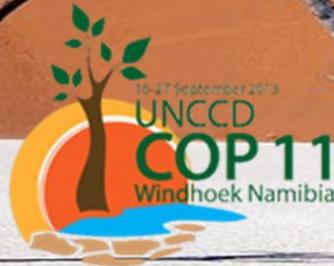


Eco - newsletter



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TODAY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS WILL BE ENGAGING THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON CAPACITY BUILDING FOR EFFECTIVE UNCCD IMPLEMENTATION

CSOs are inviting all the Delegates and Parties to the Convention to an Opening Dialogue Session (ODS) convened under the theme “*Capacity Building for the effective implementation of the UNCCD*”. The primary objectives of the ODS are to show-case how CSOs are developing and building capacity for effective UNCCD implementation as well as engage the delegates with respect to the theme. The Open Dialogue Session will be held in the Plenary Hall from 10:00am to 1:00pm.

The ODS will have two panels. The first panel composed of Ms Viviane Kanyaga (Desert Research Foundation of Namibia, Namibia), Ms Nahid Naghizadeh (Centre for Sustainable Development, Iran), Ms Maria Tharacky Namupala (WINSA, Namibia) and Mr Lucky Ganeb (Desert Research Foundation of Namibia). This panel will share experiences on capacity building for effective UNCCD implementation, at national level.

The second panel will be composed of Ms Fatima

Kaba (ENDA Energie, Senegal), Mr Wu Haiman (Elion Foundation, China) and Nathalie van Haren (Both Ends, Netherland). This panel will share experiences on capacity building for effective UNCCD implementation at international level. The ODS will be moderated by Ms Mary Seely (Desert Research Foundation of Namibia, Namibia).

Scaling up and dissemination of traditional and indigenous practices that address DLDD: CSOs contributions

The High-Level Segment continued on Tuesday morning, with ministers concluding the second round table on overcoming hurdles of scaling up and disseminating good practices. CSOs did not have an opportunity to make a submission on this issue during the plenary session. Therefore, CSOs would like to make the following submission to the distinguished delegates, through the eco-newsletter:

CSOs would like to bring to the attention of the Parties to the possibility of scaling up traditional and indigenous practices, which are used by local communities to address DLDD. There is need to build the capacity of local communities in documentation of traditional and indigenous practices. Documentation of these practices can catalyse their dissemination and scaling-up within the community and beyond. However capacity development for local communities in the documentation of these practices, require financial resources. We therefore urge the Parties not only to explore this scaling up model, but also allocate financial resources in their NAPs for scaling-up traditional and indigenous practices that address DLDD.

The quest for scaling-up and dissemination of good practices calls for a strong partnership between scientists and traditional and indigenous knowledge practitioners. This is because traditional and indigenous knowledge has proved to be a

huge potential for addressing DLDD issues, and examples exist, some of which were articulated during the discussions at the High-Level Segment. Therefore, researchers need to do more investigation into traditional and indigenous knowledge and DLDD. Indeed, research will be relevant if it addresses the interest of communities particularly those affected by DLDD.

Another issue that affects scaling-up and dissemination of good practices is land tenure and land rights. Land rights and tenure affects has been observed to indirectly remove the incentive of adopting good practices by farmers. Therefore addressing these aspects adequately can also help in the scaling-up of the good practices.

The fact that DLDD issues are not highly prioritised in the countries creates a hurdle for scaling up and dissemination of good practices. It is an undeniable fact that you can only scale up an issue if you are first of all interested in it- this is a reality. We appeal to our Honourable Ministers to place the issues of DLDD on top of the agenda at local, national and international levels. This holds key to unlock the hurdles associated with scaling up and dissemination of good practices at local, national and international levels.

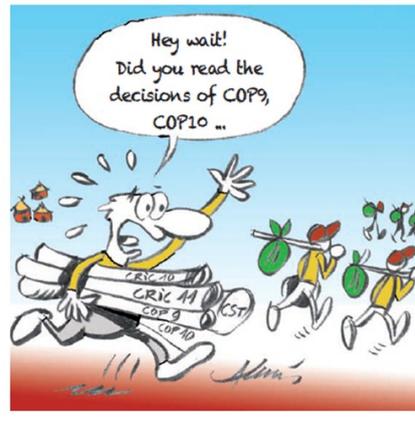
CSOs call for Investment in "the Future we Want!"

During the third round table with the theme "Economics of desertification/land degradation and restoration: considering cost-benefit analyses for scaling up investment in avoiding land degradation and restoring/regenerating degraded land" Ms Ndèye Fatou Faye from ENDA-Senegal made a statement on behalf CSOs.

Desertification and land degradation are global problems. They are environmental and economic issues that affects all countries, both developing and developed. Although we know that arable land is decreasing at a rate of about 5 to 10 million hectares per year due to land degradation, the actual costs of land degradation are still not known. Only estimate costs of land degradation exist. A current global assessment of the economic cost of land degradation is estimated to be about U.S. \$64 billion / year. At national level, the economic cost is estimated between 1% and 9% of agricultural GDP, which is high.

Apart from economic costs, it is important to mention that there also social costs that are associated with land degradation. Although social costs of land degradation are difficult to determine, assess and apportion, their secondary effects on communities includes poverty, loss of livelihood and loss of dignity, *inter alia*. The other effects of social costs of land degradation is that natural resources, water, land and the few agricultural areas that remain

As locally elected officials in the drylands, you must believe in your mandate



The decisions of the Conference of Parties do not easily reach people on the ground. Local elected officials are concerned because they must articulate global decisions and apply them in the local context. CSOs call for support and capacity building for local elected authorities. It is urgent!

— Cartoon courtesy of Group Travail Desertification, Réseau Sahel Desertification and Drynet.

are increasing becoming sources of conflict and instability – resulting in increased food insecurity.

Thus, whatever accurate approach is used to evaluate the economic costs of and degradation and desertification, we must be aware that there are no real costs other than cost of living and survival! All countries should be concerned and get involved as much as possible in not only combating land degradation, but also undertaking appropriate initiatives of addressing it.

It is true that we do not know the precise costs of land degradation, but we know and are sure that inaction will cost more than action! Most of our policy-makers were until recently insensitive to land degradation. In some countries, the agricultural sector has contributed significantly to land degradation due to agricultural policies which prioritizes monoculture of cash crops.

However, it is never too late! Governments in collaboration with CSOs should strengthen the implementation of projects and programs to restore these degraded lands. Communities should be trained and encouraged to use sustainable agriculture practices such as crop rotation, fallow, establishment of hedges to reduce wind effects and water erosion through agroforestry, *inter alia*.

We must all mobilize and increase investments, in addressing challenges of land degradation, through promotion of innovative solutions such as payment of ecosystem services. Investment in ecosystem services, has shown to have many important socio-economic and environmental impacts, and can be

the foundation for sustainable development.

CSOs recognize that efforts are being made! However investments are still insufficient and do not allow large-scale interventions. Parties, partners and CSOs must all mobilize and increase investment to promote innovative solutions, interventions, best practices related to the fight against land degradation and actions to restore lands already degraded but which can still be productive.

CSOs' closing statement for the High Level segment

The High-Level Segment was concluded on Tuesday, 24th September 2013. Ms Fatchima Noura from Ansen – Niger, delivered the following closing statement on behalf of CSOs:

We, the civil society, see that the focus of the Parties should be tackling the major drivers of land degradation. There has been little discussion about mining industry, deforestation and large scale agriculture. Distinguished delegates, we want to see the action of your governments to set limits for these major drivers of land degradation.

To reach a land degradation neutral world we need strong and democratic governments to govern the use of the scarce land resources, and to ensure rights to land for people nurturing it. Effective cooperation among agricultural, forest, environmental, economic, industrial, and development sectors is needed. It is also important to ensure that synergy among the three Rio conventions must be achieved.

We, the CSOs, are committed to the UNCCD process as well as its implementation on the ground, at all levels. We urge the Parties to ensure that UNCCD only engages with business and industry entities that are committed to sustainable livelihoods of people in dryland communities and to healthy ecosystems. The civil society wants to remind the Parties that this convention is about land. We, the civil society, want to see a clear roadmap to the end of land degradation and the Parties committing to it.



Be sure to offset your UNCCD COP 11 travel by supporting a Namibian community solar project. **26** volunteers have already offset their COP11 travel by 25th September, 2013. When will you participate?