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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/79/150](#).

** The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline for technical reasons beyond the control of the submitting office.



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 [78/153](#) on the protection of the 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-ninth 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-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the fifth 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 the United Arab Emirates, was held in Dubai, from 30 November to 13 December 2023 and comprised the following sessions:

- (a) Twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention;
- (b) Eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;
- (c) Fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement;
- (d) Fifty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice;
- (e) Fifty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation.

3. The Conference was attended on site by 43,978 government delegates from 196 parties to the Convention, 23,351 observers, including those from 43 United Nations Secretariat units and bodies, 25 specialized agencies and related organizations, 119 intergovernmental organizations and 2,092 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as 2,673 media representatives.

4. The decisions taken in Dubai, including the eight decisions of the Conference comprising the “United Arab Emirates Consensus” (decisions 1/CP.28, 16/CP.28, 1/CMA.5, 2/CMA.5, 3/CMA.5, 4/CMA.5, 5/CMA.5, 21/CMA.5), signal the beginning of the end of the fossil fuel era by laying the ground for a swift, just and equitable transition, underpinned by deep emissions cuts and scaled-up finance. The decision on the outcome of the first global stocktake contained a comprehensive assessment of progress with respect to the Paris Agreement, revealing gaps in emissions reduction, adaptation and finance. That decision contains every element that was under negotiation and can be used by parties to develop strong climate action plans with the overarching aim of keeping the goal of limiting global temperature warming to 1.5°C within reach.

5. The Conference showed a resolve to “keep the goal of 1.5°C alive” with its decision to:

launch, under the guidance of the Presidencies of its fifth, sixth and seventh sessions, a set of activities (“Road map to Mission 1.5”) to significantly enhance international cooperation and the international enabling environment to stimulate ambition in the next round of nationally determined contributions with a view to enhancing action and implementation over this critical decade and keeping 1.5 °C within reach.

6. The Conference delivered a large number of significant substantive outcomes across all bodies: the Conference of the Parties to the Convention adopted 19 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 21 decisions.

7. The outcomes of six key substantive negotiation areas were particularly important and impactful: global stocktake, loss and damage, adaptation, finance, just transition and mitigation:

(a) The decision on the global stocktake is considered the central outcome of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties. As the first stocktake of the Paris Agreement, it covers every element that was under negotiation, provides benchmarks and outlines guidance for countries to consider in the next round of climate action plans, which are due by February 2025. In the decision, the Conference recognizes the science that indicates that global greenhouse gas emissions need to be cut by 43 per cent by 2030 and 60 per cent by 2035, relative to the 2019 level, in order to limit global warming to 1.5°C. Parties were called upon to take action, *inter alia*, towards a tripling of renewable energy capacity and a doubling of the global annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030; accelerating efforts towards the phasedown of unabated coal power; phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies; and other measures that drive the transition of energy systems away from fossil fuels in a just, orderly and equitable manner, with developed countries continuing to take the lead. The decision served to recognize nature-based solutions and also resulted in unprecedented recognition and momentum for linking efforts to address the climate and biodiversity crises;

(b) For the first time, a substantive decision was adopted on the first day of the Conference: a historic agreement on the operationalization of funding arrangements for responding to loss and damage, including a new dedicated fund under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The historic agreement builds on the landmark decision adopted at the twenty-seventh session, in 2022, in which nations agreed to set up a fund to support vulnerable countries and communities already experiencing the adverse impacts of climate change. The establishment of the fund is an important symbol of global solidarity, reflecting the urgency of the climate emergency and representing a step forward in international climate justice. Further progress on the loss and damage agenda was made with the reaching of an agreement on the host secretariat of the Santiago network for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. As a platform, the network will catalyse technical assistance to developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change;

(c) Through a decision on the global goal on adaptation, parties agreed on targets for the global goal on adaptation and its framework, which serves to identify where the world needs to get to in order to be resilient to the impacts of a changing climate and assess countries’ efforts *vis-à-vis* the agreed targets. The global goal on adaptation framework reflects a global consensus on adaptation targets and covers the themes of water, food, health, ecosystems, infrastructure, poverty eradication and

cultural heritage. In line with the decision, a future-oriented approach that reflects aspiration and ambition will be applied to measuring progress towards adaptation for the first time, as opposed to the previous practice of measuring progress exclusively against past efforts;

(d) With respect to finance, parties decided to continue and strengthen the Sharm el-Sheikh dialogue between parties, relevant organizations and stakeholders to exchange views on and enhance understanding of the scope of article 2, paragraph 1 (c), of the Paris Agreement and its complementarity with article 9 of the Paris Agreement, including with regard to the operationalization and implementation of article 2, paragraph 1 (c), in 2024 and 2025;

