



UNITED  
NATIONS



**Convention to Combat  
Desertification**

Distr.  
LIMITED

ICCD/CRIC(7)/L.1  
14 November 2008

Original: ENGLISH

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**COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**  
Seventh session  
Istanbul, 3–14 November 2008

**Agenda item 6**

**Adoption of the comprehensive report of the Committee for the Review of  
the Implementation of the Convention to the Conference of the Parties,  
including conclusions and recommendations**

**Draft report of the seventh session of the Committee on the Review  
of the Implementation of the Convention**

Rapporteur: Mr. Hussein Nasrallah (Lebanon)

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. OPENING OF THE SESSION .....	1–7	3
A. Welcoming ceremony.....	1–5	3
B. General statements.....	6–7	3
II. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS.....	8–15	3
A. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work .....	8–9	3
B. Appointment of a Rapporteur of the Committee .....	10	4
C. Attendance .....	11–14	5
D. Documentation .....	15	5
III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	16–134	5
A. Programmatic framework: the work programmes of the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies .....	17–71	5

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
B. Reporting process: methodological elements of the communication of information .....	72–117	12
C. Review process: conducting a global review of implementation of the Strategy and the Convention .....	118–134	19
IV. CONCLUSION OF THE SESSION .....	135	21
A. Adoption of the report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, including conclusions and recommendations .....	135	21
B. Closure of the session .....		21

#### Annexes

I. Global interactive dialogue session on UNCCD strategic orientations .....	22
II. Presentation of the terms of reference and programme of work of the Joint Inspection Unit on the assessment of the Global Mechanism .....	23
III. Documents before the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention at its seventh session .....	24

## **I. Opening of the session**

### **A. Welcoming ceremony**

1. On 3 November 2008, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry of Turkey, Mr. Hasan Z. Sarikaya, opened the joint meeting and delivered a statement on behalf of the President of Turkey, Mr. Abdullah Gül, and the Prime Minister of Turkey, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.
2. The Minister of Environment and Forestry, Mr. Veysel Eroğlu, addressed the meeting.
3. Statements were made by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism.
4. A statement was made by Mr. Jose Luis Herranz, Director-General of the Ministry of Rural, Marine and Natural Environment of Spain, on behalf of Ms. Elena Espinosa, President of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
5. Statements by the Chairperson of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, Mr. Israel Torres (Panama), and the Chairperson of the Committee on Science and Technology, Mr. William D. Dar (Philippines), were made.

### **B. General statements**

6. Statements were made by the representatives of Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), France (on behalf of the European Union) and Ukraine (on behalf of the Eastern European States group).
7. A statement was also made by the representative of Juventude Ecológica Angolana, on behalf of civil society organizations.

## **II. Organizational matters**

### **A. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work** (Agenda item 1)

8. At its first meeting on Friday, 7 November 2008, the Committee, following the statement by the Chairperson, adopted the provisional agenda as contained in document ICCD/CRIC(7)/1.
  1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
  2. Appointment of a rapporteur of the Committee.
  3. The 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention:
    - (a) Consideration of the report on the implementation of the 10-year strategic

plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention;

- (b) Consideration of the work plans of the Convention bodies<sup>1</sup>:
    - (i) The multi-year work plan for the secretariat and the joint work programme of the secretariat and the Global Mechanism;
    - (ii) The multi-year work plan for the Global Mechanism;
    - (iii) The two-year work programme for the Committee on Science and Technology;
    - (iv) The two-year work programme for the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;
  - (c) Indicators and monitoring of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention;
  - (d) Consideration of the input from the Committee on Science and Technology at its first special session.
4. Improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and format of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties: Consideration of draft reporting guidelines as referred to in decision 8/COP.8.
  5. Additional procedures or institutional mechanisms to assist the Conference of the Parties in regularly reviewing the implementation of the Convention: Consideration of the format for future meetings of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention.
  6. Adoption of the comprehensive report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention to the Conference of the Parties, including conclusions and recommendations. [Text taken from ICCD/CRIC(7)/1]

9. At the same meeting, following the statements by the representatives of the United States and Algeria, the Committee approved its organization of work as contained in Annex II to document ICCD/CRIC(7)/1, as orally revised.

## **B. Appointment of a Rapporteur of the Committee** (Agenda item 2)

10. The Committee designated the Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Hussein Nasrallah (Lebanon) also as Rapporteur of the Committee for its seventh session.

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<sup>1</sup> Parties may wish to note that in the following lines the terminology is modified to correspond with that used in decision 3/COP.8.

### **C. Attendance**

11. The representatives of the following [to be completed] Parties to the UNCCD attended the seventh session of the CRIC: [to be completed]
12. The session was also attended by observers from [to be completed].
13. The following United Nations organizations, offices and specialized agencies were represented: [to be completed]
14. [to be completed] intergovernmental and [to be completed] non-governmental organizations were also represented.

### **D. Documentation**

15. The documents submitted for the consideration of the CRIC are listed in annex [to be completed].

## **III. Conclusions and recommendations**

16. The conclusions and recommendations listed in this report are a summary compilation of ideas, suggestions and proposals offered by various delegations during CRIC 7 to further implement the Convention and the Strategy. This report identifies potential action that could be undertaken by Parties and other stakeholders, including Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies, after consideration and appropriate decisions by the COP, in conformity with the provisions of the Convention.

