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## **Resolution adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly on 1 March 2024**

### **6/14. Strengthening international efforts to combat desertification and land degradation, restore degraded land, promote land conservation and sustainable land management, contribute to land degradation neutrality, and enhance drought resilience**

*The United Nations Environment Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 2/21 of 27 May 2016 on sand and dust storms, 2/24 of 27 May 2016 on combating desertification, land degradation and drought and promoting sustainable pastoralism and rangelands, 4/10 of 15 March 2019 on innovation on biodiversity and land degradation, 4/15 of 15 March 2019 on innovations in sustainable rangelands and pastoralism, 5/4 of 2 March 2022 on sustainable lake management and 5/5 of 2 March 2022 on nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development,

*Aware* that arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid areas together account for a significant proportion of the Earth's land area and are the habitat and source of livelihood for a large segment of the world's population,

*Recalling* General Assembly resolutions 72/220 of 20 December 2017 and 78/154 of 19 December 2023 on the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,<sup>1</sup>

*Recalling also* General Assembly resolution 73/284 of 1 March 2019 on the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030),

*Acknowledging* the importance of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in the fight against desertification, land degradation<sup>2</sup> and drought,

*Recognizing* the contributions of Indigenous Peoples and of local communities, including their knowledge, to combating desertification, land degradation and drought,

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, no. 33480.

<sup>2</sup> According to article 1 (f) of the Convention to Combat Desertification, "land degradation" means reduction or loss, in arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid areas, of the biological or economic productivity and complexity of rainfed cropland, irrigated cropland, or range, pasture, forest and woodlands resulting from land uses or from a process or combination of processes, including processes arising from human activities and habitation patterns, such as soil erosion caused by wind and/or water; deterioration of the physical, chemical and biological or economic properties of soil; and long-term loss of natural vegetation.

*Recalling* the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>3</sup> and its Sustainable Development Goals and the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the Convention to Combat Desertification adopted by the Conference of the Parties to that Convention at its thirteenth session,<sup>4</sup> and its strategic objectives, including to improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality,

*Recognizing* that the combating of desertification, restoration of degraded land and conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity enhance climate change and drought resilience, adaptation and mitigation and contribute positively to the livelihoods of local communities,

*Welcoming* the adoption by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,<sup>5</sup> including its goals and targets relevant to combating desertification, land degradation and drought,

*Highlighting* the importance of cooperation and collaboration among the secretariats of the Convention to Combat Desertification, the other Rio conventions and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements, while respecting their independence and respective mandates,

*Recognizing* the importance of multi-stakeholder initiatives and programmes, at all levels, to combat desertification and land degradation, restore degraded land, promote land conservation and sustainable land management, contribute to land degradation neutrality, and enhance drought resilience,

*Acknowledging* that gender equality and the empowerment of women, girls and young people will make a crucial contribution to combating desertification and land degradation, restoring degraded land, promoting land conservation and sustainable land management, contributing to land degradation neutrality, and enhancing drought resilience, as well as to achieving the 2030 Agenda,

*Recognizing* that the cost of restoring degraded land is much higher than that of taking action to combat desertification and land degradation, restore degraded land, contribute to land degradation neutrality, and enhance drought resilience by implementing sustainable land management activities,

*Welcoming* the offer made by Saudi Arabia to host the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification in Riyadh from 2 to 13 December 2024,

1. *Calls on* Member States, in their efforts to combat desertification and land degradation, restore degraded land, promote land conservation and sustainable land management, contribute to land degradation neutrality, and enhance drought resilience, to:

(a) Apply and, as appropriate, align with the 2018–2030 Strategic Framework of the Convention to Combat Desertification their national policies, programmes, plans and processes related to desertification, land degradation and drought, in all relevant sectors, to reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience to drought;

(b) Contribute, as appropriate, to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(c) Shift from reactive to proactive drought management, taking into consideration the importance of monitoring and early warning systems, risk and impact assessment, and mitigation, preparedness and response;

(d) Consider promoting integrated approaches to sustainable land management;

2. *Encourages* Member States, in their efforts to combat desertification and land degradation, restore degraded land, promote land conservation and sustainable land management, contribute to land degradation neutrality, and enhance drought resilience, to formulate or consider refining their voluntary land degradation neutrality targets, as appropriate;

3. *Calls on* Member States, in their efforts to combat desertification and land degradation, restore degraded land, promote land conservation and sustainable land management, contribute to land degradation neutrality, and enhance drought resilience, to further enhance the involvement of civil

<sup>3</sup> General Assembly resolution 70/1.

<sup>4</sup> Decision 7/COP.13 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification. See document ICCD/COP(13)/21/Add.1.

<sup>5</sup> Decision 15/4 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. See document CBD/COP/15/17.

society, especially women, girls and young people in the affected areas, in the implementation of policies, programmes, plans, actions and processes, as appropriate;

4. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, subject to the availability of resources, and in cooperation and collaboration with the Convention to Combat Desertification, the other Rio conventions, United Nations entities and programmes and other relevant organizations, within the scope of their respective mandates, in their efforts to combat desertification and land degradation, restore degraded land, promote land conservation and sustainable land management, contribute to land degradation neutrality, and enhance drought resilience, to:

- (a) Facilitate the sharing of knowledge;
- (b) Enhance data availability and bridge data gaps, in particular for countries with affected or threatened areas, including through the use of innovative technologies;
- (c) Facilitate the mobilization of adequate and additional resources to support Member States in their efforts;

5. *Encourages* Member States and relevant stakeholders, in their efforts to combat desertification and land degradation, restore degraded land, promote land conservation and sustainable land management, contribute to land degradation neutrality, and enhance drought resilience, to:

- (a) Continue to support, as appropriate, the implementation of relevant multi-stakeholder initiatives at the national, regional and global levels;
- (b) Strengthen North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation;
- (c) Implement or support nature-based solutions, as defined in United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/5, and ecosystem-based approaches, among other relevant approaches, as appropriate;
- (d) Strengthen cooperation and collaboration with relevant multilateral environmental agreements, including the three Rio conventions, while respecting their respective mandates;

6. *Encourages* scaled-up means of implementation, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the decisions of its Conference of the Parties, to combat desertification and drought and achieve land degradation neutrality, in particular in developing countries;

7. *Invites* the private sector to strengthen investments in the development, deployment, adaptation and scaling up of technologies relevant to combating desertification and land degradation, restoring degraded land, promoting land conservation and sustainable land management, contributing to land degradation neutrality, and enhancing drought resilience;

8. *Requests* the Executive Director to report to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its seventh session on the actions taken to implement the present resolution.