



General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 July 2019

Original: English

Seventy-fourth session

Items 19 (d), (e) and (f) of the provisional agenda*

Sustainable development:

Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Convention on Biological Diversity

Implementation of United Nations environmental conventions

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the reports submitted by the secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

* [A/74/50](#).



I. Report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention

A. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution [73/232](#) on the protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind, invited the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to report, through the Secretary-General, to the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The present report has been prepared in response to that invitation.

B. Outcomes of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the third part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change

1. Summary

2. The United Nations Climate Change Conference, presided over by the Government of Poland and held in Katowice, Poland, from 2 to 14 December 2018, comprised the following sessions:

(a) The twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention;

(b) The fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;

(c) The third part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement;

(d) The forty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation;

(e) The forty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice;

(f) The seventh part of the first session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement.

3. The Katowice Climate Change Conference enjoyed a high level of participation: it attended by 9,196 government delegates from 194 parties to the Convention, as well as representatives of one observer State; 5,543 observers, including those from 35 United Nations Secretariat units and bodies, 21 specialized agencies and related organizations, 75 intergovernmental organizations and 953 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as 1,283 media representatives.

4. The Conference achieved significant results across all bodies, most notably the adoption of the Katowice climate package, which is a robust set of guidelines for implementing the Paris Agreement. Overall, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention adopted 18 decisions, the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol adopted 5 decisions and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement adopted 18 decisions.

5. With the adoption of most of the elements of the Paris Agreement work programme, Parties have entered a new era in collective efforts to address climate change, focusing on increasing implementation and ambition.

6. The Katowice climate package includes guidelines that will operationalize an enhanced transparency framework, as well as setting out how countries will provide information about their nationally determined contributions that describe their domestic climate actions. This information includes mitigation and adaptation measures, as well as details on financial support for climate action in developing countries. The agreed guidelines mean that countries can now establish the national systems that are needed for implementing the Paris Agreement as of 2020. The same will be done at the international level. The package also includes guidelines regarding the following:

(a) The process for establishing new targets on finance from 2025 onwards to follow-on from the current target of mobilizing \$100 billion per year from 2020 to support developing countries;

(b) The process for conducting the global stocktake of the effectiveness of climate action in 2023;

(c) The process for assessing progress in the development and transfer of technology.

7. Parties will continue their negotiations to resolve the use of cooperative approaches, as well as the sustainable development mechanism, as contained in article 6 of the Paris Agreement, which are intended to allow countries to meet a part of their domestic mitigation goals through the use of market and non-market mechanisms.

8. In addition to the adoption of the Katowice climate package, other significant decisions were adopted to advance efforts under the local communities and indigenous peoples platform, take action on gender-related issues and agree on joint work in the agriculture sector, as well as on climate finance, capacity-building and technology.

9. The conference concluded the Talanoa Dialogue with the Talanoa Call for Action, in which all countries and stakeholders are called upon to act with urgency. Countries are encouraged to factor the outcome of the dialogue into efforts to increase their ambition and update their nationally determined contributions, which detail nations' climate actions, in 2020.

10. Several announcements and pledges were made during the conference by Governments, local governments, the private sector and other non-Party State actors on their efforts to accelerate the implementation of climate action. Specific to climate finance, many developed countries pledged financial support to enable developing countries to advance climate action, including for the replenishment of the Green Climate Fund. Countries sent significant positive signals regarding the Fund's first formal replenishment, with Germany and Norway announcing that they would double their contributions. The Adaptation Fund received a total of \$129 million. The engagement of multilateral development banks, international organizations, businesses, investors and civil society at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties helped to build the political will towards the outcome in Katowice.

2. High-level segment and events of the presidency of the Conference of the Parties

11. The joint high-level segment of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and part three of the first session of the

Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement was held in two parts. The first part was convened on 2 December, in the presence of Heads of State and Government. The high-level segment then resumed on 11 December for its second part.

12. The President of Poland, Andrzej Duda, opened the high-level segment on 2 December. At the meeting, Mr. Duda introduced a declaration entitled “Solidarity and just transition Silesia declaration”,¹ an initiative of the Government of Poland in its presidency of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties.

13. Statements were made by the Minister of the Environment of Poland, Henryk Kowalczyk; the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization, Petteri Taalas; the Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Hoesung Lee; the President of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, Michał Kurtyka; and the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Patricia Espinosa.