### **A. Programmatic framework: the work programmes of the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies**

#### **1. General recommendations**

17. Parties confirm the importance of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (The Strategy) as a tool to effectively respond to new challenges and opportunities in the global context. They recognize the linkages between sustainable land management and food security, adaptation to and mitigation of climate change and water management; and the relevance of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to addressing emerging challenges such as preventing forced migration.
18. Some Parties underline that the focus of the UNCCD remains on drylands, targeting combating desertification and land degradation, while noting that land degradation and soil conservation in ecosystems other than arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid are related to and influences processes in drylands and therefore cannot be ignored. Some Parties underline that the focus of the UNCCD remains on drylands, and targeting combating desertification/land degradation, while noting that land degradation and soil conservation in ecosystems other than arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid are related to, and influence, processes in drylands and

therefore cannot be ignored. There are also some Parties that consider that the degree of attention paid to non-dryland areas in the UNCCD process should be minimized, and when making reference to soil and land degradation both should be modified by the term drylands.

19. Parties confirm the importance of enhancing political awareness of and attention on the UNCCD, including in the context of enhancing synergies in the implementation of the Rio conventions. They emphasize the importance of a comprehensive communication strategy on The Strategy and of capacity building for planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment.

20. Parties underline the central role of national, subregional and regional action programmes (NAPs) and equivalent strategic documents used by the countries as the main national framework for the implementation of the Convention and The Strategy, while emphasizing the need to integrate them into overarching development plans such as poverty reduction strategy papers. They call for both financial and technical support for the alignment of the action programmes with the objectives of The Strategy, request better responsiveness by Convention institutions and bodies to the needs relating to the implementation of the NAPs to be reflected in the respective work plans of the Convention institutions.

21. Some Parties express concern over the availability of resources for the implementation of The Strategy at the national, subregional and regional levels; as well as for carrying out the work plans and programmes of the subsidiary bodies of the Conference of the Parties (COP), the Global Mechanism (GM) and the secretariat. Some Parties highlight the importance of launching intergovernmental exchanges on how to approach the achievement of Strategic Objective 4, and request the secretariat to initiate action together with the GM on this matter. Such exchanges may be considered to be organized in the sidelines of the 17<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

22. Some Parties express their general satisfaction regarding the results-based management (RBM) approach of the UNCCD in general and welcome the multi-year work plans as a basis for operationalizing the roles of the Convention institutions and bodies in promoting The Strategy. They consider, however, that the optimal delivery of the tasks of the Convention institutions and bodies will require further streamlining and integration of the work plans and programmes, and request improved coordination in this regard. Furthermore, some Parties express concern over the feasibility and applicability of these plans and programmes.

23. Full integration among the work plans and programmes of the Convention's institutions should be achieved, in order to enhance synergies and complementarities between institutions and avoid any overlap. An inclusive framework of action should be presented with the view of offering a more comprehensive picture of the services that these institutions and bodies could offer to Parties in assuming their main responsibility for implementation of The Strategy.

24. Parties also note the need for further development of the RBM methodology used, with particular attention to selecting and defining performance indicators, including the data sources to be used for the verification of these indicators. In general, quantitative performance indicators and baselines are requested to be included in the documentation provided for the ninth session of the COP (COP 9) for Parties to better monitor the progress made in implementing work plans and programmes.

25. In addition to the review of the performance indicators, Parties request a review of the expected accomplishments contained in the work plans and programmes. The purpose of these two reviews is to address Parties' concerns raised at CRIC 7, and to generate a better basis for Parties to perceive the respective roles and focus areas of the subsidiary bodies, the secretariat and the GM, in the achievement of the operational objectives contained in the Strategy.

26. Parties encourage the secretariat to continue and finalize its work towards a results-based budgeting approach, and to submit to COP 9 a realistic work programme that contains detailed information on budgetary needs, as well as an indication of whether the financing sought is from the core budget or the supplementary fund.

27. Some Parties note that the RBM approach, as well as the operational objectives of The Strategy, are for all stakeholders of the UNCCD, including Parties as well as the subsidiary bodies, the secretariat and the GM. More clarity is called for on the roles of the various participants in the operationalization and implementation of The Strategy. Particularly under Operational Objective 2, on policy frameworks, Parties may assume part of the role presented by the Convention bodies, the secretariat and the GM in their respective work plans. Indicators should be tailored to suit the various stakeholders, while ensuring comparability of information, bearing in mind that those indicators that relate to the Parties' role in implementation and expected accomplishments must be included in the reporting guidelines, taking into account the specific circumstances and capacities of developing countries.

28. Parties call for more precise phrases and terms, as well as more concrete, tangible and measurable outcomes in the work plans and programmes.

## 2. The Committee on Science and Technology

29. Parties take note with appreciation of the work carried out by the CST in developing its work plan and programme.

30. Parties note the importance of promoting the participation of scientific experts in the work of the CST, bearing in mind geographical balance. They highlight the importance of synergies among the Rio conventions, the promotion of joint activities among the experts of each convention and the participation of the civil society.

