



United Nations

ICCD/CRIC(11)/INF.2



## Convention to Combat Desertification

Distr.: General  
12 April 2013

English only

---

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

#### Eleventh session

Bonn, 15–19 April 2013

Item 12 of the provisional agenda

#### Review of information regarding the mid-term evaluation of The Strategy

## Mid-term evaluation of The Strategy: Update on the process

### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

By decision 3/COP.8, the Conference of the Parties (COP) adopted the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) (The Strategy). According to The Strategy, a mid-term evaluation is to be undertaken by the COP six years after the adoption of the Strategy. This evaluation will review progress made in implementing the strategic plan and will recommend appropriate measures to improve performance and further its implementation.

By decision 12/COP.10, the COP adopted the terms of reference for the mid-term evaluation and decided to establish an ad hoc Intersessional Working Group (IWG), subject to available funding, to prepare recommendations for the mid-term evaluation under the direction of the Bureau of the COP. By the same decision, the COP decided that the IWG shall present an update on the process at the eleventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention; this update is contained in the present document.

## Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction .....	1–5	3
II. Mid-term evaluation of The Strategy: Update on the process .....	6–18	4
A. Establishment of the Intersessional Working Group .....	6	4
B. First meeting of the Intersessional Working Group .....	7–11	4
C. Second meeting of the Intersessional Working Group .....	12–18	4
III. Next steps .....	19	5

## I. Introduction

1. By decision 3/COP.8, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) adopted a 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) (The Strategy). The vision of The Strategy is “to forge a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability”. The Strategy contains four strategic objectives and five operational objectives to guide the actions of all UNCCD stakeholders and partners.

2. According to The Strategy, a mid-term evaluation is to be undertaken by the COP six years after the adoption of the Strategy. This evaluation will review progress made in implementing The Strategy and will recommend appropriate measures to improve performance and further its implementation.

3. By decision 12/COP.10, the COP adopted the terms of reference for the mid-term evaluation. The COP recognized that the mid-term evaluation presents Parties and stakeholders with a unique opportunity to provide strategic guidance and direction to enhance the implementation of the Convention and The Strategy, building on experience gained in the period since the adoption of The Strategy. The COP further recognized that significant steps have been taken in order to monitor and assess the implementation of The Strategy, such as the establishment of the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS) and the first reporting cycle by Parties and observers based on quantifiable, provisionally adopted indicators in 2010–2011, and that important lessons can be learned from these activities.

4. The annex to decision 12/COP.10 outlines the following substantive elements for the mid-term evaluation:

1. Evaluation of the overall framework and scope of The Strategy;
2. Evaluation of progress made in implementing The Strategy;
3. Evaluation of the performance and effectiveness of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;
4. Evaluation of the performance and effectiveness of the CST in fulfilling operational objective 3 on how best to measure progress on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of The Strategy;
5. Evaluation of the performance review and assessment of implementation system;
6. Comprehensive review of Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) arrangements.

5. By decision 12/COP.10, the COP also decided to establish an ad hoc Intersessional Working Group (IWG), subject to available funding, to prepare recommendations on the mid-term evaluation under the direction of the Bureau of the COP. The COP Bureau was also assigned to develop terms of reference covering the roles and responsibilities of the IWG. In order for the mid-term evaluation to be effective and truly participatory, the COP requested the establishment of a consultative process between COP 10 and COP 11. This process could take advantage of the regional meetings held in preparation for the eleventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 11) and COP 11, and could involve online consultations (e-forums), among other means.

## **II. Mid-term evaluation of The Strategy: Update on the process**

### **A. Establishment of the Intersessional Working Group**

6. In line with decision 12/COP.10, the IWG consists of 14 members, comprising the President of the COP, the Chairperson of the CRIC, the Chairperson of the CST, two members from each of the five regional groups, and one representative from civil society organizations accredited to the COP. In December 2011, each of the five regional groups was requested to nominate two representatives to serve as members of the IWG, and the deadline for these nominations was set to 1 February 2012. Following the nomination of these representatives and the approval by the COP Bureau of the terms of reference of the IWG in late February 2012, the working group started its tasks.