14. During the high-level segment, 161 statements were delivered, five of which were made on behalf of groups of Parties. Statements were delivered by 24 Heads of State or Government, three Deputy Prime Ministers and 82 ministers or representatives of Parties.

15. Statements were also made by representatives of 20 observer constituencies that comprised indigenous peoples’ organizations, trade union-related NGOs, NGOs focused on women and gender, NGOs focused on young people, business and industry NGOs, environmental NGOs, research-oriented and independent NGOs, local government and municipal authorities and intergovernmental and regional organizations.

16. Four mandated events were convened during the Katowice Climate Change Conference: the high-level event on global climate action; the stocktake on pre-2020 implementation and ambition; the third biennial high-level ministerial dialogue on climate finance; and the political phase of the Talanoa Dialogue.² Participants in the events represented a spectrum of leaders, including Heads of State and Government, ministers, principals of international organizations and innovators and influencers from the private sector and civil society.

3. Outcomes of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties

17. The following decisions were taken at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties:

- (a) 1/CP.24: Preparations for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement;
- (b) 2/CP.24: Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform;
- (c) 3/CP.24: Long-term climate finance;
- (d) 4/CP.24: Report of the Standing Committee on Finance;
- (e) 5/CP.24: Report of the Green Climate Fund to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Green Climate Fund;

¹ Available at https://cop24.gov.pl/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Solidarity_and_Just_Transition_Silesia_Declaration.pdf.

² See <https://talanoadialogue.com>.

- (f) 6/CP.24: Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Global Environment Facility;
- (g) 7/CP.24: Modalities, work programme and functions under the Convention of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures;
- (h) 8/CP.24: National adaptation plans;
- (i) 9/CP.24: Report of the Adaptation Committee;
- (j) 10/CP.24: Report of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts;
- (k) 11/CP.24: Review of the terms of reference of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in annex I to the Convention;
- (l) 12/CP.24: Review of the Climate Technology Centre and Network;
- (m) 13/CP.24: Enhancing climate technology development and transfer through the Technology Mechanism;
- (n) 14/CP.24: Linkages between the Technology Mechanism and the Financial Mechanism of the Convention;
- (o) 15/CP.24: Annual technical progress report of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building for 2018;
- (p) 16/CP.24: Least developed countries work programme;
- (q) 17/CP.24: Dates and venues of future sessions;
- (r) 18/CP.24: Administrative, financial and institutional matters.

4. Outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

18. The following decisions were taken by the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol:

- (a) 1/CMP.14: Matters relating to the Adaptation Fund;
- (b) 2/CMP.14: Report of the Adaptation Fund Board;
- (c) 3/CMP.14: Modalities, work programme and functions under the Kyoto Protocol of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures;
- (d) 4/CMP.14: Guidance relating to the clean development mechanism;
- (e) 5/CMP.14: Administrative, financial and institutional matters.

5. Outcomes of the third part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement

19. The following decisions were taken at the third part of the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement:³

- (a) 3/CMA.1: Matters relating to the implementation of the Paris Agreement;
- (b) 4/CMA.1: Further guidance in relation to the mitigation section of decision 1/CP.21;

³ See <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/conferences/katowice-climate-change-conference-december-2018/katowice-climate-change-conference-december-2018>.

- (c) 5/CMA.1: Modalities and procedures for the operation and use of a public registry referred to in article 4, paragraph 12, of the Paris Agreement;
- (d) 6/CMA.1: Common time frames for nationally determined contributions referred to in article 4, paragraph 10, of the Paris Agreement;
- (e) 7/CMA.1: Modalities, work programme and functions under the Paris Agreement of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures;
- (f) 8/CMA.1: Matters relating to article 6 of the Paris Agreement and paragraphs 36–40 of decision 1/CP.21;
- (g) 9/CMA.1: Further guidance in relation to the adaptation communication, including, inter alia, as a component of nationally determined contributions, referred to in article 7, paragraphs 10 and 11, of the Paris Agreement;
- (h) 10/CMA.1: Modalities and procedures for the operation and use of a public registry referred to in article 7, paragraph 12, of the Paris Agreement;
- (i) 11/CMA.1: Matters referred to in paragraphs 41, 42 and 45 of decision 1/CP.21;
- (j) 12/CMA.1: Identification of the information to be provided by Parties in accordance with article 9, paragraph 5, of the Paris Agreement;
- (k) 13/CMA.1: Matters relating to the Adaptation Fund;
- (l) 14/CMA.1: Setting a new collective quantified goal on finance in accordance with decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 53;
- (m) 15/CMA.1: Scope of and modalities for the periodic assessment referred to in paragraph 69 of decision 1/CP.21;
- (n) 16/CMA.1: Technology framework under article 10, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement;
- (o) 17/CMA.1: Ways of enhancing the implementation of education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information so as to enhance actions under the Paris Agreement;
- (p) 18/CMA.1: Modalities, procedures and guidelines for the transparency framework for action and support referred to in article 13 of the Paris Agreement;
- (q) 19/CMA.1: Matters relating to article 14 of the Paris Agreement and paragraphs 99–101 of decision 1/CP.21;
- (r) 20/CMA.1: Modalities and procedures for the effective operation of the committee to facilitate implementation and promote compliance referred to in article 15, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