31. Some Parties express concern about the financial resources available and the methodology for the achievement of the expected accomplishments in the CST work plans. They suggest including the regional and national activities of the CST under regional cooperation frameworks, including regional coordination mechanisms.

32. Harmonization of the work programmes of the CST and the secretariat should be achieved in order to distribute tasks properly between the two institutions according to their respective roles, taking into account that the secretariat provides technical support to the CST, while the CST is assigned to advise the COP.

33. Parties underline the significance of raising awareness on aspects relating to science and technology in the context of the UNCCD, including the promotion of scientific publications and the dissemination of knowledge on technologies relating to UNCCD implementation. They emphasize the importance of training to increase the capacities of Parties.

34. Some Parties called for the inclusion of the activities of the Thematic Programme Networks in the CST work plan, as well as early warning activities. In this context, they recommend an increase in the role of research institutions and scientific centres, and clear criteria for their selection.

35. Regional approaches should be adequately addressed in the work of the CST, including inter alia by supporting regional initiatives for science and technology.

### 3. Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

36. Parties find the specific outcome area identified in the 2008–2009 work programme and the related outcomes adequate and relevant to the core responsibility of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) as outlined in The Strategy and relevant decisions of the COP.

37. Parties welcome the cooperation between the two subsidiary bodies of the COP and commend the level of interaction achieved, with particular regard to the inputs produced by the CST as they relate to reporting guidelines and impact indicators. Nevertheless, they express concern about the workload of the two bodies, particularly that of the CST, and the limited time available to deliver its programme. They recommend that timely guidance be given by the Bureaux of the two bodies in order to submit realistic options for indicators for the consideration of COP 9.

38. Some Parties invite the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureaux of the COP and the CRIC, to prepare a preliminary draft work plan 2010-2013 for COP 9. This preliminary work plan will be drafted in accordance with the recommendations contained in the present report, and adjusted to correspond with the new terms of reference and mandate of the CRIC, which will be adopted at COP 9.

39. Some Parties agree that the CRIC Bureau is an important agent for achieving milestones between sessions, and consequently recommend that its alternating members should provide procedural and substantive advice and avail themselves of the necessary expertise and secretariat services in order to move the agenda and the review process forward. Some other Parties note, however, that the enhanced role of the CRIC Bureau requires timely submission of documentation to the members of the Bureau, so as to enable regional consultations on the issues at hand.

### 4. The Global Mechanism

40. Parties welcome the forthcoming assessment of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the United Nations, in accordance with decision 3/COP.8, and call on the GM and the Executive Secretary to raise adequate resources for this assessment.



41. Some Parties commend the GM for the organization, structure and the detail of activities of its work plan.
42. Some other Parties consider that the performance indicators defined for the GM could be taken into account in the reporting guidelines for national reporting.
43. Some Parties welcome the support provided by the GM so far, while some others express concern about the level of resources mobilized to support the implementation of the Convention, as well as over the transparency and accountability of the GM.
44. With regard to future efforts of the GM to mobilize resources, Parties particularly emphasize opportunities provided by the private sector, foundations and CSOs.
45. Some Parties note that the main tools of GM support, namely the integrated financial strategies, might need to be adapted to the features of different countries, and they call for further analysis in this regard with a view to putting in more appropriate funding arrangements.
46. Some Parties highlight the importance of presenting the fieldwork done by the GM in a more concrete manner in the work plan and programme.
47. Some Parties consider that the GM is not a multilateral actor expected to participate in policy dialogue, and in this regard GM should not seek to increase programmatic support to sustainable land management or be involved in a variety of sectoral or thematic issues. Instead, such support should be undertaken by Parties, and if assistance is provided that should come from the multilateral organizations that participate in policy dialogue with Parties. Some other Parties recognize the interlinkages between policy environment and resource mobilization, specially with respect to PRSPs and NAPs mainstreaming in macro level policies and call for increased complementarity of the GM and the Secretariat roles through joint action at national, regional and global level.
48. Some Parties call for better geographical balance in the support provided to affected countries, including in the context of the organizational setting of the institution, while others request in a more general manner increased consistency and transparency in the selection of beneficiary countries by the GM. In principle, regional programmes of the GM should cover all regional implementation annexes of the UNCCD, and the GM should outline a clear programme for reaching out to all affected Parties according to their needs.
49. Parties invite the GM to provide more detailed information on its support, such as the amounts mobilized/raised from beneficiary countries and donors and from activities supported, quantifying different kinds of funding including innovative financing disaggregated by foundations, NGOs and the private sector. Parties request the GM to develop indicators that reflect the amount of funding that the GM seeks to mobilize, or co-financing to be attained through support to countries in preparing project applications or implementation, and that better assess the specific input of GM action. The majority of GM indicators should be quantitative.

50. Parties underline that the focus of the GM under The Strategy is on operational objective 5 concerning financing and technology transfer, and note that its activities to support Operational Objectives 1 and 2 should also be geared towards this task, avoiding overlap with the work of the secretariat.

51. Some Parties note that there is still too much overlap between the GM and the secretariat in areas where the GM should work in a supportive capacity.

