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Convention to Combat Desertification

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Conference of the Parties Committee on Science and Technology

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Agenda item 2 (c)

Items resulting from the work programme of the Science-Policy Interface for the biennium 2018–2019
Coordination activities of the Science-Policy Interface work programme 2018–2019

Policy-oriented recommendations resulting from the cooperation with other intergovernmental scientific panels and bodies

Draft decision submitted by the Chairperson of the Committee on Science and Technology

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision 23/COP.11, decision 19/COP.12 and decision 21/COP.13,

Also recalling decision 19/COP.13, decision 22/COP.13 and decision 3/COP.13,

Further recalling the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification 2018–2030 Strategic Framework, its vision for a future that minimizes and reverses desertification/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, within the scope of the Convention and in particular strategic objective 1 to improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality,

Noting with appreciation the work conducted by the Science-Policy Interface in implementing the coordination activities included in its work programme for the biennium 2018–2019,

Welcoming the completion of the Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration and the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services,

Also welcoming the completion of the think piece Land Restoration for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by the International Resources Panel of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Recognizing the contribution of the Science-Policy Interface to the scientific review of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on Climate Change,

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Desertification, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Food Security, and Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Terrestrial Ecosystems,

Welcoming the initiative undertaken jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soils of the Global Soil Partnership, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Science-Policy Interface to organize the Global Symposium on Soil Erosion, which established a common platform to present and discuss the latest information on the status of interventions and innovations in the field of soil erosion and related land management,

Acknowledging the cooperation between the Science-Policy Interface and the Global Land Indicators Initiative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, which works to ensure the harmonization of land indicators developed by the Global Land Indicators Initiative to measure tenure security with land indicators used to measure progress towards land degradation neutrality,

Also acknowledging the role played by the Science-Policy Interface in planning for a future edition of the Global Land Outlook,

Having considered document ICCD/COP(14)/CST/4 and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

1. *Encourages* Parties, where and as appropriate, to incorporate land degradation neutrality into policy and planning across sectors in an integrated way to safeguard biodiversity, ecosystem services and livelihoods by:

(a) Raising awareness and encouraging understanding of the benefits of land degradation neutrality in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goals across multiple sectors;

(b) Enhancing institutional capacities and knowledge in and across relevant sectors to mainstream and implement land degradation neutrality at subnational and national levels;

(c) Encouraging national focal points of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as national institutions that report on the Sustainable Development Goals and focal points for other relevant multilateral environmental agreements, to support coordinated activities to implement land degradation neutrality measures; and

(d) Encouraging broad stakeholder participation, involving land managers, including indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as experts and other knowledge holders, in policy for, planning for and implementation of land degradation neutrality;

2. *Encourages* Parties to document and report on experiences and lessons learned for all three levels of the land degradation neutrality response hierarchy, particularly measures to avoid land degradation;

3. *Also encourages* Parties, where appropriate, in partnership with relevant technical and financial partners, to develop national capacities for assessing land potential in order to facilitate choices which encourage better land-use practices that support the achievement of land degradation neutrality by:

(a) Inviting the International Resources Panel of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility to work with the Science-Policy Interface to develop guidance on the assessment and monitoring of land potential that is scientifically based and aligned with land degradation neutrality guidance;

(b) Encouraging the incorporation of existing sex-disaggregated data and information, including different knowledge systems, into land use planning processes at all levels that support the achievement of land degradation neutrality;

(c) Strengthening, as appropriate, national and regional capacities to undertake assessments of land potential that take into account both scientific and indigenous and local knowledge to implement land degradation neutrality; and

(d) Encouraging North–South, South–South and triangular cooperation that supports technology, scientific, indigenous and local knowledge, and other capacities in order to achieve land degradation neutrality;

4. *Further encourages* Parties, as appropriate, to enhance the potential to achieve land degradation neutrality by systematically linking the flows of consumption to the land that produces what is being consumed, which would involve:

(a) Collecting, compiling and sharing information for awareness-raising on how the benefits of achieving land degradation neutrality can be enhanced through sustainable consumption and production flows, patterns, practices and technologies;

(b) Encouraging country Parties to identify strategies to minimize the economic, social and environmental externalities arising from land degradation;

(c) Empowering women to make choices based on informed decisions on sustainable land management and consumption patterns through adequate access to information;

(d) Raising awareness in urban and peri-urban settings on how consumption patterns impact land to facilitate informed choices on consumption;