20. The General Assembly may wish:

- (a) To take note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, transmitted by the Secretary-General;
- (b) To note the outcomes of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, the fourteenth Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the third part of the first session of Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, presided over by the Government of Poland, held in Katowice, Poland, from 2 to 14 December 2018;

(c) To urge Parties to the Paris Agreement that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible in order to ensure its universality;

(d) To urge Parties to deposit their instruments of acceptance in order to ensure the prompt entry into force of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol;

(e) To urge Parties to increase their ambition and advance their nationally determined contributions in advance of 2020;

(f) To invite the Executive Secretary to continue to report to it on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement.

II. Report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

A. Introduction

21. In its resolution [73/233](#) on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session on the implementation of that resolution. The present report provides an update for the Assembly on the principal activities that have been undertaken in that respect.

B. Implementation of General Assembly resolution [73/233](#)

1. Preparations for the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and its subsidiary bodies

22. The fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa will be held in New Delhi from 2 to 13 September 2019. It will comprise the following three segments: the initial segment, to be held from 2 to 6 September; the high-level segment, which will be held on 9 and 10 September; and the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Conference of the Parties.

23. In accordance with decision 35 of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, interactive dialogue sessions among ministers and other high-ranking officials will be organized on 9 and 10 September 2019, during the high-level segment. Parallel ministerial/high-level round-table discussions, to be held on 9 September, will be focused on the following topics: (a) land, climate and renewable energy; (b) rural and urban communities: failing or flourishing together; and (c) fostering a global movement for ecosystem restoration. Three consecutive interactive dialogue sessions on the following topics are planned for 10 September: (d) a values-based approach to land stewardship; (e) healthy land: healthy people; and (f) boosting sustainable value chains for land-based business. In line with the same decision, two half-day open dialogue sessions with members of civil society have

been planned for 5 and 11 September. In the concluding segment, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention will consider all decisions not previously adopted.

24. The eighteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention will address matters such as: the effective implementation of the Convention at the national, subregional and regional levels; improving the procedures for the communication of information, as well as the quality and formats of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties; securing additional investments and relations with financial mechanisms; and the development and promotion of activities for targeted capacity-building to further the implementation of the Convention.

25. The programme of work of the fourteenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology will include items resulting from the work of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Science-Policy Interface of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa for the biennium 2018–2019 on land degradation neutrality, the land-drought nexus and recent global assessments of land degradation and restoration; the monitoring framework for the strategic objective on drought; the further development of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Knowledge Hub; and the proposed Science-Policy Interface work programme for the next biennium.

26. Consultations on the regional implementation annexes in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern Mediterranean and Central and Eastern Europe will be held back to back during the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in New Delhi on 31 August and 1 September 2019.

27. The seventeenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention was convened from 28 to 30 January 2019 in Georgetown. It marked the first review meeting to be held since the adoption of the new United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Strategic Framework, 2018–2030, according to the revised Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention terms of reference adopted by the thirteenth session of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Conference of the Parties in September 2017. A significant part of the meeting was therefore devoted to reviewing the Secretariat's preliminary analysis of reports submitted by parties and other entities, and harnessing delegates' views and perspectives with respect to the monitoring and reporting process for the five Strategic Objectives of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Delegates engaged in three interactive dialogues, exploring: the progress made in implementing voluntary land degradation neutrality targets and insights on how to translate United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification progress indicators into action; initial experiences with the implementation of the Gender Action Plan adopted at the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties; and emerging innovative financing opportunities to combat land degradation. During the closing plenary, the Committee adopted three draft documents containing the conclusions and recommendations from the meeting, to be forwarded to the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties. In the documents, the proposals of the seventeenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention are summarized in relation to the following themes: the further implementation of the five Strategic Objectives; land degradation neutrality; the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Gender Action Plan; emerging innovative financing opportunities to combat land degradation; and improving communication and reporting procedures. For the first time, the report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention also included a dedicated section highlighting recommendations made by civil society organizations.

2. Follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: achieving land degradation neutrality

28. In decision 7 of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention adopted the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification 2018–2030 Strategic Framework with a vision of a future that avoids, minimizes and reverses desertification and/or land degradation and mitigates the effects of drought in affected areas at all levels and strives to achieve a land degradation-neutral world, consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In accordance with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification 2018–2030 Strategic Framework, and by leveraging partnerships to support efforts to achieve land degradation neutrality, the Parties have taken decisive action to integrate Sustainable Development Goal 15 and related target 15.3 into the implementation of the Convention.

3. Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, Target Setting Programme and development of transformative projects and programmes related to land restoration

29. To support countries in defining target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level, consistent with decisions 2 and 3 of the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties and decision 2 of the thirteenth session of the Conference, the Global Mechanism and the secretariat, assisted Parties in formulating national voluntary targets to achieve land degradation neutrality. In collaboration with 18 international partners, comprehensive support was delivered to countries that had made a commitment to setting their national voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, which, as at June 2019, comprised 122 countries participating in the Target Setting Programme. According to an independent terminal evaluation of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme, the support was successful in part thanks to the involvement of a wide variety of institutions and countries and the extensive breadth of technical and financial partners, which helped to raise the profile and increase understanding of land degradation neutrality and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. In the independent evaluation of the support provided to countries, it was concluded that such support was: (a) highly relevant to the needs of participating countries and the priorities of the partners in the project; (b) a cost- and time-effective process, with rapid delivery achieved through a combination of a well-structured, easily replicated process and a centralized operating model; and (c) highly effective, as most project outputs and outcomes had been achieved, with the number of participating countries greatly exceeding original projections. In addition, the initiative received, in April 2019, the inaugural Impact Award of the International Union for Conservation of Nature in recognition, at the international level, of the Programme's innovative, science-based and participatory approach to supporting countries in setting targets to halt land degradation by 2030.

30. Support was also provided to Parties in developing and implementing land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes. Such support was provided by translating the voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, as well as the technical and planning work undertaken as part of the national land degradation neutrality target setting process, into specific projects and programmes that contribute to achieving land degradation neutrality. On the basis of country demands, the support was provided through five workstreams: (a) technical assistance in developing concept notes on land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes; (b) facilitating dialogue with national and international stakeholders; (c) mainstreaming gender into the projects and programmes; (d) supporting the development of fully-fledged project- or programme-related documents; and (e) establishing synergies with initiatives relevant to the United Nations Convention

to Combat Desertification, including the Initiative on Sustainability, Stability and Security, and with activities undertaken to implement both the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity at the project level to contribute to achieving land degradation neutrality, nationally determined contributions and Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

31. Furthermore, together with experts serving on the Science-Policy Interface, a voluntary checklist for land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes was developed. It was aimed at assisting country-level project developers and their technical and financial partners in designing effective and gender-responsive transformative projects and programmes.

32. In the period under review, the development of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund has been pursued. Strong collaboration was forged with a wide range of public, philanthropic and private partners, with the aim of catalysing private capital to achieve land degradation neutrality, and thereby address unmet financing needs. In the development and operationalization of the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, partnerships were developed with the Governments of France, Luxembourg and Norway, as well as the Rockefeller Foundation, which supported the feasibility studies and the initial design of the Fund. The partners also supported the initial structuring and legal foundation of the Fund. As an independent impact investment fund, the Fund invests in revenue-generating, sustainable land management and land restoration projects worldwide by providing long-term financing. In addition, the Fund has a dedicated technical assistance facility to provide technical support to the projects that demonstrate potential to become investment-ready for Fund finance. As of June 2019, the Fund announced more than \$100 million of commitments from a wide range of investors and it made its first investment in January 2019.