## 5. The secretariat

52. Some Parties welcome and appreciate the new structure of the secretariat and understand that it needs to be completed by the forthcoming institutionalization of the Regional Coordination Mechanisms together with the improved cooperation with the GM. Some other Parties express concerns about the new structure of the secretariat and recommend its revision at COP 9.

53. Parties recommend that the secretariat focus its work on its main functions as outlined in the Convention and The Strategy; seek to optimize the relevance and effectiveness of its actions; and concentrate on its comparative advantage vis-à-vis other stakeholders.

54. Parties note that continuous and strengthened involvement and participation of Parties, regarding political as well as financial support, is necessary for carrying out the secretariat's work plan under result based management, and requests all Parties. In particular developed country Parties, to enhance their efforts to this end.

55. Some Parties welcome the strengthening of the secretariat's policy support to knowledge management and scientific collaboration, as well as its enhanced advocacy and awareness raising for the Convention. In this regard, they look forward to the idea of developing a comprehensive UNCCD communication strategy, which will be presented for consideration at COP 9. However, some Parties question the need for separate units for policy and advocacy and for awareness raising, and note that perhaps a single unit could perform both functions.

56. Parties also recognize that the present programme responds to the call in The Strategy for institutional and methodological reforms and recommend that in the work programme for the coming biennium more focus is given on service rendered to Parties, in particular as they relate to the assistance that they might need in aligning their action programmes with The Strategy, and in the monitoring and assessment of the implementation of The Strategy and the Convention for the next reporting cycle.

57. Some Parties note that communication between the secretariat and individual Parties as well as subregions and regions is considered essential and should be appropriately addressed in the new structure of the secretariat.

58. Some Parties express their concern over effective facilitation of regional coordination, considering that the former facilitation units of the secretariat have been modified, and that the work plan does not identify region-specific expectations. These Parties recommend the strengthening of regional coordination mechanisms, the implementation of The Strategy, and a

general increase in attention to the needs of Parties at the regional, subregional and national levels. In addition, some affected country Parties request for capacity building in line with the National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment reports.

59. Parties underline the need for adequate resources to support activities at regional, subregional and national levels, and recommend that COP 9 take action in this regard. As an obvious means for covering some of the resource needs, they recommend that the secretariat and the GM continue the joining of their forces in delivering their services, depending on their respective mandates.

60. Parties consider that the secretariat can and should have a more proactive role in the mobilization of resources for the performance of its functions. In this context, the secretariat should reflect in its work plan the mobilization of resources for supporting the efforts of affected country Parties to strengthen dialogue and consultation at the subregional and/or regional and interregional levels, that was highlighted in The Strategy as part of the secretariat's work programme.

61. Some Parties commend the secretariat on its efforts to highlight aspects of land and soil in the context of global negotiations on adaptation to and mitigation of the impact of climate change, while some other Parties underline that the focus of this Convention remains in combating desertification in dryland areas.

62. Parties recommend that the secretariat continue to strengthen its attention on facilitating the involvement of civil society in the implementation of the Convention, including through the maintenance of the post of programme officer for civil society participation and continuous dialogue with civil society, among other means. They invite the secretariat to include indicators concerning civil society participation in the national report guidelines. They also encourage the secretariat to enhance its approaches and policy guidance for strengthening the role of the private sector at all levels of the implementation of the Convention.

63. With regard to the methodological approach of the secretariat's work plan, further detailing of the catalytic role of the secretariat is called for in order to reflect this role in the performance indicators. Setting measurable targets in the work plan is also requested.

64. It would be preferable to focus the expected accomplishments or performance indicators of the secretariat to the secretariat's preparations for the COP, rather than to the decision of the COP.

65. Parties consider that the performance indicators defined for the the secretariat could be taken into account in the reporting guidelines for national reporting.

66. Some Parties note that there is still too much overlap between the secretariat and the GM in areas where the secretariat works in a supportive capacity.

## 6. Secretariat / Global Mechanism joint work programme

67. Parties commend the efforts made by the two institutions to develop the joint work programme (JWP), while noting some overlaps with their respective two-year programmes of work. They also recognize that there are areas that are not covered in the joint work programme, but in which additional joint outcomes would be beneficial.

68. Parties note that there is still room for clarifying the allocation and execution of tasks between the secretariat and the Global Mechanism, and request the two entities to further reduce duplication in their respective work programmes while awaiting the findings of the joint inspection unit (JIU) report on the assessment of the GM. Parties invite the secretariat and the GM to include further details on concrete steps taken, as well as planned, to implement the JWP in the submission to COP 9.

69. Parties recommend the enhancement of the alignment of the implementation of the NAPs, SAPs and RAPs, and request joint financial and technical support from the secretariat and the GM, depending on their respective mandates, to undertake the necessary activities.

70. The secretariat and the GM have different mandates and the JWP should therefore focus on the areas of mutual responsibility and action where joint delivery would be of benefit to Parties.

71. Some Parties outline the importance as well as complexity of the joint work programme, and emphasize the need for thorough consideration of the JWP at COP 9.