(e) Identifying strategies to reduce food waste and loss through the entire production and distribution chain;

(f) Recognizing the importance and diversity of indigenous and local knowledge and practices, also taking into account agro-ecological principles and practices; and

(g) Encouraging continued efforts to address unsustainable fuel wood extraction and usage which can lead to deforestation and human health impacts;

5. *Requests* the secretariat to update the list of direct and indirect drivers of land degradation listed in United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting templates to reflect those listed in the annex to this decision in order to reflect the influence of consumption and production patterns and flows, accounting for different levels of confidence associated with each driver;

6. *Invites* relevant technical partners and the International Resources Panel of the United Nations Environment Programme and *requests* the secretariat and the Global Mechanism to contribute to exploring options for better collaboration among relevant major restoration and rehabilitation initiatives, facilitate comprehensive communication on the impact of these measures to reverse land degradation, taking into consideration socioecological systems, and identify needs and required capacities for targeted actions;

7. *Requests* the secretariat to explore (a) enhancing United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification reporting through the compilation of the spatial extent and status of relevant restoration and rehabilitation activities at national and subnational levels; and (b) sharing lessons learned and success stories emerging from interventions that consider land as integrated socioecological systems;

8. *Also requests* the Science-Policy Interface, in close collaboration with the secretariat, to continue to contribute to and cooperate with other scientific panels and bodies dealing with desertification/land degradation and drought issues, and *further requests* the secretariat to continue its efforts to clarify the potential benefits, costs, conditions and procedures for establishing more formal relationships with these panels and bodies.

Annex

Direct and indirect drivers of land degradation

Table 1
Direct anthropogenic drivers of land degradation identified in the Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

| <i>Direct (anthropogenic)</i> | <i>Direct (anthropogenic) subcategories</i> | <i>Linked degradation or restoration processes</i> |
|--|---|--|
| Deforestation and clearance of other native vegetation | N/A | Fragmentation; soil erosion; change in runoff and infiltration regime; climate feedbacks |
| Grazing land management | Livestock type; stocking rates; rotation regime; supplementary feeding; irrigation | Soil erosion; soil compaction; change in soil nutrient content; change in runoff and infiltration regime; invasive species; change in fire regime; secondary succession |
| Cropland and agroforestry management | Crop type; soil management; harvesting and fallow cycles; fertilizer, pesticide and herbicide; irrigation | Soil erosion; soil compaction; change in soil nutrient content; eutrophication; soil and water salinization; sedimentation; water contamination; species invasions; change in fire regimes (as related to agroforestry management) |
| Native and planted forest management | Harvesting intensity, rotation, silvicultural techniques; spatial zoning | Soil erosion; soil compaction; change in soil nutrient content; change in runoff and infiltration regime; water and soil salinization; change in species composition and species invasions |
| Non-timber natural resource extraction | Fuelwood harvesting; hunting; harvesting of wild foods, fodder, medicinal and other products | Changes in species composition |
| Fire regime change | N/A | Changes in species composition; soil erosion; loss of aboveground biomass; species invasions; change in runoff and infiltration regime |
| Invasive alien species | N/A | Changes in species composition |
| Land abandonment | N/A | Secondary succession; species invasions; change in fire regime; change in soil nutrient content |
| Mineral resource extraction | Mine type; extraction and refining techniques; pollutant discharge; spatial zoning | Soil pollution and contamination; water contamination |
| Infrastructure, industry, urbanization | Dams and hydroelectric; roads; pollutant discharge; irrigation | Soil pollution and contamination; water contamination; atmospheric pollutants |
| Climate change | Extreme weather events and long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, atmospheric composition | N/A |

Table 2

Indirect drivers of land degradation identified in the Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and their relationship with the Sustainable Development Goals

| <i>Indirect drivers</i> | <i>Subcategories</i> | <i>Related Sustainable Development Goals</i> |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Demographic | Population growth; migration (including to urban centres); density; age structure | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16 |
| Economic | Demand; poverty; commercialization and trade; urbanization; industrialization; labour markets; prices; finance; consumer behaviour | 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15 |
| Science, knowledge and technology | Education; indigenous and local knowledge; research and development investments; access to technology; innovation; communication and outreach | 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16 |
| Institutions and governance | Public policy (regulatory and incentive-based); property rights; customary law; certification; international agreements and conventions (trade, environment, etc.); competencies of formal institutions; informal institutions (social capital) | 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16 |
| Cultural | Worldviews; values; religion; consumer behaviour; diet | 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16 |