(e) An agreement was made on the launch of the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme for discussion of pathways to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement. The first dialogue under the work programme was held during the sixtieth session of the subsidiary bodies. At that session, parties also discussed the organization of future dialogues, including the topics and timing of the dialogues and the effective and inclusive participation of parties and non-party stakeholders in the dialogues;

(f) With respect to mitigation, it was agreed that the mitigation work programme, which had been launched at the twenty-seventh session, in 2022, would continue until 2030, and that at least two global dialogues would be held each year. On the subject of cooperation approaches under article 6 of the Paris Agreement, the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement further defined the rules and modalities for internationally transferred mitigation outcomes for market mechanisms, as outlined in article 6, paragraphs 2 and 4, moving towards the implementation of multilateral trading of emissions reductions. Parties also discussed non-market-based cooperation to implement mitigation and adaptation actions, as outlined in article 6, paragraph 8.

8. The Conference of the Parties recognized the important role of non-party stakeholders, including civil society, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, young people, children, local and regional governments, and other stakeholders, in contributing to progress towards the objective of the Convention and the goals of the Paris Agreement. The work of the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action aimed at enhancing ambition and the leadership and the actions of the high-level champions for climate action were welcomed, and the need for continued acceleration and collaboration between parties and non-party stakeholders was emphasized. The parties also invited the secretariat to ensure greater accountability regarding voluntary initiatives through the Global Climate Action portal.

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

9. The first part of the joint high-level segment of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement was held on 1 and 2 December, as part of the World Climate Action Summit. The resumed joint high-level segment was held on 9 December.

10. At the opening ceremony of the World Climate Action Summit, statements were delivered by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, and the President of the General Assembly, Dennis Francis.

11. During the high-level segment, 177 national statements were delivered, of which 116 were by Heads of State or Government, 5 by Vice-Presidents, 2 by Deputy Prime Ministers and 55 by ministers or representatives of parties.

12. Statements were also made by representatives of 41 observer constituencies, including business and industry NGOs, environmental NGOs, farmer NGOs, Indigenous Peoples' organizations, local governments, municipal authorities, intergovernmental and regional organizations, research and independent NGOs, trade union NGOs, women and gender NGOs, youth NGOs and faith-based NGOs.

13. Pursuant to its decision 1/CP.20, the Conference of the Parties convened a high-level event on global climate action that provided opportunities for strengthening high-level engagement in the implementation of policy options and climate action, for taking stock of progress in sectoral breakthroughs derived from the Climate Action Pathways and in the Race to Zero and Race to Resilience campaigns, and for achieving effective high-level engagement of dignitaries of parties, international organizations and non-party stakeholders.

14. Under the guidance of the presidency of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, three high-level events were convened during the Conference:

(a) The 2023 high-level ministerial dialogue on a new collective quantified goal on climate finance served to provide guidance on the ad hoc work programme by focusing on the approach to scale, the elements of the goal in relation to the scale and the mode of work for the coming year to reach an agreement in 2024;

(b) The second biannual high-level ministerial dialogue on climate finance regarding information to be provided by the parties in accordance with article 9, paragraph 5, of the Paris Agreement was focused on improving the utility of the biennial communications of that information and enhancing the provision and mobilization of climate finance. Designed to strengthen the political momentum driving negotiations, the dialogue served as a platform to reiterate and reinforce key political messages aimed at generating impactful outcomes on climate finance issues;

(c) The 2023 annual high-level ministerial round table on pre-2030 ambition provided an opportunity to discuss how the mitigation outcome of the twenty-eighth session should be framed with a view to accelerating both individual and collective action to keep the goal of 1.5°C alive, in line with the bottom-up structure of the Paris Agreement. Parties also discussed how to ensure that everyone had access to technology and finance for the implementation of zero- and low-emission solutions needed to enhance ambition by all.

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

15. The following decisions were adopted by the Conference:

(a) 1/CP.28: Operationalization of the new funding arrangements, including a fund, for responding to loss and damage referred to in paragraphs 2–3 of decisions 2/CP.27 and 2/CMA.4;

(b) 2/CP.28: Santiago network for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change under the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts;

(c) 3/CP.28: Report of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts;

(d) 4/CP.28: Long-term climate finance;

- (e) 5/CP.28: Matters relating to the Standing Committee on Finance;
- (f) 6/CP.28: Report of the Green Climate Fund to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Green Climate Fund;
- (g) 7/CP.28: Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties and guidance to the Global Environment Facility;
- (h) 8/CP.28: Compilation and synthesis of, and summary report on the in-session workshop on, biennial communications of information related to article 9, paragraph 5, of the Paris Agreement;
- (i) 9/CP.28: Enhancing climate technology development and transfer through the Technology Mechanism;
- (j) 10/CP.28: Linkages between the Technology Mechanism and the Financial Mechanism;
- (k) 11/CP.28: Annual technical progress report of the Paris Committee on capacity-building for 2023;
- (l) 12/CP.28: Terms of reference for the second review of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building;
- (m) 13/CP.28: Review of the functions, work programme and modalities of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures, midterm review of the workplan and report of the forum;
- (n) 14/CP.28: Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;
- (o) 15/CP.28: Gender and climate change;
- (p) 16/CP.28: Presidency youth climate champion;
- (q) 17/CP.28: Dates and venues of future sessions;
- (r) 18/CP.28: Administrative, financial and institutional matters;
- (s) 19/CP.28: Administrative, financial and institutional matters.

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

16. The following decisions were adopted by the Conference:

- (a) 1/CMP.18: Guidance relating to the clean development mechanism;
- (b) 2/CMP.18: Matters relating to joint implementation;
- (c) 3/CMP.18: Matters relating to the Adaptation Fund;
- (d) 4/CMP.18: Review of the functions, work programme and modalities of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures, midterm review of the workplan and report of the forum;
- (e) 5/CMP.18: Administrative, financial and institutional matters;
- (f) 6/CMP.18: Budget for the international transaction log;
- (g) 7/CMP.18: Administrative, financial and institutional matters.

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

17. The following decisions were adopted by the Conference:

- (a) 1/CMA.5: Outcome of the first global stocktake;
- (b) 2/CMA.5: Global goal on adaptation;
- (c) 3/CMA.5: United Arab Emirates just transition work programme;
- (d) 4/CMA.5: Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation work programme referred to in decision 4/CMA.4;
- (e) 5/CMA.5: Operationalization of the new funding arrangements, including a fund, for responding to loss and damage referred to in paragraphs 2–3 of decisions 2/CP.27 and 2/CMA.4;
- (f) 6/CMA.5: Santiago network for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change under the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts;
- (g) 7/CMA.5: Report of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts;
- (h) 8/CMA.5: New collective quantified goal on climate finance;
- (i) 9/CMA.5: Matters relating to the Standing Committee on Finance;
- (j) 10/CMA.5: Guidance to the Green Climate Fund;
- (k) 11/CMA.5: Guidance to the Global Environment Facility;
- (l) 12/CMA.5: Matters relating to the Adaptation Fund;
- (m) 13/CMA.5: Compilation and synthesis of, and summary report on the in-session workshop on, biennial communications of information related to Article 9, paragraph 5, of the Paris Agreement;
- (n) 14/CMA.5: Enhancing climate technology development and transfer to support implementation of the Paris Agreement;
- (o) 15/CMA.5: Annual technical progress report of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building for 2023;
- (p) 16/CMA.5: Terms of reference for the second review of the Paris Committee on Capacity-building;
- (q) 17/CMA.5: Work programme under the framework for non-market approaches referred to in article 6, paragraph 8, of the Paris Agreement and in decision 4/CMA.3;
- (r) 18/CMA.5: Provision of financial and technical support to developing country parties for reporting and capacity-building;
- (s) 19/CMA.5: Review of the functions, work programme and modalities of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures, midterm review of the workplan and report of the forum;
- (t) 20/CMA.5: Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;
- (u) 21/CMA.5: Presidency youth climate champion.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

18. 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 welcome the outcomes of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, presided over by the Government of the United Arab Emirates, in Dubai, from 30 November to 13 December 2023;

(c) To urge parties to the Convention that have not yet ratified the Paris Agreement to expedite their relevant 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 respond swiftly to the calls for enhanced climate action and support, including by revisiting and strengthening the 2030 targets in their nationally determined contributions;

(e) To call upon parties that have not yet submitted their national adaptation plans or biennial update reports to accelerate work on the preparation thereof and submit them to the Convention secretariat;

(f) To invite the Executive Secretary to continue to report to it on the work of the Conference of the Parties, 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

19. In its resolution [78/154](#), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its seventy-ninth session a report on the implementation of the resolution. The present report constitutes an update to the Assembly on the principal activities that have been undertaken in that respect.

B. Status of land degradation and policy initiatives on land restoration and sustainable land management

1. Status of land degradation

20. According to the latest data from the United Nations from its *Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023* and its recently launched Convention to Combat Desertification data dashboard, at least 100 million hectares of healthy and productive land were degraded every year between 2015 and 2019, adding up to an area twice the size of Greenland. That escalating trend affects the well-being of the estimated 3.2 billion people who are affected by land degradation. If current trends in land degradation continue, restoring 1.5 billion hectares of land by 2030 will be necessary

to achieve land degradation neutrality. In the light of those statistics, urgent action is needed to halt any new land degradation while accelerating existing commitments to restore 1 billion hectares of land by 2030.

2. Global Land Restoration Initiative of the Group of 20

21. Significant progress was made under the Global Land Restoration Initiative of the Group of 20 during the reporting period. While India served as president of the Group of 20, land restoration continued to be a priority, with a focus on restoration of land affected by mining, as well as on restoration of areas degraded by forest fire. A new geospatial platform known as the “Global restoration information hub” was launched, bringing together publicly available information on land restoration. A series of capacity-building activities were conducted on topics ranging from biosaline agriculture for land restoration to geographical information system tools for sustainable land management. Work to develop a global course on sustainable agriculture for land restoration was also completed, and the course is expected to be used to train 1 million university students by 2044. During the reporting period, progress was also made in promoting land restoration as a means of providing opportunities in terms of livelihoods and increased food and water security. Young entrepreneurs around the world who have used modern technology to prevent land degradation or achieve land restoration were also identified and recognized. In collaboration with the International Trade Centre, a new mentoring programme was launched to promote “ecopreneurs ” using land as a platform for start-ups. With a view to increasing awareness among parliamentarians around the world of the issue of land degradation and of the potential of using legislative tools for land restoration, an event known as the Global Changemaker Academy for Parliamentarians was held in Bonn in August 2023; 29 parliamentarians from 24 countries participated.

3. Policies

22. The Convention secretariat continues to provide policy-relevant knowledge products to assist parties and enhance the implementation of the Convention. These publications also serve as strategic communication products highlighting opportunities for collaboration and joint implementation of sustainable land management and restoration initiatives with diverse partners and stakeholders from the global to the local levels.

23. In the past year, the secretariat has produced policy-relevant synergy briefs in which it outlines areas for potential cooperation with other Rio conventions and United Nations entities to advance the decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification. The *Global Land Outlook: Thematic Report on Rangelands and Pastoralists*, released in May 2024, is another example of policy-relevant outreach on sustainable development issues of immediate concern to parties. A thematic report of the *Global Land Outlook* on the Middle East and North Africa will be launched at the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, in December 2024.

24. The Convention secretariat is also organizing national multi-stakeholder consultations in select countries to formulate or revise land tenure policies and build capacities for more inclusive governance of land and natural resources, in concert with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.¹ In collaboration with the members of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, guidelines on the integration of sand and dust storm management into key policy areas were prepared for the International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms on 12 July 2024, along with a technical brief on the Global Sand and Dust

¹ See, for example, www.fao.org/land-water/land/tenure-ldn/fao-uncdd-joint-initiative/en/.

Storms Source Base-map. A primer on urban/rural linkages and land is being co-produced with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and will be launched at the World Urban Forum in November 2024.

4. Project implementation

25. Globally, 131 countries have pledged to establish national voluntary targets for land degradation neutrality and measures to achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030. In all, 112 parties have successfully completed this process, and 106 have already published their national reports on the website of the Convention to Combat Desertification.

26. Under a second phase of the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme, 18 countries that had previously set voluntary targets in this area are receiving assistance to refine those targets so as to make them more specific, timebound and spatially explicit.

27. Since 2018, 94 countries have developed national or multi-country projects through Land Degradation Neutrality Transformative Projects and Programmes.

C. Drought and latest developments in drought resilience policies

28. Human-induced global warming over the past 200 years has led to the current temperature rise of 1.1°C above pre-industrial levels and, consequently, to more frequent and hazardous weather events, including drought.² Based on data reported by 101 parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification during the 2022 reporting process, 1.84 billion people are drought stricken, out of whom 4.7 per cent are exposed to severe or extreme drought.³ According to World Bank estimates, 85 per cent of people affected by drought live in low- or middle-income countries. In 2022 and 2023, 23 countries in five continents declared a drought emergency. The Horn of Africa faced its worst drought in 40 years, and Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia were hit particularly hard, leaving approximately 23 million people severely food-insecure as of the end of December 2022, according to the World Food Programme.

29. At its fifteenth session, the Conference of the Parties identified several measures that could contribute to building capacity for drought preparedness and resilience, including effective policy coupled with advocacy and knowledge-sharing; the scaling up of drought impact mitigation through, inter alia, early warning, monitoring, vulnerability assessments and preparedness; strengthened institutional arrangements; and increased investment in drought preparedness and risk mitigation measures. Parties also made a landmark decision to establish a new intergovernmental working group on drought during the triennium 2022–2024. The working group was tasked with identifying and evaluating options to effectively manage drought under the Convention, including through supporting a shift from reactive to proactive drought management, with global policy instruments and regional policy frameworks that are linked, where relevant, to national plans.

30. As of May 2024, the intergovernmental working group had convened a total of five in-person and multiple hybrid and virtual meetings and was considering legally and non-legally binding options that included developing new financing mechanisms or strengthening existing ones, evaluating the desirability of a global target and developing a global work programme on drought resilience. The intergovernmental working group presented a progress report to the Committee for the Review of the

² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, “Climate change 2023: synthesis report”, 2023.

³ Daniel Tsegai and others, “Global drought snapshot 2023: the need for proactive action”, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, 2023.

Implementation of the Convention at its twenty-first session, in November 2023 (ICCD/CRIC(21)/10). The group met in Riyadh from 3 to 6 June 2024 to finalize its report to the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

31. In order to build political momentum for the drought agenda, the Convention secretariat has also been strengthening partnerships to support affected countries through its role as host of the International Drought Resilience Alliance, which was launched by the President of Senegal and the Prime Minister of Spain on 7 November 2022. The Alliance's membership has grown to a total of 38 countries and over 30 international organizations.

32. The International Drought Resilience Alliance is important, as it envisions a world in which droughts are proactively addressed by shifting from a reactive and crisis-based approach to droughts to a proactive, risk-based approach comprising drought preparedness and adaptation measures, with a view to significantly reducing the vulnerability of people and ecosystems at all levels.

33. The International Drought Resilience Alliance initiated a call for action to support nature-based solutions in drought resilience.⁴ A meeting of Heads of State was held on the margins of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The meeting served to highlight the need to draw on the collective strengths of the Alliance's expanding membership in order to advance specific policies, actions and capacity-building initiatives for drought preparedness, acknowledging that humanity is only as resilient to drought and climate change as the land is. The Alliance continues to advocate action on drought and to mobilize political commitment at the highest level.

34. Major publications were also launched at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Dubai, including the "Global drought snapshot report 2023", a policy brief on the compounding and cascading effects of drought and a technical brief on nature-based solutions for drought.

35. Under the drought initiative launched under the framework of the Convention, more than 70 countries are designing national plans of action, of which 34 are publicly available.

D. Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility

36. Effective collaboration between the Convention secretariat and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) continued during the reporting period. The Convention secretariat has been actively drawing attention to the flexibility of large-scale land restoration and its potential for advancing a number of goals pertaining to the environment and to sustainable development. In this context, the Convention secretariat has been advocating an increase in funding allocations under both the GEF land degradation focal area programme and its integrated programmes. The Convention secretariat also sought to advance collaboration with GEF on the implementation of the Conference of the Parties decisions on drought; on the conceptualization of an indicator on drought that reflects its integrated nature and impact on land degradation, agriculture, biodiversity and livelihoods; and on the implementation of a legacy project on land and drought, against the backdrop of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

⁴ Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, International Drought Resilience Alliance and The Nature Conservancy, "Nature-based solutions for drought resilience", technical brief, 2023.

37. Most enabling activities that support States parties to the Convention with reporting, drought planning and integrated land-use planning have been made possible with the support of GEF. For example, through the Global Support Programme III, GEF helped parties to complete the 2022 reporting cycle of the Convention. Results were presented to the parties at the twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, in 2023. The next phase of the Programme is currently being developed by the Convention secretariat, and its objective will be to help the parties not only to complete reporting to the Convention secretariat but also to monitor land degradation trends at the national level. The Convention secretariat is also collaborating with GEF on several other enabling activities, including projects on implementing decisions on drought adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and on assisting countries with integrated drought management in national drought plans, as well as a new project on integrating land degradation neutrality into land-use planning frameworks.

38. The objective of the project on integrating land degradation neutrality is to enhance governance and planning in this area in a gender-responsive manner, which will be integral to the Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme. The Convention secretariat also participated in the seventh GEF Assembly, held in August 2023, at which the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative was profiled as an example of joint work in support of sustainable land management with multiple benefits.

E. Partnerships

39. The Convention secretariat continued to forge and build on partnerships with organizations and institutions with convergent or complementary missions, with a view to addressing desertification, land degradation and drought.

40. In order to enhance the capacity of countries to monitor and report on land degradation and restoration and to strengthen knowledge-sharing, the Convention secretariat is collaborating with the Open Geospatial Consortium on internationally agreed standards to develop tools for measuring progress related to Goal indicator 15.3.1 (proportion of land that is degraded). The Convention secretariat has also continued its collaboration with the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies on a study of gender-responsive technologies for sustainable land management.

41. Partnerships have also been established with the private sector through the Business for Land initiative, which seeks to engage the private sector in support of meeting voluntary targets for land degradation neutrality. The Convention secretariat has also engaged with the World Economic Forum to raise land issues on the global business agenda.

42. The Convention secretariat renewed its partnership with the Republic of Korea by extending the Changwon initiative. It also partnered with the Arab Gulf Programme for Development and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa to organize a land and drought pavilion at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, so as to highlight the importance of healthy land as a climate solution. Cooperation agreements were also signed or renewed with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Forum on Forests and the International Renewable Energy Agency.

43. In order to strengthen youth engagement in land restoration and drought resilience, the Convention secretariat has engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, including the United Nations Youth Office, the United Nations Children's Fund and

the International Labour Organization, on a new youth engagement strategy. The strategy was launched on 17 June 2024, to mark World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought and the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention.

F. Twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention

44. The twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention was convened as part of preparations for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

45. The twenty-first session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention was held in Samarkand from 13 to 17 November 2023. Over 500 delegates from 196 countries, the European Union, civil society and academia attended the meeting, which was the first meeting of a subsidiary body to the Convention held in Central Asia.

46. At the twenty-first session, parties had the opportunity to review progress and provide recommendations on advancing global targets for preventing and reversing land degradation, in line with the Convention secretariat's strategic and implementation frameworks for the period 2018–2030.

47. Significant events on the margins of the twenty-first session included the convening of the Convention's gender caucus, which discussed the land rights of women as a prerequisite to the success of global efforts on land restoration and drought resilience. A high-level event on sand and dust storms, hosted by the Government of Uzbekistan, was convened on 15 November 2024. More than 30 side events were held, providing opportunities for the exchange of information and experiences on diverse issues related to the objectives of the Convention.

G. World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

48. The global theme of the 2024 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, "United for land: our legacy, our future", served to emphasize the transformative power of sustainable land management to create a blueprint for a better future on land for all generations.

49. The global observance of the day on 17 June 2024 was hosted by the Government of Germany and served to showcase a strong ambition for the land agenda, ahead of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

H. Observations and recommendations

50. Land resources provide the foundation for the wealth of global societies and economies. They are used to meet the growing needs and desires for food, water, fuel and other raw materials that shape livelihoods and lifestyles. Unsustainable management and use of land, however, has resulted in the degradation of more than 70 per cent of the Earth's land area, causing unparalleled environmental degradation and contributing significantly to global warming. If current land degradation trends persist, scientists predict that severe climate-induced disturbances will increase, including disruptions to food supplies and continued biodiversity loss, which could affect the approximately \$44 trillion of economic output that is reliant on natural capital, equivalent to more than half of global annual gross domestic product.

51. The impact of land degradation, however, goes beyond this. In many areas, especially in the drylands, growing demand for food and water (due to population increases and the steady expansion of the middle class), coupled with accelerating land degradation and the shrinking of natural ecosystems, is triggering competition over scarce water and fertile land, which can directly cause or amplify tensions between communities and lead to conflict and forced migration. In Africa alone, up to 60 million people could be displaced over the next decade owing to deteriorating land conditions.

52. At the same time, persistent land degradation, in tandem with climate change, is exacerbating water availability and contributing to the severity and frequency of drought worldwide. Drought affects both developed and developing nations. A total of 1.84 billion people are affected by drought; of them, 4.7 per cent are exposed to severe or extreme drought,⁵ resulting in displacement, hunger and very often, death. The economic costs of drought exceed \$125 billion globally. Forecasts indicate that, by 2050, droughts may affect over three quarters of the world's population. That figure reflects not just one but multiple crises facing humanity.

53. In this context, the Convention secretariat has been advocating land restoration on a global scale. The international community has pledged to restore 1 billion hectares of degraded land by 2030. The aim is to preserve and safeguard the productivity of land resources for generations to come, reduce the risks and impacts of disasters and pandemics, and boost ecosystem and community resilience in the face of impending environmental stresses and climate shocks. Restoration is a proven and cost-effective solution that can help to reverse the climate change and biodiversity loss caused by the rapid depletion of land, a finite natural asset. Furthermore, healthy land offers natural long-term storage for freshwater. Land restoration can yield multiple solutions, from increasing the amount and quality of food on tables and generating livelihoods to contributing to poverty alleviation and economic growth and building resilience to droughts, climate change and sand and dust storms.

54. Above all, land restoration contributes to the creation of green jobs, giving young people a sense of direction and anchoring them to the land, especially in the drylands. Land restoration is also the best hope for addressing one of the most shocking gender inequalities in the world: land tenure.

55. Against this backdrop, the General Assembly may wish to consider initiating focused dialogues and debates on the multiple risks associated with land degradation and drought, including interlinkages with food and water security, conflict and forced migration.

56. The General Assembly may also wish to prioritize drought resilience in its deliberations and support the development of drought management policies, with an emphasis on building resilience through policies on early warning, preparedness and mitigation. It may also wish to call upon United Nations entities to mainstream drought resilience into their programmes when supporting countries prone to or already affected by droughts.

57. The General Assembly may also wish to encourage States in their efforts to make progress towards achieving land degradation neutrality (target 15.3), which would also contribute to accelerating the implementation of all the Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

58. With regard to land restoration, the General Assembly may wish to note the various ongoing global, regional and national initiatives in place and encourage all Member States and other stakeholders to provide positive incentives to Indigenous

⁵ Daniel Tsegai and others, "Global drought snapshot 2023: the need for proactive action".

and community-based groups and the private sector for large-scale, sustainable land restoration.

59. Above all, the General Assembly may wish to look ahead to the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, to be held in Riyadh from 2 to 13 December 2024, and call for ambitious outcomes that will catalyse a greening of land worldwide.

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

A. Introduction

60. The present report is submitted in response to resolution [78/155](#) on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its contribution to sustainable development, in which the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly, at its seventy-ninth session, a report on the implementation of the resolution and progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

61. At the time of reporting, there were 196 parties to the Convention, 173 parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention, 54 parties to the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol and 141 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.

B. Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

62. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework was adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at the second part of its fifteenth meeting, in December 2022, in its decision 15/4. The implementation of the Framework is to be supported by other decisions of the Conference of the Parties on the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and review; resource mobilization; capacity-building and development and technical and scientific cooperation; digital sequence information on genetic resources; and cooperation with other conventions and international organizations.

63. The Framework has been recognized or welcomed in decisions or resolutions of numerous other intergovernmental bodies and international organizations, including the General Assembly, the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as by the governing bodies of various biodiversity-related conventions, multilateral environmental agreements on chemicals and waste and regional conventions.

64. To advance the implementation of the Framework, the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has convened a series of regional and subregional dialogues on national biodiversity strategies and action plans to facilitate the sharing of experiences and mutual learning related to the revision or updating of those strategies and plans to align them with the Framework, including by setting and aligning national targets with the Framework. Parties to the Convention are to revise

or update those strategies and plans by the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

65. Support for the implementation of the Framework is being provided through various means. The seventh Assembly of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) ratified and launched the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund in August 2023, thereby complementing support provided under the GEF trust fund. Eligible countries have been invited to participate in the programming of the first tranche of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, and an aspirational goal has been set for the Fund, consisting of ensuring that at least 20 per cent of funding is invested in conservation action by Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

66. In May 2024, 18 regional and subregional organizations were selected to serve as support centres for technical and scientific cooperation. Those organizations are mandated to catalyse technical and scientific cooperation among the parties to the Convention within the geographical regions that they cover, with a view to supporting the implementation of the Framework at the national level.

67. In order to facilitate broad outreach, the Framework has been branded as “the biodiversity plan”, and a logo has been designed. The theme of the 2024 International Day for Biological Diversity, observed on 22 May, was “Be part of the plan”, and the celebrations served as a call to action for all stakeholders to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity by supporting the implementation of the Framework. The event was celebrated in more than 100 countries worldwide, with flagship events held in Nairobi, on the margins of the fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, as well as in Bogotá, Geneva and Hainan, China. The celebrations for the International Day in 2024 contributed to increasing the visibility of the biodiversity agenda in the lead-up to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

C. Intersessional meetings in preparation for the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

1. Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

68. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Conference of the Parties held its twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth meetings in Nairobi from 15 to 19 October 2023 and from 13 to 18 May 2024, respectively. Prominent on the agendas of the two meetings were issues relating to: facilitating the implementation of the Framework and the monitoring of its progress; findings from the assessments by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; invasive alien species; sustainable wildlife management; biodiversity and climate change; synthetic biology; biosafety risk assessment and risk management; the detection and identification of living modified organisms; linkages between biodiversity and human health; and the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, including further work on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, as well as island biodiversity.

69. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice adopted recommendations on those issues, many of which include draft decisions for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting.

2. Subsidiary Body for Implementation

70. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation held its fourth meeting in Nairobi, from 21 to 29 May 2024, at which it adopted recommendations on a range of issues,

including: the financial mechanism; communication, education and public awareness; mechanisms for planning, monitoring, reporting and review; capacity-building and development, technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer; resource mobilization; review of implementation, encompassing progress in the preparation of revised or updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the establishment of national targets; a long-term strategic approach to mainstreaming biodiversity; the development of a methodology for the second assessment and review of the effectiveness of the Nagoya Protocol; cooperation with other conventions and international organizations; and the multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties. Draft decisions contained in those recommendations will be submitted for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting and, where applicable, by the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meetings of the Parties to the Protocols to the Convention.

71. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation will hold its fifth meeting from 16 to 18 October 2024, immediately prior to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. It will consider progress in the implementation of the Framework, progress by the parties in revising or updating their national biodiversity strategies and action plans and in establishing national targets aligned with the Framework and associated goals and targets, including in relation to means of implementation, and progress towards piloting the modus operandi of an open-ended forum for voluntary country reviews.

3. Ad Hoc Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on Article 8 (j) and Related Provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity

72. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on Article 8 (j) and Related Provisions of the Convention held its twelfth meeting in Geneva, from 12 to 16 November 2023. Issues considered by the Working Group included the development of a new programme of work and institutional arrangements on article 8 (j) and other provisions of the Convention related to Indigenous Peoples and local communities; and recommendations from the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues pertaining to the Convention. The recommendations from the Working Group on Article 8 (j) will be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting.

4. Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources

73. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources held its first meeting in Geneva, from 14 to 18 November 2023. The Working Group considered the development and operationalization of a multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources, including a global fund. The outcomes of that meeting will form the basis for further discussions at the second meeting, to be held in Montreal, Canada, from 12 to 16 August 2024. The Working Group is to make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting and report to the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol at its fifth meeting.

5. Other preparatory meetings

74. Numerous other meetings have been held to advance processes under the Convention and its Protocols.

75. At its eighteenth and nineteenth meetings, the Compliance Committee under the Cartagena Protocol considered both general issues of compliance and individual cases

of non-compliance and developed recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol at its eleventh meeting.

76. At its fourth meeting, the Compliance Committee under the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing reviewed general issues of compliance and developed recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol at its fifth meeting.

77. Numerous expert groups have met to provide technical inputs on a range of issues, including: the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on the New Programme of Work and Institutional Arrangements on Article 8 (j) and Other Provisions of the Convention Related to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities; the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment; and the Multidisciplinary Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Synthetic Biology to Support the Process for Broad and Regular Horizon Scanning, Monitoring and Assessment.

78. The Advisory Committee on Resource Mobilization also held various meetings to, inter alia, support the strengthening of the strategy for resource mobilization for the Framework.

D. Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention

79. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention will hold its sixteenth meeting in Cali, Colombia, from 21 October to 1 November 2024, under the theme “Peace with nature”, concurrently with the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol and the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol.

80. The meetings will be a key milestone for assessing progress in the implementation of the Framework. The Conference of the Parties is expected to, inter alia, further develop mechanisms to support the implementation of the Framework and monitor and review its implementation; further enhance the engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities; and operationalize the multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources, including a global fund.

E. Recommendations

81. The General Assembly may wish to, inter alia:

(a) Express its appreciation to Colombia for hosting the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and call for the implementation of the outcomes of that meeting;

(b) Call upon all States Members of the United Nations to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework as a contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including by, as appropriate, developing national targets aligned with the targets of the Framework, updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans and developing the policy measures necessary to ensure progress towards national and global targets, by means of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach;

(c) Welcome the decisions of the governing bodies of other conventions and organizations to recognize, welcome or endorse the Framework and to coordinate their strategies and action plans with the Framework, in line with paragraph 4 of decision 15/13 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention;

(d) Welcome the strategy for resource mobilization for the Framework as guidance to facilitate the immediate mobilization of resources;

(e) Call upon developed country parties to the Convention, in accordance with their obligations under the Convention, and invite other developed country Member States, and others that are in a position to do so, as well as philanthropic organizations and the private sector, to mobilize international financial flows to developing countries for the implementation of the Framework and to ensure the early capitalization of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund established by GEF;

(f) Welcome the agreement to establish a multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources, including a global fund, and call upon parties to the Convention and all Member States to participate in the mechanism following its further development and operationalization;

(g) Acknowledge the important roles and contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities as custodians of biodiversity and partners in its conservation, restoration and sustainable use;

(h) Call upon all Member States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Convention;

(i) Call upon all parties that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol;

(j) Call upon all parties that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Nagoya Protocol.
