

**Report on:**

**The 14<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of Parties**

**The United Nations Convention to Combat  
Desertification, New Delhi, India**

**2-13 September 2019**



**Cenesta**  
Centre for Sustainable Development

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## About the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the Convention at the international level to combat desertification and land degradation. The Convention established in 1994, adopted on 17 June 1994 and entered into force on 26 December 1996. The UNCCD currently has 197 Parties and 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 found.

The Convention's 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.

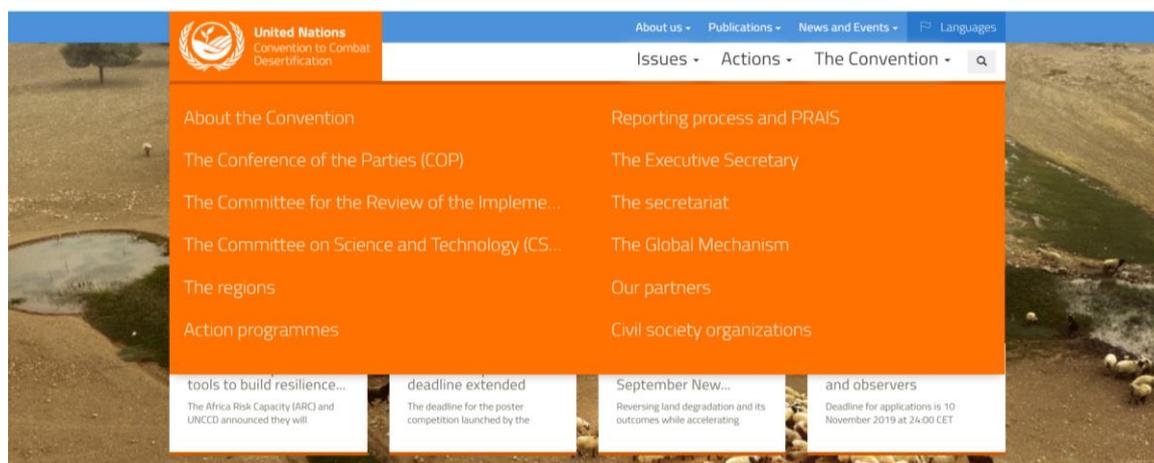
The UNCCD is particularly committed to a bottom-up approach, encouraging the participation of local people in combating desertification and land degradation.

The UNCCD secretariat facilitates cooperation between developed and developing countries, particularly around knowledge and technology transfer for sustainable land management.

As the dynamics of land, climate and biodiversity are intimately connected, the UNCCD collaborates closely with the other two Rio Conventions; the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to meet these complex challenges with an integrated approach and the best possible use of natural resources.

The Convention has five world regions including Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), Northern Mediterranean, Central and Eastern Europe in which have an important role in implementation of the Convention. 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.

<https://www.unccd.int/>



## The Fourteenth Session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations to Combat Desertification (COP14 of the UNCCD)

The fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties **of the UNCCD (COP14 of the UNCCD)** held at the India Expo Centre and Mart, New Delhi, India, from 02 to 13 September 2019. UNCCD COP14 provides a unique opportunity to deliberate, coordinate and exchange ideas to resolve the major problem of desertification worldwide and reach a global consensus for adoption by the country parties.

Prior to COP14, the Regional consultations of affected country Parties of the Convention, regional implementation annexes for Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern Mediterranean and Central and Eastern European Country Parties as well as the CSOs preparatory meeting, were scheduled on 31 August to 01 September 2019 at the same venue.

The conference convened to address critical gaps in land management and planning, as well as practical actions to ensure countries achieve Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) by delivering tools and resources that are fit for global movement on land restoration.



In total, the COP14 brought nearly 8,000 participants, including representatives from government officials, United Nations bodies and agencies, civil society organizations, local community organizations, trade unions, business and media members.

The representatives of the accredited CSOs of the UNCCD including environmental and social activists, indigenous peoples, small-scale farmers, women and youth had remarkable efforts during the COP14 of the UNCCD.

The CSO panel members put admirable effort before, during and after the COP14 of the UNCCD for the benefit of the CSOs community. These efforts mainly include arrangement and management to develop several CSOs statements and interventions during the COP14

to reflect the perspectives and views of all affected communities, organizing two Open Dialogue Sessions, formal and informal debates, negotiation and discussion with delegates from parties, EU, private sector and international organizations.

The COP14 of the UNCCD adopted 36 decisions, to ensure that the Convention's goals for 2018-2030 are achieved.

With special thanks to all organisers, funding agencies, particularly the government of India, the UNCCD Secretariat and the CSO panel members for providing this valuable opportunity for us to participate in the COP14 of UNCCD.

<https://www.unccd.int/conventionconference-parties-cop/cop14-2-13-september-new-delhi-india>



## Activities carried out prior to the COP14th of the UNCCD in order to liaise with the CSOs in the network or constituency

### Participation in the 17<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention to the UNCCD (CRIC17 of the UNCCD)

The 17<sup>th</sup> session of CRIC of the UNCCD, held in Georgetown, Guyana, at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre (ACCC), from 28 to 30 January.

Prior to the official session of the CRIC17, in 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2019, three training workshops organized by the Soil Leadership Academy for interested participants of various stakeholders (CSOs, private sector, parties, researchers, UN agencies and international organizations) on Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN), Gender and Drought and dust storms.

The sum of 200 delegates attended to the CRIC17, out of this number about 30 representatives of the UNCCD accredited CSOs actively participated in training workshops, CRIC17 official sessions including three important interactive dialogue sessions.



The topics of the three interactive dialogue sessions of the CRIC17 were:

- The UNCCD Gender Action Plan as a tool to improve the living conditions of affected populations;
- Identifying emerging innovative financing opportunities to combat land degradation;
- Progress made in setting voluntary land degradation neutrality (LDN) targets and advancing towards LDN implementation.

Along 6 member organisation of Drynet network, Nahid Naghizadeh from CENESTA, Iran, have had chance to supported by Drynet and participate in Training workshop on Land Degradation Neutrality in 25 & 26 and the CRIC17 of the UNCCD from 28-30 January 2019.

Special thanks to Drynet secretariat and Drynet partner organisation “Both Ends” for supporting the participation of 7 Drynet partners and thanks to the CSOs secretariat and CSO Panel of the UNCCD on provision of enabling environment for the participation of civil society community in CRIC17.

It worth to say, with the leadership of CSOs panel of the convention, the relevant active networks such as Drynet, Caribbean Youth Environment Network, and Guyana’s civil society organizations, the CSOs community of the convention organized themselves for successful dialogue and discussions during the event.

The CSOs attending CRIC17 had a daily briefing meeting leading by CSO panel in every morning. They divided into different working groups, did an admirable collective work on

reviewing the circulated official documents of the CRIC17, to be sure that CSOs, land users, women's group and youth are engaged and included in official documents of the convention. As a result, they issued several statements and interventions on important topics and sessions of CRIC17 and followed it up for inclusion of their recommendation and priorities in CRIC17 report for approval during the 14th Conference of the Parties (COP14) in September 2019, in India.

The CSOs attending CRIC17 organized a meeting and developed their priorities to call the parties for stronger collaboration in the following areas during the CRIC17 of the UNCCD.

For more information on CSOs participation in CRIC17 of the UNCCD, please see:

<https://dry-net.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/May-2019-newsletter.pdf>



## First National Forum of the Union of Indigenous Nomadic Tribes of Iran

*Prepared by Nahid Naghizadeh, CENESTA, ICCA Consortium Member*

The first national forum of the Union of Indigenous Nomadic Tribes of Iran (UNINOMAD – an ICCA Consortium Member) was held in the Bakhtiari Tribal Confederacy’s Territory, Lali, Khuzistan, Iran on 21 February 2019. This forum hosted by the Sustainable Livelihood group (Sanduq) of the Bakhtiari Tribal confederacy with the support of the CENESTA.



Approximately 500 participants attended the Forum: women and men elders and representatives of the Bakhtiari, Qashqai, Shahsevan, Arab communities, and other nomadic tribes of Iran, parliamentarians, governmental authorities, and academics.



The main goal of the forum was to declare unity and solidarity among the Iranian nomadic tribes. Among the shared goals were the recognition of their customary territories as ICCAs- Territories of Life de jure with their own governance systems, and strengthening their capacities to co-manage natural resources with governmental authorities.

The participants strongly reaffirmed the long-lasting bond between nomadic peoples and mother earth, their dedication to the environment and biodiversity, and the fundamental role of nomadic peoples in nature conservation. Elders and representatives of UNINOMAD

described the challenges faced by nomadic peoples and suggested appropriate approaches and solutions to tackle these issues.



Members of Parliament, local and national authorities, and academics, all talked about the need for recognition of economic, security, cultural, and environmental values of nomadic peoples to assure their well-being in the country. They went as far as naming nomadic people's concerns as one of the top priorities for the authorities in national and local programs, especially in the Sixth National Development Plan.

For Persian version see: <http://www.cenesta.org/fa/category/themes-fa/nomads-lc-fa/nomads-fa/bakhtiari-fa/>

<https://www.iccaconsortium.org/index.php/2019/02/21/first-national-forum-of-the-union-of-indigenous-nomadic-tribes-of-iran/>



## Contribution to establish A “Public Platform on Flood Vulnerability”

Iran was witnessed heavy rains and flood during March and April 2019. The flood caused a big human loss, displaced and injured people, loss of livestock, soil erosion and destroyed cities, villages, agricultural lands and infrastructure in different parts of the country including North East, West and South West. Along with all local, national assistance to displaced people, Environmental NGOs network, interested experts and academics decided to establish a “Public Platform on Flood Vulnerability” as a collective contribution of various stakeholders to work on the following themes:

- Participatory assessment on flood vulnerability, understanding the root causes of recent floods, reducing and preventing the risk of flood in affected areas;
- Recommendation to decision and policy-makers to reduce the socio-economic and environmental consequences in affected areas:
- Promoting and understanding the Community Based Early Warning System to cope with climate change issues;
- Public awareness-raising and production of multi-media and documentary on the role of careless development projects including big dams constructions and their impact on ecosystems, destruction of biodiversity (flora and fauna), consequences of construction around river basins, deforestation and appropriate integration of indigenous and traditional knowledge with modern science;
- Production of multi-media materials on socio-economic and ecological consequences of the flood, resettlement of local people,
- Participation of CSOs representatives in the “Special working group for preparing the national report on flood ”
- Public awareness-raising through organising dialogue sessions, workshops and meetings.

The core members of the platform, environmental NGOs network and other supporters of the platform continuously are active and participate to meet the above-mentioned themes at local, provincial and national levels since establishment.

E.g. organizing a workshop and panel discussion on “**Flood, People and Nature**” in “18<sup>th</sup> International Exhibition of the Environment” in Tehran in April 2019.



**Sustainability of Nature and People with emphasis on the effects of recent floods,**

**By: Tehran Network of Environmental & Natural Resources NGOs & Public Platform on Flood Vulnerability**

## Participation in 4<sup>th</sup> International Civil Society Summit “Desertif'actions 2019”

The Desertif'actions 2019, International Civil Society Summit on LAND, BIODIVERSITY and CLIMATE was held on OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso from 19-22 of June 2019.

<https://desertif-actions.org/index.php/en/da19-en/>

The summit brought more than 380 participants from 40 countries representing 230 multi-actors organizations including local communities, NGO, scientists, international organizations, public and private sectors. All participants of the event demonstrated a fruitful cooperation and constructive dialogues inside events, workshops, panel sessions in which was an inspiration for everyone to support sustainable land use and restoration of ecosystems and combat desertification, land degradation, and drought at all levels.