### **B. First meeting of the Intersessional Working Group**

7. The IWG had its first meeting on 26–27 March 2012 in Bonn, Germany. At the beginning of the meeting, the group appointed Mr. Chenchu Norbu from Bhutan as the Chair of the group. The IWG also appointed Ms. Barbara De Rosa-Joynt from the United States of America as the Vice-Chair of the group.

8. The focus of the first meeting was on organizational matters: the main outputs to be produced, the organization of work in producing the outputs, and the related schedule and facilities. In terms of content, members of the IWG highlighted the importance of progress in aligning national, subregional and regional action programmes (NAPs, SRAPs and RAPs) and other national level processes as key components of the mid-term evaluation.

9. The IWG decided that it would use external experts to assist in preparing documentation. As a first priority, the consultants to be recruited would propose a detailed document preparation plan and schedule for the consideration and guidance of the IWG.

10. The IWG also decided to work electronically, mainly by e-mail. The UNCCD secretariat was requested to establish a dedicated webpage for the mid-term evaluation process to provide information on the group and its work to all interested stakeholders. This webpage was created soon after the first IWG meeting.

11. In accordance with its terms of reference, the IWG considered options for Parties and relevant stakeholders to provide feedback on the documentation generated through the IWG. Regional meetings in preparation for CRIC 11 were considered as important channels for consulting within regions on the mid-term evaluation. The regionally appointed members of the IWG would be responsible for briefing the regions on the work of the group and acquiring and transmitting regional inputs. The secretariat would assist as necessary in this task. Translation of IWG documents in languages other than English was considered fundamental for effective regional consultations.

### **C. Second meeting of the Intersessional Working Group**

12. The second meeting of the IWG was held in Bonn, Germany from 31 October to 3 November 2012 with the aim of taking a first look at the draft documentation and defining next steps in preparing the mid-term evaluation. The deliberations of the group involved a consideration of the evaluation methodology followed by the documentation overview for each of the six evaluation components.

13. The core of the methodology for preparing the mid-term evaluation – the overall criteria, the criteria to be used for each component of the evaluation, the input material and

output documentation – is presented in the terms of reference for the IWG. During its second meeting, the IWG identified further details on how to collect and organize information for conducting the evaluation, and on the structure and logic of the documentation that is under preparation.

14. It was noted that conducting the evaluation according to the criteria for each evaluation component requires a significant amount of background information on the matters under consideration, and that this information needs to be collected and organized in a systematic manner. The main sources of such information are the reports submitted through the PRAIS and the background documents that were defined in the terms of reference for the IWG. In addition to these, the IWG decided to conduct an online survey to collect further information to complement the existing material.

15. In order to ensure a participatory approach, the IWG decided that the regional meetings taking place before CRIC 11 would be used to collect feedback from all Parties, and that online consultations would be organized in the time period between the third and the fourth meeting. To ensure broad-based and focused feedback, the material to be provided for each phase of the consultative process would involve brief synthesis documents accompanied by targeted questionnaires, which would be available in all six United Nations languages.

16. The final report of the IWG would be available at the end of June 2013. The regional meetings in preparation for COP 11 would provide an opportunity to countries belonging to the Regional Implementation Annexes to discuss the recommendations made by the IWG and to prepare related regional positions.

17. Following its second meeting, the IWG prepared a questionnaire to collect further information. This questionnaire was prepared as an online survey in the six United Nations languages for all national focal points in mid-December 2012. 68 countries responded to the survey.

18. Following the analysis of the online survey, the IWG consultants started to prepare the draft documents for each of the survey components, including possible elements for the draft recommendations of the IWG. The draft documents were sent to the members of the IWG and made available at regional meetings prior to CRIC 11.

### **III. Next steps**

19. The third IWG meeting will be held on 22–24 April 2013 in Bonn, Germany. This meeting will focus on developing the conclusions and recommendations of the IWG, building on the drafts prepared by the consultants and the initial feedback collected during the regional meetings. After the third meeting, the results of the IWG work are to be made available online, and an online call for feedback will be launched as well, with the aim of collecting input from the national focal points and possibly other stakeholders. The final IWG meeting would be organized in June 2013, in due time to complete and release the IWG report by the given deadline of 30 June 2013.

---