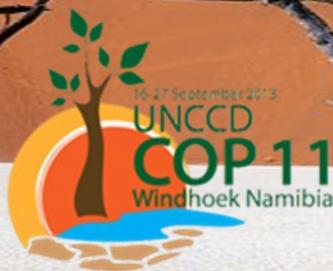


# Eco - newsletter



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Eco-newsletter has been published by Non-Governmental Groups at major conferences since the Stockholm Environmental Conference in 1972. This issue is produced by groups attending the UNCCD COP 11 in Windhoek, Namibia



In this current session of COP which is convened under the theme “A stronger UNCCD for a land-degradation neutral world”, CSOs are placing emphasis on the implementation of the UNCCD, especially at the local level. Parties must review and en-

## “A stronger UNCCD for a land degradation neutral world “ - requires inclusiveness and practical implementation

.....from the CSO Opening Statement

The representatives of Civil Society Organizations from all regions of the world, attending the Eleventh Session of the Conference of Parties (COP11) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) wish to thank the Secretariat of the UNCCD, and the Parties to the convention for inviting them to participate in the Conference. They would also like to extend their gratitude to the

donors who have made their attendance to this conference possible.

The CSOs, would also like thank the Government and people of the Republic of Namibia for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to them since our arrival in this beautiful city of Windhoek.

hance the current implementation strategies with the view of making UNCCD a practical tool for addressing the challenges of land degra-

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dation and desertification. CSOs have noted with concern that land degradation and desertification are on the increase, and the effects of these phenomena have negatively affected the livelihoods of communities, with local and indigenous communities being the hardest hit. Despite the excellent 10 year strategy and National Action Programs, CSOs have observed that land degradation and desertification phenomena are increasingly compromising communities' water and food security, livelihoods and stability of communities, *inter alia*. Land grabbing and climate change are exacerbating the situation.

CSOs have noted with concern that since the inception of the UNCCD, a number of valuable decisions and initiatives were put in place by the Parties – such as the 10 year strategy for the Implementation of the UNCCD. However, CSOs are sad to report that the implementation of these decisions and initiatives is slow on the ground, and hence there is little or no tangible progress on the ground. Also, the participation of CSOs in the UNCCD process continues to diminishing year by year as reflected by the number of accredited CSOs. We call for inclusiveness of CSOs, especially at national level, in the process as enshrined in the convention. We are ready and willing to collaborate and complement the efforts of Parties in the implementation of the convention at national level. We call on the UNCCD National Focal Points to actively involve us so that our efforts are aligned with the National Action Programs.

CSOs are playing, and will continue playing, a critical role in addressing the effects land degradation and desertification in communities. These include awareness raising; capacity building and development in sustainable land and water management; participatory approaches to the restoration of degraded lands, promotion and documentation of indigenous knowledge; and generation of

scientific knowledge and facts to help decision making at all levels, *inter alia*. However, CSOs would like to report that their efforts are severely constrained by resources, especially financial resources. CSOs call on the Parties to increase the allocation of financial resources to the implementation of convention.

CSOs still believes that with critical focus on implementation, the UNCCD can be an effective tool for addressing the challenges of land degradation, drought and desertification. As Parties deliberate, let them think of communities in the Northern part of Namibia, as well as in all the corners of world – who have been waiting, and still waiting for this tool, UNCCD, to improve and secure their livelihoods. Let us make UNCCD, the hope for securing current and future livelihoods.

### CSO Topics for the ODS

During the Open Dialogue Sessions, CSOs have agreed to discuss, share information and engage the delegates on the following two topics:

1. *Mobilization of resources to support the implementation of the UNCCD through building effective partnerships between national and international actors.*
2. *Capacity building for the CSOs for UNCCD implementation.*

Another topic that will be addressed during the allocated time slots for the ODS is “*the contributions of CSOs to a Land-Degradation Neutral World in the context of sustainable development.*” CSOs will use the ODS for sharing experiences on best practices developed by the communities affected by desertification . During the ODS, CSOs will Invite & involve the private sector to interact directly with the rural farmers/community members affected by land degradation and desertification.

**Be sure to offset your UNCCD COP 11 travel by supporting a Namibian community solar project. Two volunteers have already offset their COP11 travel by 16 Sept. When will you participate?**

Eco Newsletter is published daily by the CSOs attending UNCCD COP11

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