The three panels of the event focused on:

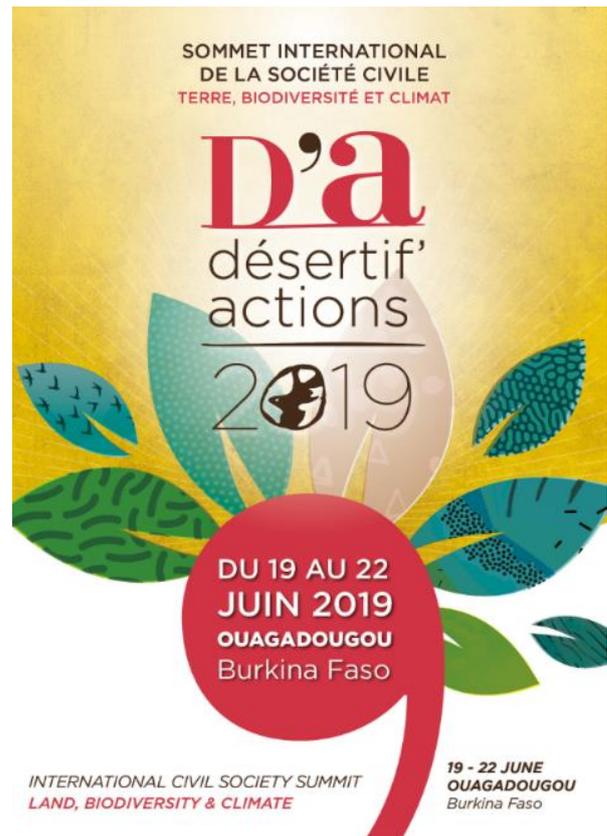
- Panel 1. The Place of Land in African Initiatives;
- Panel 2. UNCCD COP14, Challenges and Stakes;
- Panel 3. Funding Action to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation.

The four themed workshops focused on:

- The Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWSSI) and Civil Society: (How to turn GGW into an operational framework of desertification combat?)
- Pastoralism in Drylands: Reaffirming its Central role in combat against desertification;
- The implementation of land degradation neutrality: Anticipating land tenure management future challenges;
- Multi uses of water in drylands: Improve integrated management of water resources.

From Iran, CENESTA’s representative, Nahid Naghizadeh, supported by the event organizers (UNCCD, CARI and SPONG) and participated in this event. She participated in two days workshop on “Pastoralism and Rangeland Restoration: a practitioners’ dialogue for increased investment in pastoral management of the rangelands”. In this event, she presented how CENESTA has started a process towards Preservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Rangelands through strengthening Indigenous Nomadic Tribes of Iran. The Pastoralism and Rangeland Restoration event of Desertif'actions 2019, focused on three main sessions including:

- The importance of rangelands restoration;
- How Sustainably Rangelands restored?
- How to mobilize key actors to restore degraded rangelands?



The participants of “Pastoralism and Rangeland Restoration” issued several key messages for the final declaration of 4<sup>th</sup> international civil society summit Désertif’actions, reaffirming the pastoralists central role in combating desertification and cope to climate change issues in drylands including:

- Recognize the territorial integrity of pastoralists, their rights, their roles and their invaluable expertise. Prevent the fragmentation of their territories in the framework of recognition “Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas and Territories (ICCAs)” and actively engage with them for inclusive, sustainable governance and use of rangelands.
- Develop and mobilize the resources for multi-stakeholder alliances for the restoration of rangelands based on customary management systems of pastoralists that recognize the wealth of pastoralists’ traditional knowledge and practices, and support adequate mobile health, education and veterinary care services.
- Mobilize the people, communities, CSOs, authorities and international organisations to actively support and take action regarding the International Year of Pastoralists and Rangelands (IYRP).

The participants of Desertif’actions 2019, adopted a declaration, emphasizing, “we are warning for the convergence of major factors that are aggravating land degradation and desertification! and we declare that it is no longer time to seek more evidence for the land, climate and biodiversity catastrophes taking place, but to act!”

<https://desertif-actions.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Declaration-v3-EN.pdf>



## Collaboration in preparing Drynet side events and action plan at COP14th of the UNCCD

Drynet members and its board collaborated for the active participation of network members on the four advocacy priorities of *Drynet* during COP14 of the UNCCD emphasizing:

- Just, accountable and responsible land governance that recognizes formal and non-formal (including customary) land use and tenure rights: supporting the implementation of the VGGTs in the UNCCD strategic framework 2018-2030;
- Operationalization of SDG target 15.3 in relation to all land-related SDGs and associated targets through meaningful participation of dryland communities;
- Finance for restoration for local people, communities, institutions and organisations;
- Guarantee meaningful CSO participation in the implementation and monitoring of the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018 – 2030.

Drynet members had close collaboration to be ready for collective collaboration with other CSOs and being involved in policy discussions at various levels, awareness-raising amongst CSOs, alliance with other networks and platforms, knowledge and experience sharing, collaboration with the UNCCD CSO panel and negotiation with parties, international organisation and other stakeholders. Drynet members also planned to organize two side events during COP14 of the UNCCD on:

- Pathways for big money to reach local communities: how large funds can support communities to contribute to Land Degradation Neutrality and SDG 15.3 while leaving no one behind;
- From global frameworks to local actions: the change that (upcoming) global reports can bring to policies and action on sustainable land management.

CENESTA representative as one of the Drynet members contribute for strong participation of the network at COP14 of the UNCCD.



**drynet**  
A global initiative to create sustainable futures for drylands

*The international network of civil society organisations that empower dryland communities to conserve land-based ecosystems and enhance livelihoods*

**NETWORKING ACROSS CONTINENTS**

- A platform for information sharing and learning
- Collective knowledge, insight and expertise
- Strengthening civil society action
- Promoting ambition at the UNCCD and in other international processes

**TO PROVIDE A COLLECTIVE INTERNATIONAL VOICE**

- Promoting indigenous rights and land tenure rights
- Transforming systems towards greater equity and sustainability
- Embracing agroecology and supporting sustainable livelihoods

**FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT**

[www.dry-net.org](http://www.dry-net.org)



## **Reviewing the relevant documents and readiness for various side events of COP14 of the UNCCD**

To participate more actively in UNCCD COP14 events, CENESTA representative corresponded and communicated with various organizations such as IUCN, Pastoralists Knowledge Hub of the FAO, CARI, IFAD and Drynet network to contribute in different side events. Besides, reviewing various documents of COP14 before travelling to India was a part of preparatory activities.

## **List of Activities carried out during the COP14 of the UNCCD**

Along with other representatives of civil society organizations, CENESTA representative actively participated and collaborated in relevant sessions and collective work of the CSOs community and COP14 events of the UNCCD including:

- Participating in the preparatory meeting of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
- Regular attendance in daily consultation meeting of the CSOs;
- Opening session of the 14th Conference of the Parties of the UNCCD;
- Collaboration in preparing CSOs collective statement's & interventions during COP14 of the UNCCD;
  - CSOs Opening statement;
  - CSOs statement on land tenure;
  - CSOs statement on Gender;
  - CSOs comments and recommendations to Strategic Objectives of the UNCCD 2018–2030 Strategic Framework.
  - CSOs Statement on Sand and dust storms, COW;
  - CSOs Closing statement;
- Contact person of Asia region to prepare a collective presentation of the region for Open Dialogue Session 1: land tenure, including inheritance and access to land;
- Representative of Asia region to describe the common presentation of the region within Open Dialogue Session 1 of COP14;
- Contribution to prepare the common presentation of Asia region for the Open Dialogue Session 2: intergenerational cooperation on land restoration;
- Participation and interventions in COP14 side events;
- Participation in the High-level segment of COP14 of the UNCCD;
- Participation in Interactive dialogue 01: values-based approach to land stewardship;
- Participation in roundtable 03: Foster a global movement for ecosystem restoration;
- Participation and presentation in several side events of COP14 of the UNCCD and;
- Participating in other sessions of COP14 events (CRIC, COW, Rio Pavilion events, visiting and reviewing publications and innovations of various organization in exhibition area, etc.) during the whole event.

## **Participation in Preparatory Meeting of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)**

Before the official meetings of the UNCCD COP14, accredited CSOs had the opportunity to participate in the CSOs preparatory meeting that took place on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019. This meeting allowed all participated CSOs to know each other and make the necessary arrangements for their stronger participation and collective work on upcoming events of COP14.

The meeting started with welcoming addresses by distinguished authority of the host country (India) and Mr Bhawani Shanker Kusum, President of Gram Bharati Samiti (GBS), the host CSO of the COP14. They emphasized the important role of the CSOs in sustainable land management and accomplishment of the implementation of the convention at local and national levels as a trustful mechanism giving voice to the people on the ground.

The member of the CSO panel followed the meeting by a short introduction of the CSOs representatives. The meeting continued with explaining the history of the UNCCD, COP, CST, CRIC, CSO panel, SPI, ODS sessions, and the role and function of the CSO panel to ensure that the CSOs concerns, knowledge and insights properly reflected in the decisions to be taken by the parties.

For this reason, the CSO panel members along other CSOs representatives arranged to have a concise strategy during COP14 for accomplishment the following items:

- Confirmation of five following priorities of the CSOs and considering these priorities in all forms of CSOs participation in the COP process;
  - 1) Recognition by policy-makers, financial institutions and others that community-led initiatives are contributing to Land Degradation Neutrality.
  - 2) Land tenure security of communities in general, and women, young people and vulnerable groups specifically must be secured through a UNCCD COP14 decision on implementation of FAO's Voluntary Tenure Guidelines (VGGTs).
  - 3) Participation of civil society and especially women's and youth groups throughout the decision-making processes regarding Land Degradation Neutrality target and National Drought Plans is crucial to guarantee sustainability.
  - 4) Finance must be accessible and appropriate for civil society organizations supporting communities especially women and young people in achieving LDN and/or monitoring the implementation of LDN projects.
  - 5) Transform our society to achieve greater sustainability and equity, especially gender equity.
- Formation of different thematic working groups on:
  - 1) COP & COW interventions and contact group;
  - 2) CRIC interventions and contact group;
  - 3) CST interventions and contact group;
  - 4) Open Dialogue Session 1 on land tenure, including inheritance and access to land;
  - 5) Open Dialogue Session 2 On intergenerational cooperation on land restoration;

- 6) High-Level Segment;
  - 7) Parallel roundtable 01: land, climate and renewable energy;
  - 8) Parallel roundtable 02: rural and urban communities - failing or flourishing together;
  - 9) Parallel roundtable 03: Foster a global movement for ecosystem restoration;
  - 10) Interactive dialogue 01: values-based approach to land stewardship;
  - 11) Interactive dialogue 02: healthy land, healthy people;
  - 12) Interactive dialogue 03: boosting sustainable value chains for land-based business;
  - 13) Daily ECO newsletter on reflecting CSOs voices, views and highlights of the day and experiences from the ground.
- Identifying the CSOs representatives within the working groups, for their collective collaboration on preparing the relevant statements and interventions in high priority topics and discussions during the whole event (COP14);
  - Planning for the daily meeting to review and recap the previous day, exchange of important information by thematic working groups, consultation and finalization of the prepared statements for stronger participation and intervention of the CSO community along with the event;
  - Necessary arrangements for CSOs communication through various social networks and applications such as Mobilize.io, #COP 14 and COP14 WhatsApp group;  
<https://csos-unced.mobilize.io/main/groups/34542/pending-approval?skipPromotion=true>

Mr Marcos Montorio, the NGO and Civil Society Liaison Officer of the UNCCD, explained the overall Rules of procedure and Do's & Don't's of the COP14 of the UNCCD. He gave a brief explanation on the opening session, COP presidency, CSOs opportunity for intervention, the two subsidiary body (CRIC and CST), Open Dialogue Sessions, High-level Segment, Ministerial round tables and interactive discussions and closing session of the COP.



