

ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA
16-27 SEPTEMBER 2013

MEDIA FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

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What is the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification?

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD), was adopted on 17 June 1994 in Paris, France, and entered into force in 1996. The Convention enjoys a universal membership of 194 country Parties, and one regional economic integration organization - the European Union. The Convention is implemented on the basis of five regional implementation annexes for [Africa](#), [Asia](#), [Central and Eastern Europe](#), [Latin America and the Caribbean](#), and [the Northern Mediterranean](#). For more information on the regional annexes see Fact Sheets 11-15 available online at the following address: <http://www.unccd.int/en/resources/Library/Pages/Fact.aspx>

At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in June 2012, world leaders called for global action in three key areas in the context of the Convention: to strive towards a land-degradation neutral world; to monitor, globally, land degradation and land restoration; and to strengthen the scientific basis of the Convention.

What is the mandate of the Convention?

The objective of the Convention is to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought by taking effective action at all levels through international cooperation and partnership agreements in order to achieve sustainable development in the affected areas. In 2007, the parties adopted [the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance for the implementation of the Convention \(2008-2018\) \(The Strategy\)](#). It specifies the four strategic objectives and related five operational objectives to be achieved during this period. COP11 will review [The Mid-Term evaluation of the implementation Strategy](#).

Why do the Drylands Matter?

The scope of the Convention is the arid, semi-arid and dry-sub humid areas, which are collectively known as drylands. They make up 34.8% of the Earth and are inhabited by over two billion people. Due to their extensiveness, dryland ecosystems play a critical role in the regulation of the global climate. They are also a significant contributor to the world's food security. Ninety percent of the drylands inhabitants are in developing countries and a significant proportion of them live off the natural resources in the drylands. (For specific details, refer to the Drylands [Factsheet](http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/Pages/About-the-Convention.aspx) <http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/Pages/About-the-Convention.aspx>)

The sensitivity of the dryland ecosystems to human and climatic variations makes land degradation, commonly referred to as desertification, a persistent problem in the drylands. Drylands are also particularly prone to droughts. The scientific community predicts that droughts will become more intense, more frequent and more severe. With poverty especially lagging in the drylands, these projections may have disastrous consequences, as was most recently evident in the Horn of Africa. The Convention is designed to mitigate these effects.

How does the Convention work?

The Parties meet every two years in a Conference – the Conference of the Parties (COP) – to negotiate and take key decisions. The tenth session of the Conference of Parties (COP 10) took place in Changwon City, Republic of Korea, in October 2011. The eleventh session will take place from 16-27 September 2013 in Windhoek, Namibia. In between the COP sessions, Parties work through their elected bureau, the COP Bureau, which is headed by a COP President, currently held by the Republic of Korea, who will hand it over to Namibia at the start of COP11. (For more information on the COP see [Article 22 of the Convention](#)).

The COP is the main policy formulation and decision-making body of the Convention. As such, it takes decisions regarding the implementation of Convention. Ministers attend the COP to facilitate decision making, and a High-level segment is often reserved for their interactions. The COP11 high-level segment is scheduled to take place on 23-24 September 2013.

The [Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention](#) (CRIC) and the [Committee on Science and Technology](#) (CST) are the Convention's subsidiary bodies. They meet during the COP's intercessional period, that is, between the COP sessions, and formulate recommendations to the Conference which makes final decisions. The [secretariat](#) and the [Global Mechanism provide the day-to-day serving of the COP](#), its subsidiary bodies and the affected Parties to carry out their work. (For more information on the Convention and its institutions see [UNCCD Fact Sheet 1](#))

What is the role of the subsidiary bodies?

The twelfth session of the CRIC will meet from 16-27 September 2013 during the COP11 session in Windhoek, Namibia. The [CRIC 12 agenda](#) includes: evaluating the 10-year Strategy; improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and format of reports to be submitted to the Conference of the Parties; promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies; reviewing collaboration with the Global Environment Facility; and as necessary, formulating the draft decisions for consideration by the COP.

The CST provides scientific advice to the COP and Parties. Its members, known as the scientific and technology correspondents (STCs), are drawn from the parties. In 2009, at the advice of the CST, COP 9 adopted the indicators that will be used to assess, starting from 2012, the impact of the implementation of the Convention in the drylands. However, no common methodologies for the

measurement of this impact were specified. With the assistance of the CST bureau, the secretariat has been assessing the methodologies that could be used for this purpose.

A special session of the CST, the CST S-3 had in its agenda, the consideration of progress made by the [ad hoc Advisory Group of Technical Experts \(AGTE\)](#) in refining the impact indicators relating to strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of The Strategy as well as the review of scientific information submitted by affected country Parties during the 2012 reporting and review cycle on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3, particularly on poverty and land cover in affected areas. In addition, the CST discussed the preparation of the [UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference](#) on “Combating DLDD for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices”.

CST 11 will also meet alongside COP 11 Namibia. Its [agenda](#) includes: the consideration of progress made in the organization of international, interdisciplinary scientific advice in the Convention process; reshaping the operation of the Committee on Science and Technology in line with The Strategy by reviewing the outcomes of the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference; improvement of knowledge management, including traditional knowledge, best practices and success stories through the Scientific Knowledge Brokering Portal; and promoting the analysis and dissemination of best practices.

All official documents to be considered by the CRIC 12 and CST11 are made available online under [Official Documents](#).

What facilities are available to the media?

A press working area has been set up at the Windhoek Country Club for exclusive use by the Media. It will have access to the Internet. However, all media are expected to bring all other equipment. The plenary hall is equipped with a broadcast multimedia output unit.

The [documentation](#) for COP 11 and its subsidiary bodies is available from the UNCCD COP 11 Website: www.unccd.int, under, ‘Official Documents’. Every morning, a daily journal is issued in hard copy and electronically, with information on the formal and informal activities planned for the day.

Logistical information about hotels, visa, travel and other matters is contained in a document titled [Information for Participants: \[http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/official-documents/Pages/SymbolDetail.aspx?k=ICCD/COP\\(11\\)/INF.1&ctx=COP\\(11\\)\]\(http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/official-documents/Pages/SymbolDetail.aspx?k=ICCD/COP\(11\)/INF.1&ctx=COP\(11\)\)](http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/official-documents/Pages/SymbolDetail.aspx?k=ICCD/COP(11)/INF.1&ctx=COP(11)).

Information on the requirements for journalists to participate in COP11 is available online at: <http://www.unccd.int/Lists/SiteDocumentLibrary/COP/COP%202011/Media/Media%20Registration%20Information.pdf>. Additional information on requirements from the host country is available at: <http://www.unccdcop11.com/#!media/c1mpv>.

A media workshop in preparation for COP 11 will take place on Saturday, 14 September 2013, in Windhoek, Namibia. It is open to local and international journalists. Additional information will be provided on the UNCCD COP11 media page. <http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/the-bodies/the-cop/cop11/Pages/default.aspx>

Three press conferences are provisionally planned to take place from 1:15-2:00 p.m. on the following dates: Monday, 16 September 2013 after the COP opening; Monday, 23 September 2013 after opening of the high level segment; and Friday, 27 September 2013 on the COP 11 outcome. Detailed information will be provided in the Press Kit to be issued on 9 September 2013.

The participants list is not available before the conference begins. However, journalists may contact the country delegates directly to identify potential experts or interviewees through the Convention's National Focal Points. Their contact details are provided here: <http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/Official-contacts/Pages/default.aspx>. The list of civil society organizations accredited to the Convention is also available here: <http://www.unccd.int/en/Stakeholders/civil-society/Accreditation-process/Pages/default.aspx>

Several side events and thematic forums are also planned on the margins of COP11. A provisional list of the events will be posted on the [COP 11 website](#).

When can I pick up my access badge?

For those arriving early, pre-registration will be available on Friday, 13 September and Saturday, 14 September between 9:00 am – 1:00 pm and 2:00 – 5:00 pm and Sunday, 15 September between 9:00 am – 1:00 pm and 3:00 – 5:00 pm. The on-site registration will continue throughout the session's working days from 8:00 am to 1.30 pm and from 2.30 to 5:00 pm. Any changes to the opening hours of the registration desk will be communicated in the Official Journal of the session. Journalists who have submitted their accreditation documentation will be issued with their badge upon presentation of their identification.

Can I get funded to attend the COP?

The secretariat has no mandate to provide financial or travel support for media representatives.

Who is the media contact at the secretariat?

The primary media contact at the secretariat is: Ms Wagaki Mwangi, Public Information and Media Officer, UNCCD; email: wmwangi@unccd.int or press@unccd.int; cell: + 49-173-268 7593.