## **B. Reporting process: methodological elements of the communication of information**

### 1. General recommendations

72. Parties commended the secretariat's work on reporting and appreciated the valuable assistance provided by members of the inter-agency task force (IATF).

73. General agreement was expressed on the proposed reporting principles as they relate to the content of reporting, its format and the reporting process. The secretariat is requested to produce new reporting guidelines for consideration at appropriate preparatory processes leading to COP 9 as prescribed by decision 8/COP.8, taking the approach outlined in the reporting principles.

74. Parties expressed the need for the information coming out of the reports to be presented and analysed at the appropriate preparatory processes leading to intersessional sessions of the CRIC.

75. Parties shared the view that the new reporting should be based on simple, quantitative and measurable indicators. Performance indicators should be used to measure progress against the operational objectives of The Strategy, while impact indicators should be used to measure progress against the strategic objectives contained in country, subregional and regional profiles.

76. Information systems should be established and/or improved at the national, subregional, regional and global levels in order to support the enhanced reporting system. At the national level, information that supports the preparation of reports under different multilateral environmental agreements should be developed and/or maintained and/or integrated into existing relevant databases. In order to avoid duplication of work, existing information systems at the national level should be surveyed, especially those set up within the framework of international projects/assistance. Furthermore, the secretariat should use criteria to classify the information provided in the reports and set up an information system for the efficient handling of the classified information. Some Parties see the establishment/improvement of those information systems as a pre-requisite for successful reporting and welcome the proposal to include in those systems information that may service the other Rio conventions. Some Parties stated that institutional networking would be enhanced through such systems.

77. Parties agreed that a global assessment of capacity needs is necessary in order to ascertain the level of assistance needed and to support the work of the CST in this regard. This assessment should take into account findings from other capacity assessments that have so far been undertaken, such as the National Capacity Self Assessments (NCSAs) in order to avoid duplication. Any capacity-building measure should be seen as a process rather than a project, that is, capacity building for improving monitoring and assessment is a long-term undertaking that should take into consideration emerging issues as they arise.

78. A call was made to take advantage of existing expertise and information at the regional and subregional levels in the field of capacity building.

79. Some Parties stressed the need for increased capacity-building measures, including, above all, the predictable and timely availability of financial resources relating to newly proposed reporting obligations of the Parties. This is particularly important for establishing and/or strengthening the monitoring and assessment systems aimed at implementing an indicator-based system to be considered by COP 9. Reference was made to the considerably larger amount of capacity building-related funding available for reporting under other two Rio conventions, which has so far been provided by the GEF. A call was made to the GEF to provide similar amounts to the UNCCD Parties.

80. The secretariat should develop a common framework for the definition and selection of best practices for consideration by Parties. Many Parties stressed the need to include in the reports a section on success stories, and one on best practices with an emphasis on the lessons learned, both from activities that were successful and those that were less successful. In order not to overload the reports, some Parties proposed to have those best practices detailed in annexes and to develop a standard format for their presentation with the aim of increasing readability.

81. Parties recommend that proposals on the scope of the review, and the frequency of submission of reports by all reporting entities as well as appropriate intervals between reporting cycles be linked with the proposed terms of reference and operational modalities of the CRIC, and reflected in the 2010–2011 work programme and the 2010–2013 work plan of the CRIC. Due account in these considerations should be taken of decision 3/COP.8, which states that the CRIC should be restructured around a simplified and effective reporting process based on

information which is comparable across regions and over time. A common and coherent format for future CRIC meetings and reporting guidelines, as well as a mutual agenda, should be adopted.

82. The need to streamline the decisions relating to reporting by adopting a new decision at COP 9, which would supersede those previously adopted by the COP on this matter, was put forward. This also includes the discontinuation of the alternation system of reporting (African Parties not reporting at the same time as other Parties). The view was expressed that all Parties should submit their reports at the same time.

83. The secretariat was requested to communicate to the Parties the timetable of activities to be carried out before COP 9 in this respect. The secretariat was also encouraged to start a pilot phase with a selected number of countries to test the proposed reporting guidelines.

84. Some Parties noted that, in order to change the trend of land degradation, Parties should follow an integrated approach based on basin-wide management when allocating funds for sustainable land use.

## 2. Specific recommendations relating to the reporting entities

### (a) Affected country Parties

85. Alignment of action programmes with The Strategy would facilitate effective implementation, monitoring and application of the new reporting guidelines to their full effect. Some Parties voiced their concern that the alignment process for the action programmes will postpone implementation of The Strategy and urged the secretariat and the GM, as a matter of priority, to provide clear guidance and technical assistance to affected country Parties in this regard. Clear linkages between the revised action programmes and the indicators for reporting should be established. NAPs should set targets, set out baseline information, identify indicators and a timeframe, specify the range of activities envisaged to reach such targets, and identify indicators to measure progress with achieving these targets. Parties have, however, stressed that significant efforts on their side will have to be invested into this exercise, for which capacity building and additional funding would be required. Some Parties underlined that consistency of reporting with relevant national planning processes needs to be emphasized.

86. Financial reporting should be based on a standard financial reporting format to be agreed by the Parties. Commonly agreed financial reporting systems should be used by affected country Parties and their development partners. Emphasis in reporting should be put on financial matters and also on an analysis of the impact of the activities undertaken.