## Highlights from CSOs preparatory meeting (Opening Speech of the UNCCD Executive Secretary)

The opening speech of Mr Ibrahim Thiaw (the UNCCD Executive Secretary) started by appreciating the commitment of the CSOs and their vital role as an important ally during the COP14 of the UNCCD. Mr Thiaw noted Land degradation threatens the most vulnerable people to feed their families, the survival of over a million species and drives forced migration and resource-related conflicts. He specified, We could be at a moment of radical change that depends on several elements, in which the full and committed involvement of the CSOs is going to be paramount. To quote from Gandhi. “In a gentle way, you can shake the world”.

He focused on the strategic role of the CSOs in general and the CSOs panel in particular in:

- decision-making process and goodwill/compliance of the private sector;
- policy issues to the attention of the Parties,
- Land tenure as a big win of COP14 if all goes well!
- Moreover, CSOs efforts and solidarity in amplifying and hearing the voice of local communities, indigenous peoples, men, women, and youth at the COP. Therefore, your endless struggle on decision-making processes and practical actions not only will assist for improving their immediate environment and quality of life but also solving pressing global problems that concern them - such as food security, migration, conflict, climate change and loss of biodiversity.



He further noted, during the next two weeks, the CSOs have the opportunity to interact with decision-makers and provide their input into about 30 decisions which he hoped to see clear outcomes on climate/biodiversity synergies, drought restoration, sand and dust storms and gender. “I certainly count on you and thank you for your support – and service to others - during the first 25 years of the Convention. I wish all of us a fruitful and constructive meeting. **Let’s shake the world.**

For a complete version of the opening speech of the executive secretary of the UNCCD, see:

[https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/relevant-links/2019-09/310819%20CSO%20Pre%20Meeting%20Opening%20remarks\\_website.pdf](https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/relevant-links/2019-09/310819%20CSO%20Pre%20Meeting%20Opening%20remarks_website.pdf)



### Provisional Agenda for CSO Preparatory Meeting

**Sunday 01 September 2019, 09:00-17:30**

**Venue:** room MET-02 in the conference venue.

09:00 – 09:15	<b>Opening Session &amp; Welcome Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation of the CSO panel</li> <li>• COP host country</li> <li>• Mr. Bhawani Shanker Kusum, President, Gram Bharati Samiti (GBS), COP host CSO.</li> </ul>
09:15 – 10:00	<b>Round of introduction: who is who in the room</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Emmanuel SECK Name, organization, country, and topic focus (2 key words)
10:00 – 11:00	<b>Crash course UNCCD</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Emmanuel SECK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the UNCCD (history, COP, CST, CRIC, CSO panel, SPI)—Octavio</li> <li>• CSO lobby &amp; advocacy from CRIC17 to COP14: CSOs priorities --Nathalie</li> <li>• Presentation of the CSO report—Jiajia</li> <li>• Presentation COP 14 and the way the CSO panel is facilitating the CSOs-Valentin</li> <li>• Rules of procedure and Do's &amp; Don't's in COP –Marcos</li> <li>• Open discussion</li> </ul>
11:00 – 11:15	<b>Break</b>
11:15 – 12:30	<b>CSOs organisation &amp; Working groups:</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Nathalie Van Haren <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the table</li> <li>• Paper board ( CSO participants for each group), groups created</li> </ul>
12:30 – 13:30	<b>Break</b>
13:30 – 15:00	<b>CSOs organisation &amp; Working groups (cont.)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group work on COP/CoW, CRIC, CST, ODS 1, ODS2, ECO</li> </ul>
15:00 – 15:45	<b>Interaction between UNCCD Executive Secretary Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, and CSOs</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Valentin Ciubotaru <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome and highlighting CSO priorities</li> <li>• Remarks from Executive Secretary Ibrahim Thiaw</li> <li>• Open Discussion</li> </ul>
15:45 – 17:00	<b>Practical stuff</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Jiajia LUO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventory of CSOs with a country delegation badge for Contact Group</li> <li>• App to share stuff: Mobilize.io</li> <li>• WhatsApp Group</li> <li>• Twitter: #COP14</li> </ul>
17:00 – 17:30	<b>Any other matter</b>

For more information on the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on **Climate Change's** (IPCC) **Special Report on Climate Change and Land** (SRCCL) see:

[https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2019/08/4.-SPM\\_Approved\\_Microsite\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2019/08/4.-SPM_Approved_Microsite_FINAL.pdf)

## Regular participation in daily consultation meeting of the CSOs

Regular participation in daily meetings of the CSOs was another valuable opportunity and learning process for CSOs representative through:

- Daily interaction and exchange of information with other CSO representatives;
- Interaction and consultation with the NGO and Civil Society Liaison Officer of the UNCCD;
- Participation in co-chairing the daily consultation meetings;
- Sharing insights and feedbacks from previous day;
- Reviewing the daily agenda of COP14;
- Collective work with regional CSO members on their common presentation in open dialogue sessions (1&2);
- Reviewing and finalizing the prepared statements by different working groups;
- A friendly atmosphere for introduction of the new-comers of the CSO community and familiarizing them with various components of the conference of the parties;
- Encouraging stronger alliance, presence and interaction with other groups within important and relevant components of COP14 of the UNCCD;
- Meeting with other allies on relevant topics of the COP such as LDN Fund;





### The LDN Fund – investment fund

#### A mission-driven impact fund project

To be a source of transformative capital bringing together public and private investors to fund triple bottom line projects that contribute to Land Degradation Neutrality

**Sustainable agriculture**

**Sustainable forestry**

**Other LDN-related sectors, such as green infrastructure and ecotourism**

By tackling land degradation, the LDN Fund is expected to provide:

**Socio-economic benefits**

- Creation of decent jobs
- Improved livelihoods
- Increase the resilience of local communities
- Cultural and recreational benefits
- Improved public health

**Environmental benefits**

- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Restoration of degraded land/ecosystems
- Reduced deforestation
- Soil conservation
- Improved habitats and biodiversity

The LDN Fund is targeting total impacts of:

- 35 million tons of carbon sequestered
- 500,000 hectares converted to SLM practices
- 100,000 decent jobs created/supported



## Participation in various sessions of COP14 of the UNCCD

### Opening session of the 14th Conference of the Parties of the UNCCD

The 14<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties (COP14) started on Monday 2 September 2019. The introductory remarks of COP 14 started by COP14 President (India's Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Mr Prakash Javadekar). In continuation of the opening session, respective representative of the host country, the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, representatives of the parties, regional and interest groups, intergovernmental organisations, UN agencies and representative of non-governmental organizations made their opening statements.

The COP took place in conjunction with the 18<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 18) and the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the UNCCD's Committee on Science and Technology (CST 14).



### **Highlights of the UNCCD Executive Secretary opening statement**

UNCCD Executive Secretary, Mr Ibrahim Thiaw, welcomed delegates and noted if we succeed at this Conference, we will achieve removing obstacles to sustainable development, avoiding natural disasters, particularly from climate change and bringing wellbeing to everyone through the jobs and opportunities that land restoration creates.

He referred to some findings of scientific reports, such as IPBES Global Assessment, IPCC, SPI and the regional edition of the global Land Outlook and stressed, “Science has spelt out what needs to be done. Therefore, we need to translate this knowledge into policies and combine with partnerships that advance our priorities.

He also noted the important opportunities of COP14 such as thematic days on drought, sand and dust storms, Youth forum, Business, Cities and Local Government, the High-Level Segment, and three roundtables that will offer practical and cost-efficient solutions on the benefit of peoples, climate, ecosystems, reducing gender and rural inequality, and stepping up to the transformational change.

For a complete version of the opening speech of the UNCCD Executive Secretary, see:

[https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/relevant-links/2019-09/020919%20COP%2014%20Opening%20Speech\\_website.pdf](https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/relevant-links/2019-09/020919%20COP%2014%20Opening%20Speech_website.pdf)



### *Highlights of the other opening statements of COP14 of the UNCCD*

The other opening statements highlighted the attention of all parties and allies of the UNCCD to the following topics:

- Joint international commitment to finding new ways for sustainable development methods and technology to restore degraded lands;
- Building alliances to reduce and stop the threat and negative impacts of current trends of land degradation to human beings and ecosystems;
- Translating countries' LDN voluntary targets into action through proper projects, budget and multilateral cooperation;
- Empowerment of women as crucial in solving land-related issues, and the need to enhance the UNCCD's outreach to attain wider public awareness.
- Reaching agreement on a common indicator for drought during COP14 to support the integral achievement of the 2018-2030 Strategic Framework;
- Support for improving resilience, economic growth, poverty reduction and building greater resilience to climate change impacts;
- strong linkages between continuous land degradation, climate change and the biodiversity crisis;
- increased ambition to achieve the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
- need to “conceptually and methodologically refine the LDN target
- capacity-building efforts to ensure implementation of the 2018-2030 Strategic Framework;
- support for involving local communities, and in particular women, in the design of effective land management programmes and
- An operative implementation of the Convention and importance of National Adaptation Plans and cooperation among countries at regional and sub-regional levels;
- Attention of the parties to the five priorities of the Civil society Organisations in the decision-making process of COP14 of the UNCCD including:
  - Recognizing the importance of Community-led initiatives contribute to LDN;
  - Achieving Land tenure security and implementation of VGGT;
  - Participation of CSOs in decision-making processes of the Convention, particularly in LDN and National Drought plans;
  - Enhancing the CSOs access to adequate financing in achieving LDN and;
  - Transform our society to achieve greater sustainability and equity, especially gender equity.



## **Collaboration in preparing CSOs collective statement's & interventions during COP14 of the UNCCD**

Collective collaboration to prepare the CSOs statements and interventions on important topics and different sessions was another part of the CSO's activities to emphasize their concerns and demands in the decision-making process of COP14. CENESTA's representative along with other delegates of CSOs actively took part in group discussions and preparing various statements on opening, closing, land tenure and gender statements and other interventions of the CSOs community.

### ***Opening statement of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs),***

Delivered by Mr Bhawani Kusum, Gram Bharathi Samiti, CSO Focal Point for COP14, India  
Mr President, Executive Director of UNCCD, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,  
Dear friends of the frontline for combating desertification I am honoured to speak on behalf of civil society organisations attending COP14. I have been advised that around 1000 delegates have registered as CSOs.

I would like to express our deep gratitude to the Government and people of India for hosting COP14, to the parties of the Convention and several funders that do allow our presence here, and to the Secretariat of the UNCCD for facilitating the whole.

Mr President, when land is degraded, we all suffer the consequences. But some are more vulnerable than others. For the time being, a new category of vulnerable is rapidly increasing facing a burning world under thousands of forest fires, in Amazonia, in Congo and Angola. No doubt that they are mainly human-induced and too often driven by large-scale natural resources exploitation like industrial agriculture or mining. Our home is burning.



We are participating in this meeting to remind the delegates of the very real concerns of the people affected by land degradation, desertification and droughts. While our hourglass overflows, we urge the Parties to act in the best interests of the people and engage people in the ground so that they will be able to sustain their livelihood and build a resilient future. At least to be able to expect any future for our children.

As the world heats up under its ever-thickening blanket of greenhouse gasses, the impacts of land degradation are felt ever more intensely. Droughts are becoming extreme, and 12 million ha of productive land is lost to desertification each year.

