

SYNTHESIS OF CSD-17 DECISIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Sustainable Development in its 17th Session that took place from 4-15 May 2009 in New York agreed on a number of decisions to accelerate the implementation of sustainable development agenda in the areas of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. Negotiated outcomes included: 278 decisions/actions, including 46 (in 5 clusters) on *Agriculture*; 49 (in 6 clusters) on *Rural Development*; 41 (in 5 clusters) on *Land*; 27 (in 4 clusters) on *Drought*; 27 (in 3 clusters) on *Desertification*; 53 (in 9 clusters) on *Africa*; and 35 (in 4 clusters) on *Inter-linkages and Means of Implementation*. Another important outcome of the session was Chair's Shared Vision--emphasizing the need to follow a fast track approach to address the challenges confronting sustainable development.

This paper presents a succinct synthesis of policy measures and actions agreed during CSD-17, highlighting 11 key recommendations together with a total of 81 actions embedded in the political declaration adopted by the Commission. This paper serves as a background document to the *Multistakeholder Dialogue on Advancing the implementation of Sustainable Development* to be held in New York on 1 February 2010, with the objective to enhance awareness of Governments and other stakeholders about key messages emanating from the negotiated outcomes. Reference(s) provided at the end of each policy action refer to the corresponding decision number in the official report of CSD-17.

KEY MESSAGES AND AGREED ACTIONS

1. Enhance agricultural productivity and food security

To achieve sustained growth in agricultural productivity and to enhance food security, the governments should implement the following actions:

- a. Provide targeted support and technical assistance to farmers, especially small-scale and women farmers, in the form of affordable inputs, microfinance/micro credit, advisory services on farm management techniques, and risk management strategies in agriculture. {Para. 6(a) (ii), (xii), (xvii); Para. 21(a) (vi)}
- b. Take measures to overcome the growing scarcities of many natural resources and the competing claims to their use by implementing a combination of sustainable soil, land, livestock, forest, biodiversity and water management practices. {Para. 5}
- c. Promote scaling up of good practices. In this regard, facilitate farmers, especially smallholders, in taking advantage of modern information and communication technologies, innovative solutions to increase agricultural productivity, and improved farm management practices and technologies. {Para. 6(b) (v), 6(d) (iii); Para. 8}
- d. Assist rural producers, associations and firms in responding to market demand, while ensuring expanded access to markets and sharing of best entrepreneurial practices, and

providing enhanced access to market infrastructure and information. {Para. 6 (d) (vi); Para. 8(d) (d)(x); Para. 12(b) (iv)}

- e. Promote the adoption of improved post-harvest technologies to reduce wastage along the food chain, including ways and means for improving food handling, food testing, processing equipment, storage techniques, cold chain systems and transportation infrastructure. {Para. 6 (d) (iii), (iv)}
- f. Address food security and agricultural development as part of the international development agenda. {Chapeau}
- g. Reduce land losses in particular in Small Island Developing States and low-lying coastal areas by implementing actions aimed at reducing coastal erosion, adapting to climate change, and reducing saltwater intrusion into freshwater supplies and agricultural land. {Para. 9(c) (v), (vi)}

2. Strengthen agricultural research systems

To stimulate growth in agricultural sector and achieve poverty alleviation, agricultural research systems and their dissemination capacities should be strengthened. Towards this aim:

- a. Make best use of science-based approaches as well as local and indigenous knowledge, while ensuring that results support the needs of local agro-climatic conditions. {Para. 9(e) (iii); Para. 19(d); Para. 21(c) (v)}
- b. Make increased investments in agricultural research infrastructure, enabling these systems to respond to challenges of low agricultural productivity and growing food insecurity. {Para. 6(b) (iii); Para. 21(c) (iv)}
- c. Examine the underlying causes and effects of drought; and identify techniques and practices that can improve food security and reduce human vulnerability. {Para. 10(b) (vi)}
- d. Promote the development of drought-tolerant seed varieties and ensuring their easy access to farmers in drought prone areas. {Para. 10(c) (ii)}
- e. Support and strengthen international agricultural research systems, especially the international research centres of CGIAR, as well as other relevant international organizations. {Para. 6(b) (iii)}

3. Improve policy coherence for agricultural development

The developing country governments should rationalize their agricultural development policies, with due considerations to objectives such as: achieving food security, reducing rural poverty, sustaining rural livelihoods and protecting the natural resource base. Towards this aim:

- a. Develop and implement comprehensive and integrated rural development policies and programmes, including their mainstreaming in poverty reduction strategies and national development programmes. {Para. 17 (g)}
- b. Expedite implementation of measures and actions which are participatory, multidisciplinary, multi-sectoral and mutually reinforcing. {Para. 14}
- c. Examine challenges and opportunities posed by biofuels within the context of national food security and energy needs, and follow course that is consistent with the national development priorities. {Para. 6 (c) (ii), (iii)}
- d. Prepare and implement national drought management plans which should include, *inter alia*, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures, including but not limited to reducing deforestation, promoting conservation and rehabilitation of vegetation cover, reducing land degradation, and improving soil conservation practices. {Para. 10, 10(a) (i), (iii), (vi)}
- e. Integrate National Action Plans (NAPs) related to drought and desertification into national development strategies, and mobilize support for their implementation through regional and international cooperation and partnerships. {Para. 11(a) (iii), 11(c) (xi), (xii)}
- f. Establish effective land administration systems supported by appropriate institutional and legal frameworks to promote transparent, secure and equitable access to land including land tenure, particularly to the poor and other vulnerable groups, as well as protection of pastoralist grazing rights. {Para. 8(d) (a) (ii); Para. 9(d), 9 (d)(ii), (vi), (v)}
- g. Implement measures and incentives that will encourage enhanced public and private capital flows, including foreign direct investment, and technology transfer, employment generation and infrastructure development. {Para. 6(a) (vi); Para. 9(a) (ix); Para. 9(e); Para. 10(d); Para. 11(a) (v); Para. 12(b) (vi); Para. 21(c)(ii)}

4. Create conditions for sustainable rural livelihoods

The governments in collaboration with development partners, local communities and civil society should implement the following actions to enable rural communities to engage in maximizing income-generating activities, while minimizing vulnerability and risk.

- a. Enhance access to social services in rural areas, especially the primary health-care systems, educational facilities, drinking water and sanitation services, and electrification and communication facilities. {Para. 8(d) (b) (i), (ii), (iii), (v); Para. 8(d) (c) (i), (iii); Para. 8(d) (f) (iv)}
- b. Take measures at all levels to address challenges posed by climate change, drought, desertification and natural disasters, including strengthening of risk and disaster management capacities of rural communities. {Para. 6(a) (xvii); Para. 8; Para. 8(d) (a) (vii), (ix); Para. 10(c) (iii); Para. 11(b) (viii); Para. 11(c) (iii); Para. 20; Para. 20(a)}
- c. Make increased investments in rural infrastructure covering areas such as: roads, waterways and transport systems, storage and market facilities, livestock facilities, irrigation systems, affordable housing, and information and communications networks.

{Para. 8(d) (c) (i)}

- d. Invest in employment generation projects such as agro-processing and rural industry, rural social services, and natural resources conservation etc. {Para. 8; Para. 8(d) (e) (iii); Para. 21(a) (iv)}
- e. Enhance the resilience of communities to drought by instituting community-based land tenure systems based on good governance principles, promoting mixed crop-livestock production systems, implementing weather insurance schemes, and promoting sustainable land use and water management practices. {Para. 6(c) (i), (iv); Para. 10(c)}
- f. Promote the development and implementation of effective drought information, forecasting and early warning systems to disseminate reliable and timely information to communities living in drought-prone regions to enable them to take appropriate and proactive measures. {Para. 10(a) (v)}
- g. Strengthen links between agriculture and other sectors of the rural economy, and connecting distribution and marketing infrastructure to local markets. {Para. 2; Para. 8(d)(iv)}
- h. Develop sustainable ways to add value to agricultural products to generate additional income. {Para. (8d) (v)}
- i. Develop and implement social protection programmes with reference to most vulnerable households. {Para. 8(d)}
- j. Promote sustainable tourism in rural areas. {Para. 8(d)(vii)}

5. Enhance access to social capital in rural areas

The governments should implement the following actions in an effort to enhance access to social capital: To this end:

- a. Empower rural communities, especially vulnerable groups, in decision making processes related to development of policies and programs aimed at drought risk reduction, mitigating the effects of drought, combating desertification and reducing land degradation. {Para. 10(c) (vii)}
- b. Promote the development of rural organizations such as community driven cooperatives, and facilitate their access to productive resources. {Para. 8(d) (c) (vi)}
- c. Promote equitable access to natural and other productive resources, and create equal opportunities for women and men in all aspects of rural development. {Para. 8(d) (a)(ii)}
- d. Transfer technologies to support sustainable rural livelihoods. {Para. 8(d) (f) (iii)}
- e. Create employment opportunities in rural areas by diversifying rural development activities, and encouraging entrepreneurial activities. {Para. 8(d) (d)(iii), (vi)}

- f. Provide access for small and resource-poor farmers to the legal system and legal services. {Para. 6(b) (ix)}

6. Promote integrated management of land and water resources

The governments should implement the following actions to address the interlinked crises of land degradation, water scarcity and deteriorating water quality.

- a. Promote sustainable management of natural resources (biodiversity, water, land, and forest etc.) in a manner that also supports ecosystem functions. {Para. 10(a) (vii); Para. 10(d) (i); Para. 11(b)(i); Para. (c)(vii); Para. 18}
- b. Design and implement sustainable and efficient water resources development and management schemes and practices. {Para. 6(c)(i)}
- c. Promote sustainable and integrated land use planning and land management practices. {Para. 9(a)}
- d. Promote the implementation of principles of integrated water resources management with special emphasis on improving irrigation efficiencies, soil and water management practices, water quality, and water productivity in agriculture sector; reducing supply-demand gap; seeking balance among different water uses; and strengthening coordination among institutions engaged in water- and land-related activities. {Para. 6(a)(i), (ii), (iii); Para. 6(c) (i); Para. 8(d)(c)(i); Para. 9(b)(iv); Para. 9(c) (ii), (iii) (iv); Para. 10(a)(iv), (vii); Para. 10(c)(i), (vi); Para. 11(b)(ii), (v), (vi), (vii)}
- e. Implement long-term policies and programmes focusing on improving land and water governance and providing equitable access to land and water resources with due consideration to sustaining agricultural productivity and food security, providing ecosystem services, combating deforestation, conserving biological diversity, sequestering carbon and contributing to the regulation of climate. {Para. 8(d)(a)(ii); Para. 9; Para. 9(a)(xi); Para. 9(c)(ii); Para. 9 (d); Para. 9(d)(ii); Para. 10(c)(i)}
- f. Reduce land degradation and rehabilitate degraded land by implementing sustainable agricultural and livestock production practices together with actions that lead to the recovery of the soil's physical integrity. {Para. 9(b); Para. 9(b)(ii), (iv); Para. 10(c)(i)}
- g. Promote sustainable land use and livelihoods by providing greater tenure security and rights for people living in the affected areas especially vulnerable groups, encouraging land users to invest in soil and water conservation, and reducing soil erosion through sustainable agro-forestry practices. {Para. 11(b)(ii), (vi), (vii)}
- h. Develop and implement systems to inventory, assess, monitor and further understand the capacity of the land to support ecosystem functions. {Para. 9(a)(ii)}
- i. Ensure environmental sustainability in rural areas by promoting sustainable land use and environment management practices, including ecosystem conservation through community-based programmes, and safe waste management practices. {Para. 8(d)(e); Para. 8(d)(e)(i)-(iv)}

- j. Take actions to prevent sand dune movement and reduce the frequency and severity of sandstorms, *inter alia*, through strengthening of early warning systems and restoring vegetation. {Para. 11(b)(viii)}

7. Intensify efforts for capacity building and technology transfer

Capacity building and technology transfer needs in developing countries especially within the context of meeting development goals are huge and diverse. To this end, governments together with relevant stakeholders and partners should implement the following actions.

- a. Enhance capacity-building and technology transfer efforts by fully implementing the actions agreed under the Agenda 21, JPOI and the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building. {Para. 21(c); Para. 21(c)(iii)}
- b. Promote universal and free access to primary education and develop human resources capacity through appropriate education and training programmes, in particular for rural youth. {Para.17(b)}
- c. Promote the utilization of efficient and cost-effective technologies for the implementation of sustainable land management programs at national level, and provide economic incentives to small-scale resource poor farmers for acquiring suitable technologies and adopting sustainable practices. {Para. 9(a)(x), (xiv)}
- d. Strengthen human resource and institutional capacity of Small Island Developing States and Africa for integrated rural development and sustainable management of natural resources, including in coastal zones and marine fisheries, wetlands. {Para. 17(g)}
- e. Develop and strengthen human resources, technical and institutional capacities in meeting the challenges of sustainable agriculture and rural development, with special emphasis on:
 - agricultural production and marketing, as well as in of food value chains, {Para. 6(d)(i); Para. 17(c)}
 - integrated pest management approaches, {Para.6(a)(xiii)}
 - land use planning and management, {Para. 9(a)}
 - research and dissemination, {Para. 21(c)(iv)}
 - scaling up of best practices in agricultural and rural development and in combating drought and desertification, {Chapeau; Para. 8(d)(d)(xiii); Para. 9(a)(xviii); Para. 11(c)(v)}
 - application of tools and technologies for monitoring soil quality and land degradation, {Para. 9(b)(v)}
 - bridging the data gaps, and developing new risk management tools, {Para. 8(d)(d)(xii); Para.9(a)(xv), (xvi); Para. 9(b)(v)}
 - enhancing the scientific understanding of land resources systems, {Para. 9(e)(iv)}
 - developing national innovation capacity, {Para. 6(b)(vii)}
 - utilizing climatic information and forecasts before, during and after drought events, {Para. 10(b)(v)}

- integrating issues related to drought into national, regional and global sustainable development strategies and plans, {Para. 10(a)(i)}
- organic agriculture, sustainable bio-based products in agriculture, and the management and control of invasive species, {Para. 6(a)(iv), (v), (xi)}
- planning for disaster management, {Para. 11(c)(iii)}
- development, deployment and diffusion of technologies, {Para. 11(c)(v); Para. 20(b); Para. 21(c)(iv)}
- establishing drought and desertification-related indicators and related web-based information systems. {Para. 10(b)(iii)}

8. Enable Africa to meet development goals

African Governments and their development partners need to make extraordinary efforts in terms of implementing a holistic and multi-pronged approach to address the daunting challenges the continent is facing. Towards this aim, actions to be implemented include but not limited to the following.

- a. Improve the access of African populations in particular the most vulnerable ones in rural areas to basic primary services like water, sanitation, health, and education. {Para. 12(h)(ii)}
- b. Support actions at all levels for ecologically and socially sustainable use of natural resources, diversification of African economies, accelerating Africa's integration into world markets, as well as an African green revolution. {Para. 12; Para. Para. 12(d)(ii)}
- c. Revitalize agriculture development in Africa by:
 - accelerating the implementation of comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme of NEPAD, including the implementation of the Maputo Declaration, {Para. 12(a)(iv)}
 - investing in agriculture and rural infrastructure, {Para. 12(a)(v); Para. 12(b)(v), (vi)}
 - stimulating private investments in agriculture while supporting small farmers, {Para. 12(a)(vi)}
 - reforming agricultural development policies and institutions, and {Para. 12(c)}
 - enhancing farmers' access to markets. {Para. 12(d)(i)}
- d. Enhance productivity of African agriculture by:
 - strengthening agricultural research and extension systems, {Para.12(b)(iii); Para. 12(h)(vii)}
 - facilitating scaling up of successful practices, {Para.12(b)(viii)}
 - promoting equitable access to land and other productive resources, {Para 12(a)(x)}
 - providing secure land tenure and rights, {Para.12(a)(x)}
 - improving land and water governance, and {Para.12(a)(xi), (xiii); Para.12(d)(iv)}
 - encouraging agro-ecological practices, including the promotion of traditional and indigenous knowledge. {Para.12(b)(viii)}
- e. Integrate African farmers and local entrepreneurs into agricultural supply chains by:

- providing timely access by farmers to affordable inputs and credit, {Para. 12(b)(i)}
 - enhancing access to public and private insurance instruments, {Para. 12(b)(i)}
 - supporting the participation of farmer organizations into decision making processes, {Para. 12(b)(ii)}
 - strengthening production and marketing capacity of farmer organizations, {Para. 12(b)(iii)}
 - improving market infrastructure and market information systems. {Para. 12(b)(iv)}
- f. Reduce pre- and post- harvest losses especially through:
- infrastructure and transport development, {Para. 12(b)(vi)}
 - improvement of storage capacity and supply chains, {Para. 12(b)(vi)}
 - transfer of technology in line with national and local needs. {Para. 12(b)(vi)}
- g. Create an enabling environment to achieve sustainable development in Africa by improving governance at all levels, implementing pro-poor economic policies, deepening democracy, preventing conflicts, managing post-conflict development and consolidation, protecting human rights, and strengthening active participation. {Para. 12(c)}
- h. Supporting African regional development organisations in their efforts to provide and mobilize support for securing coordination in national strategies and policies for agricultural development and food security; improving the institutional environment for the agricultural economy; and sustainable management of trans-boundary water resources. {Para. 12(d)(iii), (iv)}
- i. Reduce the debt burden of African countries through effective debt management, and extend debt restructuring facility to those countries which are not eligible for assistance under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. {Para. 12(e)}

9. Adapt to climate change

Although adaptation measures will vary enormously, efforts should be targeted mainly at reducing the vulnerabilities of rural poor and strengthening their coping capacities. In this regard:

- a. Integrate climate change adaptation measures and disaster risk reduction strategies in agricultural and rural development programs and sustainable land management and action plans while ensuring development, transfer and diffusion of new technologies to decrease vulnerability to climate change. {Para. 20(a), (b)}
- b. Disseminate strategies and practices to combat desertification and mitigate the negative impact of climate change by:
- promoting sustainable land management practices, {Para.11(b)(i); Para. 20(a)}
 - initiating community-based natural resources management programs, {Para.8(d)(e)(iii)}
 - rehabilitating degraded lands, {Para. 11(b)(iv)}
 - integrating pastoral and agricultural land uses including rangeland management practices, {Para. 11(b)(iv)}

- enhancing soil productivity, {Para. 11(b)(ii)}
 - promoting sustainable water management practices. {Para. 11(b)(v)}
- c. Establish guidelines for development of drought indices for use in different parts of the world to facilitate the compilation and reporting of drought conditions. {Para. 10(b)(iv)}

10. Increase international financial and technical cooperation for development

Meeting the sustainable development agenda not only requires significant changes in policies and priorities, but also a major effort by developing countries and their development partners to mobilize new and additional financial resources, including the implementation of following actions.

- a. Meet all official development assistance commitments, including the commitments made at the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development. {Chapeau, Para. 21(a)(i)}
- b. Put in place streamlined procedures for timely disbursement of development assistance funds. {Para. 6(e)(ii)}
- c. Scale up support for the implementation of regional agricultural development programs ensuring that ODA is supportive of national development priorities and increases in the volume of ODA are accompanied by improvements in the effectiveness of aid. {Chapeau; Para. 6; Para. 12(f)(iii), (iv)}
- d. Mobilize adequate, predictable and timely financial resources for the implementation of the ten-year strategic plan of the UNCCD. {Para. 11(a)(v)}
- e. Invite the GEF to facilitate access to full range of GEF funds relating to land degradation and desertification, including simplification of GEF procedures. {Para. 11(c)(x)}
- f. Explore sovereign debt restructuring mechanisms based on existing frameworks and principles, with broad creditors' and debtors' participation and ensuring comparable burden-sharing among creditors. {Para. 21(a)(v)}
- g. Promote the exchange and transfer of information on new and improved technologies and best practices as appropriate, through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation. {Para. 9(a)(xviii)}
- h. Support the implementation of sustainable consumption and production patterns and the development of 10-year framework of programmes, complementing regional and national initiatives following the principles and provisions contained in the JPOI. {Para. 19(a), (b)}
- i. Strengthen the resilience of agriculture by implementing actions leading to sustainable use of biodiversity, and realizing the objectives of the International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources. {Para. 6(a)(viii), (ix), (x)}

- j. Implement the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development for the SIDS in a manner that addresses climate change adaptation needs. {Para. 20(c)}

11. Strengthen multi-stakeholders participation and partnerships

Governments of developing countries should seek and mobilize an increasing engagement of various stakeholders (international institutions, civil society, policy and research community and local communities etc.) to back up implementation at national and local levels, especially in the programs and processes aimed at:

- a. Enhancing coherence between and within international processes and institutions having an impact on agriculture, food security and rural development. {Para.13}
- b. Supporting regional initiatives and related national programmes for combating desertification. {Para.11(c)(xi)}
- c. Enhancing the level of assistance to those developing countries implementing governance reforms, including land tenure reforms to enhance sustainable livelihoods. {Para.9(e)(ii)}
- d. Encouraging the farmers to adopt practices that would restore, maintain and enhance ecosystem services. {Para. 6(a)(xix)}
- e. Promoting an equitable multilateral trading system, including strengthening of trading capacities of developing countries. {Para. 21(b)(i), (iii)}
- f. Reaching a successful and timely conclusion to the World Trade Organization Doha Round with an ambitious, balanced and development-oriented outcome. {Chapeau}
- g. Enhancing coordination and coherence among the United Nations system and all relevant international organizations, while respecting their individual mandates. {Chapeau; Para. 6(d)(ix), (x); Para. 10(d)(iv); Para. 11(a)(i); Para. 12(i)}
- h. Strengthening cooperation and coordination among the three Rio Conventions, while respecting their individual mandates. {Chapeau; Para. 10(d)(iv); Para. 12(i)}
- i. Monitoring the implementation of CSD-17 decisions. In this regard, FAO in collaboration with IFAD and WFP should follow up the implementation of decisions on agriculture and rural development; and UNCCD in partnership with relevant UN system organizations on land, drought and desertification. The Commission will follow up decisions taken on Africa in 2012 and 2016. { Follow-up on agriculture and rural development; Follow-up on land, drought and desertification; Follow-up on Africa }