87. The new reporting format should provide an opportunity for affected country Parties to highlight the opportunities and constraints they face in implementing the Convention and The Strategy, whether they are of a physical, financial, social, political, institutional or of another nature.

88. The establishment/improvement of national environmental information systems would be a central asset in sustaining the new reporting of affected country Parties, and capacity building

and technological support provided by the international community will be required. Some Parties expressed the need for a comprehensive approach to capacity building that addresses not only technological issues but also other issues, including training of the stakeholders involved at the national level, given the wealth of information that will be required under the new reporting system. Sufficient time and resources for capacity building, also in relation to the new reporting format and guidelines, should be ensured and the required support prioritized.

89. Some Parties found it useful to name the relevant stakeholders who should be integrated into the reporting process and to specify which stakeholders should be involved in the consultative processes relating to the reporting, including decentralized administrative bodies and CSOs.

(b) Developed country Parties

90. Reporting by developed country Parties should focus on providing information on the extent to which the Convention has been mainstreamed into countries' development cooperation strategies, the contribution to the achievement of the scope, strategies and objectives of the Convention and the actions undertaken to respond to the relevant requests of the COP. Ways and means need to be found to tackle the problem of measuring the financial allocations to combat desertification compared to those in other related fields and the possible problem of double counting of financial support.

91. Financial reporting should be based on a standard financial reporting format, so that information on assistance provided by developed country Parties can be compared with that reported by developing affected country Parties.

92. Emphasis in reporting should be put on financial matters but also on analysis of the impact of activities undertaken. One section of the new reporting format for developed country Parties should be dedicated to a qualitative and, as far as possible, quantitative assessment of this impact.

93. The use of Rio markers in the financial reporting was considered one possible way of quantifying and analysing the information. However, the Parties underlined the ongoing discussion about the possible improvements gained from using Rio markers and called on the secretariat to consider the outcome of these discussions.

(c) The Global Environment Facility

94. The need to ensure coherence between the reporting guidelines for the GEF and the MoU concluded between the GEF and the COP was emphasized.

(d) The secretariat

95. The secretariat should structure its reports using the same indicator-based approach as that applied by Parties and ensure that the RBM indicators considered and adopted for the work programme of the secretariat feed into the overall indicators identified by Parties for The Strategy.

96. Some Parties expressed the view that the national reports should be submitted to the secretariat in time for the Executive Secretary to take account of their data and proposals when preparing documents for future CRIC meetings.

(e) The Global Mechanism

97. Reporting by the GM should include an assessment of the extent to which the Convention and the implementation of action programmes have been supported by the GM; an assessment of the GM's quantitative and qualitative contribution to the achievement of the scope, strategies and objectives of the Convention, with specific reference to the operational objectives set out in The Strategy; information on actions taken to respond to the reviews of policies, operational modalities and activities of the GM; reporting on global funding trends and financial flows to specific regions and countries supported by the GM; , as well as of the other relevant requests of the COP; and provide joint reporting with the secretariat on the implementation of the JWP. Emphasis in reporting should be put on financial matters but also on an analysis of the impact of activities undertaken.

98. The GM should structure its reports using the same indicator-based approach as that applied by Parties and ensure that the RBM indicators considered and adopted for the work programme of the GM feed into the overall indicators identified by Parties for The Strategy. Particular emphasis should be placed on provision of information from the GM on its measurable achievements in response to Operational Objective 5 of The Strategy, as well as on its support for the achievement of Operational Objectives 1 and 2. Performance indicators used for this purpose should be in line with the indicators to be set for country Parties.

99. Some Parties expressed the view that the national reports should be submitted to the secretariat in time to allow the GM to take account of their data and proposals when preparing for future CRIC sessions.

(f) Reports on the implementation of subregional and regional action programmes

100. SRAPs and RAPs should be aligned with The Strategy, as required by decision 3/COP.8. Clear linkages between revisions of SRAPs and RAPs and the identification of indicators should be established. Clear guidelines on how to achieve this need to be provided to Parties by the secretariat in collaboration with the GM.

101. In addition to the core (common) set of indicators to be considered by the COP, SRAPs and RAPs should be able to use their own subregion- or region-specific indicators and data to properly reflect their specificity. Some Parties suggested a process needs to be established through which the Parties of a subregion or region can harmonize available information at the national level in order to prepare SRAPs/RAPs in the context of the forthcoming regional mechanisms as appropriate.

102. Whereas subregional profiles were considered to be relevant and useful, some Parties expressed reservations about the establishment of regional profiles, as some regions are so diverse that a regional profile might prove difficult to establish. The establishment of regional



information systems, on the other hand, could be viewed as useful. Some Parties, however, considered it necessary to clarify their purpose, management and content.

103. Some Parties emphasized the need for all Parties involved in a SRAP to be included in the preparation of respective subregional reports.

104. Financial reporting by subregional and regional entities should be based on a standard financial reporting format, as is proposed for the reports of affected country Parties. Accompanying measures, such as capacity building and the improvement of coordination and information-sharing systems, could be considered together with the mobilization of the resources necessary for their implementation.