Climate-related natural disasters such as hurricanes reap an ever-growing toll, in particular on the poor and vulnerable. We all are very much aware of the increasing trend in number and importance of these events that have already disastrous negative impacts on local livelihoods, food security, health, international stability and security, migrations, as

reported in three major reports in 2019 by IPBES on biodiversity, HLPE on food security and IPCC on climate.

Mr President, dear participants, yesterday the Executive Secretary Ibrahim Thiaw addressed the CSOs by saying that we need to address the future with a radical change that focuses on the root causes, at the requisite scale, and making the best use of the opportunities that are embedded in the challenges we face. Are we ready for radical changes?

In that spirit we, therefore, call urgently on the Parties, the inter-governmental organisations and the donors, to join hands with civil society to increase our ambition and accelerate our actions to sustain the land and its people.

**With regard to the agenda, the Civil society Organisations in this COP have agreed to bring five priorities to your attention.**

First: the recognition by policy-makers, financial institutions and others, that community-led initiatives are contributing to Land Degradation Neutrality.

Second: land tenure security of communities in general, and of women, young people and vulnerable groups specifically must be secured through a UNCCD COP14 decision on implementation of Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land fisheries and forests.

Third: participation of civil society and especially women, youth, children throughout the decision-making processes regarding Land Degradation Neutrality target and National Drought Plans is crucial to guarantee sustainability.

Fourth: finances must be accessible and appropriate for civil society organizations supporting communities especially women and young people in achieving LDN and/or monitoring the implementation of LDN projects.

***Fifth: transform our society to achieve greater sustainability and equity, especially gender equity.***

We call upon the Parties to include these priorities of the CSOs in the COP 14 decisions.

From our experience, we do know that the solutions are available and they do exist. While preparing the COP14 in Ougadougou in June 2019 during the 4<sup>th</sup> desertification CSOS forum, participants from more than 40 countries shared numerous initiatives on pastoralism, multiuse of water, solutions on land tenure, agroecology, Green Great Wall Initiative of Sahara and Sahel and others.

Mr President, distinguished delegates, we as CSOs are committed to contributing to implementing these solutions, ecosystem restoration and solving these problems. May we remind this assembly that we are ready and skilled for upscaling of these initiatives.

Working together is not an option while none of us is able alone standing to overcome the present situation. We must achieve pro-active engagement and equal participation of women, young people, children, indigenous communities, pastoralists, disabilities, marginalised groups, private sector and scientists and the civil society organisations to meet the SDG targets specially target 15 & 15.3 by 2030.

Finally, we are not the people combating desertification, we are the land combating desertification.

We wish you all a wonderful meeting and stay in the warm-hearted city New Delhi.

Thank you

## Open dialogue sessions of COP14 of the UNCCD with Civil Society Organizations

Open Dialogue Session (ODS) is a unique feature of the UNCCD and its commitment to promoting the CSOs role and inclusion of their activities within the official programme of work of the Conference of the Parties. During the two open dialogue sessions of COP14, the CSOs community had the opportunity to share their success stories, best practices, testimonies, concerns and priorities with parties, UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations and private sector for positive influence in the decision-making process particularly in achieving SDG 15.3, land degradation neutrality, sustainable land management and responsible land governance.

CENESTA representative played an active role as a contact person of Asia region for preparing the collective and common presentation of Asian countries including Iraq, Iran, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and presenting it in the first open dialogue session.



### First Open dialogue session on land tenure

The first of two open dialogue session on the inclusion of land tenure in the context of LDN held in the afternoon of 5<sup>th</sup> September. The event held with presence of Mr Shri C K Mishra (on behalf of COP Presiden), Mr Octavio Perez Pardo (CSOs panel member), Dr Pradeep Monga (Deputy Executive Secretary), Mr Marcos Montorio (NGO and Civil Society Liaison Officer), two representatives form secretary and five regional representatives of the CSOs.

The session opened by Mr Shri C K Mishra. He noted I am sure, in today's discussion, the CSOs will come up with constructive and positive ideas which will be helpful to the COP and its decision-making process.

Mr Octavio Perez Pardo, the moderator of the session, noted, land tenure security is a central topic of today's debate and discussion, he added, we are aware that each county has its sovereignty and its rules and guidelines on land tenure such as statutory land tenure, private land tenure, state and customary land tenure. We believe it is very important to understand that land security is a topic, which goes beyond the type of land tenure and is a central element of our debate. Security in land tenure regime in each country undoubtedly is a good link to food security, job creation, employment, poverty alleviation and gender equality. The moderator then introduced the procedure of the first open dialogue session and opened the floor for the five regional representatives of CSOs.

The CSO representatives and their overall topics in the first open dialogue session were as follows:

1. MrValentin Ciubotaru, NGO Bios, from Eastern Europe, presented: National Engagement Strategy - a tool for people cantered land governance. He discussed lessons learned from Moldova’s land reform process, noting the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships in enhancing transparency and advocacy efforts;
2. Ms Nahid Naghizadeh, CENESTA, from Asia, highlighted how Asian CSOs contribute to improving the security of land tenure at country level and what are the existing challenges faced by local communities in Iraq, Iran, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. She noted, majority of countries facing challenges due to insecure land tenure and pressure on natural resources due to lack of proper policies and regulations, war, conflict among displaced peoples, allocation of lands to extractive industries, big dams construction, urbanization and change of land use (rangelands to agricultural lands “agri-business”).
3. Mr Pablo Mota, Mision Verde Amazonia, from Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighted land tenure initiatives in their region by giving some examples where indigenous communities have been granted autonomy to make decisions over their land;
4. Ms Kouyate Guondo Sissoko, Reseau des Femmes pour les Droits Environment from Africa talked on women challenges on access to land due to traditional norms that discourage women’s land ownership.
5. Ms Nathalie Van Haren, Both ENDS, provided an overview of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (Voluntary Guidelines).



After regional presentations, the moderator opened the floor for comments and questions for the delegates. A number of parties and EU made their comments and statements in which some of them agreed on ensuring land tenure security as a key element to sustainable land management and some of them preferred not to focus on land tenure issues and leave it to national sovereignty and beyond the mandate of the Convention.



### ***Second Open dialogue session on intergenerational equity, land tenure, food security, green jobs, and migration***

The second open dialogue session of COP14 with CSOs held in 11<sup>th</sup> of September and chaired by Mr Jigmet Takpa, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India on behalf of the COP14 president, and moderated by Emmanuel Seck, Environment and Development Action (ENDA), from Senegal.

Mr Jimet Takpa opened the session, noting, that CSOs play a very important role in implementing in land restoration activities on the ground. The CSOs presence and their active participation are critical not only for the success of this COP but also implementation of land restoration and combating desertification. He further noted, the CSOs are the bridge between the policy-makers, international parties, partners and local communities.

The topic of the second open dialogue session focused on **“Intergenerational cooperation for Land Restoration including land tenure security, green jobs and migration”**. The moderator of the session, Mr Emmanuel Seck, noted the second open dialogue discussion have divided into two parts:

- 1) “Testimonies for legacy” between elders and younger, to share their story related the land restoration, and;
- 2) “Initiatives and practices on land restoration and combating desertification from the ground”.

The four participants of the first part “testimonies for legacy” were as follows:

- 1) Ambassador Byong Hyon Kwon, Chair Man of Future Forest, South Korea, explained the success story of 18 years struggle in planting over 22 million trees in six Chinese deserts to combat desertification;
- 2) Ms Yugratna Srivastava, Chairman of Young and the Youth Focal Point in the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), appreciated the efforts of Mr Kwon and stressed the

importance of inter-generational equity, accountability and engagement and meaningful participation of youth in decision-making process;

- 3) Mr Bhawani Shanker Kusum, Executive Director of GBS, India, shared his engagement in combating desertification and described how youth and women participated in a land restoration project involving the planting of 60,000 trees to restore wastelands in Jaipur, India.
- 4) Mr Alvaro Alfaro, Plant for the Planet, from Chile, he emphasized that water is a human right, against the backdrop of the privatization of water rights in Chile.



**Under Part II entitled “Learning from the Ground”, the CSOs panellists were as follows:**

- 1) Mr Moses Chabuka from Neno Active Youth in Development-Malawi, representing African CSOs, discussed success stories in addressing food insecurity, unemployment, and hazardous migration;
- 2) Ms Juan Riet from Ciedur-Uruguay (Latin America and the Carribean), described sustainable land management initiatives for youth, including training of thousands of young farmers; engaging young people inland restoration; environmental education programmes in rural areas;
- 3) Ms Oindila Basu, IFSA, India (Asia), reflected on the effects of land degradation on food security, jobs and wellbeing. She noted a lack of motivation among youth to return to rural areas, saying this drives rural-urban migration, with attendant challenges;
- 4) Ms Mathilde Bourjac from CARI, France (WEOG), observed that while people living in oases enjoy comparatively good ecological conditions, they are vulnerable to climate change and land degradation. To offset these impacts, she suggested a focus on restoring degraded oases; promoting inter-generational knowledge transfer; and empowering local communities;
- 5) Ms Sophiko Akhobadze from REC-Caucasus, Georgia (Eastern Europe), she noted the direct and indirect impacts of migration and highlighted achievements in land restoration, including organic farming markets organized by small farmers in Moldova; agroforestry initiatives involving hundreds of local farmers; and women managed small nurseries in Georgia.



The session headed by number of comments and statements and the CSOs representatives responded to comments and questions.

Mr Ibrahim Thiaw, the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, recalled the Convention’s long engagement with CSOs and thanked participants for the constructive dialogue. He emphasized that the UNCCD cannot be implemented without the participation of CSOs.

The moderator of the session noted that migration from rural areas is linked to low income from the agricultural sector. He highlighted the need for direct access to funding for marginalized groups; promoting good practices that draw on traditional knowledge as well as modern technology; and securing access to land for young people and women.

In the closing session of the meeting, Chair Takpa noted that the knowledge of adults and youth has to come together to achieve land restoration. He pointed to the numerous success stories presented by CSOs, calling for their replication.



## **Participation and interventions in COP14 side events**

Side events are a platform for all stakeholders and interested groups within the UNCCD COPs that provide an enabling environment to engage with parties, interaction and sharing of experiences with parties and other participants, showcasing of various innovations, knowledge sharing, capacity building, networking among CSOs and representatives of other groups. During the 14<sup>th</sup> COP of the UNCCD, CENESTA representative participated in several side events to share and present their organisational experiences with interested groups. The followings are some of the selected side events where CENESTA representative participated and shared their experiences, insights and best practices on relevant topics at local and national levels.

### ***Sustainable land management; restoration, biodiversity, livelihoods, pastoralism “LDN: restoring balance in our natural and working landscapes***

6<sup>th</sup> September, CARI, IUCN, UNCCD and ReSAD

This side event organized around the theme of achieving a balanced response to LDN: ensuring investments in all affected biomes, adherence to the response hierarchy, and making sure that smallholder farmers and pastoralists benefit from the LDN process.

The event launched the joint IUCN & UNCCD-GM report ‘Reviving Land and Restoring Landscapes: Policy Convergence Between FLR and LDN, which highlights the synergies that countries are finding in LDN response, as well as some of the remaining challenges. The report recommends greater adherence to established principles of LDN and FLR, higher levels of policy commitment from government, and strengthening the call for inter-sectoral coordination for integrated responses, particularly for large-scale restoration investments.

A key challenge lies in mobilizing investment for rangeland restoration: the most dominant biome in drylands remains relatively neglected in LDN actions. Therefore, the side-event focused specific discussion of including rangelands and pastoralists in LDN responses via showcasing the recent on Sustainable Rangeland Management in Sub-Saharan Africa by WOCAT and the World Bank that highlights guidelines to improved rangeland management.