33. Active engagement of the multilateral funding and technical entities in capacity-building events was also pursued, with the aim of disseminating among their respective staff some of the technical aspects of land degradation neutrality as an accelerator to the Sustainable Development Goals in general and target 15.3 in particular; and to facilitate exchanges with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification national focal points and other stakeholders. There has also been close collaboration with the secretariat of the Global Environment Facility in support of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification implementation activities, as well as the promotion of synergies with other Rio Conventions, with the aim of fostering co-benefits, contributing to the achievement of national priorities within the context of the 2030 Agenda and the upcoming United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, 2021–2030.

4. Global celebration of World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought and other outreach activities

34. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Convention, the observance of World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought was held throughout the world on 17 June under the slogan "Let's grow the future together" was focused on progress made in sustainable land management and drought mitigation. The global observance was held in Ankara in conjunction with the 19th International Soil Congress, with nearly 3,000 international and local participants in attendance.

35. The global observance of World Day to Combat Desertification and the 25th anniversary of the Convention were held in Ankara and hosted by the Government of Turkey, in conjunction with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification media workshop and the 19th International Soil Congress. Nearly 3,000 people attended the event and listened to messages on the impact of sustainable land management in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. The President of

Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, sent a message to participants in the event, speaking about Turkish efforts towards combating desertification and the tangible outcome that they have achieved. The Secretary-General addressed the gathering through a video message, and other high-level international and national representatives delivered messages to support the celebration.

36. A commemorative event was held for the first Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the late Hama Arba Diallo. In addition, the winners of the international photo contest of the World Day to Combat Desertification 2019 and of the 2019 Land for Life Award were announced, namely, the project entitled “Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transition” of the Ministry of Agriculture of Ethiopia; the President of the Network for the Development and Promotion of Active Methods of Research and Participatory Planning of Burkina Faso, Mathieu Ouédraogo; and the former Head of the Department of Finance of Tibet, Yun Da, who won the special China Award.

5. Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility

37. Collaboration with the secretariat of the Global Environment Facility continued to be strengthened, in line with the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and Council guidance on the Facility. On 11 June, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification attended the 56th Council of the Facility, in Washington, D.C. On that occasion, and in accordance with decision 11 of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, the Executive Secretary and the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the Facility signed a new memorandum of understanding, superseding the one that had been in effect since 2005. In addition, the Council of the Facility approved its work programme, which contains several land degradation focal area projects, all set out to achieve land degradation neutrality.

6. Partnerships

38. Making significant progress towards achieving the strategic objectives of the Convention and the 2030 Agenda requires strong and effective partnerships that can leverage the appropriate synergies with organizations that have overlapping or convergent missions. This includes not only the Rio Conventions and other multilateral environmental agreements but also those organizations and institutions focused on issues directly related to sustainable land management, including: monitoring and reporting; capacity-building; gender equality; drought, sandstorms and dust storms; the Science-Policy Interface, governance and land rights; rural development; migration and conflict; knowledge transfer and technology transfer; media outreach and communications or resource mobilization.

39. The secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, as the custodian agency for Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.3.1, proportion of land that is degraded over total land area, continues to play an active role in the ongoing Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, which oversees the Goal indicator framework adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission. The secretariat used the information submitted to it by Parties in their 2018 national reports relevant to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, specifically, the data related to indicator 15.3.1, to report regionally and globally, according to the protocols established within the Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework, to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, held in July 2019.

40. Since the adoption of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Gender Action Plan, the secretariat has collaborated with, among others, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women to strengthen

its capacity in order to enhance gender mainstreaming in its work, including in-situ technical advice and policy guidance on integrating gender issues into the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. With the financial support of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, three technical workshops on gender mainstreaming in land degradation neutrality programming were organized in the Philippines, Saint Lucia and Zambia to build capacity by designing subregional land degradation neutrality transformative projects and programmes.

41. Within the framework of the drought initiative of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, several agencies, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Global Water Partnership and the National Drought Mitigation Center, in the United States, have established a working group to facilitate the implementation of the Drought Initiative. The working group has collaborated on the development of a drought toolbox, which is expected to be launched in September 2019. The secretariat is a member of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, which was formed at the 24th Meeting of the Environment Management Group Senior Officials in response to General Assembly resolution [72/225](#) on combating sand and dust storms. The secretariat has collaborated with other United Nations entities, including the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Meteorological Organization, as well as with scientific institutions and Governments, on sandstorm- and dust storm-related issues, in particular with regard to the development of science-based communications and a global sandstorm and dust storm source base map.