### 3. Performance indicators for the review of The Strategy

105. Parties requested the secretariat not to alter the outcome areas or operational objectives contained in The Strategy since this would reopen negotiations on The Strategy itself. The secretariat is requested to focus on the consolidation of performance indicators with a view to identifying a minimum set.

106. Harmonization of the various indicator sets used by The Strategy was also requested. Impact and performance indicators as well as those performance indicators used by institutions implementing an RBM system need to be established with the aim of having a coherent indicator system for the UNCCD.

107. Detailed input was provided by Parties on the following:

(a) The set of performance indicators should initially be limited, with flexibility to be expanded where necessary, and as the monitoring process evolves;

(b) Performance indicators need to be measurable, implementable and clear to the stakeholders using them;

(c) Special emphasis should be given to indicators dealing with financial issues. These need to be quantitative and to assist the CRIC in assessing investment flows.

108. In the interest of coherence, some Parties mentioned that the development of an indicator system should go hand-in-hand with the realignment of action programmes so that countries can use the same indicators for implementing The Strategy/Convention as for reporting.

109. Apart from developing the minimum set of performance indicators, a methodology is needed to guide Parties in the use of the indicators. The secretariat is requested to take this into consideration when working on the consolidation of performance indicators.

110. Additionally, a glossary that would clarify the terminology and definition of indicators, so that Parties have a common understanding of the process and the implementation of indicators, is requested.

111. The CST is requested to provide advice on performance indicators, in particular with regard to Operational Objective 3, in addition to its work on fine-tuning Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

112. Subregional and regional expertise needs to be taken into consideration to the extent possible in the consolidation of performance and impact indicators. Some Parties stressed that a lot of work is already under way with regard to indicators, which should be flowing into this exercise.

#### 4. Impact indicators for the review of the implementation of the Convention

113. Parties expressed great appreciation to the CST for its substantive contribution to the CRIC process. They reinforced the need to concentrate efforts on the identification of the existing relevant indicators and data at country level as part of the process for the establishment of the minimum set of indicators for measuring the impacts of the implementation of The Strategy.

114. Regarding the characteristics of the indicators, Parties reinforced the need to take into consideration some key aspects such as their measurability, reliability, simplicity and cost-effectiveness. In addition, Parties noted the need for the indicators to have specific units of measurement. Parties also highlighted the issue of the applicability of the set of indicators at all levels and recommended the CST to take into consideration the various existing initiatives in different regions for the selection of the minimum set of indicators. Parties further proposed that it would be imperative to identify and differentiate qualitative indicators from quantitative indicators. The indicators should be as detailed as is realistic and relevant to the region in question. However, differentiation in the detail of the indicators according to regional conditions should enable the provision of implementation results in a format that is understandable to and comparable for all regions.

115. Parties mentioned the importance of capacity-building activities to support Parties to utilize the minimum set of indicators as regards collection of data, monitoring and evaluation. Parties also called for the establishment of a procedural manual and highlighted the need to establish baseline data. Parties further recognized the need for a concerted effort to enhance the human, financial and technological resources necessary to access, collect, analyse and decipher existing and new information.

116. In terms of the process for the selection of the minimum set of indicators to be made available and presented through the CST process at COP 9, Parties mentioned the need to establish a precise calendar of activities as well as the respective responsibilities in this process, thereby determining who should do what. In this regard, Parties requested the CST Bureau to coordinate the process and further requested the secretariat and the GM to assist and support the CST Bureau in undertaking these tasks.

117. Parties expressed the need for the National Focal Points and the Science Correspondents to speed-up the process for the selection of the minimum set of indicators during the first semester of 2009 in order to allow Parties to make a concrete decision at COP 9.

### **C. Review process: conducting a global review of the implementation of the Strategy and the Convention**

#### **1. General recommendations**

118. Parties recognize that, according to decision 7/COP.8, the terms of reference of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) should be considered and revised as necessary at the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 9), bearing in mind the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (The Strategy) and role of the CRIC as specified in the relevant decisions of the eighth session of the COP (COP 8) and the outcomes of the seventh session of the CRIC (CRIC 7) and the eighth session of the CRIC (CRIC 8).

119. Nevertheless, The Strategy has already outlined the CRIC's core functions as follows: (a) determining and disseminating best practices on implementation of the UNCCD; (b) reviewing implementation of The Strategy; (c) reviewing Parties' contributions to the implementation of the Convention; and (d) assessing and monitoring CRIC performance and effectiveness.

120. Parties also recognize that The Strategy has called for a synchronization of the meetings of the CRIC and the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), with a view to ensuring continuity and providing timely policy advice to the COP in accordance with The Strategy.

121. In this regard, Parties recommend that the secretariat prepare a revised version of the document on the proposed format for future sessions of the CRIC, as well as a document on the revised terms of reference of the CRIC as requested by decisions 3/COP.8 and 9/COP.8, taking into consideration the conclusions and recommendations of CRIC 7.

#### **2. Review across regions and over time, and inputs from the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies**

122. CRIC 7 recognized that The Strategy has fixed a crucial milestone in the new review system, whereby it provided that the simplified and effective new reporting process should be based on information that is comparable across regions and over time.