#### **In this side event, CENESTA representative shared:**

- The result of 2 days discussion on “Pastoralism and Rangeland Restoration: a practitioners’ dialogue for increased investment in pastoral management of the rangelands” as part of Desertif'actions 2019 and;
- CENESTA’s experiences on Indigenous & Community Conserved Territories & Areas (ICCAs), A Holistic, Customary Approach to Conservation of Nature



### **UNCCD Secretariat: Gender Action Plan (UNCCD Gender CAUCUS)**

4<sup>th</sup> September, Rio Pavilion, New Delhi, India

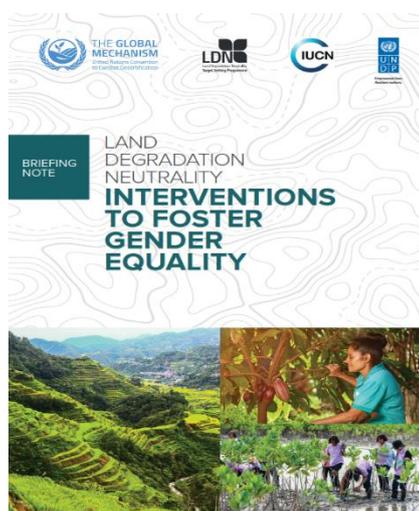
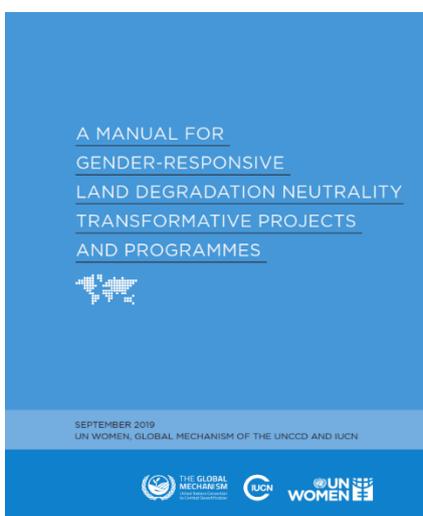
The gender action plan adopted at COP13 that was a landmark decision for the UNCCD. After the adoption of the gender action plan by UNCCD, parties committed to improving the quality of life for women worldwide. The UNCCD Gender Caucus facilitated informal interactions between representatives of civil society organizations, faith-based groups and government representatives from various countries where issues such as land tenure, drought and sandstorms discussed.



### **UN Woman Gender equality: A key to achieving Land Degradation Neutrality**

5<sup>th</sup> September, IUCN and GM of the UNCCD and UN Women, New Delhi, India

In this side event, the briefing note on Land Degradation Neutrality- Interventions to Foster Gender Equality and the manual on Gender-Responsive land Degradation Neutrality Transformative Projects and Programmes officially launched.



### ***Showcasing on- and offsite impacts of Sustainable Land Management with focus on disaster risk reduction and water***

4<sup>th</sup> September, By WOCAT, FAO, University of BERN, ICIMOD, Nairobi Water Fund and GB Plan

In this side event, the expert on Sustainable Land Management shared their insights on how they identified, assessed and visualized the on-an off-site impacts of the SLM in the different case study regions and got the perspectives of the key stakeholders and partner institutions.

### ***One Logo Side Event, organised by Future Forest, CSO in South Korea***

4 September 2019, New Delhi, India

#### **A brief description of One Logo Alliance**

**1. Vision:** An alliance of CSOs that are active in the combat against land desertification that has come together to communicate in a single, unequivocal message that the problem is real, solutions exist and are possible.

**2. Core value:** Throughout the world, thousands upon thousands of people have come together in Civil Society Organizations to slow down, stop and even reverse the effects of land degradation and all of its negative impacts. However, this large number of people and institutions have an insurmountable task of convincing the remaining population of the importance and urgency of taking action. By uniting under one strong message, represented by one logo to be communicated by everyone, we believe we can break through this barrier.

**3. Mission statement:** The OneLogo Alliance will reach out to all CSOs that are involved in processes that will contribute to land degradation neutrality, reaching worldwide penetration of its message.

**4. Action plan:** The first part of the process involves definitions: who we are, what we stand for, our strategies to reach our vision, etc.

➤ Introduction of CENESTA and its mandate and mission in one logo side event.

For more information on One Logo Initiative see:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfRDg6EKXuaSzs2uQUk45-W3qRYCu4Qn73cZeAry7c-hEjRPw/viewform>

### ***CSO actions to combat desertification: working with communities to up-scale Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration throughout the Sahel***

6<sup>th</sup> September, CARI and its networks, New Delhi, India

***Participation on Various events on GEF DAY at the RIO Convention Pavilion, 9 September including:***

#### ***Transformational change in practice, where are we coming from? Where we are going?***

- Setting the stage on Transformational change in land degradation projects;
- The role of multiple stakeholder platforms from global to local levels.

## Monitoring and Combating Land Degradation in Pastoral Areas (rangelands and grasslands), – Are Participatory Approaches Important?

12 September 13-15, FAO and IUCN, UNCCD COP, New Delhi, India

“This side-event has shown how we can work together as partners across civil society, governments, local communities, NGOs, UN agencies, development partners, academia to build needed momentum and generate necessary data with an aim to influence well-informed policies and interventions in pastoral areas,” said FAO’s Vivian Onyango who coordinated the side-event. “We still have a long way to go but increasingly we are seeing attention towards pastoral areas increasing.”

Nahid Naghizadeh from CENESTA, Iran stated that “pastoralists are guardians and stewards of drylands with key socio-economic values underpinned by a dynamic livelihood system that enable adaptation, resilience and living in harmony with nature.”

She shared the benefits of pastoralism to rangelands and grassland ecosystems and focused on the important role of pastoralism in the conservation of rangelands.

For more details on this side event see:

<http://www.fao.org/pastoralist-knowledge-hub/news/detail/en/c/1234516/>



**...Seasonal migration as a historical adaptation and resilience strategy & living in harmony with nature**

Carrying capacity, date and time of migration; number of animals for migration

**Scout system**

- Collection of necessary ecological information on **weather, climate, indicator species of plants**, etc., by community scouts;
- Assessment & **processing of collected data** by community elders for understanding the **carrying capacity of every particular micro ecosystem**;
- Decision making on the **time of migration**;
- Decision making on how many **heads of animals** to allow to migrate based on thousands of years of experience;



***Pathways for big money to reach local communities: how large funds can support communities to contribute to Land Degradation Neutrality and SDG 15.3 while leaving no one behind.***

11 September 13-15, Drynet network, New Delhi, India

In this side event 6 speakers (2 CSOs and 4 Funders “GEF, WB, NEPAD, IFAD, GCF, GM, OSS, AFDB, Drynet, GIZ, WASSAN”) made a brief opening statement in response to the following question:

“SLM at the required scale! Is this just a dream? How do you envisage CSOs having greater access to greater funding? What are the pathways and what should CSOs do to achieve this? What are the experiences that can be drawn from your own organisation?”

they shared existing success stories and challenges faced on the topic of and explored appropriate options and community-friendly funding mechanisms based on lessons learnt from their experiences and analysis of the current financial mechanisms in place.





## Drynet Side Events



**drynet**  
A global initiative to create sustainable futures for drylands

*The international network of civil society organisations that empower dryland communities to conserve land-based ecosystems and enhance livelihoods*

**NETWORKING ACROSS CONTINENTS**

- A platform for information sharing and learning
- Collective knowledge, insight and expertise
- Strengthening civil society actions
- Promoting ambition at the UNCCD and in other international processes

**TO PROVIDE A COLLECTIVE INTERNATIONAL VOICE**

- Promoting indigenous rights and land tenure rights
- Transforming systems towards greater equity and sustainability
- Embracing agroecology and supporting sustainable livelihoods

**FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT**

www.dry-net.org



**UNCCD COP14 Side Events:  
COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES FOR  
LAND DEGRADATION NEUTRALITY**

**From global frameworks to local actions - Drynet**  
The change that (upcoming) global reports can bring to policies and action on sustainable land management.  
**Thursday 12 September 8:00 - 10:00 MET-10**

**Pathways for big money to reach local communities - Drynet**  
How large funds can support communities to contribute to Land Degradation Neutrality and SDG15.3 while leaving no one behind.  
**Wednesday 11 September 08:30 - 10:00 MET-06**

**Communities regreen the Sahel - Both ENDS & CARI**  
CSO actions to combat desertification: working with communities to up-scale Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration throughout the Sahel.  
**Friday 6 September 13:00 - 15:00 MET-09**



***From global frameworks to local actions: the change that (upcoming) global reports can bring to policies and action on sustainable land management***

12 September 08-10, am Drynet network, New Delhi, India

the side event speakers discussed on the global cornerstone documents relevant to communities living on land including 2018 IPBES Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration, 2019 IPBES Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, 2019 IPCC Special Report on Climate change and land and other important reports like Escazu Agreement and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. They discussed to explore how the policy options are supporting community activities in dryland areas and areas that are affected by desertification, land degradation and droughts.





## High-level segment of COP14 of the UNCCD

The two-day high-level segment held on 9-10 September with the participation of heads of the UN and other international organizations, leaders and ministers of states and presence of CSOs and private sector.

During this event, the participants discussed a group of issues at 3 Ministerial Roundtables and three Interactive Dialogues.

In the opening of the high-level segment, Mr Ibrahim Thiaw, UNCCD Executive Secretary, put focus on sensitive responsibility of all interested groups and states, for developing a suitable strategy and common pathway to achieve sustainability and ensure a safe, prosperous and equitable society for future and next generation. Mr Thiaw noted, given our 25 years anniversary theme of 'Growing the Future Together', it made me wonder:

- What can we achieve today, to justify the confidence of future generation in us?
- To ensure those 25 years from now, the children born today will see their families growing up in a safe, prosperous and equitable society.

He further noted we should reach the agreements here on:

- How to restore, protect and manage our land on a massive scale,
- And how to trigger a seismic shift in the private sector
- Partnerships to make it happen,
- Can immediately help ramp up the ambition of action plans for everyone involved.



He concluded that: I know we will ensure this COP

- Makes global peace and prosperity
- More achievable, if not yet inevitable.

Perhaps making it inevitable can be our challenge for next time!

For a complete version of the opening speech of UNCCD Executive Secretary in High-Level Segment, see: [https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/relevant-links/2019-09/090919UNCCD%20ES\\_%20HLS%20opening%20speech.pdf](https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/relevant-links/2019-09/090919UNCCD%20ES_%20HLS%20opening%20speech.pdf)

### Highlights form High-level Segment Statements

- Building alliances among all stakeholders for combating desertification, poverty alleviation, conflict resolution and economic development;
- Promoting and sharing best practices and adequate financial sources to CSOs community, indigenous peoples and local communities;
- Capacity building for all stakeholders and their involvement in national target setting for Land degradation neutrally and achieving SDG 15.3;

- Involving young generation and women, Job creation and provide enabling environment for their active participation in the implementation of the convention;
- To promote the importance and implementation of community-led initiatives, equity, sustainability, and land tenure security in achieving LDN at all levels;
- To create suitable linkages among UNCCD Secretaries and national and regional levels) for collective implementation of convention;

### **The Three Ministerial Roundtables**

The three ministerial roundtables and highlights of its statements are as follows:

- Roundtable 01: land, climate and renewable energy;
- Roundtable 02: rural and urban communities - failing or flourishing together;
- Roundtable 03: Foster a global movement for ecosystem restoration;



### **Highlights of the Ministerial Roundtables**

#### **Roundtable 1. Land, Climate and Renewable Energy:**

- land is the connecting piece in the implementation of the Rio Conventions and achieving LDN;
- Design and implementation collective actions based on the outputs and recommendations of the recently released report of the IPCC;
- Moving towards transformational change on socio-economic and ecological aspects and rethinking of policy frameworks;
- Reduced capacity for hydropower generation due to decreasing water flows;
- Promote and understanding linkages between afforestation, LDN, biodiversity conservation, and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- Developing renewable energy projects and responsible consumption of natural and land-based resources and combine solar and agricultural systems;
- Commitments for the implementation of Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT);
- Design and implement sustainable land management project with the aim of emission reduction and climate change adaptation.