42. During the capacity-building training fair that was held on the margins of the 17th session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, in January 2019, training sessions were conducted to improve drought resilience, mitigate the sources and impacts of sandstorms and dust storms and strengthen the gender-related expertise of stakeholders of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

C. Observations and recommendations

43. The period for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will come to an end in more than a decade. As progress reports on its implementation show, the achievement of some Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 15, is lagging. This is of concern because most of the people who have been left behind live in areas that include degraded lands or have been experiencing long and recurrent droughts. The General Assembly, in its resolution [73/233](#), affirmed that achieving land degradation neutrality would serve as an accelerator and integrator for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. As the land restoration movement gains momentum, with the recent proclamation of the Assembly on the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, along with other similar initiatives and commitments, land degradation neutrality indicators make restoration measurable. The Assembly may therefore wish to continue to place this target at the heart of the 2030 Agenda, to accelerate the achievement of others. The Assembly may also wish to pursue its efforts to encourage countries to develop and implement national drought management policies, as well as the establishment and strengthening of comprehensive drought monitoring, preparedness and early warning systems.

III. Report of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

A. Introduction

44. In its resolution [73/234](#), the General Assembly invited the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, through the Secretary-General, to report to it at its seventy-fourth session on the implementation of that resolution. The present report is submitted in response to that invitation.

45. In October 2018, the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties was held from 17 to 29 November 2018 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. It was preceded by the African Biodiversity Summit, held on 13 November, and the high-level segment, held on 14 and 15 November 2018.

46. The African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity was organized on the basis of the theme “Land and ecosystem degradation and restoration: Priorities for increased investments in biodiversity and resilience in Africa”. The Ministers adopted the Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration for Increased Resilience, which will be submitted for adoption to the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government in 2020.

47. The high-level segment of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties was convened on the theme “Investing in biodiversity for people and planet”. The major outcomes of the high-level segment included the launch of: an initiative towards an international alliance on nature and culture; the Sharm el-Sheikh to Beijing Action Agenda for Nature and People; and the Sharm el-Sheikh ministerial declaration on investing in biodiversity for people and planet. Parties committed to mainstreaming biodiversity into all sectors by integrating biodiversity values into legislative and policy frameworks and development and finance plans; phasing out or reforming subsidies and other harmful incentives; strengthening ecosystem-based approaches to climate change; promoting sustainable consumption and production and facilitating access to and transfer of relevant technologies. The Ministers also requested the General Assembly to convene a summit on biodiversity at the level of Heads of State and Government before the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in 2020 in order to highlight the urgency of action at the highest levels in support of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework that contributes to the 2030 Agenda and places the global community on a path towards realizing the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity. The issue of mainstreaming was also taken up at the Global Business and Biodiversity Forum, which was convened in parallel to the high-level segment.

B. Outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity

48. At the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, 37 decisions were adopted on strategic, administrative, financial and ecosystem-related issues of relevance to the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. The Conference of the Parties, launched a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and, to that end, established an open-ended working group. It also called for the establishment of a high-level panel and global, regional and thematic consultations with parties and stakeholders. With regard to resource mobilization, the Conference of the Parties: noted progress towards the achievement of resource mobilization targets; noted a lack of progress in eliminating subsidies harmful to biodiversity; developed a checklist of safeguards for biodiversity

financing mechanisms; and reaffirmed that resource mobilization would be an integral part of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. With regard to capacity-building, the Conference of the Parties called for a long-term strategic framework for capacity-building beyond 2020, aligned with the post-2020 framework and the 2030 Agenda. In addition, the Conference of the Parties supported joint capacity-building activities with other conventions and promoted technical and scientific cooperation in the context of the Global Taxonomy, Bio-Bridge and Forest Ecosystem Restoration initiatives. With regard to mechanisms for national reporting, the Conference of the Parties decided to commence synchronized reporting cycles for the Convention and the Protocols while also calling upon to enhance the integration of the work of the protocols into national action plans.

