the precariousness of natural conditions.

Among these challenges food security is paramount, as without it human dignity is impossible. In a world of enormous means, it is no longer acceptable that a significant part of the population lacks access to the food they need for survival. The populations of drylands are among the most vulnerable and therefore should have priority consideration by the international community.

The issue of inequality among women and men as was discussed at the Rio Pavilion during Gender Day undoubtedly remains one of the most deeply rooted problems in our societies. We must overcome these inequities and support the women of the world more effectively, particularly those in drylands, who each day pay too high a price for their motherhood, the food security for their families, and the terrible strain of the on-going quest for water and food.

Peace and security are increasingly threatened by the ungoverned appetites of a few: for political power, for wealth, for military dominance or for religious domination, all of which will lead us to certain ruin. The long lines of refugees and migrants crowding parts of the world, often originating from degraded lands, are our responsibility. They are our children, whether we want them or not.

Mr President let us return to the work of the Conference of the Parties and appreciate its good organization that has enabled the civil society organizations to fully participate.

We note that the contact groups that were established in the early stages of this COP operated exclusively in English and did not allow the systematic presence of CSOs. This is not in keeping with the spirit of participation of which the UNCCD should be the champion.

Regarding the CST, CSOs recall that they played an important role in improving the efficiency of the Committee and have contributed local and traditional knowledge in order to strengthen links between technology and policy making, particularly in the crucial fields of sustainable land management, resilience and adaptation of communities. We want to thank the parties who supported this view in decision-making.

Regarding the round tables of the High-level segment CSOs appreciated the intention of arriving at a more fruitful discussion in this segment rather than a series of statements. However facilitation arrangements should lead to more interactivity.

During the High Level Segment, the CSO community was invited to organize a dialogue on the burning issue of land rights. On that occasion, it drew the attention of country Parties to the fact that it is time to take action to adequately address recognition of land rights of land using communities by implementing, inter alia the following:

- Securing land rights as a prerequisite to achieving LDN
- Securing land tenure systems for the drylands through locally appropriate, participatory and multi-stakeholder processes that take into account the dynamic nature of the dryland ecology and also take into consideration the dynamic nature of the multiple land uses of dryland communities.
- Providing government recognition of the ownership and control of land by indigenous peoples and local communities.
- Recognizing the collective rights of land users, especially with regard to the livelihoods of pastoralists, indigenous peoples and women, as a first step to supporting community-based management systems to prevent degradation and restore land
- Giving equitable access and rights to land to men and women, especially vulnerable and indigenous peoples, in order to eradicate poverty.
- Tackling the weak governance and corruption endemic to the land governance system, which in many countries favour the status quo and harm the interests of poor people.
- Democratizing and securing land rights so as to ensure the continued sustainable management of natural resources, and to sustain the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities.
- Restoring degraded lands that are used by land-insecure communities in ways that avoid land grabbing, but rather improved tenure security, especially for indigenous p
- Developing legal principles and guidelines for ensuring social protection, food security, security of indigenous peoples and local communities, land tenure, ecological integrity, transparency and accountability, in order to overcome social and historical inequities.

Mr President, CSOs present at COP12 welcomed the adoption of the land degradation neutrality and believe that this is a potentially powerful concept for ensuring that the land sector is understood not only as part of the problem, but as part of the solutions in the crucial debate on climate change. In the context of the Sustainable Development Goal 15 and its

Target 15.3, we urge Parties, donors and international organizations to integrate it in any policy or action to address climate change, any development action and any action concerning agriculture.

The CSOs urge the CST and SPI as well as scientists around the world to define and agree upon a universal definition of LDN and its scope, and its benchmarks and indicators at all levels from global to local.

In order to deliver real benefits to people and planet, LDN must not:

- lead to trade-offs that would lead to sustainable development being compromised to conserve the environment;
- result in resources being used inefficiently to restore degraded landscapes when they can be used more efficiently to conserve landscapes that are not yet degraded;
- create 'rights' to degrade through off-set mechanisms;
- lead to the degradation of water resources;
- undermine the rights of land users, especially in the lands used by communities;
- lead to land grabbing or land transfer;
- undermine the land rights of landless farmers, pastoral communities and indigenous land users..

In this context, any funds that are mobilized must be specifically targeted and must be governed transparently and not left in the hands of the private sector, which is driven by the profit motive.

Mr President, Mrs, distinguished delegates,

In all cases, neutrality in terms of land degradation must first serve the populations that the Convention is intended to protect. It should offer these nearly two billion people opportunities for productive work and better incomes, in ways that can make them proud of their contribution to two major issues of global concern: climate change and poverty, and bolster their rights to benefit from the land.

Thank you,

Delivered by Serkan Aykut of the Foresters' Association of Turkey on behalf of CSOs

Activities undertaken by the organization after COP12 of the UNCCD

Activities undertaken by the organization when returning to their country are as follows:

PowerPoint presentation, activities and results COP12 of the UNCCD

This presentation mostly includes the same content as the English report (current report) but it is illustrated and is in brief. The outline of the presentation are as follows:

- Desertification and its widespread in the world
- A brief history of the UNCCD
- Introduction to the participatory mandate of the UNCCD
- Introduction to the UNCCD structure and subsidiary bodies (COP, CST, CRIC and Secretariat);
- National Action Programme “NAP”
- The 10-year Strategy of the UNCCD
- Main Stakeholders in Combating Desertification, land degradation and Drought
- Articles about the participation of the CSOs and CBOs for the implementation of the Convention
- Preparatory Workshop on Sustainability of Development in Drylands: Increase the Synergy between the Three Rio Conventions
- Collaboration in Drynet Activities Prior to COP12 of UNCCD (side event, newsletter & publications)
- Introduction to the COP12 of the UNCCD
 - CSOs plenary meeting
 - Opening of the 12th Conference of Parties
 - The CSOs Open Dialogue Sessions “Demystifying the LDN with CSO contributions”
 - Attending side events during COP12 of the UNCCD
 - CSOs and CST
 - CSOs and CRIC
 - CSOs and High Level Segment
 - CSOs and Roundtable discussions of the High level Segment
 - Dialogue with CSOs on Land Rights, High Level Segment
 - Dialogue with private sector and parliamentarians, High Level segment
- The Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) and Land Degradation Neutrality Fund (LDNF)
- Final Remarks of the COP12 of the UNCCD
 - Key Remarks of the CSOs Final Statement

- Final Statement of the CSOs for the COP12 of the UNCCD

Persian news item about the COP12 of the UNCCD

Inclusion of the news item within quarterly newsletter of the Civil Society Organisation (CENESTA) and sharing it with the environmental telegram channels in Iran.

List of the CSOs and interested experts

The following list is the List of the e-mail address of the contact persons of CSOs that have received this report. In addition in Iran we have a number of national Telegram channels on relevant environmental issues, that I have sent the report to their admin officers to share it with the group. Two of those telegram channels are as follows:

- The National Channel of the Iran's Environment (951 members mostly environmental activists from CSOs, CBOs and Gov. experts from all over the country, <https://telegram.me/joinchat/BPuFXDwspAXHLY8Ad4sa7Q>);
- NGOs platform on Wetlands Issues (74 members) <https://telegram.me/wetlandngo>

Sharing the current report with the following CSO members and interested Gov. experts;

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