### **Roundtable 2. Rural and Urban Communities – “Failing or Flourishing**

- Strengthening the linkages and cooperation between urban and rural areas, for the creation of economic opportunities and enhancing sustainable land management and land use planning;
- Developing suitable strategies to mitigate negative impacts on ecosystems and resources for both rural and urban residents, though, inter alia, strengthening action and policy measures aimed at managing severe droughts and minimizing food waste through sustainable consumption and production;

### **Roundtable 3. Fostering a Global Movement for Ecosystem Restoration:**

- Allocation of necessary resources through innovative financial solutions for ecosystem restoration;
- Immediate actions for restoration of forests, rangelands, wetlands and deserts through sound scientific management through ecosystem-sensitive approaches; enabling policies that mobilize entire societies to address DLDD and synergy among three Rio Conventions;
- Engagement and mobilizing all stakeholders and right-holders for the global movement for ecosystem restoration, through strengthening the South-South cooperation; community-led initiatives, scaling up the ecosystem restoration initiatives, ensuring gender equality and women’s empowerment at all levels.

### **Three interactive dialogues of the high-level segment**

- A values-based approach to land stewardship;
- Interactive Dialogue 2: Healthy land, healthy people;
- Boosting sustainable value chains for land-based business.

### **Highlights of the Three Interactive Dialogues**

- Understanding and promotion of traditional and indigenous knowledge of indigenous peoples and its role in protecting land and natural resources;
- Sustainable land and resources management through developing and implementing community-driven projects and community-led initiatives;
- Building alliances and partnership for sustainable and integrated water management;
- Implementing the Voluntary Guidelines on Sustainable Soil Management of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP);
- Economic diversification and actions towards creating innovative, inclusive and “entirely new” value chains in order to unlock natural capital;
- Providing enabling environment for capacity building and access to knowledge for small scale farmers on sustainable farming methods such as using renewable energy, access to market, rehabilitation of native plant genetic resources aiming improvement of local livelihoods;
- Supporting the insurance for agriculture soil health, building up community resilience against climate change, and securing land right, land tenure and equitable access to land and funding especially for women;

### ***Highlights from CSOs statements within the high-level segment, Ministerial Roundtables and Interactive Dialogues***

The CSOs community developed their own statements during the high-level segment and its associated roundtables and interactive dialogues, the followings are some of the important factors and points raised by the CSOs community during this event:

- Securing Land tenure of indigenous peoples and local communities in particular women's right and access to land is essential for land degradation neutrality, land restoration, sustainable land use and combating desertification;
- Community-led sustainable land management and restoration practices are the main contributors to the LDN targets;
- Improve the communication with CSOs, and their participation in the National Target setting, not only in this plenary hall but also in countries;
- Access to appropriate sources of finance to that support community-based initiatives;
- Strongly request the parties to earmark more public money from GEF, UNDP, FAO and GCF for small grants programmes specifically for communities to restore the land;
- Assisting the rural and Indigenous communities in terms of reforestation, restoration of land and water bodies like rivers, ponds, mountain top forest and topsoil mitigation measures;
- Capacity building and strengthening of Urban, Rural and Indigenous and local communities on mitigation and restoration measures;
- Participation of civil society and especially women's groups throughout the decision-making processes regarding development a solution for harmonisation of rural and urban areas and flourishing together is crucial to guarantee sustainability;
- Knowledge and experience sharing organized by CSOs between people and communities that want to engage in natural regeneration;
- Facilitation of CSO engagement with policy-makers to contribute to creating an enabling policy environment;
- Making Legally binding strong agreement between countries to maintain the health of country lands, natural resources and its bio-cultural diversity and avoiding land degradation at the country level;
- Promoting agroecology instead of high intensive chemical farming, nourishing our land with healthy organic matter instead of chemicals and encourage a local food consumption habit that can maintain the soil health;
- Having real interactive dialogue and to interact with speakers and not only presentations of the statements during the high-level segment;
- To strengthen the resilience of food systems and value chains, financial services need to be tailored to the local context and combined with other types of interventions such as supporting sustainable livelihood practices or access to markets;
- Increasing technical capacity and product understanding of small producers, traders, processors and other local actors in agricultural value chains is crucial to facilitate effective use of financial flows and service;

- The call for transformative action from UNCCD on sustainable land use, restoration and stop land degradation depends on creating a more equitable society and transformed ecosystems which is resilient in the face of the climate crisis and other potentially destructive human actions;
- Change is often temporary while transformation is permanent for transformational change we need to get out of our comfort zone to engage and collaborate with each other through interaction over what is important and act in terms of our common values, to be genuinely transformative.
- **We all here have one goal that is overcoming the land degradation issue and sustainable use of land for the prosperous future of humankind as well as mother earth. This is our one planet; there is no other to go to, Act now!**

### **Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC)**

CRIC is one of the two subsidiary bodies of the UNCCD. The 18<sup>th</sup> session of the CRIC (CRIC18) opened on Tuesday, 3 September and convened in parallel to the COP. The CRIC closed its meetings on 12 September and adopted seven decisions including:

- Assessment of the implementation of the Convention against the strategic objectives of the UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework (ICCD/CRIC(18)/L.4);
- Improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the COP (ICCD/CRIC(18)/L.2);
- Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (ICCD/CRIC(18)/L.1);
- Assessment of financial flows for the implementation of the Convention (ICCD/CRIC(18)/L.6);
- Enhancing the implementation of the UNCCD in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the enhancement, strengthening and promotion of capacity building (ICCD/CRIC(18)/L.3);
- Date and venue of CRIC 19 (ICCD/CRIC(18)/L.5); and
- Programme of work for CRIC 19 (ICCD/CRIC(18)/L.7).

CSOs actively participated in CRIC sessions and the CSO community prepared a common statement for the opening statement of CRIC18.

### ***CSO statement in CRIC opening session, 03 September 2019***

Delivered by Nathalie van Haren, Both Ends

Chairperson, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen!

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to speak on behalf of more than 500 CSOs accredited to the UNCCD that are actively involved in the implementation of the convention together with people and grassroots communities. As we are here

together, we all agree that land is important. It is the basis of life for all, for women and for men, for our children and their children.

We as civil society are here to ensure that the voices and concerns of the people affected by land degradation and desertification are well heard. We are also here to show the great accomplishments of local communities regarding sustainable land use and restoration if an enabling policy environment is being created.



There are three crucial elements for such an enabling environment:

- 1) Land tenure security
- 2) Knowledge about sustainable practices of communities
- 3) Finance for community-led restoration practices

Everywhere in the world, we see the pressure on land increases. This is due to land degradation and the fact that extractive agribusinesses, mining companies and infrastructure are taking more and more land for short-term economic gains at the expense of the livelihoods of people. People are not sure about their rights and use of the land and forced to migrate to other areas. The CSOs have been advocating for land rights and land tenure security for women and men living in drylands for many years.

At the same time, we see that when people and communities know that their children and the children's children-to-come have access to land, they will invest in the land, in growing trees, in soil health and in their general ecosystem. Land tenure security is, therefore, a crucial element for land restoration, sustainable land use and combating desertification. Land tenure security is essential for land degradation neutrality. The civil society organizations joined here at COP14 urge the parties to take a COP14-decision on the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Tenure Guidelines in Land Degradation Neutrality processes.

We would like to bring to the parties attention, that community-led SLM and restoration practices are the main contributors to the LDN targets. However, these practices often go unseen and little or no credit is given by policy-makers living in urban areas. We strongly recommend to all to travel to the rural areas and engage with people restoring the land.

These are the green jobs and businesses that support communities, these are the green jobs and businesses that need to be supported.

Another crucial part of an enabling environment is easy access to appropriate financing mechanisms to support people and communities in their restoration and SLM practices. We kindly but strongly request the parties to earmark more public money within GEF, UNDP, FAO and GCF for small grants programmes specifically for communities to restore the land. In addition, we urge the parties to ensure that inclusive, participatory and transparent decision-making process.

And while we are at it and I come to my last point.

Engagement with civil society doesn't hurt. We need to act together to restore the land, for our children and our children's children. Through engagement with each other, we start to better understand each other and our actions become transformative. We, therefore, make a strong appeal to the parties to ensure meaningful participation of civil society and especially women's and youth groups throughout the decision-making processes regarding Land Degradation Neutrality target and National Drought Plans. Thank you

The statement is developed through cooperation between Sophie Akhobadze, Marissa Mohamed, Amiya Prapan Chakrabarty, Yahya Msangi, Nathalie van Haren

Group contact person is Nathalie van Haren: [n.vanharen@bothends.org](mailto:n.vanharen@bothends.org)

## **Committee on Science and Technology (CST)**

The Committee on Science and Technology is another subsidiary body of the UNCCD. The 14<sup>th</sup> session of the UNCCD's Committee on Science and Technology (CST14) convened from 3 to 6 September in parallel to the COP and approved, and forwarded six decisions, to the COP which was adopted by the COP.

The representatives of the CSOs community actively participated in CST sessions to convey the voice of the CSOs and their requests/ demands in relevant decisions of the CST. In the opening session of the CST, The Environmental Monitoring Group, on behalf of CSOs, stated: "While the earth is in a climate crisis, scientific knowledge is also expanding exponentially". He urged "moving on" from exclusively focusing on LDN as the "mantra" of the past years to optimize land use through finding practical solutions to ensure carbon "stays in the soil."



Other delegated stated:

- Land-use change is the largest driver of biodiversity loss with the greatest impact on the environment;
- Cooperative work needed at all levels to disseminate and translate identified technologies and knowledge into direct benefits for local land users;
- Recognition of the potential impact of research by scientific panels, urging for improved technologies and mitigation strategies to reduce the direct impacts of drought on ecosystems and soil degradation;
- Comprehensive understanding of the causes of DLDD and noted the role of science in generating tools to avoid, manage, and reverse land degradation and ecosystems, and provide an approach to achieving LDN;
- Establishment of technical centers in the regions to support: the generation of scientific evidence to prevent and manage droughts; the sustainable use of forests and peatlands; and the monitoring of sand and dust storms;
- Moving on from exclusively focusing on LDN as the “mantra” of the past years to optimize land use through finding practical solutions to ensure carbon “stays in the soil.”;
- The delegates also noted the importance of the Soil Organic Carbon (SOC), but need for other indicators, such as economic and social criteria, when researching drivers of DLDD; because UNCCD pertinent information on SOC was difficult for countries to access so they need a mechanism to understand the soil organic carbon;
- Specifying the economic benefits of sustainable land use and LDN policies; the importance of technology in policy implementation;
- The need for linking land tenure security to land degradation neutrality, preventing land grabbing, and ensuring respect for the ecological capacity of nature on land.

