



## Convention on Biological Diversity

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### CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Twelfth meeting

Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, 6-17 October 2014

Items 12 and 29 of the provisional agenda\*

### OUTCOME OF THE THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE JOINT LIAISON GROUP OF THE RIO CONVENTIONS

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

#### INTRODUCTION

1 The Conference of the Parties has, through several decisions, reiterated the importance of cooperation among the three Rio conventions through the Joint Liaison Group. In paragraph 13 (b) of decision X/33, the Conference of the Parties encouraged the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to collaborate with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) through the Joint Liaison Group in the development of joint activities. In paragraph 12 (d) of decision XI/3, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to promote the further harmonization of global indicators and their use between the Convention on Biological Diversity and other conventions, including through the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions.

2 The thirteenth meeting of the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) of the Rio Conventions was held in New York, United States of America, on 24 September 2014, on the margins of the United Nations Climate Summit. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, the Executive Secretary of CBD and was attended by Ms. Monique Barbut, the Executive Secretary of UNCCD and Ms. Christiana Figueres, the Executive Secretary of UNFCCC.

3 The JLG discussed areas for enhanced cooperation and agreed to focus on issues where collective advances can be made while bearing in mind the respective independent legal status and mandates of the three Rio Conventions. In this context, the JLG agreed to promote work on joint indicators that could be used for reporting under the three conventions. In this regard, the UNCCD has begun to consider possible joint indicators and has suggested three possible bio-physical indicators for which data already exist and where countries would find it easy to monitor and report on these indicators.

4 The JLG agreed to promote the adoption of the joint indicators during the sixth meeting of the Adaptation Committee of UNFCCC, the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CBD (CBD COP 12), the twelfth meeting of the Conference of Parties to UNCCD (UNCCD COP 12) and the twentieth and twenty-first sessions of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC (UNFCCC COP 20 and COP 21). The UNCCD has prepared, for this purpose, a briefing for the Adaptation Committee of UNFCCC.

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\* UNEP/CBD/COP/12/1/Rev.1.

5 The Executive Secretary is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the document prepared by UNCCD for the sixth meeting of the Adaptation Committee of UNFCCC on the development of common indicators. The document is being circulated in the form and language in which it was received by the Secretariat.

**Sixth meeting of the UNFCCC Adaptation Committee.**

**Bonn, Germany, 29 September to 1 October 2014**

**Agenda Items 6(a)**

**Proposal for the development of common indicators or a framework  
for monitoring and evaluating land-based adaptation policies and practices**

Prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

**Recommended action by the Adaptation Committee at its sixth meeting**

The AC may wish to consider: (1) defining the steps for monitoring and evaluation of adaptation policies and practices, in order to facilitate the enhanced implementation of adaptation actions and national assessments; (2) Proposing initiating a concerted effort among the relevant bodies of the Convention to develop a set of recommendations with practical methodologies, tools, and options for common indicators or framework for national reporting on land-based adaptation policies and practices, building upon – as appropriate – on existing information and databases, as well as on the ongoing body of work and decisions of the Conference of the Parties of the Rio Conventions; (3) The adoption of three biophysical indicators for reporting on land-based adaptation, within a monitoring and evaluation framework:

- Land productivity dynamics
- Land cover change as an outcome of land use change; and
- Trends in carbon stocks above and below ground.

The AC may further wish to (4) elaborate and adopt draft recommendations and guidance based on this proposal, for discussion and consideration by COP 20 in Lima, and for a final decision in 2015 at COP 21 in Paris.

Climate change is in itself a public bad of which no one can be excluded from the externalities it causes. The impacts of climate change worsen ecosystems and human livelihoods, thus generating more public bads on ecosystems and societies. Land-based adaptation is a public good as increases the health and resilience of our land resources (e.g., soil, water and biodiversity) largely determined by management practices, governance systems, and environmental changes.

The conversion of natural ecosystems or the unsustainable use of natural resources for food and energy production cause land degradation at the local level, increased carbon emissions, reduced biodiversity, and diminished rainfall on regional and global scales. Indeed, intertwined public bads such as land degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change exhibit feedback loops that add to a downward spiral in the productivity and availability of land resources, contributing to reduced adaptive capacity or resilience.

**Shared Approach**

This proposal focuses on the potential for developing common indicators or a framework to be used by the Rio Conventions for convergence in monitoring and evaluating land-based approaches to increasing the adaptive capacity or resilience of land resources (and by extension that of communities) when addressing climate change impacts. Human society depends on the supporting, provisioning, regulating and cultural services provided by well-functioning natural systems yet approximately 60% of our ecosystems are considered degraded or are being managed unsustainably.

The shared strategic goals of the Rio Conventions with regard to the sustainable management of land resources, present a unique opportunity to leverage synergies, increase efficiency and avoid duplication in their efforts to assist Parties in their national reporting processes. To respond to the rapidly growing risks associated with land degradation, land-based approaches to climate change adaptation need to be given greater priority within a comprehensive 2015 climate strategy that contains common indicators or frameworks for monitoring and evaluating adaptation measures and outcomes.

The UNFCCC convention has made progress on adaptation options through the Cancun Adaptation Framework and the establishment of the Adaptation Committee (AC) to promote the implementation of enhanced and coherent action under the Convention. As part of its work, the AC may wish to propose initiating a concerted effort at COP20 among the relevant bodies of the Convention to develop a set of recommendations with practical methodologies, tools, and options for common indicators or framework for national reporting on land-based adaptation policies and practices, building upon – as appropriate – on existing body of work and decisions of the Conference of the Parties of the Rio Conventions.

A coherent approach would help facilitate the establishment of baselines and practical reporting processes for monitoring outcomes that would allow Parties to better meet adaptation challenges by attracting the necessary financial resources (e.g. Global Climate Fund and others financial sources) and more effectively implement the strategic plans of all three Conventions thus conferring to adaptation the same level of priority as mitigation.

### **Starting Point**

Land-based adaptation to climate change is a combination of activities, including land use policies and planning, integrated natural resource management practices, and resource mobilization strategies that improve social, economic, and environmental resilience. In the consideration of the three proposed biophysical indicators for reporting on land-based adaptation the AC could take the initial steps in assisting Parties in targeting and prioritizing adaptation actions, determining baselines for measuring progress and outcomes, and enriching reporting within the NAPs/NAPAs of the UNFCCC; similarly, the Parties of the other Rio conventions could coherently report on progress made in the NAPs of the UNCCD and NBSAPs of the CBD. These reports could also communicate the effectiveness of adaptation policies and practices to decision-makers and other stakeholders. Within the UNFCCC, the proposed indicators could be also used as a proxy for specifically measuring land-based carbon sequestration and

reported by Parties in their National Communications. Finally, their use could facilitate highlighting the contribution of sustainable land management and ecosystem restoration activities to climate change adaptation.

The existing body of work in the Conventions provides a good foundation from which to start overcoming the challenges in identifying practical indicators. Some of the existing databases (and their sources) for the indicators being proposed are provided in Annex 1. These have the potential to be refined and made operable within a common adaptation monitoring framework. This approach is also in line with some recent recommendations on the way forward for adaptation to climate change (FCCC/SBSTA/2013/2) which advocate for:

- global mapping and studies to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of ecosystem-based approaches for adaptation, including the development of multilevel indicators (i.e. local, national, regional and global), and
- a process for harmonizing goals and indicators across the Rio Conventions and the GEF to achieve synergies between climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land management.

## ANNEX 1

### List of existing datasets for land-based indicators for climate change adaptation

The UNFCCC has compiled a number of datasets and data sources related to climate change adaptation ([http://unfccc.int/adaptation/knowledge\\_resources/databases/items/6996.php](http://unfccc.int/adaptation/knowledge_resources/databases/items/6996.php)). The table below presents other relevant databases, methodologies and knowledge sources which could also be considered in the development of adaptation indicators or frameworks.

Metric	Database/source	URL
Poverty severity & Income inequality	The World Bank database	<a href="http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/tableview.aspx">http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/tableview.aspx</a>
Proportion of population using an improved drinking water source	WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation Methodology database	<a href="http://www.wssinfo.org/data-estimates/table/">http://www.wssinfo.org/data-estimates/table/</a>
Land cover	FAO's Global Land Cover-SHARE database	<a href="http://www.glcn.org/databases/lc_glcshare_en.jsp">http://www.glcn.org/databases/lc_glcshare_en.jsp</a>
Land productivity dynamics	JRC's New World Atlas of Desertification (WAD)	<a href="http://wad.jrc.ec.europa.eu/">http://wad.jrc.ec.europa.eu/</a>
Soil organic carbon content	ISRIC's Harmonized World Soil Database (HWSD)	<a href="http://webarchive.iiasa.ac.at/Research/LUC/External-World-soil-database/HTML/">http://webarchive.iiasa.ac.at/Research/LUC/External-World-soil-database/HTML/</a>