



REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE 10TH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION

29 AUGUST – 2 SEPTEMBER 2011

MEETING STATEMENT

The Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 10th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention for Combating Desertification (UNCCD) was held in Nadi, Fiji from 29 August to 2 September, 2011, was attended by 12 Pacific Island Parties to the Convention and Timor-Leste, partners, donors and non-governmental organizations from the region; and concluded with a Statement on:

Reaffirming the commitment by Pacific island countries to implement the objectives of the Convention;

Recognizing that the diverse collection of volcanic islands and coral atolls scattered across the Pacific region make up 30% of the earth's surface;

Drawing attention to the fact that Pacific lives and cultures are highly dependent on their land and sea; and even small scale land degradation will have severe and lasting consequences for the Pacific;

Recognising the value of collaborating and working in partnership within the Pacific Region, and with other SIDS, to implement SLM and related programmes;

The Meeting proposes the following.

In accordance with the Agenda Items for COP10, CRIC 10 and CST 10, the Pacific Island Countries and Timor-Leste highlighted the following priorities and recommendations for consideration:

1. National Action Plan (NAP) alignment

Recognising that NAP alignment is a significant consideration as well as a major challenge for all PICs¹ noting country driven priorities;

Affirming that it is priority to mainstream NAPs with national priorities and sustainable development plans and environmental management;

¹ PIC, Pacific or Pacific Region refers to Pacific Island Countries and Timor-Leste

Affirming that NAP alignment to the Convention 10-year Strategic Plan is important for meeting our obligations;

Drawing attention to the fact that it will place a strain on existing resources;

Further drawing attention to the need for policy and technical support;

Call for UNCCD Secretariat, the Global Mechanism and the Regional Coordinating Unit to make NAP alignment a priority in their work plans in order to support PICs to meet the 2014 target for the 10-year Strategic Plan;

Call for multilateral funding resources to be made available to support alignment processes, including, *inter alia*, regional and sub-regional training support and technical assistance;

2. Pacific Participation in CRIC, COP and CST meetings

Recognising the importance of PIC participation at CRIC, COP and CST meetings;

Acknowledging that resources are a limiting factor for PICs to prepare and participate in UNCCD forums;

Drawing attention to the unpredictability of financial resources to support PIC participation;

Urge the Secretariat and Global Mechanism to investigate reliable sources of funding and support that will assist PICs to prepare and actively participate in UNCCD meetings and processes;

Urge Pacific Country Parties to consider the importance of consistent representation to UNCCD forums;

3. National monitoring and information management systems

Acknowledging that national [baseline] data collection and ongoing monitoring of SLM activities are an essential part of addressing DLDD

Reaffirming the need for ongoing support for regular data collection and monitoring

Recognize the inherent value of unique and diverse traditional knowledge and practices in sustainable land management in the Pacific

Call for support for the development of integrated national level data and information systems that support natural resource management (data collection, storage, dissemination and management);

Further **call** for financial and technical support for national monitoring systems;

Encourage the development of legitimate, credible and relevant national monitoring and assessment systems that support evidence-based policy and decision-making processes and strengthen the socio-economic, traditional and environmental information and knowledge management aspects of DLDD issues.

4. Convention integration and coordination

Recognising that global collaboration across the Rio Conventions would assist with national government in harmonizing their own activities and having coherence and coordinated implementation;

Further recognizing that streamlining of reporting across all Rio Conventions would relieve the significant burden of reporting from PICs; strengthen coherence and coordinated implementation and increase effective mainstreaming of the DLDD and related environmental issues into national sustainable development plans;

The UNCCD Secretariat is **encouraged** to use its membership of the Joint Liaison Group to explore options towards streamlining reporting across the three Rio Conventions;

The Secretariat is **also encouraged** to use its membership of the Joint Liaison Group to explore options for coordination of planning and programming across the Rio Conventions;

5. Best practices

Encourage the Secretariat to develop a SLM best practices database with a specific focus on SIDS;

Encourage PICs to compile a national SLM best practices database and contribute to Global and SIDS best practices database;

Encourage the mainstreaming of SLM best practices into national policy and planning processes;

Call for financial and technical support for PICs to compile a national SLM best practices database and contribute to Global and SIDS best practices database.

6. Financial Flows (Integrated Finance Strategies (IFS) and Integrated Investment Strategy (IIF)

Recognize and advocate the need to explore new, additional and innovative channels of financial support to augment traditional funding sources, including support to regional institutions for capacity support.

7. Regional support

Encourage the Secretariat to strengthen regional reference centres to provide long-term technical assistance and policy advisory support;

Recognising the role of a Sub Regional Action Plan (SRAP) to support the development, implementation and alignment of NAPs;

Recognising that Pacific Island Countries are at different stages with the development of their NAPs ranging from countries without NAPs to countries in the process of formulating NAPs and countries that are implementing NAPs;

Recognising that there are existing regional mechanisms that are already providing support to Pacific Island Countries in the development of their NAPs and related instruments for addressing DLDD issues;

Draw attention to the need to support for initial research and related preparatory steps for developing a Pacific SRAP that responds effectively to supporting the diverse needs and requirements of Pacific Island Countries' NAPs and their supporting national action frameworks.