Amongst the six important decisions of the CST, decision# (ICCD/COP(14)/CST/L.1) encourages parties to:

- integrate gender-responsive actions to promote women, youth, and girls through the gender-inclusive design of preliminary LDN assessments;
- develop gender-responsive LDN interventions based on women’s participation in decision-making for enabling inclusive land governance; and
- take into account gender dimensions responsive to the concerns of women, youth, and girls in land-use planning and in the design of interventions towards achieving LDN;
- promote SLM technologies, practices, and approaches that contribute to maintaining or increasing SOC for multiple benefits;
- Take into account land tenure and land-use planning conditions, as appropriate, for creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment for LDN, following the VGGT;
- Capacity building for improved assessment and monitoring of (a) land degradation neutrality; (b) multiple benefits; and (c) trade-offs to support integrated land-use planning.

After 4 days of the CST sessions, the CST approved and forwarded six decisions to the COP, which adopted on Friday, 6 September.

## Five priorities of the CSOs within COP14 decisions

During the two-weeks, the representatives of the Civil society organizations actively participated in the whole event and continuously highlighted and advocated their five priorities for the attention of all stakeholders in particular parties for considering and include those priorities in COP14 decisions.

The followings are part of CENESTA's representative insights and observations on considering the five priorities of the CSOs community within COP14 decisions:

### 1) **Recognition by policy-makers, financial institutions and others that community-led initiatives are contributing to Land Degradation Neutrality;**

Along with the serious effort of the CSOs community on promoting the importance of community-led initiatives in achieving LDN, and overall agreement of the majority of other partners on this topic, there is no direct statement and commitment in COP decisions for this priority. However in:

**COP14 decision 9 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.9)**, which contains two annexes, including the New Delhi Declaration, in which ministers and high-level representatives recognizing that:

- DLDD undermines health, development, and prosperity in all regions;
- concerned that the impacts of desertification/land degradation and drought are felt most keenly by vulnerable people and;
- acknowledging those practices that conserve and restore land and soil affected by DLDD and floods contribute towards achieving LDN and can also have long-term multiple benefits for the health, well-being, and socio-economic development of the entire society, especially for the livelihoods of the rural poor;

**and noting the findings of IPBES and IPCC reports on:**

- Development of **community-driven transformative projects and programs** that are gender-responsive, at local, national and regional levels;
- Encourage a **proactive approach** to reducing the risks and impacts of DLDD through the implementation of drought preparedness plans and increased risk mitigation for drought and sand and dust storms.

### 2) **Land tenure security of communities in general, and of women, young people and vulnerable groups specifically must be secured through a UNCCD COP14 decision on implementation of FAO's Voluntary Tenure Guidelines (VGGTs);**

Positive attention and inclusion of a new agenda item on land tenure for consideration at COP14 was one of the most important discussed topics of the agenda. Initial reactions from parties indicated that while there is broad recognition that land governance is critical in creating an enabling environment for sustainable land management and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular SDG 15.3, many governments were concerned that recommendations on this issue might infringe on their sovereignty. However, in result of serious efforts of the CSOs community and supportive parties and international organizations, and contact group discussion, for the first time, the UNCCD COP formally recognized that equitable land tenure could build an enabling environment for

large-scale land restoration to meet one of the Convention's core objectives: **improving the lives of people living in drylands.**

Despite, the absence of FPIC principles, and despite some compromises for stronger language on land rights of women and local communities, especially indigenous peoples territories, the adoption of a decision on "**land tenure**" was clearly recognized as one of the most important outcomes of COP14 of the UNCCD, under decision (ICCD/COP(14)/L.17). Under this decision, the COP encourages and invite the parties to:

- Follow the VGGT in the implementation of activities to combat DLDD, achieve LDN, and recognize legitimate tenure rights, including customary rights, consistent with the national legal framework.
- legally recognize equal use and ownership rights of land for women and the enhancement of women's equal access to land and land tenure security as well as the promotion of gender-sensitive measures to combat DLDD and achieve LDN, taking into account the national context; and
- Ensure that measures to combat DLDD are carried out in a non-discriminatory and participatory way so that they promote equal tenure rights and access to land for all, in particular, vulnerable and marginal groups, within the national context.

**Other decisions of COP14 referring to land tenure are as follows:**

- **CST decision 1 (ICCD/COP(14)/CST/L.1)**, encouraging parties to take into account **land tenure** and land-use planning conditions, as appropriate, for creating an enabling policy and regulatory environment for LDN, following the VGGT;
- **COP14 decision 9 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.9)**, reaffirm the relevance of the VGGT in the context of national food security for better access, control, and stewardship over land and equitable tenure security, in accordance with relevant national legislation, for the implementation of the Convention and the promotion of sustainable land management.

### **3) Participation of civil society and especially women's and youth groups throughout the decision-making processes regarding Land Degradation Neutrality target and National Drought Plans is crucial to guarantee sustainability;**

The CSOs continuously called for their strong participation in the decision-making process of LDN target setting and National Drought Plans and announced their commitment and their important role in supporting local and national-level efforts to enhance resilience to DLDD. Despite these efforts, there is no strong commitment for parties within COP decisions on CSOs participation in decision-making processes of LDN targets and National Drought Plans. However, in drought discussions, delegates agreed on the establishment of an intergovernmental working group (IWG) and the CSO panel has asked the COP bureau to include some seats for CSOs in this working group, in which reflected in COP decision 22 as follows:

- **COP14 decision 14 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.22)**, the COP establishes an intergovernmental working group (IWG), on effective policy and implementation measures for addressing drought under the UNCCD, with a view to presenting its findings and recommendations to parties for their consideration at COP 15. **This IWG comprises parties, international organizations, the SPI, CSOs, and key stakeholders, as appropriate;** and consist of a

maximum of three-party representatives from each regional implementation annexe of the Convention.

Other decisions on encouraging parties to involve CSOs more in the UNCCD process are as follows:

- **COP14 decision 10 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.10)**, the COP encourages parties to involve more accredited CSOs in the UNCCD process and request secretariat to continue working with CSOs;
- **COP14 decision 16 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.16)**, the COP invites civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders to leverage international awareness-raising opportunities for outreach, including to women, girls, and youth, around actions to combat DLDD, and achieve LDN and drought resilience;
- **COP14 decision 3 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.3)**, the COP takes note with appreciation of the CSO Declaration & decides to include the declaration as an annexe to the COP 14 report.

**4) Finance must be accessible and appropriate for civil society organizations supporting communities especially women and young people in achieving LDN and/or monitoring the implementation of LDN projects.**

CSOs call for accessible and appropriate finance in achieving LDN and monitoring the implementation of LDN projects and its importance, in general, welcomed by the majority of COP parties. Some parties confirmed that linkages among securing access to land and improving direct access to finance by CSOs and local communities is a key component to achieve LDN and some highlighted the need to mobilize resources to ensure they reach the most vulnerable people through transformative projects and programs. However, along with all positive insights and reflections on the need for appropriate financial mechanisms to support CSOs and people and communities in SLM practices, there is no strong commitment among COP decision, excepting the;

- **CRIC18 decision 3 (ICCD/CRIC(18)/L.3)**, the COP requests the Secretariat to invites technical and financial institutions and other stakeholders to provide technical and financial support to UNCCD accredited CSOs that are involved in and/or need capacity building to facilitate their greater and **more effective contribution to and participation in the implementation process.**

**5) Transform our society to achieve greater sustainability and equity, especially gender equity.**

CSOs advocacy and support on gender-related issues and COP14 discussions and decision on this thematic issue was another success and important outcome of COP14 of the UNCCD that agreed by parties to create enabling environments for gender-responsive and transformative actions through inclusion of various phrases in following COP14 decisions:

- **COP14 decision 4 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.4) on Gender:** in which encourages parties to create enabling environments at the national level to make the implementation of the Convention gender-responsive and transformative. In addition, it requests relevant national and international partners on gender mainstreaming and the implementation of the GAP, strengthening gender-related knowledge and capacity building, both in the Secretariat and the GM, by providing training to all staff on gender mainstreaming methods, tools, and techniques on a regular basis.

- **COP14 decision 9 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.9)**, in which the ministers and high-level representatives underlined the **development** of community-driven transformative projects and programs that are **gender-responsive, at local, national and regional levels**;
- **COP14 decisions 10 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.10)**, that requests the Secretariat to continue working with key stakeholders, including youth, faith-based **organizations**, local governments, farmers, pastoralists, women's organizations, indigenous peoples, and local communities;
- **COP14 decision 17 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.17)**, **that** legally recognize equal use and ownership rights of land for women and the enhancement of women's equal access to land and land tenure security as well as the promotion of gender-sensitive measures to combat DLDD and achieve LDN, taking into account the national context;
- **COP14 decision 21 (ICCD/COP(14)/L.21)**, the COP requests the Secretariat and **appropriate** Convention bodies and institutions to build on the collaboration initiated with relevant UN entities to support gender mainstreaming at all levels, but especially at the national and subnational levels;

**CST14 decision 1 (ICCD/COP(14)/CST/L.1)**, The COP encourages parties and other stakeholders to:

- Integrate gender-responsive actions to promote women, youth, and girls through the gender-inclusive design of preliminary LDN assessments;
- Develop gender-responsive LDN interventions based on women's participation in decision-making for enabling inclusive land governance; and
- Take into account gender dimensions responsive to the concerns of women, youth, and girls in land-use planning and in the design of interventions towards achieving LDN.

**CRIC18 decision 3 (ICCD/CRIC(18)/L.3)**, the COP requests the Secretariat to, among others:

- continue targeted capacity building to support gender-responsive and transformative implementation of the Convention, and to further strengthen and deepen both formal and informal partnerships to better facilitate the UNCCD capacity-building process;

**CRIC18 decision 4 (ICCD/CRIC(18)/L.4)**, the COP, *inter alia*:

- Urges Parties to mainstream gender inclusivity to further strengthen the implementation of the Convention and LDN and ensure long-term success; and
- Requests the Secretariat to strengthen gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of the Gender Action Plan by collaborating with relevant partners to gather sex- and age-disaggregated data and presenting the data in user-friendly formats.

## Final Summary

The fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 14) started on 2 September and ended on 13 September 2019 with over 8,000 participants, including more than 100 ministers and high-level officials, Parties, UN Agencies, Intergovernmental Organizations, CSOs, Private Sector, and other interested groups attended the two-week meeting.

After ten days of meetings, 11 high-level, 30 committee and over 170 stakeholder meetings, 44 exhibitions and 126 side events. The Conference adopted **the Delhi Declaration** in which parties expressed commitment for a range of issues, including gender and health, ecosystem restoration, taking action on climate change, private sector engagement, Peace Forest Initiative and recovery of 26 million hectares of degraded land in India.

At the closing of COP14, UNCCD Executive Secretary Mr Ibrahim Thiaw highlighted four key messages from the meeting:

- Land restoration is the cheapest solution to climate change and biodiversity loss;
- Land restoration makes business sense if regulations and incentives to reward investment are in place;
- Drought preparedness and response are critical in the face of climate change; and
- To put people first is to ensure gender balance, engage youth, and secure land rights.

UNCCD COP14 agreed on over 30 decisions to ramp up and elaborate further action on the ground to ensure that the Convention's goals for 2018-2030 are achieved. The COP adopted decisions on, among other topics discussed how to implement four thematic policy frameworks addressing drought, gender, sand and dust storms, and desertification, land degradation, and drought (DLDD) as a driver for migration. The COP also agreed to include land tenure as a new thematic area under the Convention. After lengthy negotiations on drought, delegates agreed, subject to the availability of resources, to establish an intergovernmental working group to explore effective policy and implementation measures for addressing drought under the UNCCD.

The CSOs preparatory meeting and two Open Dialogue Sessions as a unique feature of the UNCCD for promoting the CSOs role and inclusion of their activities within the official programme of work of the COP organized in 1<sup>st</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of September. During the two Open Dialogue sessions, the CSOs community had opportunity to share their success stories, best practices, testimonies, concerns and priorities with all stakeholders of the Convention for positive influence in the decision-making process of COP14 of the UNCCD.

