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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/75/150](#).



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 [74/219](#) 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-fifth 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-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties, the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the second session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement

1. Summary

2. The United Nations Climate Change Conference, presided over by the Government of Chile and held in Madrid from 2 to 13 December 2019, comprised the following sessions:

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

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

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

(d) The fifty-first session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation;

(e) The fifty-first session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice.

3. The Conference was attended by 11,414 government delegates from 196 parties to the Convention, as well as representatives of one observer State; 8,775 observers, including those from 28 United Nations Secretariat units and bodies, 23 specialized agencies and related organizations, 76 intergovernmental organizations and 1,049 non-governmental organizations, as well as 844 media representatives.

4. The Conference achieved results across all bodies, most notably the adoption of the Chile Madrid Time for Action, the completion of the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts and the adoption of several workplans, including an enhanced five-year Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan, a six-year workplan on response measures and an initial workplan of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform. Parties also advanced work on other important issues, including finance, transparency of climate action, forests and agriculture, technology, capacity-building, oceans and gender. 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 7 decisions and the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement adopted 9 decisions.

5. Following agreement on the guidelines for implementation of the Paris Agreement in Katowice, Poland, in 2018, a key objective of the Conference was to conclude the outstanding issues relating to the Paris Agreement work programme. Although parties were unable to conclude the outstanding issues, the most notable of which was article 6 of the Paris Agreement, progress was made in the negotiations during the Conference. The other outstanding issues included common time frames for nationally determined contributions, elements of the transparency framework and the initial institutional arrangements for capacity-building.

6. Increasing ambition through enhanced climate action was an important focus of the presidency of the Conference. In the lead-up to and during the conference, a large group of countries, regions, cities, businesses and investors signalled their intention to achieve net zero carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 as part of the Climate Ambition Alliance led by Chile. Also rallying under the Climate Ambition Alliance, 114 nations signalled their intention to submit enhanced climate action plans in 2020.

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

7. The high-level segment of the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties, the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the second session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement was held on 10 and 11 December 2019. At the opening ceremony, statements were delivered by a prominent guest, Alejandro Sanz; the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization, Petteri Taalas; the Minister for Ecological Transition of Spain, Teresa Ribera; the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Patricia Espinosa; the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, Tijjani Muhammad Bande; and the President of the Conference of the Parties at its twenty-fifth session, Carolina Schmidt.

8. During the high-level segment, 163 national statements were delivered, including by one President, three Prime Ministers, two Deputy Prime Ministers and two Ministers for Foreign Affairs.

9. Statements were also made by representatives of 18 intergovernmental organizations, 9 non-governmental organizations and 1 faith-based group.

10. During the Conference, the presidency convened a series of high-level ministerial events to promote enhanced ambition and raise awareness on key issues, including finance, transport, energy, science, agriculture and forestry. The events successfully resulted in several initiatives, partnerships and announcements.

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

11. The following decisions were adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its twenty-fifth session:

- (a) 1/CP.25: Chile Madrid Time for Action;
- (b) 2/CP.25: Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts and its 2019 review;
- (c) 3/CP.25: Enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan;
- (d) 4/CP.25: Workplan of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures and its Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures;

- (e) 5/CP.25: Scope of the second periodic review of the long-term global goal under the Convention and of overall progress towards achieving it;
- (f) 6/CP.25: Revision of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change reporting guidelines on national communications for parties included in annex I to the Convention;
- (g) 7/CP.25: National adaptation plans;
- (h) 8/CP.25: Annual technical progress report of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building for 2019;
- (i) 9/CP.25: Review of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building;
- (j) 10/CP.25: Fourth comprehensive review of the implementation of the framework for capacity-building in developing countries under the Convention;
- (k) 11/CP.25: Matters relating to the Standing Committee on Finance;
- (l) 12/CP.25: Report of the Green Climate Fund to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Green Climate Fund;
- (m) 13/CP.25: Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Global Environment Facility;
- (n) 14/CP.25: Enhancing climate technology development and transfer through the Technology Mechanism;
- (o) 15/CP.25: Terms of reference for the review of the Doha work programme on article 6 of the Convention;
- (p) 16/CP.25: Dates and venues of future sessions;
- (q) 17/CP.25: Programme budget for the biennium 2020–2021;
- (r) 18/CP.25: Administrative, financial and institutional matters.

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

12. The following decisions were adopted by the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol at its fifteenth session:
- (a) 1/CMP.15: Chile Madrid Time for Action;
 - (b) 2/CMP.15: Guidance relating to the clean development mechanism;
 - (c) 3/CMP.15: Report of the Adaptation Fund Board;
 - (d) 4/CMP.15: Workplan of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures and its Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures;
 - (e) 5/CMP.15: Budget for the international transaction log and a methodology for the collection of its fees for the biennium 2020–2021;
 - (f) 6/CMP.15: Programme budget for the biennium 2020–2021;
 - (g) 7/CMP.15: Administrative, financial and institutional matters.

5. Outcomes of the second session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement

13. The following decisions were adopted by the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement at its second session:

- (a) 1/CMA.2: Chile Madrid Time for Action;
- (b) 2/CMA.2: Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts and its 2019 review;
- (c) 3/CMA.2: Initial institutional arrangements for capacity-building under the Paris Agreement;
- (d) 4/CMA.2: Workplan of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures and its Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures;
- (e) 5/CMA.2: Matters relating to the Standing Committee on Finance;
- (f) 6/CMA.2: Guidance to the Green Climate Fund;
- (g) 7/CMA.2: Guidance to the Global Environment Facility;
- (h) 8/CMA.2: Enhancing climate technology development and transfer to support implementation of the Paris Agreement;
- (i) 9/CMA.2: Matters relating to article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

14. 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-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties, the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the second session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, held in Madrid from 2 to 13 December 2019 and presided over by the Minister of the Environment of Chile, Carolina Schmidt;
- (c) To urge parties to the Convention that have not yet ratified the Paris Agreement to expedite their domestic procedures, and to promptly deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, in order to ensure its universality;
- (d) To urge parties to the Kyoto Protocol that have not yet ratified the Doha Amendment to expedite their domestic procedures, and to promptly deposit their instruments of acceptance of the Doha Amendment in order to ensure its prompt entry into force;
- (e) To urge parties to increase their ambition and advance their nationally determined contributions;
- (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

15. In its resolution [74/220](#) 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 report on the implementation of the resolution at its seventy-fifth session. The present report constitutes an update for the Assembly on the principal activities that have been undertaken in that respect.

B. Implementation of General Assembly resolution [74/220](#)

1. Outcome of 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

16. 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, the eighteenth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and the fourteenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology were held in New Delhi from 2 to 13 September 2019. The Conference of the Parties, which brought together 6,000 participants, was opened by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, and statements were made by the Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, as well as the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Conference elected the Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change of India, Shri Prakash Javadekar, as President of the Conference. The Conference also saw the participation of heads of United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme, and heads of other multilateral organizations, including the Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility and the Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund.

17. The Conference of the Parties held a high-level segment on 9 and 10 September 2019, which included three parallel ministerial/high-level round tables, three interactive dialogue sessions and one plenary session and concluded with the adoption of the New Delhi Declaration: Investing in Land and Unlocking Opportunities. The Conference also held two open dialogue sessions, on the themes “Inclusive dialogue on land tenure in the context of land degradation neutrality” and “Intergenerational cooperation for land restoration, including land tenure security, green jobs and migration”, which concluded with the adoption of a declaration of civil society organizations. Under the auspices of the Conference, a Youth Forum took place on 6 and 7 September 2019. The Conference also welcomed the contributions of the Sustainable Land Management Business Forum.

18. The Conference of the Parties also encouraged partners to support the implementation of the Convention by further developing the land degradation neutrality target-setting programme and supporting parties in periodically reviewing and monitoring progress and continuing to promote synergies and knowledge-sharing.

19. The Conference also called for the broadening of outreach to non-traditional funding sources, such as private and blended finance, to find ways to support countries in combating desertification, land degradation and drought. The Conference encouraged parties to facilitate greater coordination between the Convention national focal points and the Green Climate Fund national designated authorities to harmonize approaches to addressing land issues in the context of climate change and to maximize the use of diverse financial instruments.

20. Recalling that the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification recognized that drought is a challenge of global dimension, the Conference established an intergovernmental working group on effective policy and implementation measures for addressing drought under the Convention, and requested it to present its findings and recommendations at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

21. Recognizing that responsible land governance is a fundamental component of sustainable land management and welcoming the work of the Science-Policy Interface on this issue, the Conference requested the secretariat of the Convention, in consultation with the Bureau of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, to explore options for the integration of existing globally agreed Sustainable Development Goal indicators relevant to land governance into the Convention reporting process.

2. Global celebration of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

22. The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is observed every year on 17 June to promote public awareness of international efforts to combat desertification. The theme for 2020, “Food. Feed. Fibre”, focused on changing public attitudes to the leading driver of desertification and land degradation. Particularly in the context of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the Day drew global attention to humanity’s reliance on land for well-being and health.

23. The global observance was hosted by the Republic of Korea and was organized entirely online owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. The 12-hour programme included varied content, including a ministerial panel discussion, under the theme “Is it time for a new social contract for nature?”. All six Convention Land Ambassadors took part in the programme, with different roles. The observance programme was livestreamed on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and the Convention website. Over 67 million people in over 50 countries were reached through social media. One million people actively participated in the observance event. Video messages were received from the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, ministers and heads of United Nations entities.

24. In his message, the Secretary-General called for: “A new contract for nature. Through international action and solidarity, we can scale up land restoration and nature-based solutions for climate action and the benefit of future generations.” This new contract for nature is founded on recognition that the long-term resilience and well-being of humanity depends on the health and integrity of nature. Its aim should be to consolidate shared values and the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to build back better and foster a culture of healthy engagement with nature and a sense of responsibility to future generations.

3. Recent policy and operational developments

25. **Land tenure and gender.** In decision 26/COP.14, the Conference of the Parties recognized that responsible governance of tenure supported the achievement of sustainable land management and contributed to the realization of the multiple

benefits of land degradation neutrality, in line with target 15.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals. National and local governments play an important role in ensuring the responsible governance of tenure and resource rights, using fit-for-purpose tools and context-appropriate approaches which may include the creation of enforcement instruments and institutions that can host participatory conflict and dispute resolution mechanisms.

26. The reform and strengthening of land administration, documentation and related institutional mechanisms provides a significant and durable foundation upon which to scale up sustainable land management and restoration activities to create jobs and enhance livelihood opportunities. In the aforementioned decision, the Conference of the Parties invited parties to adopt national land governance legislation and procedures in order to support sustainable land use and land restoration, and encouraged parties to recognize legitimate tenure rights, including customary rights, consistent with the national legal framework.

27. In addition to tenure security, the redirection of support from governments and development partners to strengthen farmers' institutional, technical and financial capacities was recognized as a key factor in building resilience on farms and in organizations and enterprises. Increasingly, evidence supports the notion that agricultural productivity increases when land users perceive improvements to their property rights. Farming communities and agro-entrepreneurs should be empowered as active agents to restore and sustainably manage their land. Whether offered through a formal, State-managed tenure system or a customary system, farmers must be confident in their rights to access, use and reap benefits from their land.

28. In order for women farmers, who are responsible for between 60 per cent and 80 per cent of the food production in developing countries, to use land more efficiently and thereby make a greater contribution to food security and resilient food systems, they need access to land, management control of land-based resources, and economic incentives that the security of tenure provides. In decision 26/COP.14, parties were invited to legally recognize equal use and ownership 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 desertification, land degradation and drought and achieve land degradation neutrality, taking into account the national context.

29. **Drought Initiative.** The secretariat of the Convention is ramping up its activities to support countries on drought preparedness, with a focus on a management approach that prioritizes "prevention" over "recovery". Recognizing the growing need to help parties, communities, agriculture, businesses and individuals threatened by drought, the secretariat is working with more than 70 countries to guide them through the process of developing and enhancing proactive national drought plans.

30. In addition, to enable action, the secretariat of the Convention, together with partners, also developed a drought toolbox with a range of effective technical and policy options to analyse drought vulnerabilities and risks and to guide and help to prioritize feasible drought mitigation intervention measures. The toolbox is also designed to provide drought stakeholders with easy access to tools, case studies and other resources to support the design and implementation of national drought plans on: (a) drought monitoring and early warning systems; (b) drought vulnerability and impact assessments; and (c) drought risk mitigation measures.

31. At its fourteenth session, the Conference of the Parties called for response and recovery from drought through the adoption of effective policy and implementation measures. This issue is also being explored by an intergovernmental working group, which will finalize its work by mid-2021 and deliver its recommendations to the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth session. At the country level, the national

drought plans, supported through the Drought Initiative, will soon be completed, and pilot projects related to droughts as well as sand and dust storms will be implemented in Central Asia and Southern Africa. The roll-out of an effective approach to drought by all parties to the Convention will help to secure the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable and those most at risk.

32. The secretariat and the Global Mechanism of the Convention, with partners on the ground, have provided support to country parties in achieving their national programmes to combat desertification and to achieve land degradation neutrality targets through the development of bankable, gender-responsive transformative projects and programmes. The circular and restoration economy also offers an opportunity for Convention stakeholders to protect the land and at the same time create decent green jobs on a large scale. The degradation of land is threatening food security, lowering economic prospects in rural areas and turning young people into economic migrants.

33. At the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, India pledged to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030, more than its earlier target of 21 million hectares. The Prime Minister of India also called upon the leadership of the Convention to prepare a global water action agenda, which would be “central to the land degradation neutrality strategy”.

34. Shovel-ready restoration projects are generally labour-intensive and can create a lot of jobs that do not need high levels of existing skills or extensive training. In addition to providing critical energy and natural infrastructure, many of these jobs generate immediate and tangible benefits to local communities, biodiversity and the broader economy. For instance, for every dollar spent, at least \$9 of economic benefits can be expected; large-scale ecosystem restoration efforts have the potential to create up to 40 jobs for every \$1 million invested. As a result, increased employment in protected areas, sustainable land management, ecosystem restoration and other nature-based solutions become accelerators of, rather than barriers to, economic recovery.

35. **Great Green Wall Initiative and the Initiative on Sustainability, Stability and Security.** A specific response package for the Sahel, building on the “Creating lands of opportunity” project, the Great Green Wall Initiative and other relevant activities of the secretariat, is being formulated, while support for tackling the social implications of COVID-19 in rural areas, such as forced migration and conflict over natural resources, is being envisaged through the Initiative on Sustainability, Stability and Security. On the margins of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, the Great Green Wall Initiative gained strong political momentum as it was discussed at a ministerial round table hosted by the Deputy Secretary-General.

36. **Peace Forest Initiative.** A unique global initiative to promote peace through land restoration was signed by the Convention secretariat and the Korea Forest Service. Conflicts over natural resources are among the key peace and security challenges of the twenty-first century. With the right approach, cooperation in the management of natural resources can offer countries recovering from violent conflict an opportunity to achieve stability and trust while rebuilding livelihoods and economies. To meet this need, the Peace Forest Initiative will promote cooperation between countries to rehabilitate degraded land and forests in fragile and post-conflict locations while promoting peace and confidence.

37. The Convention secretariat has been underlining the importance of integrated land use planning that navigates trade-offs, promotes a healthy urban-rural dynamic and encourages local and circular production and consumption, wherever possible. Actively supporting and galvanizing momentum for the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the flagship publication of the Convention secretariat, *Global*

Land Outlook, is promoting restorative land-based activities and transformative projects and programmes that simultaneously contribute to creating livelihoods, reversing biodiversity loss and enhancing carbon sequestration. These nature-based solutions can provide approximately one third of the solutions needed to achieve the climate mitigation targets of the Paris Agreement.

