



## **Task Force on Displacement**

### of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts

#### INPUTS OF

#### *United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)*

#### CONTEXT

As one of the three Rio Conventions, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) works in close synergy with UNFCCC.

Last year, the Executive Secretaries of the three Rio Conventions called for the establishment of a project preparation facility to finance projects addressing common issues. Making the case for a common approach, the statement notes that the challenges of land degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change are fundamentally intertwined, yet they are often addressed in isolation when implementing projects on the ground. It highlights, for example, that current management practices in the land use sector are responsible for approximately 25% of global greenhouse gas emissions and that, with over 1.3 billion people reliant on degrading land and exposed to an unprecedented level of climate stress, the situation is expected to worsen.

Against this backdrop, UNCCD and UNFCCC are expected to adopt a coherent and multi-disciplinary approach to advert, minimize and address the effects of the changing climatic and environmental conditions, including migration and displacement. Both Conventions are mentioned in the preamble of the current draft of the Global Compact for safe, regular and orderly migration, as their implementation is crucial to address the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin.

The effects of desertification land degradation and drought (DLDD) on migration have already been recognized in Convention text and its annexes. Due to the increased importance of the topic on the international agenda, UNCCD Parties reiterated the need



to work on this with a COP decision on *"The positive role that measures taken under the Convention can play to address desertification/land degradation and drought as one of the drivers that causes migration"* adopted by UNCCD Parties in Ordos, China (UNCCD COP 13, September 2017).

Recalling the provisions in the Convention text<sup>i</sup> and its annexes<sup>ii</sup>, the UNGA resolution 71/229 adopted on the 21 December 2016 as well as the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, adopted by the UNGA on the 19 September 2016, the decision invites the Parties of the Convention to

- (a) promote the positive role that measures taken under the Convention can play to address desertification/land degradation and drought as one of the drivers that causes migration;
- (b) Enhance international cooperation that aims to promote the positive role that measures taken under the Convention can play to address desertification/land degradation and drought as one of the drivers that causes migration;

and requests the UNCCD secretariat to:

- (a) Support Parties, upon request in implementing the actions mentioned above;
- (b) Commission, in consultation with the Bureau of the Convention of the Parties, subject to the availability of resources, a study on the role that measures taken under the Convention can play to address desertification/land degradation and drought as one of the drivers that causes migration;
- (c) Support regional and international cooperation and initiatives that aims to address desertification/land degradation and drought as one of the drivers that causes migration;
- (d) Strengthen cross-sectorial cooperation with other United Nations agencies and programs, regional and international organizations, and stakeholders to share information on the linkages between desertification/land degradation and drought and migration.

Considering that the national decision-makers attending UNCCD COPs often coincide with those participating at UNFCCC COPs, this decision taken at UNCCD COP in Ordos could play a crucial role in leveraging political support around the Task Force recommendations, with particular regard to slow onset events.



## POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION

Based on the expertise and data collected on the nexus migration-DLDD, UNCCD could provide a major support to the work of the Task Force on slow-onset events in the following fields:

- *Policy*: helping the leading organizations to fill the gaps in the current mapping exercises, with particular regard to activity I.2, II.2, II.3, II.4
- *Data and Assessment*: supporting the development of the expert group on slow-onset events (e.g. designing ToR, providing experts, scientific evidence etc.) and contributing to systematic data collection on DLDD
- *Framing and linkages*: (i) stimulating and awakening commitment, cooperation action of the Parties by engaging those countries that have been particularly active in promoting the UNCCD COP decision (ii) promoting recognition of these links in national, regional and international policy instruments (NDCs, GCM, etc.).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

With regard to the drafting of recommendations by the Task Force on Displacement, UNCCD suggests that the Task Force's Workplan should consider the following proposals:

- Include the revision of NAPs, SRAPs etc. of the three Rio Conventions in the mapping exercise. Climate change and environmental degradation are intertwined phenomena that can very rarely be separated in trying to better understand displacement related to slow onset events
- Considering the role of land access (land and tenure) as a key component to address displacement and the role of land restoration, sustainable land management and drought early warning systems to avert and minimize it.

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<sup>i</sup> "Mindful that desertification and drought affect sustainable development through their interrelationships with important social problems such as poverty, poor health and nutrition, lack of food security, and those arising from migration, displacement of persons and demographic dynamics" (Preamble of the UNCCD Convention); in Art. 17, Parties agreed that "they would support research activities that take into account, where relevant, the relationship between poverty, migration caused by environmental factors, and desertification"

<sup>ii</sup> In Annex I, Parties of the African region convened in Art. 3 that "they shall adopt a basic approach that takes into consideration the difficult socio-economic conditions, exacerbated by deteriorating and fluctuating terms of trade, external indebtedness and political instability, which induce internal, regional and international migrations"; in Art. 8, Parties recommend that "National action programmes shall, as appropriate, include measures to improve the economic environment with a view to eradicating poverty, defining and applying population and migration policies to reduce population pressure on land"; in Art. 11,



Parties agreed that *"priority areas for sub-regional action programmes shall, as appropriate, focus on early warning systems and joint planning for mitigating the effects of drought, including measures to address the problems resulting from environmentally induced migrations"*;

Art. 2 of Annex II of the Convention invites the Parties of the Asian region Recalling that of to *"take into consideration the significant impact of conditions in the world economy and social problems such as poverty, poor health and nutrition, lack of food security, migration, displaced persons and demographic dynamics in carrying out their obligations under the Convention"*;

In Art. 2 of Annex III, Parties of the Latin American and Caribbean region agreed that the region will have to *"adopt an integrated approach to problems of desertification and drought by promoting sustainable development models that are in keeping with the environmental, economic and social situation in each country, taking into consideration that from the social point of view, the results of desertification and drought are impoverishment, migration, internal population movements, and the deterioration of the quality of life"*.