One of the central themes of the COP14 was the high-level segment on 9-10 September on how to build momentum towards a global movement on land restoration. Six ministerial roundtables and high-level interactive dialogues took place over the two days, addressing, among others, land issues related to climate and renewable energy, rural and urban communities, ecosystem restoration, health, and values-based approaches.

The meetings of the UNCCD's two subsidiary bodies including the 18<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC18) and the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the UNCCD's Committee on Science and Technology (CST14) convened in parallel to the COP14. Building on a series of landmark global assessments published in the lead up to COP 14, including the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and

Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment and its Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Climate Change and Land.

The CST adopted six decisions addressing, inter alia: guidance for developing a global indicator on drought; interfacing science and policy; and sharing knowledge.

The CRIC adopted seven decisions on, among other issues, enhancing implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through strengthened capacity building.

Other initiatives launched at COP 14 included:

- A road map for scaling up the Africa-led Great Green Wall Initiative to restore 100 million hectares of land and create 10 million green jobs by 2030;
- The new UNCCD interactive Drought Toolbox that aims to strengthen countries' preparedness and resilience; and
- An international coalition on sand and dust storms aimed at mitigating their transboundary impacts on human health, the environment, and key economic sectors.

COP 14 ended on a note of optimism that there is a growing alignment of the land, climate, and biodiversity agendas, and, with its sharpened focus on land restoration, the UNCCD can offer cost-effective and sustainable solutions to some of the most entrenched global challenges today.



## Closing Speech of Mr Ibrahim Thiaw, UNCCD Executive Secretary

New Delhi, 13 September 2019

Minister Javadekar, COP 14 President, Excellencies, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Mahatma Gandhi once said:

***“Honest disagreement is often a good sign of progress”.***

Over the last two (2) weeks, there has been plenty of honest disagreements. I know there have been some hot debates. But I am delighted to report that we have seen very good progress on all our areas of work; to strengthen our Convention, to better support the Parties and, above all, to produce better results for the people we serve.

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi rightly said at the Opening Ceremony of this COP, “everything has a law of being, a purpose, and everybody has to fulfil a purpose.” and this is precisely what we did here at COP 14.

Let me begin by, once again, congratulating our new President of COP 14, His Excellency Mr Prakash Javadekar,

Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India. He and I have had good discussions in recent months about our shared hopes for this Conference. Those hopes have been surpassed in every account! I would like to express our gratitude to the Government and people of India. Excellency, we have no doubt the Convention is in very capable hands. Your experience, your vision, and your wisdom are recognized by all of us that have had the privilege to know you. In the coming two (2) years, we look forward, under your able presidency, to continue to walk together, to share together so that we can indeed make a future that is more sustainable for all.

Mister President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please allow me to share with you **four** take-away messages:

**First:** we have sent a very clear message to the upcoming New York Summits: **investing in land unlocks multiple opportunities**. Land restoration is one of the cheapest solutions to address the global crises of climate change and biodiversity loss and, ultimately, to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

A global movement of restoration, anchored in Nature-based Solutions, would deliver benefits for the three (3) Rio Conventions and for many of the world’s most pressing issues. Our successes will be measured in more than biophysical terms. They will mean greater health and well-being for people everywhere and for the planet.

This leads me to my second take away: there is a clear **business case for land restoration**.

More opportunities will emerge as we build an even stronger business case for land restoration. That business case for investment in land and its restoration works for both you as Parties and the private sector.

At COP 14, we talked about the need for sustainable value chains. And the private sector invited you among other things to think about how to regulate in support of innovation for sustainable land management, and how to develop incentive mechanisms that reward the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of natural resources.

**Third:** I think this is the COP when we finally put **drought** at the right level. We have woken up to the fact that we will see more frequent and severe droughts, a phenomenon that will be exacerbated by climate change.

Parties should be better prepared for drought, particularly through better mitigation and management of risks. The momentum started a few years ago. Now we need to accelerate and come to long-lasting options.

**Finally, to my mind, this was the COP where we put people at the heart of what we do.**

I was delighted, in particular, to see Parties embrace the need not only to talk about but really deliver on the Gender Action Plan and youth engagement.

And adopt a decision on land tenure rights. With tenure right and better access to credit and technology for all land-users - women and men– we can, in the years to come, see this Convention deliver real impact. At scale.

Mister President, Ladies and Gentlemen, Allow me to close by saying:

- Thank you all for being here. For your flexibility and for your willingness to compromise and drive this agenda in a positive direction. I hope you would agree with me that this COP has been simply excellent! Many participants say it has been a turning point.
- Running such a large COP flawlessly could not have happened without the generosity and the unwavering support from our host country, India. I am still reflecting as to which of the following touched me the most: (i) the kindness of Indian people, (ii) the quality of the cuisine or (iii) the enthusiasm and spirit of the local organizing committee. Mister President: please convey our deepest gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to the Government and people of India! Allow me to put on record our sincere thank you to all volunteers, interns, security officers, technicians and many others who have worked tirelessly, in the background, sometimes even unnoticed, but whose contributions have been critical for the success of COP 14. Can I ask the room to please express its gratitude to the organizing committee? They deserve a round of applause!
- My sincere thanks also go to our UN colleagues who came from Arusha, Bangkok, Nairobi, New York, Geneva, and Vienna, for your hard work, camaraderie and dedication.
- Finally, allow me to pay tribute to UNCCD staff for their extraordinary dedication and professionalism. I measure and appreciate all the efforts, enthusiasm, imagination and diplomatic skills each of you has put in this process. I also value the intellectual contribution all of you have provided at different stages while preparing for the COP 14, and during the various meetings and events. Your professionalism embodies the UNCCD philosophy and your hard work is a prime example of how we can further the land degradation neutrality agenda. Can I ask all UNCCD staff to please rise?

Ladies and Gentlemen, please join me in congratulating and thanking them! They also deserve a big round of applause. COP 14 is over. For us, it is not the end. Our work begins! On the road to the Climate Action Summit, UNFCCC COP 25 and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, let us keep the momentum and build stronger partnerships.

Thank you for all you have done to make COP 14 such an effective forum, and for being such strong advocates of land. We did demonstrate that investing in land, can and does, unlock opportunities, not only for ecosystems but most importantly for humankind, for our little *Defne* and all her sisters and brothers around the world. Thank you!

## CSOs closing Statement

New Delhi, 13 September 2019

Mr Chair,

Over the past two weeks, the representatives of the 1000 registered CSOs have actively and passionately participated in all stages of the agenda of the 14th COP14 Conference of the Parties.

With the support of our elected panel of CSO representatives from among the 600 accredited CSOs, two open dialogue sessions allowed us to better share our concerns and contributions during the opening sessions, the Committee of the Whole, the CRIC and the CST.

As well as the round tables and interactive dialogues, even if we regret the absence of debates generated by the richness of the contributions.

First of all, we would like to thank you for the work you have done together. You will also have seen the growing mobilization of CSOs following the review of document ICCD/COP14/ in this session. We believe that nothing important can be done without civil society.

Regarding the panel in support of the CSO community, we ask for a decision from the COP to provide it with a deputy representative for each of the five regions represented. We also wish to provide interpretation facilities during the preparatory session on the eve of each COP. On several occasions, we have shared our priorities.

In addition, allow us to reiterate our main concerns, which we, civil society organizations, strongly recommend to the parties here present to adopt:

- About funding: the most direct possible access to funds for communities, especially young people and women, to enable them to commit themselves even more strongly to combating desertification and countering the temptation to irregular migration.
- About good practices: the combined use of sharp techniques from traditional knowledge and modern high technology.
- Regarding the focus on land management: based on the scientifically sound evidence produced by recent reports from IPBES, IPCC and HLPE, it is now crucial to broaden our perceptions of what needs to be done, but also the need for alternative approaches to land management. And take into account intergenerational cooperation, which plays a fundamental role in the persistence of a way of life-based on environmental and cultural conditions. The knowledge of adults and youth must be brought together to enable land restoration and combine traditional knowledge and innovation.
- With regard to youth and women: urgently ensure access to land for youth and women in order to recognize and encourage their contributions to land restoration as well as strengthen their unique role in society

Mr Chair, dear delegates,

Science confirms that migration is closely linked to the degradation of natural resources, particularly through unsustainable use practices and low incomes in the agricultural sector. Yet there are many examples of successful practices implemented by CSOs for land restoration and green jobs in rural areas: they need to be more seriously supported and replicated because they have the power to encourage people to stay on their territory and in their own countries.

Close and transparent cooperation between CSOs, business, governments and local stakeholders is not an option, but an imperative for collective effectiveness that no one here can claim to avoid.

With regard to raising awareness and raising the level of awareness and preparing civil society for the Conference of the Parties, we affirm that the Desert Action Forum, the last of which took place in Ouagadougou Burkina Faso in June, is a privileged moment. In this regard, we ask that the declaration entitled "we are the land that fights desertification" produced by 380 participants from 40 countries and 240 organizations represented be annexed as a reference document for the mobilization of civil society to the decisions of this COP.



Many requests from civil society organizations have been submitted.

In some cases, such as the complicated issue of land tenure, we are pleased to see that this has been integrated.

However, we are aware that, particularly at the country level, many of our requests and recommendations have never been implemented. For example, CSOs were not generally actively involved in processes concerning land degradation neutrality in countries. That is very unfortunate. We call for clearer guidelines for the participation of civil society organizations in all Convention processes and for these to be applied in countries.

The time has come for synergy and even integration between the Multilateral Environmental Agreements, in particular, the Rio Conventions, the UNCCD, the CBD and the UNFCCC. We note according to science that they converge towards a single objective: to preserve our common home. None of these conventions can achieve this alone and we cannot afford the luxury of competition.

We have the technology, the workforce, active participation and scientifically sound arguments. Considerable resources can be mobilized if we want to.

Mr President, It has been 25 years since the Convention was born, but if our situation is worse today than when we started, it is no longer time to complain, let alone to be an extra. The future will judge us.

We call for concrete action now.

We want to say with one voice

LETs ACT TOGETHER NOW

TOMORROW IT MAY BE TO LATE

CENESTA representative would like to express her special thanks and appreciation to all respective organizers including the UNCCD Secretariat, the government of India, the NGO and Civil Society Liaison Officer of the UNCCD, the CSO Panel of the UNCCD and other international organizations for supporting the CSOs community participation in COP14 of the UNCCD.

Special thanks to the “NGO and Civil Society Liaison Officer” of the UNCCD and the CSO panel members of 5 regions, for their excellent work on the benefit of CSOs community before and during the COP14. High appreciation for their efforts to set the scene for reflection of the strong and collective work of the CSOs community and their contribution and interventions during the whole event of COP14.

As we expressed in our joint closing statement:

We call for concrete action now.

We want to say with one voice

LETs ACT TOGETHER NOW,

TOMORROW IT MAY BE TO LATE

## **List of activities undertaken by the organization when returning to their country to ensure sharing of information**

**Preparation a summary report of COP14 of the UNCCD in Persian**

**Preparation a short news for CENESTA web site on COP14 of the UNCCD**

## **List of CSOs and organizations which have received the information**

The prepared report in English and Persian have been shared with relevant national NGOs such as Tehran Network of Environmental & Natural Resources NGOs & Public Platform on Flood Vulnerability and other environmental networks with over 1500 members who works on relevant environmental topics on natural resource management, environmental solutions, rehabilitation of forests and rangelands, wetlands, desertification, etc.

The followings are the list of CSOs members and their e-mail address and the name of the contact persons, that have received the English and summary report in Persian.

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