123. Parties recommend that the current alternation in reporting be ended, and that all regions report to the COP at the same time from the next reporting cycle in 2010. A number of specific arrangements and support measures will be required for affected country Parties, particularly the least developed among them, to facilitate timely initiation of this process under the new reporting and review system to be adopted at COP 9.

124. Recalling the overall mandate of the CRIC, to review the implementation of The Strategy, Parties also recommend that the work programmes of the Convention's institutions and bodies are submitted to the CRIC for consideration and advice, while action on budgetary matters is taken to the Conference of the Parties.

125. Some Parties support the proposal that the Convention's institutions (the secretariat and the Global Mechanism) and subsidiary bodies also report to intersessional sessions of the CRIC, to enable simultaneous analyses of the efforts undertaken by all UNCCD stakeholders and to orient their action as appropriate. Some other Parties prefer that Convention's institutions and bodies report only to CRIC sessions held during the COP.

126. With regard to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), while recalling that the report of the GEF is currently submitted to sessional sessions of the CRIC in accordance with decision 1/COP.5, and the present institutional arrangements between the GEF and the COP, it was suggested that the GEF should be invited to submit a report on its support to the implementation of the Convention to the intersessional sessions of the CRIC. GEF reports addressing broader policy issues could then be submitted to the CRIC sessions taking place during the COP.

127. Parties recognize the role that the CST would have in providing a preliminary analysis of country profiles and impact indicators and assisting the CRIC in the review of the implementation of the Convention. In this regard, some Parties express the need to hold intersessional sessions of the CST every four years, back-to-back or in parallel with intersessional sessions of the CRIC. This would enable the CRIC to take better advantage of the information already provided and the analysis performed at the level of the CST, and increase the cost-effectiveness of both processes. However, concern was raised that attention should be paid to the fact that CRIC sessions should be attended by policymakers, while CST sessions are geared more towards science and technology experts.

128. There is a need for stronger involvement of civil society in the proceedings of the CRIC and a need for civil society organizations (CSOs) to be involved in the review of the implementation of the Convention and The Strategy, through a specific segment at the intersessional sessions of the CRIC. However, while agreeing on this, some delegations recalled the intergovernmental nature of the UNCCD process. It was also proposed that a broader concept of CSOs be adopted to include, for instance, local authorities. Some Parties propose to go further by giving the civil society the opportunity to get involved in the debates led under other segments, particularly those on exchanges of information on best practices.

129. Some Parties underlined the need for clear terms of reference for the involvement of CSOs in the proceedings of the CRIC. This should include consideration of the timing of the CSO segment during the CRIC sessions.

### 3. Frequency and type of review

130. Parties generally welcome the option by which the review of the implementation of The Strategy through performance indicators would be carried out every two years, and the review of implementation of the Convention through desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) profiles and impact indicators would be carried out every four years. The possibility of splitting the review of impact indicators and DLDD profiles into two subsets over one four-year reporting period was also mentioned.

131. The need for a review of the format of the intersessional sessions of the CRIC was emphasized in order to concentrate more on analysis rather than the presentation of information, which should be delegated to regional meetings in preparation for intersessional sessions. Parties were in general agreement about the five segments proposed for the intersessional sessions of the CRIC, including CST meetings.

132. Various proposals on the nature of CRIC deliberations, their interactivity and related adjustments in the duration of the sessions were presented. Some Parties also proposed that the CRIC session should concentrate on a smaller number of key, politically-important (inter alia climate change mitigation and adaptation, food security) topics and key elements of the 10-year Strategy in order to prepare better for COP deliberations and decision-making. Some Parties recalled the added value of exchanges of views on lesson learned and best practices. Other Parties deem that interactive sessions at CRIC should not jeopardize or impinge upon the intergovernmental nature of the review process and should not affect the time necessary for Parties deliberations. It was recalled that CRIC should address the main constraints on Parties in the implementation of the Convention and The Strategy.

133. With regard to the duration of the meetings of the CRIC, Parties directed that the cost-effectiveness of CRIC meetings should be ensured and recommended convening intersessional sessions of the CRIC of a duration ranging from five to 10 working days, in accordance with the nature of the review (review of operational objectives and/or strategic objectives) as well as the convening of joint sessions with the CST.

134. The need to have regional meetings in preparation for intersessional sessions of the CRIC was also emphasized, as a means to increase the efficiency of CRIC deliberations and the effectiveness of its conclusions and targeted recommendations.

#### **IV. Conclusion of the session**

##### **A. Adoption of the report of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, including conclusions and recommendations**

135. At its \_\_\_\_ meeting on \_\_\_\_ November 2008, the Committee considered the draft report of its seventh session (to be completed). Also at the same meeting, at the proposal of the Chairperson, the Committee authorized the Rapporteur to complete the report of the session with the assistance of the secretariat.

##### **B. Closure of the session**

[to be completed]

Annex I

Global interactive dialogue session on UNCCD strategic orientations

[to be completed]

Annex II

Presentation of the terms of reference and programme of work of the Joint Inspection  
Unit on the assessment of the Global Mechanism

[to be completed]

Annex III

Documents before the Committee for the Review of the Implementation  
of the Convention at its seventh session

[to be completed]

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