49. With regard to traditional knowledge and the customary sustainable use of indigenous peoples and local communities, under issues related to article 8 (j), the Conference of the Parties decided to complete the current work programme; develop a new programme of work of relevance to indigenous peoples and local communities within the post-2020 global biodiversity framework; and consider future institutional arrangements for their effective participation in the work of the Convention. At its fourteenth session, the Conference of the Parties also adopted the Rutzolijirisaxik Voluntary Guidelines for the Repatriation of Traditional Knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Relevant for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity for the repatriation of traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities, which is relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, as well as a glossary of key terms and concepts within the context of article 8 (j) and related provisions.

50. In its decision on digital sequence information on genetic resources, the Conference of the Parties recognized that: access to and the use of such information contributes to scientific research; further capacity to gain access to and use digital sequence information on genetic resources is needed in many countries; some parties have adopted domestic measures that regulate access to and the use of such information as part of their access and benefit-sharing frameworks; and there was a divergence of views among Parties regarding benefit-sharing as a result of the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention further decided to establish a science- and policy-based process for further consideration of the issue, including the submission of views and information; the commissioning of studies by the Executive Secretary and an extended ad hoc technical expert group. The outcomes of the expert group are to be considered by the Open-ended Working Group on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which is to make recommendations to the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties on how to address digital sequence information on genetic resources in the context of the framework.

51. Other important decisions adopted by the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention included: mandating the preparation of the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook; calling on the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to assess the drivers of biodiversity loss and the determinants of transformational change and how they could be used to achieve the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity; adopting voluntary guidance for the sustainable wild meat sector; welcoming the consideration of interlinkages between human health and biodiversity by the World Health Assembly and encouraging parties to mainstream biodiversity into the health sector; calling upon parties to address the drivers of pollinator decline and to adopt pollinator-friendly practices; urging parties to mainstream protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures into key sectors; urging parties to minimize the impacts of marine debris, in particular plastic pollution, on marine and coastal biodiversity;

addressing the impacts of deep-seabed mining on marine biodiversity; protecting biodiversity in cold-water areas: urging collaboration to prevent new introduction and spread of invasive alien species of concern; review of the existing Gender Plan of Action and organization of workshops on the linkages between gender and biodiversity.

52. On climate change, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention noted the findings of the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and expressed its deep concern that failure to stem global warming would endanger many species and ecosystems and reduce their capacity to sequester carbon, thereby worsening the climate crisis. Voluntary guidelines on ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction were also adopted.

C. Outcomes of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity

53. The ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted 16 decisions. They included: stressing the importance of including biosafety in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and deciding to develop a specific implementation plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety as a follow-up to the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period 2011–2020; acknowledging the need for a specific action plan for capacity-building for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol and its Supplementary Protocol that is aligned with the specific follow-up to the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and complementary to the long-term strategic framework for capacity-building beyond 2020; urging Parties, for the remaining period of the Framework and Action Plan for Capacity-Building, to prioritize and focus on operational objectives relating to the development of national biosafety legislation, risk assessment, detection and identification of living modified organisms, and public awareness, education and participation; calling for broad international cooperation, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building to support parties in assessing the potential adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity from living modified organisms produced through new developments in modern biotechnology, including genome editing and living modified organisms containing engineered gene drives; establishing an expert group on risk assessment to, among other things, consider the need for the development of additional guidance on risk assessment, and extending the online forum on risk assessment and risk management in order to assist the expert group; taking note of the “Guidance on the Assessment of Socio-Economic Considerations in the Context of article 26 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety”⁴ and extending the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Socio-economic Considerations to supplement the voluntary Guidance with examples of methodologies and applications of socioeconomic considerations; urging Parties to prioritize biosafety projects during the programming of their national allocations under the System for transparent Allocation of Resources within the framework of the seventh replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility trust fund; adopting the format for the fourth national report on the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol and requesting Parties to submit their reports 12 months before the tenth Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol; deciding that the fourth assessment and review of the Cartagena Protocol will be combined with the final evaluation of the Strategic Plan

⁴ Available at www.cbd.int/doc/c/0215/0803/cb8d71c24d40c683e6dafb0a/cp-mop-09-10-en.pdf.

for the Cartagena Protocol to be conducted by the tenth Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol; urging Parties and inviting other Governments to provide the necessary funds in support of those Parties requested by the Compliance Committee to develop and implement compliance action plans.

54. The Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety entered into force on 5 March 2018. As at 10 April 2019, the Supplementary Protocol had received 44 instruments of ratification, accession, approval or acceptance. The ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity also served as the Meeting of the Parties to the Supplementary Protocol and adopted one decision, which requested Parties to designate a competent authority to perform the functions set out in article 5 of the Supplementary Protocol, and to make it available on the Biosafety Clearing-House. The decision also included a request that a study on financial security be prepared, to be considered at the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

D. Outcomes of the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol

55. As at 28 May 2019, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Nagoya Protocol) had received 118 instruments of ratification, accession, approval or acceptance. Following the entry into force of the Protocol, in October 2014, efforts continue to be focused on further advancing the implementation of the Protocol.

56. The third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity was held concurrently with the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties. It adopted 16 decisions, which address the following key areas:

(a) Supporting the ratification and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, including decisions on the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House, capacity-building, awareness-raising, the financial mechanism and enhancing the integration under the Convention and its Protocols with respect to provisions related to access and benefit-sharing;

(b) The progress made in the implementation of and compliance with the Nagoya Protocol, including decisions on assessment and review of the effectiveness of the Protocol and compliance with the Protocol;

(c) Further policy developments, including decisions on a global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism, specialized international access and benefit sharing instruments in the context of article 4, paragraph 4, of the Nagoya Protocol, and digital sequence information on genetic resources.

57. In accordance with article 31 of the Nagoya Protocol, the Parties to the Protocol conducted the first assessment and review of the effectiveness of the Protocol and adopted a decision that welcomes progress in establishing legislative, administrative or policy measures on access and benefit-sharing and institutional arrangements and identifies areas where further work is needed.

E. Progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including difficulties encountered in the process of implementation

58. The fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties reviewed the progress in implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and concluded that despite many positive actions, most of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets were not on track to be achieved by 2020. Further to the mandate from the fourteenth session concerning the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, the initial views of parties have been solicited and compiled in a discussion document. In addition, a series of regional consultations has been convened in 2019 in Nagoya, Japan, from 28 to 31 January for the Asia and Pacific Region; in Bonn, Germany, from 19 to 22 March for the Group of Western European and other States; in Addis Ababa from 2 to 5 April for the African region; in Belgrade from 16 to 18 April for the Central and East European region and in Montevideo from 14 to 17 May for the Latin American and Caribbean region. Similarly, thematic consultations have also been organized, including a workshop that was held in New York on 11 and 12 April 2019 to consider the integration of gender considerations into the post-2020 framework and a workshop held in Bern from 10 to 12 June to consult the biodiversity-related Conventions for inputs for the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

F. United Nations Decade on Biodiversity and International Day for Biodiversity

59. To follow up on the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity as an important framework to promote the engagement of all stakeholders in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, the secretariat has promoted several activities. Significant among these are the commemorative events that were organized to mark the International Day for Biodiversity, 22 May 2019, on the theme “Our Biodiversity, Our Food, Our Health”. Speaking on that day, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Cristiana Paşca-Palmer, stated that, without healthy nature and biodiversity, we cannot have high-quality nutrition, and without high-quality nutrition, we cannot have good health. In his message, the Secretary-General, António Guterres, stressed that, by halting environmentally harmful practices, diversifying food systems and promoting more sustainable production and consumption patterns, global health can be improved, food security can be increased and resilience to climate change can be strengthened. In addition to having their awareness raised of the challenges involved through International Day for Biodiversity celebrations, participants were also encouraged to take specific actions by registering the steps that they took to make their diets more biodiversity-friendly through the Action Agenda for Nature and People, a campaign to raise awareness of and increase ambition with regard to achieving biodiversity goals.

G. Recommendations

60. The General Assembly, at its seventy-fourth session may wish:

(a) To stress the importance of follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Cartagena Protocol) and the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and

Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Nagoya Protocol);

(b) To call upon all parties to accelerate and scale up efforts to implement the Strategic Plan and Aichi targets and mainstream and integrate biodiversity into the activities to implement the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda;

(c) To invite all parties and relevant United Nations departments, specialized agencies, funds, programmes and regional commissions to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, 2011–2020;

(d) To call upon all States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(e) To call upon all parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing;

(f) To call upon all parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and its Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress;

(g) To encourage States Members and entities of the United Nations to engage in the process of preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;

(h) To decide on the date and modalities of a summit on biodiversity, mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution [73/234](#).