4. Contribution of land restoration and sustainable land management to building back better in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

38. Faced with an increasingly uncertain future, the global community must take steps to reduce the risk of future pandemics and promote an inclusive, green recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. Protecting and restoring natural ecosystems is crucial for avoiding the well-understood risks of the emergence of novel infectious diseases. Moreover, land is key to building back better. For many communities in the developing world, land is the sole source of livelihoods and the only safety net during crises and times of stress. Protecting and restoring the health and productivity of land resources will be central to the recovery and long-term stability of those communities, providing citizens with jobs, food security and enhanced resilience to future shocks.

39. The Convention secretariat prioritizes human well-being and health by combating desertification and land degradation and mitigating the effects of drought. The 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the Convention reaffirms this commitment with objectives that emphasize improving ecosystem and community resilience and the living conditions of affected populations.

40. To help to address the COVID-19 crisis and to identify and prepare for elements for further consideration by the parties to the Convention, the Convention secretariat is focusing the response around the following framework for action, comprising three tracks, namely: (a) addressing the health dimensions of the global crisis; (b) safeguarding livelihoods; and (c) building back better, smarter and stronger. All three tracks would need to be tackled simultaneously, as they touch on the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery phases of the crisis.

41. **Ecosystem restoration and risk reduction.** Through the protection and restoration of nature, future risks to humanity, such as zoonoses, drought and climate change, will be reduced. At the same time, an economic recovery will be supported that is powered by new jobs, livelihoods and value chains created in renewable energy and low-carbon infrastructure, sustainable and resilient food systems and the conservation, sustainable use and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems, which are essential elements of a sustainable, green and circular economy.

5. Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility and other partners

42. The Convention secretariat has pursued and enhanced its collaboration with the Global Environment Facility. Likewise, consultations have taken place between the Executive Secretary of the Convention and the Facility authorities to discuss collaboration in various areas, including the preparatory process for the next replenishment of the Facility and the extent of the Facility's support operations for the Great Green Wall Initiative. The secretariat is also cooperating with the Green Climate Fund in designing an umbrella programme in the Sahel. Such cooperation has the potential to be extended to other regions.

C. Observations and recommendations

43. In its resolution [74/220](#), the General Assembly recognized that land-based solutions, as part of nature-based solutions, constitute promising options to evaluate and consider in connection with sequestering carbon and enhancing the resilience of

people and ecosystems affected by desertification, land degradation and drought, as well as the adverse effects of climate change. With the world's fragilities and inequalities so painfully exposed by the pandemic, there is a duty to build back better and move away from the business-as-usual mindset to go further and take active steps to align recovery with sustainable development.

44. Land restoration and the achievement of land degradation neutrality, which has emerged as a comprehensive pathway to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, can also be envisaged as contributing to build the world back better in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. To achieve this, a shift in the manner in which land and other natural resources are utilized is imperative. This will necessitate the forging of strong partnerships among stakeholders, based on a new relationship with nature. Synergies between the three Rio conventions and related environmental and development organizations are essential.

45. In this context, the General Assembly may wish to continue to draw global attention to humanity's reliance on land for health and well-being and encourage a paradigm shift in the way nature is managed, chiefly in the land sector, as the degradation of land constitutes a significant driver of habitat loss, which itself is a risk multiplier of new pandemics. It may also wish to pursue the advancement of the land-based agenda to address several global policy challenges, ranging from fighting poverty to food security, rural women's empowerment and nature-based solutions to address climate change and biodiversity loss.

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

A. Introduction

46. In its resolution [74/221](#) on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its contribution to sustainable development, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly, at its seventy-fifth session, a report on the implementation of the resolution, including on progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and difficulties encountered in the process of their implementation. The present report is submitted in response to that request.

B. Preparations for the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the meetings of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meetings of the Parties to the Protocols to the Convention: meetings of subsidiary bodies

47. Currently, the secretariat of the Convention is preparing the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the fourth 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. For this purpose, some meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Conference of the Parties have been held, while others have been postponed owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

48. At least 673 delegates, representing 118 countries, convened in Montreal, Canada, for the twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, held from 25 to 29 November 2019. Key recommendations that emerged from the meeting were on elements of the scientific and technical evidence base for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the need for action to tackle direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss and to tackle climate change and land degradation in an integrated manner by scaling up existing measures and initiating steps to achieve transformative changes. The Subsidiary Body also made recommendations on the need for changes in finance and economics that support pathways to sustainability so as to achieve the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, “Living in harmony with nature”. The indispensability of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk reduction for achieving multiple globally agreed goals, including the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, was the subject of another set of recommendations. Other outcomes included a call for increased inter-agency cooperation on biological and cultural diversity, the sustainable use of biodiversity in wildlife management and collaboration to tackle the illegal and unsustainable use and trade of wildlife. New ecologically or biologically significant marine areas in the North-East Atlantic were also identified. Consideration of whether synthetic biology would be classified as a new and emerging issue was deferred to the twenty-fourth meeting, with a recommendation to the Conference of the Parties to the Convention at its fifteenth meeting that, pending the outcome of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body, no new and emerging issues would be added to the Body’s agenda in the coming biennium.

Twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

49. The twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice has been tentatively rescheduled to be held from 2 to 7 November 2020. The meeting is expected to take up a number of issues, including the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, synthetic biology and marine and coastal biodiversity. Interlinkages between issues, such as biodiversity and agriculture and health, will also be taken up.

Third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation

50. The third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation has been tentatively rescheduled to take place from 9 to 14 November 2020. It is expected to review the progress made in the implementation of all aspects of the Convention, the Protocols thereto and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020. It will also take up issues relating to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The meeting is expected to make recommendations for consideration and decision at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol.

Eleventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group on Article 8 (j) and related provisions

51. The eleventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group on Article 8 (j) and related provisions took place from 20 to 22 November 2019. The

Working Group made a number of recommendations for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation on a new programme of work, including the contribution of the Working Group to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

C. 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

52. Since the submission of the previous report (A/74/207), three additional countries have deposited instruments of ratification, accession, approval or acceptance of 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. As a result, as at 28 June 2020, the overall number of ratifications of the Nagoya Protocol had risen to 125. Following the entry into force of the Protocol in October 2014, efforts have been focused on further advancing the implementation of the Protocol.

53. To prepare for the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol, a number of meetings have been convened, including the third meeting of the Compliance Committee and meetings of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources. Similarly, meetings of the Informal Advisory Committee on the Access and Benefit-Sharing Clearing-House and the Informal Advisory Committee on Capacity-building for the Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol have been organized. Apart from the outcomes of those meetings, all recommendations from the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation on specialized international access and benefit-sharing instruments in the context of article 4, paragraph 4, of the Nagoya Protocol and on a global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism (article 10 of the Nagoya Protocol) will be factored into the preparations for the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol.

D. Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity

54. Since the submission of the previous report, one additional country has deposited its instrument of ratification, accession, approval or acceptance of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. As a result, as at 28 June 2020, the overall number of ratifications of the Cartagena Protocol had risen to 172.

55. To prepare for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol, a number of meetings have been held, including the sixteenth and seventeenth meetings of the Compliance Committee, the thirteenth and fourteenth meetings of the Liaison Group on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the eleventh meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee on the Biosafety Clearing-House. Other meetings were the meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Socioeconomic Considerations and the meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment. The outcomes of the twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, as well as the recommendations expected from the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, will also be factored into the preparations for

the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol.

Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

56. Since the submission of the previous report, four additional countries have deposited their instruments of ratification, accession, approval or acceptance of the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. As a result, as at 28 June 2020, the overall number of ratifications of the Supplementary Protocol had risen to 48.

57. The Supplementary Protocol entered into force on 5 March 2018. Article 14, paragraph 1, of the Supplementary Protocol provides that the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol shall serve as the Meeting of the Parties to the Supplementary Protocol. Therefore, issues relating to the implementation of the Supplementary Protocol, in particular a study on financial security mechanisms, will be considered at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol.

E. Progress made in the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and difficulties encountered in the process of implementation

58. In 2010, the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 as an ambitious global plan of action to safeguard biodiversity. The plan comprises, inter alia, a vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050, as well as a set of targets for 2020 (the Aichi Biodiversity Targets). The fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* will provide a final assessment of progress in the implementation of the plan later in 2020. However, reports including the *Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the sixth national reports provided by parties to the Convention indicate that, despite important progress, the targets of the plan will not be met. Biodiversity continues to be lost globally, which threatens the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, among other things.

F. Process for the preparation of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework

59. Since the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 will end this year, the parties to the Convention decided to develop a post-2020 global biodiversity framework for adoption at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. At the fourteenth meeting, parties adopted a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The negotiations to develop the framework are being undertaken by a dedicated open-ended intersessional working group co-chaired by Francis Ogwal (Uganda) and Basile van Havre (Canada) and overseen by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties. In collaboration with the Co-Chairs and under the guidance of the Bureau, the secretariat has organized five regional consultations and a number of thematic consultations on issues requested by the parties and stakeholders. In addition, two meetings of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework have been held, in Nairobi in August 2019 and in Rome in February 2020. The Working Group has undertaken

its work on the basis of comprehensive consultation processes, including requests for written submissions and inputs from regional and thematic consultations. The Convention's subsidiary bodies have also been tasked with contributing to the process and providing inputs to the Working Group. In this light, the outcomes of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation will be particularly important for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. At the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, a scientific and technical review of the framework's draft goals and targets, and related indicators and baselines, will be carried out. The third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation will provide elements regarding the means to support and review the implementation of the framework. In this context, the secretariat has also developed a draft strategy for resource mobilization, a draft long-term strategic framework for capacity development, proposals to enhance technical and scientific cooperation, a draft knowledge management component and a draft review mechanism for the post-2020 framework, for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its third meeting. The next meeting of the Working Group is tentatively scheduled to be held in the first quarter of 2021 and is expected to provide a final draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting.

G. International Day for Biological Diversity

60. The International Day for Biological Diversity was commemorated on 22 May 2020 under the theme "Our solutions are in nature". As part of a comprehensive communication strategy, several days leading up to the International Day were dedicated to themes derived from the key elements of the biodiversity agenda, including science and traditional knowledge, different ways of conserving biodiversity, health, agriculture, food and feed, food security and biodiversity, and people, culture and biodiversity. A number of commemorative events were organized at the national and global level by 105 parties, 17 United Nations entities and 22 other stakeholders. A virtual high-level discussion was organized at United Nations Headquarters on the theme for the International Day, with the participation of nine ministers. The social media campaign yielded 1.8 million impressions.

H. High-level political forum on sustainable development in 2020

61. With regard to activities to participate in and contribute to the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2020, the secretariat of the Convention has been collaborating with relevant United Nations entities on substantive preparations for several thematic sessions of the forum, notably on the themes "Protecting the planet and building resilience", "Ending hunger and achieving food security for all" and "Bolstering local action to control the pandemic and accelerate implementation". The secretariat is also preparing a side event on the theme "Urgent action on biodiversity for sustainable development: update on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework" during the high-level segment.

I. Preparations for the summit on biodiversity

62. The secretariat of the Convention has been assisting with substantive preparations for the summit on biodiversity in collaboration with other United Nations entities, including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the

Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and other stakeholders, including the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and the World Wide Fund for Nature, through the inter-agency task force established by the President of the General Assembly.

J. Recommendations

63. The General Assembly, at its seventy-fifth 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 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;

(b) To call upon all parties, specialized agencies and other United Nations entities and all other stakeholders to effectively engage in the negotiations on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and its implementation once it is finalized and adopted;

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

(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 Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;

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

(g) To call upon all parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization.