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**Sixty-eighth session**

Item 20 (d), (e) and (f) of the provisional agenda<sup>1</sup>

**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 convention****Note by the Secretary-General**

In its resolution 67/211 of 21 December 2012, the General Assembly of the United Nations requested the Secretary-General to report to it, at its 68<sup>th</sup> session, on the implementation of that resolution. The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the reports submitted by the Secretariats of 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.

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<sup>1</sup> A/68/...

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**I. Report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change<sup>2</sup> on the United Nations Climate Change Conference, Doha, Qatar, 2012.**

**A. Outcomes of the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol**

1. The United Nations Climate Change Conference was held in Doha, Qatar, from 26 November to 8 December 2012, and comprised the following sessions:
  - (a) The eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties;
  - (b) The eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;
  - (c) The thirty-seventh session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI);
  - (d) The thirty-seventh session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA);
  - (e) The second part of the seventeenth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP);
  - (f) The second part of the fifteenth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA).
  - (g) The second part of the first session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP)
2. The Doha Conference had a high level of participation, and was attended by 4,300 government delegates, 3,900 observers and 680 media representatives. The Conference of the Parties adopted 18 decisions and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol adopted 13

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

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decisions. The main outcomes of the Conference are reflected in the Doha Climate Gateway:

- a) The adoption of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol, entrenching the second commitment period;
  - b) Agreement on a plan of work to adopt a global climate change agreement by 2015;
  - c) The agreed plan to explore options towards raising the necessary ambition to bridge the pre-2020 mitigation ambition gap;
  - d) Agreement on how to maintain political focus on the mobilization of climate finance and the completion of the institutions established at Cancun and Durban that will support further action by developing countries; and,
  - e) Agreement on an approach to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts, including a decision to put in place at the next Conference the required institutional arrangements.
2. The negotiations on a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, which started in Montreal in 2005, came to a close with the conclusion of the AWG-KP. At the same time, the work initiated five years ago in Bali came to a close, with the agreed closure of the AWG-LCA. Parties have now shifted their focus to enhancing the on-going efforts at implementation of previous outcomes and to the negotiations under the ADP towards a global climate agreement in 2015.

### **B. High-level segment**

3. The joint high-level segment of the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol was opened by the COP President, the Chairman of the Qatar Administrative Control and Transparency Authority, and was preceded by a

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welcoming ceremony attended by the Emir of Qatar, the Secretary-General, the President of the United Nations General Assembly and other dignitaries.

4. The Secretary-General of the United Nations and the President of the United Nations general Assembly delivered statements recognizing the challenges and emphasizing the need for making progress and moving forward on key issues. The Secretary-General urged Parties to work with a spirit of compromise, sustaining the momentum for change built since the Bali Climate Change Conferences and delivering on key issues such as the adoption of the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, progress on long-term finance, progress on established institutions set up in Cancun and Durban and progress under the ADP.
5. At the high-level segment, statements were made by 156 Parties, of which seven were given by Heads of State or Government, five were given by either Vice-Presidents or Deputy Prime Ministers, 99 were given by ministers and 45 were given by Party representatives. In addition, two statements were given by observer states.

### **C. Outcomes of the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties**

6. In Doha, the Conference of the Parties agreed to a plan of work for the ADP as it works towards a comprehensive legal agreement covering all countries, to be adopted by 2015 and to come into effect from 2020. The plan of work maps out the process for the next year and outlines the timetable for the elements of a draft negotiating text to be available by the end of 2014 at the latest, with a view to making available a negotiating text before May 2015. The Conference also welcomed the announcement by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to convene world leaders in 2014.
7. Parties also agreed to identify and explore options for a range of actions that can close the pre-2020 ambition gap with a view to identifying further activities for the plan of work of the ADP in 2014 ensuring the highest possible mitigation efforts under the Convention.

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8. The Conference of the Parties adopted decision 1/CP.18, which together with decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions, constitute the agreed outcome pursuant to the Bali Action Plan. Work in the context of such agreed outcome is now in its implementation phase under the relevant constituted bodies under the Convention and a number of decisions were adopted in Doha pursuant to the full implementation of the agreed outcome to the Bali Action Plan.
  9. The process for the first review of the adequacy of the long-term global temperature goal (the review) was launched in Doha and is set to start in 2013 and conclude in 2015. Parties agreed on further definition of the scope of the review and development of its modalities, including how the key inputs such as the Fifth Assessment Report of the IPCC will be considered.
  10. A major outcome of the Conference was a decision adopted on approaches to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The Conference decided to establish institutional arrangements, such as an international mechanism, to address loss and damage associated with the impacts of climate change in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to climate change.
  11. The work programme on long-term finance was extended in Doha for one year with the aim of encouraging developed country Parties in their efforts to identify ways for mobilizing the scaling up of climate finance to USD 100 billion per year by 2020. The Conference of the Parties also requested the Standing Committee to support the implementation of this work programme by providing expert inputs.
  12. The Conference of the Parties decided to change the name of the Standing Committee to the Standing Committee on Finance, adopted its revised composition and working modalities and endorsed its work programme for 2013–2015. The Conference also took note of the report of the Standing Committee on the outcomes of its meetings in 2012 and its recommendations regarding guidance to the operating entities of the financial mechanism of the Convention.

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13. The Conference endorsed the consensus decision of the Board of the Green Climate Fund to select the Republic of Korea as the host of the Green Climate Fund. The Board of the Green Climate Fund and the Republic of Korea were requested by the Conference to conclude the legal and administrative arrangements for hosting the Green Climate Fund in an expedited manner. The Fund is expected to start its work in Songdo, Republic of Korea, in the second half of 2013 and launch its activities in 2014. The Conference also requested the Standing Committee and the Board of the Green Climate Fund to develop arrangements between the Conference of the Parties and the Green Climate Fund. Relevant provisions in decision 3/CP.17 and in the governing instrument of the Green Climate Fund were recognised as the basis to ensure that the Fund is accountable to and functions under the guidance of the Conference of the Parties. The Conference shall provide initial guidance to the Green Climate Fund at its nineteenth session.
14. In Doha, the Conference decided to initiate the fifth review of the financial mechanism of the Convention and the Standing Committee was requested to further amend the guidelines for the review of the financial mechanism, and to provide draft updated guidelines for consideration and adoption, with a view to finalizing the fifth review of the financial mechanism for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its nineteenth session.
15. As part of the guidance from the Conference of the Parties to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Conference requested the GEF to:
- a) Make available support to Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) for preparing their biennial update reports;
  - b) Provide funds for technical support for the preparation of biennial update reports from non-Annex I Parties; and,
  - c) Consider how to enable activities for the preparation of the national adaptation plan process for interested developing country Parties that are not least developed country parties, through the Special Climate Change Fund.

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16. The Adaptation Committee has initiated its work and presented a report to the Conference of the Parties. The Conference in Doha approved the draft three-year workplan of the Adaptation Committee and endorsed its draft rules of procedure, providing the Committee with the necessary guidance to make significant contributions to the implementation of the Bali Action Plan.
  17. Reaffirming the importance of the need to address adaptation planning in the broader context of sustainable development planning, the Conference provided guidance to the GEF to enable activities for the preparation of national adaptation plans by the least developed country Parties, including through the provision of funding from the Least Developed Countries Fund. The Conference also requested the GEF to consider how to enable activities for the preparation of the national adaptation plan process for interested developing country Parties that are not least developed country parties. An assessment of progress in this respect shall be made and considered at the twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties.
  18. The Technology Executive Committee reported on its activities and performance to the Conference in Doha, including on its consultations with relevant stakeholders on ways to promote enabling environments and to address barriers to technology development and transfer, and on technology road maps and action plans. Parties appreciated the key messages of the Committee on enabling environments for and barriers to technology development and transfer, and noted that the Committee is undertaking further work on such issues as well as on technology roadmaps and technology needs assessments.
  19. A significant advancement for the completion of the institutional arrangements for technology transfer to developing nations has been the completion of the selection process for the host of the Climate Technology Centre. The Conference in Doha selected a UNEP-led consortium to host the Climate technology Centre, for an initial term of five years, and established the Advisory Board of the Climate technology

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Centre and Network bringing the Technology Mechanism under the UNFCCC closer to full operationalization.

20. The Doha work programme on Article 6 of the Convention was adopted by the Conference, recognizing the importance of education, training and skills development for all Parties to achieve sustainable development in the long term. The Conference also mandated the Subsidiary Body for Implementation to organise an in-session dialogue, on an annual basis, to share experiences and exchange ideas, best practices and lessons learned regarding the implementation of the Doha work programme on Article 6 of the Convention.
21. It was also recognised that countries with economies in transition that are currently receiving support are in need of further capacity-building, in particular for the implementation of their national low-carbon development strategies. Furthermore, it was also recognised that some countries with economies in transition have not only been recipients of assistance but have also started to transfer their own expertise, knowledge and lessons learned on capacity-building to non-Annex I Parties.
22. Both the Conference of the Parties and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol passed decisions to promote gender balance and improve the participation of women in delegations and bodies constituted under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol with a process for yearly monitoring of progress.
23. A pledge by Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates was submitted to the Conference in which this group of Parties put forward their current actions and plans in pursuit of economic diversification that have co-benefits in the form of emission reductions, adaptation to the impacts of climate change and response measures. The Conference of the Parties decided to anchor such pledges with other mitigation pledges of developing country Parties.

**D. Outcomes of the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol**



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24. The most important outcome of the Conference was the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol. Through the Doha Amendment, the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol was enabled to start on 1 January 2013 and it will last eight years. Under the Doha Amendment, 37 countries (all European Union members, Australia, Belarus, Croatia, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Norway, Switzerland, and Ukraine) adopted legally binding emission reduction targets collectively bringing them to a level of 18% below their 1990 baselines (as compared to an aggregate 5% reduction under the first commitment period). Additionally, the targets of Parties under the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol were underpinned by strict accounting rules. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties agreed on guidance relating to the report to facilitate the calculation of the assigned amount for each Party with a quantified emission limitation and reduction commitment for the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.
25. Parties also agreed to review their emission reduction commitments by 2014 at the latest, with a view to increasing their respective levels of ambition. With the Doha Amendment securing the enabling of the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is to continue operating normally. As part of such continued operation of the CDM, the conference decided to grant access to the CDM to those countries taking part in the second commitment period.
26. In Doha, a number of Parties comprised of Australia, the European Union, Japan, Lichtenstein, Monaco, Norway and Switzerland made political declarations, which were inscribed in an annex of the decision on the amendment to the Kyoto Protocol, that they will not purchase carried over surplus assigned amount units (so called “hot air”) from the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol during the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol.
27. The Adaptation Fund Board presented its report to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, which noted the

accreditation of 14 national implementing entities that can directly access resources from the Adaptation Fund. The Conference decided to consider, at its next session, the means to enhance the sustainability, adequacy and predictability of the resources of the Fund, including the potential to diversify revenue streams of the Adaptation Fund.

28. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol also adopted a decision on the initial review of the Adaptation Fund. In such initial review, the Conference decided to extend until June 2015 the interim institutional arrangements with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank) as the trustee of the Adaptation Fund. The Conference also decided to extend the interim institutional arrangements of the secretariat of the Adaptation Fund Board until the completion of the second review of the Adaptation Fund in 2014.
29. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol provided further guidance relating to the CDM. The topics of such guidance included general guidance, review of the modalities and procedures for the CDM, governance, baseline and monitoring methodologies and additionality, registration of CDM project activities and issuance of certified emission reductions, and regional and subregional distribution.
30. As in previous years, the Conference also provided guidance in respect to the implementation of Article 6 of the Kyoto Protocol (on Joint Implementation), which included general guidance, guidance on governance and on the resources for work on Joint Implementation.

## **E. Conclusions and recommendations**

### **31. The United Nations General Assembly may wish to, inter alia:**

- a. Take note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as transmitted by the Secretary-General;**

- b. Note the outcomes of the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted by the Government of Qatar from 26 November to 8 December 2012;**
- c. Urge the ratification of the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol by all Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;**
- d. Pledge its support to the negotiating process under the Durban Platform towards the conclusion of a new climate agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by 2015;**
- e. Invite the Executive Secretary to continue to report to it on the work of the Conference.**

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**II. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa**  
**Implementation of resolution 67/211 of 22 December 2011**

**A. Background**

1. In its resolution 67/211, the General Assembly recalled that desertification, land degradation and drought were challenges of a global dimension which continued to pose serious challenges to the sustainable development of all countries, particularly developing countries. It reaffirmed its resolve to take coordinated action, nationally, regionally and internationally to globally monitor land degradation and restore degraded lands in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas. In this respect, the Assembly encouraged giving appropriate consideration to the issues of desertification, land degradation and drought in the elaboration of the development agenda beyond 2015. The meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Convention held in the aftermath of Rio+20 dwelled extensively on its outcome as it related to those issues.

**B. The third special session of the committee on Science and Technology, the UNCCD second Scientific Conference and the Eleventh session of the Committee for the review of the implementation of the Convention**

2. The third special session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST S-3), and the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference were convened back to back in Bonn, Germany, from 9 to 12 April 2013.
3. Issues addressed during CST 3 included the preparation of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference and progress made in refining the impact indicators relating to strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Ten-Year Strategy (The

Strategy). CST S-3 took note of progress made by the ad hoc advisory group of technical experts (AGTE) on impact indicator refinement and put forward a series of comments for further refinement of the final recommendations of the AGTE which will be presented to the eleventh session of the CST.

With the view of contributing to the work of the CRIC, CST S-3 also, for the first time, reviewed and assessed scientific information on impact indicators submitted by affected country Parties during the 2012-2013 reporting and review cycle.

4. The UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference took up the theme of “Economic assessment of desertification, sustainable land management and resilience of arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas”. In addition to representatives of Parties to the Convention, United Nations organizations, offices and specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations and civil society organizations, 189 scientists also attended the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference. Issues which were addressed included: economic and social impacts of DLDD; cost and benefits of policies and practices addressing land degradation and drought in the drylands; drivers of change and resilience increase; and strategies and policies for local, national, regional and international level.
5. The eleventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 11) was held in Bonn, Germany, from 15-19 April 2013, following the meetings of the five Regional Implementation Annexes in preparation for CRIC 11.
6. The meeting reviewed information relating to all performance and impact indicators of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) (the Strategy), as well as information on financial flows for the implementation of the Convention, submitted by Parties and other reporting entities in compliance with the performance review and assessment of implementation system (PRAIS)

adopted by the UNCCD in 2009. CRIC 11 also reviewed information on accessibility of best practices, strengthening the relationships with other Conventions and on the overall reporting process. With some limitations due to the number of reports submitted and to the coherence and the completeness of data, CRIC 11 was successful in assessing the progress made by Parties to the UNCCD in achieving the operational objectives of the Strategy since the year 2008, through an analysis of trends against the 18 performance indicators.

7. CRIC 11 also reviewed, for the first time since the adoption of the Strategy, information on impact indicators relevant to its strategic objectives. Despite data gaps and lack of comparability, a first set of baseline data has been derived from reports of affected country Parties on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Strategy. Although limited, the data coverage has enabled a subset of analyses to be carried out and has provided useful insights on how to further improve the process in the future.
8. While the focus was primarily on the assessment of implementation of the Convention, the programme of work of CRIC 11 enabled Parties to be briefed and updated on other important items including: the progress made in the work of the Intersessional Working Group (IWG) to assist the Conference of the Parties (COP) in the independent mid-term evaluation of the Strategy. The recommendations contained in the final report of the Committee will be considered by Parties in preparation for, and during formal consultations to take place at CRIC 12 that will guide the decision-making process at COP 11.

**C. High Level Meeting on National Drought Policies**

9. Pursuant to decision 9/COP.10 paragraph 2, the UNCCD secretariat together with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) organized a High-Level Meeting on National Drought Policy (HMNDP) from 11 to 15 March

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2013 in Geneva, Switzerland, in collaboration with a number of United Nations agencies, international and regional organizations, and key national agencies. In keeping with the key objectives of the UNCCD that include mitigating drought, improving the livelihoods of affected populations, and enhancing the productivity of affected ecosystems, the HMNDP focused on achieving the following objectives:

- (a) Inclusion of proactive mitigation and planning measures, risk management, public outreach and resource stewardship as key elements of effective national drought policy;
  - (b) Greater collaboration to enhance national, regional and global observation networks and information delivery systems to improve public understanding of and preparedness for drought;
  - (c) Incorporation of comprehensive governmental and private insurance schemes and financial strategies into drought preparedness plans;
  - (d) Introduction of a safety net of emergency relief programmes through diverse government departments based on the sound stewardship of natural resources and measures to increase the resilience of populations; and
  - (e) Coordination of drought programmes and response in an effective, efficient and customer-oriented manner.
10. The HMNDP also sought to help create more drought-resilient societies through (a) promoting standard approaches to vulnerability and impact assessment; (b) implementing effective drought monitoring and early warning systems; (c) enhancing preparedness and mitigation measures; and (d) implementing emergency response and relief measures that reinforce national drought policy goals. To provide concerted support to countries in developing national drought management policies (NDMPs), the UNCCD secretariat, in collaboration with the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity

Development (UNW-DPC), WMO and FAO, launched an initiative to build capacity at national level to enable countries to develop their NDMPs. To facilitate the development of an NDMP, the UNCCD secretariat developed an advocacy policy framework on drought, which is an instrument to assist countries in promoting the development of their national drought management policies.

11. The HMNDP adopted a declaration calling upon countries and governments around the world to put in place national drought management policies as an indispensable measure to build drought resilient societies. The HMNDP concluded that without a coordinated national drought policy, countries will continue to respond to drought in a reactive, crisis management mode. The outcomes of the HMNDP also acknowledged the urgency of the problem and the major consequences of drought in terms of the loss of human life, food insecurity, degradation of natural resources, negative consequences on the environment's fauna and flora, poverty and social unrest, as also the short and long term economic losses it causes in a number of economic sectors including agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, water supply, industry, energy production and tourism.

#### **D. Global observance of the 2013 World Day to Combat Desertification**

12. The global observance of the 2013 World day to Combat Desertification was organised on the theme of drought and water scarcity. Under the slogan, "Don't let our future dry up", the observance was aimed at creating awareness about the risks of drought and water scarcity in the drylands and beyond, and calling attention to the importance of sustaining healthy soils, as follow up to the outcomes of UNCSD, as well as in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda and the SDGs.
13. The global observance of the World Day was held in conjunction with a Conference on desertification and land degradation titled "Desertification: to



care or not to care?” organized by the University of Ghent, Belgium, jointly with UNESCO and UNU-UNWEH, among others. Speaking at the event, the UNCCD Executive Secretary called for action at the policy and grassroots levels in order to build preparedness to and mitigate the effects of drought, and to combat desertification and land degradation effectively. He highlighted the need for assistance to help local communities adopt and scale up sustainable land management practices. He also urged that the global aspiration of a land-degradation neutral world be translated into reality by giving it a concrete target under the Sustainable Development Goals which are under consideration by the UN General Assembly. He also stressed that the need to mitigate drought by implementing the outcomes of the HLMNDP in order to better prepare for and manage the risks associated with drought.

14. At the global observance event, the three winners of the Land for Life Award were announced. Another recognition programme, Dryland Champions, was also announced at the same event. The Dryland Champions programme honors individuals who have pioneered new solutions or revitalized traditional methods to bring life back to the drylands. In 2013, 14 countries joined the programme and of which, five countries announced their national dryland champions. These five countries are: Eritrea, Hungary, Kenya, Portugal and Thailand.
15. The UN Secretary-General issued a message on the occasion of the World Day calling for a collective global response to drought and a shift from crisis management to drought preparedness and resilience. He indicated that the price for preparedness was minimal compared to the cost of disaster relief, and that droughts can be mitigated and called for the full implementation of the outcomes of the High-level Meeting on National Drought Policy. The Secretary-General also called for implementation of UNCSD outcomes on a land degradation neutral world by avoiding and offsetting land degradation.

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### **E. Land for Life Award**

16. An important element of the global observance of the World Day to Combat Desertification was the Land for Life Award, which was launched at COP 10 as part of the “Changwon initiative”. The Land for Life Award is the only global award that focuses solely on recognizing organizations and individuals working to restore degraded lands and improve soil’s natural health and productive capacity. It has served as a substantive new platform to raise awareness about the problems and solutions of desertification and land degradation. With future support from donors, the award has the potential to become a prestigious recognition for those working to combat land degradation around the world, as well as to provide the means to scale up promising new strategies for Sustainable Land Management (SLM).
17. This year 137 applications were received, in all six UN languages and from a range of organizations and individuals, indicating broad awareness about the award. 16 semi-finalists were selected and submitted to a jury of 10 experts in the field of development, sustainable land management (SLM) and soil science. The 2013 award went to (1) Foundation for Ecological Security, a non-governmental organization in India whose work has improved the livelihoods of 1.7 million people living in more than 4,000 villages, and influenced national environmental policy. (2) Consejo Civil Mexicano para la Silvicultura Sostenible for its work in the Amanalco Valle Bravo Basin in central Mexico, and (3) World Vision Australia for popularizing Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration in the Sahel region in Africa. Each year, total of USD100,000 is set for award winners for further scaling up or scaling out their award winning activities. The announcement of the winners was made during the global observance of the World Day on 17 June. The award ceremony will take place during COP 11.

**F. United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010-2020)**

18. The 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly, vide resolution A/64/201, declared the decade 2010-2020 as the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (UNDDDD). An UNDDDD Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) has been constituted, with the participation of thirteen UN entities and international organizations to organise and coordinate global observance activities under the Decade. The IATF has met five times to develop and implement planned activities. The theme chosen by the IATF for activities under the aegis of the decade in 2012 was 'The Management and Use of Land in a Green Economy'. In December 2012 at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Doha, Qatar, the IATF organized a side event under the decade on the theme 'Grasslands climate change mitigation and adaptation potential', in collaboration with the Government of Mongolia, the UNCCD secretariat and other partners. The UNCCD secretariat also organized a round table session during Land Day 5 on Agriculture, Landscapes and Livelihoods titled "Climate change resilience in dryland agro-ecosystems: Improving food security and livelihoods in a land degradation neutral world". The main outcomes of the session focused on the different dimensions of drylands agriculture and an emphasis on land restoration.
19. Other events organised by the task force included the launch, in December 2012, of an online campaign for children and youth titled 'Going Land Degradation Neutral', in partnership with Bonn International Model United Nations, to raise awareness about the Rio+20 outcomes on desertification, land degradation and drought.
20. The theme for the 2013 observance of the Decade, 'Drought and Water Scarcity' was intended to reinforce the messages of the 2013 WDCD and the International Year of Water Cooperation. During the HLMNDP, the IATF

organized a side event on the theme to kick off the campaign for the WDCD. This April, the IATF organized a side event titled, ‘Dry forests: Drought, water scarcity and the global development agenda’ at the United Nations Forum on Forests in Turkey. The IATF also participated in a panel at the UNCCD side event on communications held in Bonn to publicize the theme for the year.

**G. Follow up to Rio plus 20 /Post 2015 development agenda and SDG process**

**Consideration of DLDD issues by the UNGA Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals**

21. To follow up on the commitment by world leaders at UNCSD to strive towards a land degradation neutral world, and mainstream this commitment in the deliberations in the UNGA on the post 2015 development and SDG agenda processes, the UNCCD secretariat has been actively participating in and supporting the UN Task Team, which was established to support the intergovernmental process in the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. The themes of drought, desertification and land degradation, along with food security and nutrition, sustainable agriculture, water and sanitation, were among the first substantive issues to be taken up by the OWG, at its third session from 22 to 24 May 2013. The prominence accorded to and the early consideration of land degradation, desertification and drought issues by the OWG, reflected the success of efforts by the UNCCD secretariat at advocacy and outreach to the international community to prioritize DLDD issues and follow up effectively on the commitments at Rio plus 20 to strive towards a land degradation neutral world.
22. The UNCCD secretariat was tasked by the UN Task Team to take the lead in drafting a six-page concise Issues Brief encompassing sections on

stocktaking, recommendations for a SDG and outlining proposals for a way forward.

23. The Executive Secretary was invited to introduce the Issues brief to the OWG along with the representatives of FAO, IFAD and WFP. Stressing the nexus between poverty and land degradation, the Executive Secretary emphasized the need to strive towards a land degradation neutral world and proposed “sustainable land use for all and by all” as an overarching and stand-alone SDG on land with specific targets aiming to achieve zero net land degradation by 2030, zero net forest degradation by 2030 and drought policies and preparedness measures operationalized in all drought prone countries by 2020.
24. UNCCD Drylands Ambassador Dennis Garrity, was invited to address the OWG as a panelist. In his presentation, he emphasized that 40% of degraded lands were found in areas with high instances of poverty and that land degradation directly affected 1.5 billion people, with disproportionate effects on women and children. For setting a target for a zero net rate of land degradation, he called for reducing the rate of degradation on currently non-degraded land, and increasing the rate of regeneration of that land that is already degraded. Presenting an example of community-based success regenerating land in Niger, the panelist stressed the need to align global goals with local communities.
25. In the interactive discussions that ensued, a number of groups and individual member states articulated their support for consideration of an SDG on a Land-Degradation Neutral World most notably the Group of 77, the European Union, the African Union and the Group of LDCs. The summary of the deliberations issued by the Co-Chairs immediately after the OWG meeting reflected recognition of the close interdependency between food, land and water, as well as energy, health, biodiversity and climate change, the need to address the drivers of land degradation, including unsustainable agricultural

and livestock management practices as well as mining and industrial pollution. The summary noted that halting land degradation and increasing land restoration had co-benefits, including for sustainable water management and re-affirmed the commitment to a land-degradation neutral world.

### **Consideration of the outcomes of Rio+20 relevant to DLDD by the African Union Assembly**

26. The African Union Assembly met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding the Organization of African Union (OAU)/African Union (AU). On that occasion, the delegation of Burkina Faso, in its capacity as the Chair of the African Group of UNCCD, proposed an agenda item related to the Convention. In the related decision adopted by the Assembly, Heads of State and Government invited African Governments to include DLDD on the list of priorities for their sustainable development policies. They were urged to place DLDD at the centre of the debate on post-2015 development agenda and to have a Sustainable Development Goal on land degradation neutrality. The Assembly also “paid homage” to the outgoing Executive Secretary for having contributed in an “exceptional manner” to promote the objectives of the Convention.

### **Other events to follow up on Rio plus 20 outcomes relevant to DLDD**

27. The UNCCD secretariat has also been actively engaged in and supported a number of events to follow up on the commitments undertaken at Rio plus 20 relevant to DLDD.

#### ***a. The fourth International Conference on Drylands, Deserts and Desertification: Implementing Rio+20 in the Drylands***

28. The conference was held in Sede Boqer, Israel from 12 to 16 November 2012 and included a one-day session titled “Operationalizing the Zero Net Land Degradation (ZNLD) target”. An outcome report was prepared highlighting

the conclusions and recommendations of the session. These included 1) although a ZNLD target, in practice, must be implemented at the local scale, its achievement will require a vertically integrated approach with top-down leadership and support; 2) the need to establish pilot projects at both the local and landscape scales while establishing long-term partnerships for achieving the ZNLD target at the global scale through the United Nations system; and 3) one of the main challenges in operationalizing ZNLD is that of establishing baselines and indicators as well as monitoring and verification at all levels.

***b. First Global Soil Week (GSW)***

29. The secretariat also participated and supported the first Global Soil Week which was held from 19 to 22 November 2012 in Berlin, Germany and organized by the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies and several partners involving as well the UNCCD secretariat. The main outcome of the event was the recognition that soil is the natural capital in the nexus of food, energy and water issues, and that this realization needs to be considered in management approaches. The value of a Sustainable Development Goal specific to land and soil was also discussed and the need to reinforce country-level accountability and context-specific targets and indicators was specified. A set of Sustainable Development Goals and a protocol on land and soil attached to UNCCD were contemplated by participants as the preferred options for future steps.

***c. Consultative Meeting of Experts on a Sustainable Development Goal on Land Degradation Neutral World and on the target for Zero Net Land Degradation (ZNLD)***

30. An informal consultative meeting of experts on a sustainable development goal on land degradation neutral world and on the target for zero net land degradation was convened in Seoul, South Korea from 26 to 27 June 2013 by the Government of the Republic of Korea and facilitated by the UNCCD secretariat. The objectives of the meeting were to: (1) gather advice and

recommendations on options for the establishment of a SDG on LDNW to be negotiated in the process of the General Assembly; (2) gather advice and recommendations on options for formulating and operationalizing a ZNLD target under the UNCCD framework, so as to provide concrete and action-oriented targets that could be used to measure progress towards a LDNW; and (3) provide the rationale and necessary elements for the establishment of an ad-hoc working group that would provide further the advice and recommendations for achieving a LDNW and for formulating and operationalizing a ZNLD target under the UNCCD framework, including recommendations on the terms of reference of the ad-hoc working group.

#### **H. Partnerships**

31. The UNCCD secretariat has also been participating actively in initiatives and activities for collaboration and partnership with other UN entities, to implement the objectives of the convention.
32. The UNCCD secretariat participated in Rio Conventions Pavilion, a joint initiative by the Rio Conventions, which was organized on the margins of the CBD COP 11 in October 2012 in Hyderabad, India. At the Rio Conventions Pavilion, the secretariat participated in Ecosystem Restoration Day. The event called for concerted and coordinated long-term efforts to mobilize resources and facilitate the implementation of ecosystem restoration activities on the ground to deliver multiple benefits that contribute to improved human well-being and socio-economic development while significantly reducing environmental risks and scarcities. The fourteen partners acknowledged that accelerated efforts are needed to restore and rehabilitate degraded lands, ecosystems and landscapes.
33. The secretariat also organized Land Day 6 under the aegis of the Pavilion. Land day 6 was organized on October 15 2012 and the theme was “Land-degradation neutrality: A response to the 2020 Aichi biodiversity targets”. It focused on the



interaction between biodiversity and desertification to demonstrate the benefits of synergy for achieving the Aichi Targets and land-degradation neutrality.

34. The UNCCD secretariat also participated actively in the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions (JLG). The 12th meeting of JLG took place in Bonn on 22 January 2013, with the participation of the Executive Secretaries of the three Rio Conventions. During the meeting, the Executive Secretaries committed themselves to undertake efforts to seek better communication and coordination among the three Executive Secretaries, and to have greater impact on the national level, while also being aware of the scarce resources available. The Executive Secretaries agreed to further engage in the organization of the Rio Conventions Pavilion while enhancing efforts to gather financial support from donors.
35. Other partnerships that the UNCCD secretariat forged included the agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to collaborate in the use of nuclear technologies to strengthen the assessment of soil erosion and monitor improvements over time. Through the partnership, Parties to the Convention will be able to access and participate in IAEA technical cooperation projects and use radionuclide and stable isotopic techniques such as environmentally friendly tracer elements to study soil erosion, improve land productivity and minimize the impacts of drought. Cooperation is foreseen in the exchange and dissemination of information, participation in relevant scientific networks and activities, and in joint educational and training courses.

#### **I. Observations and possible General Assembly action**

36. In the light of the Rio+20 outcome related to desertification, land degradation and drought, it has become increasingly clear that if the international community does not take bold action to protect, restore and manage land and soils sustainably, we will not achieve our commitments for climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity conservation, forest and MDG targets; we will not alleviate rural poverty and hunger nor ensure long-term food security or build

resilience to drought and water stress. At Rio plus 20, world leaders agreed to strive to achieve a land-degradation neutral world in the context of sustainable development. We must recognize that the many millions of people who manage agricultural systems, from the very poorest to the most commercialized producers, constitute the largest group of natural resource managers on earth. Their decisions, as well as those of the world's 7 billion consumers, will shape global food and nutrition security and the health of the world's ecosystems into the future. The challenge is to support better decisions by using all the tools at our disposal for reversing land degradation trends and gearing towards a land-degradation neutral world. In this respect, the General Assembly may wish to ensure that its open working group on sustainable development goals (SDGs) continue to pay special attention to those issues with a view to including them in the post 2015 development agenda.

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

#### **A. Outcome of COP 11**

1. Since the previous report to the General Assembly in August 2012, the eleventh session of the Conference of Parties (COP 11) took place in Hyderabad, India from 8-19 October 2012, which adopted 33 decisions.
2. Significant among the issues addressed by COP 11 were capacity building and financial support for Parties to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. On funding of implementation, there were a number of breakthroughs. . Using a baseline period of 2006 to 2010, it was agreed that biodiversity-related international financial flows to developing countries towards implementing the Strategic Plan would be doubled by 2015. COP 11 also set targets to increase the number of countries that include biodiversity in their national

development plans, and prepare national financial plans for biodiversity, by 2015. All Parties agreed to substantially increase domestic expenditures for biodiversity protection over the same period. These targets, and progress achieved will, be reviewed at COP 12. For the first time, several developing countries pledged additional funds, beyond their core assessed contributions, for implementing the Convention. The Hyderabad Call for Biodiversity Champions, with an initial pledge of US\$ 50 million from the Government of India, was also launched. The programme will accept pledges from governments and organizations in support of the Strategic Plan. The Global Environment Facility, for the first time, was provided with an assessment of the financial resources required to meet the needs of developing countries for implementing the Convention.

3. A number of decisions were also taken to support Parties by building capacity for implementation of national biodiversity plans. These included measures to enhance technical and scientific cooperation among countries. In addition the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans Forum (NBSAP Forum), which provides easy-to-access, targeted information, was launched at COP 11.
4. Marine and coastal biodiversity was also a focus area at COP 11. Substantial progress was made in describing ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, and the COP decided to transmit results of the first tranche of work to the General Assembly, for consideration by its Working Group biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction. Decisions were also taken on new measures to factor biodiversity into environmental impact assessments linked to infrastructure and other development projects in marine and coastal areas. Parties to the Convention also called for more research into the potential adverse effects of underwater noise from ships and other sources on marine and coastal biodiversity, and highlighted the growing concern of the adverse effects of marine debris. COP 11 also

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recognized the growing challenge of the impacts of climate change on coral reefs, which, Parties agreed, will require significant investment to overcome. There was also a call to fisheries management bodies to play a stronger role in addressing the impacts of fisheries on biodiversity.

5. Parties also provided guidance on the preparations for the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Nagoya Protocol) and agreed that a third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol would be needed prior to COP 12.
6. COP 11 also adopted decisions on article 8(j), relating to indigenous and local communities, including on protected areas, measures to support achievement of Aichi Target 15, climate change and biodiversity and calling for enhanced collaboration between the CBD and UN climate change initiatives, including building biodiversity safeguards into work related to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (“REDD+”).
7. COP 11 also welcomed the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and requested it to contribute to assessments of the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.
8. A parallel summit of Cities and Local Authorities was also convened. Participants adopted the Hyderabad Declaration on Sub national Governments, Cities and other Local Authorities for Biodiversity, which supports the work of cities and provinces to achieve the Global Strategy for Biodiversity and calls for greater coordination between levels of government.

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## **B. Outcome of MOP6**

9. The sixth Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (MOP 6), took place in Hyderabad, India, from 1 to 5 October 2012 and adopted 16 decisions, including on advancing issues regarding socio-economic considerations, risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms (LMOs) and capacity-building. Of significance were the decisions to establish an ad hoc technical expert group to develop conceptual clarity on socio-economic considerations arising from the impact of LMOs on biological diversity, especially with regard to the value of biodiversity to indigenous and local communities. The convening of online discussion groups and regional online real-time conferences were also mandated to synthesize the exchange of views, information and experiences on socio-economic considerations. MOP 6 also commended the progress made in developing the “Guidance on Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms” and encouraged Governments and relevant organizations to test this guidance in actual cases of risk assessment. It also decided to extend an open-ended online forum and establish a new Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management to, contribute to structuring and focusing the process and analysis of testing the guidelines for guidance. MOP6 also adopted a new Framework and Action Plan for the Effective Implementation of the Protocol to replace the updated Action Plan and mandated capacity-building activities, including regional and sub regional training workshops and the development of online training modules to support Parties.

## **C. Follow up to COP11 and MOP6**

10. Significant activities and initiatives undertaken by the Secretariat to follow up on decisions taken at COP11/MOP6 include the following:

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## **Nagoya Protocol**

11. To follow up on decisions at COP 11 which called on the Secretariat to undertake capacity-building and awareness-raising activities to support the early ratification of the Nagoya Protocol, the Secretariat has developed targeted awareness-raising materials and organised a number of regional and sub regional capacity-building workshops and also targeted briefings for parliamentarians, decision makers and other stakeholders. The Secretary General sent a letter to all Heads of State/Government of Parties in April 2013, urging early ratification so that the Nagoya Protocol can enter into force and the international community can move to the implementation phase. As of 21 June 2013, 18 Parties to the Convention have deposited their instruments of ratification or accession, i.e. Albania, Botswana, Comoros, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, India, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Panama, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa and Syrian Arab Republic. In order for the Protocol to enter into force in time for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the first meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol, to be held concurrently with the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be hosted by the Republic of Korea in October 2014, the 50<sup>th</sup> instrument needs to be deposited by Monday, 7 July 2014.
  
12. To address outstanding issues related to the establishment of the pilot phase of the Access and Benefit-Sharing Clearing House, the development of a strategic framework for capacity-building and development under the Protocol and cooperative procedures and institutional mechanisms to promote compliance with the Nagoya Protocol and address cases of non-compliance, the Secretariat, in follow to COP 11, has undertaken extensive online consultations on the need for and modalities of a global, multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism and a synthesis of the views is under preparation and will be considered at an expert meeting to be convened from 17-19 September 2013 in Montreal. The Secretariat

is also implementing The Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House on a pilot basis in preparation for the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol. A meeting of experts was organised by the Secretariat, from 3 - 5 June 2013 in Montreal, to develop a draft Strategic Framework for Capacity-building and Development in Support of the Effective Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

### **Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol**

13. The Secretariat has also been following up on decisions at MOP 6 on the status of signature, ratification and accession of the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress. As of 21 June 2013, 14 Parties to the Cartagena Protocol have deposited their instruments of ratification, approval, acceptance, or accession to the Supplementary Protocol (Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, EU, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Mexico, Mongolia, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Syria). The Supplementary Protocol will enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the fortieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

### **D. Progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achievement of the Aichi Targets, including difficulties encountered in the process of implementation**

14. As requested by UNGA resolution 67/212 a summary assessment of the progress made so far in the implementation of the Strategic Plan/ Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including difficulties encountered in the process of implementation, is provided below. A comprehensive assessment is currently under preparation and will be reflected in the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4) to be released in the fall of 2014.
15. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, adopted at COP 10, is a global framework, with a long term vision that “by 2050 biodiversity is valued,

conserved, restored and wisely used so as to maintain ecosystem services and sustaining a healthy planet that can deliver essential benefits for all people.” In the shorter term, by 2020, it aims for actions to halt the loss of biodiversity and to ensure the resilience of ecosystems so as to contribute to human well-being and poverty eradication. The Strategic Plan includes twenty agreed time bound targets. These are primarily intended to be implemented through national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and national targets:

**Target 1:** *“By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably”*: Public opinion surveys show an increase in awareness and understanding of biodiversity in those few countries where repeated assessments have been made. There is steady incremental progress in awareness of the value of biodiversity and measures that can be taken to conserve and use it sustainably. A major challenge is to expand opinion polls to a wider range of countries and to set appropriate baselines.

**Target 2:** *“By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems”*: Significant progress is being made by several countries to integrate biodiversity into national strategies, planning and accounting processes. These efforts are supported by the Wealth Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services (WAVES) partnership led by the World Bank and work led by the United Nations Statistical Commission on green accounting.

**Target 3:** *“By 2020, at the latest, incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the*



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*Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socio-economic conditions”* : Some progress has been reported in addressing subsidies harmful to biodiversity and in realigning incentives, with a broad range of incentive programmes already implemented in various sectors, including payments for ecosystem services; tax exemptions or tax deductibility schemes, support in commercialization and market development, including certification, and subsidized insurance for specific economic activities e.g. organic farming and biodiversity banks. The issue will be further addressed at COP-12.

**Target 4:** *“By 2020, at the latest, Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits:* While there are a number of initiatives by Parties, organizations and the private sector, there is insufficient data to assess overall progress at this stage. The 10 year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns, adopted by UNCSD will add impetus to the achievement of this target.

**Target 5:** *“By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced”:* Overall rates of deforestation are declining. However, the decline in rates of deforestation is not yet sufficient to achieve the target of halving the rate of loss by 2020. Many freshwater and coastal ecosystems, such as mangroves, continue to be degraded with loss of biodiversity.

**Target 6:** *“By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries*

*on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits*”: Progress has been made with significant reductions in harvests of global marine fisheries in some areas compared with the unsustainable levels of a decade ago. However, overfishing still occurs in many areas.

**Target 7:** *“By 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity*”: Considerable progress has been made, with many ongoing initiatives to improve the sustainability of agricultural, aqua cultural and forestry systems and the development of national certification schemes for agricultural, aqua cultural and forestry products. However, while it is clear that efforts to promote the sustainable management of resources are increasing, there is insufficient data, at this moment, to make a comprehensive assessment of progress towards all elements of this target.

**Target 8:** *“By 2020, pollution, including from excess nutrients, has been brought to levels that are not detrimental to ecosystem function and biodiversity*”: Progress has been made with some countries reducing the run-off of nutrients, and developing regulations on a range of pollutants. Work is also being undertaken under international agreements and conventions to control certain types of chemical pollutants and their movement, however, not all pollutants are covered by these initiatives.

**Target 9:** *“By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment*”: Various actions have been taken by Parties and other stakeholders including control and eradication programmes for already established invasive species. Increasingly countries also have programmes in place to identify invasive alien species before they enter their territory. Such actions, however, need to be significantly scaled up if this target is to be met.

**Target 10:** “By 2015, the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized, so as to maintain their integrity and functioning”. Actions that are being taken to reach this target include reducing pollution, overexploitation and harvesting practices, which often showed positive effects. However, with the information currently available it is not possible to comprehensively assess progress towards this target.

**Target 11:** “By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes”: Both the expansion of protected areas and the national targets being adopted by countries suggest that the target of protecting 17% of terrestrial areas is within reach. The 10% target for protection is also within reach for territorial waters. But substantial additional efforts will be needed to achieve the targets in open ocean and deep sea areas, both within and beyond national jurisdiction.

**Target 12:** “By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained”: Overall, while the actions being taken to prevent extinction of species are having a positive impact, they will need to be significantly scaled up if Aichi Target 12 is to be reached. Latest assessments suggest that of the more than 70,000 species assessed 30% are still threatened with extinction and of these, 4,000 are critically endangered.

**Target 13:** “By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-

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*economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity”*: Current assessments suggest that the genetic diversity of cultivated, farmed species, their wild relatives and other socio-economically important species is still declining. But while significant progress has been made in the ex situ conservation of crops, there has been less progress with in situ conservation and enhanced efforts to conserve genetic diversity are required.

**Target 14:** *“By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable”*: Since the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, published in 2005, many countries have made increased efforts to maintain ecosystem services, but based on current data, it is difficult to assess the overall status of ecosystem services. The development of a major assessment on the status of biodiversity and ecosystem services is currently under consideration by IPBES.

**Target 15:** *“By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification”*: There has been some progress in achievement of target 15, with growing recognition of ecosystem resilience as an important policy objective for Parties. Ecosystem restoration was given further impetus by a decision of COP 11 and the Hyderabad Call for concerted action.

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**Target 16:** “By 2015, the Nagoya Protocol is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation”: Progress towards achievement of target 16 has already been reported in para 12/13.

**Target 17:** “By 2015 each Party has developed, adopted as a policy instrument, and has commenced implementing an effective, participatory and updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan”: Over 90% of Parties have developed NBSAPs and most now are in the process of updating and aligning them with the current Strategic Plan. However, to meet the target, Parties will need to adopt the updated NBSAPs as policy instruments, including resource mobilization strategies and monitoring systems for national targets.

**Target 18:** “By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels”: There has been steady progress towards achieving Target 18, including the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol which provides protection of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, work under the Convention to develop a Plan of Action on Customary Sustainable Use of biodiversity, and, at national level, through increased recognition and support for community conservation areas.

**Target 19:** “By 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and

*applied*”: For significant progress to be achieved, increased investments in biodiversity data and observations are necessary. SBSTTA-17 will examine the scientific and technical needs for the achievement of the Aichi Targets. Measures to further promote technical and scientific cooperation among Parties will be addressed at COP 12. Work under IPBES will also contribute to the achievement of this target.

***Target 20:*** “*By 2020, at the latest, the mobilization of financial resources for effectively implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 from all sources, and in accordance with the consolidated and agreed process in the Strategy for Resource Mobilization, should increase substantially from the current levels. This target will be subject to changes contingent to resource needs assessments to be developed and reported by Parties*”: Recognising that a substantial increase in financial resources would be necessary for the implementation of the Strategic Plan, this issue was addressed at COP 11. A detailed report on the breakthrough in reaching an agreement on a doubling of international financial flows by 2015 has been reported on in paragraph 3 above. The strategy for resource mobilization, including targets for domestic resource mobilization, will be further addressed at COP 12.

***Challenges in implementing the Strategic Plan and Aichi targets.***

16. Significant challenges that Parties, particularly from developing countries, face in implementing the Strategic Plan and the Aichi targets include the need for enhanced capacity, and the need for human, technical and financial resources. To address these challenges, the secretariat, supported by the Japan Biodiversity Fund, has organised capacity building workshops to support countries in the updating of NBSAPs, preparation of national reports and the implementation of many programmes of work. Partnerships with UN Funds and programmes and specialized agencies are also contributing to these efforts. All countries face the need for the active engagement of all sectors of government and society. Timely

monitoring of progress towards the achievement of the Aichi Targets is essential to ensure that countries are on track to achieve the Targets, individually and collectively. Support from international community and the UN system through the mainstreaming of biodiversity in the post 2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals will be crucial for generating and sustaining the momentum required for implementation of the strategic Plan and the Aichi targets.

**E. Follow up on Rio plus 20: International Decade on Biodiversity, post 2015 development agenda and SDG processes**

17. To follow up on the outcome of UNCSD, which welcomed the UN Decade for Biodiversity as an important framework to promote the engagement of all stakeholders in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, the Secretariat has promoted a number of activities. Significant among these are the commemorative events to mark the International Day for Biodiversity (IDB) on May 22 2013. A panel discussion was organized at UN headquarters on the occasion of the IDB, on the margins of the third session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a view to highlighting the important role of biodiversity and ecosystems in ensuring water security and sustainable development. A publication entitled “Natural Solutions For Water Security”<sup>3</sup>, which highlighted the role of biodiversity and ecosystems in ensuring water quality, supply and availability was launched and messages of the UN Secretary General, Chair UN Water were widely disseminated. National level observances designed to enhance awareness of the linkages between biodiversity and water were also organized in more than 51 countries and over 17 international and United Nations organizations commemorated the IDB.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/idb/2013/booklet/>

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18. The Secretariat is also contributing actively to the preparations initiated by the UN Task Team to support the deliberations of member states in the Open Working Group on SDGs, with a view to mainstreaming biodiversity in the consideration of the post 2015 development agenda and the SDGs.
19. The twelfth meeting of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions (JLG-12) took place on 25 January 2013 and deliberated on measures to enhance collaboration between the Rio Conventions, particularly through the Rio Conventions Pavilion, the Rio Conventions Calendar and joint activities on gender mainstreaming, and the post-2015 development agenda. The CBD Secretariat has also entered into partnership with GEF for a pilot project on the implementation of joint activities between the Rio Conventions at the national and sub-national level, with some selected countries.

### **Recommendations**

20. The General Assembly, at its sixty-eighth session, may wish to, inter alia:
- (a) Stress the importance of follow up to and implementation of the outcomes of COP11 /MOP6;
  - (b) Call on all Parties to implement the Strategic Plan and Aichi targets;
  - (c) ) Invite all Parties and relevant United Nations departments, specialized agencies, funds, programmes and regional commissions to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, 2011-2020;
  - (e) Call on all States that have not yet done so, to ratify or accede to the Convention on Biological Diversity;



(f) Calls on all Parties to the Convention, that have not yet done so, to ratify or accede to Nagoya Protocol;

(g) Calls on all parties to the Convention, that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and its Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress.