



Summary of the 7th Meeting of the UNCCD CSO Panel (18 August 2020)

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Panel had its seventh meeting on Tuesday 18 August 2020.

In this meeting, the Panel members discussed the following topics: updates on the CSO panel website, the finalization of the work program and budget, the current process led by FAO and UNCCD to produce a technical guide on inclusion of VGGT into LDN programs, the preparation of the next newsletter.

The CSO panel website (<https://csopanel.org/>) is now online and will be regularly updated by all members.

The CSO panel work program for the 2020-2021 biennium is being finalized. It contains five “work-packages”:

1. CSO Panel and UNCCD processes
2. Communication and information sharing toward accredited CSOs
3. CSO preparation and involvement in CRIC, CST and COP
4. CSO involvement in implementing COP14 decisions
5. Synergies between UNCCD and other UN Conventions

Decision 26/COP14 on land tenure is implemented through production of a technical guide on how to integrate the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT) into implementation of the Convention and land degradation neutrality. In this process, several online multi-stakeholders consultations are held. The CSO panel members are participating to these consultations and regularly inform and consult accredited CSOs.

The CSO panel members agreed that the next issue should be ready by September 2020 and should include among others the following topics: report from the intergovernmental working group on drought, report on the SPI work, report on the preparation of the technical guide to integrate VGGT into the LDN, information on the panel work program, any other content coming from accredited CSOs.

In this meeting, the UNCCD secretariat also provided the Panel members with updates on several topics:

- The CRIC19 is scheduled from 10 to 12 of February 2021 in Bonn, Germany (provided the COVID-19 pandemic no longer impacts international travels). The CRIC19 agenda will notably include discussion on Land Tenure, Gender Program and Drought Initiative. Official documents will be ready by the end of 2020. As no physical meeting of the CSO panel members should be possible before 2021, further discussions on how the CSOs can collaborate efficiently online to prepare for CRIC will be needed in next meetings.
- The UNCCD Secretariat will meet with UNFCCC COP26 team and with Youth network on Climate Change, regarding 2021 agenda and preparation. The Secretariat is expected to give feedbacks on these discussions.
- The new edition of the Global Land Outlook is under preparation. The CSO panel requested the UNCCD Secretariat to keep the CSOs in general and particularly the CSO



panel, involved in the preparation of the GLO2. The publication should contain inputs from the CSOs on the topics of the GLO. In this regard, the secretariat should ensure that the staff in charge of the GLO associates the panel to support in the active engagement of the civil society organizations.

Finally, during this meeting the CSO panel and the Secretariat discussed an issue voiced by a CSO from WEOG region regarding the poor quality of CSO representation in the Global Panel Discussion organized by UNCCD Capacity Building Marketplace on the subject “Is Poverty necessary in the world to mitigate Climate Change?” The recording of this webinar is available online. Toward the end of the video presentation from CSOs are including but they are of poor quality: poorly edited and with contents not clearly linked to the contents of the webinar. This reflect badly on CSOs action.

The CSO panel requested the UNCCD secretariat to gather information on the purpose of attaching those contributions to the final edited video. Furthermore, the CSO Panel requested information on why the accredited CSOs were not informed in advance so as to provide appropriate videos for portraying their work. The CSO panel also requested the secretariat to bring this concern to the UNCCD CBM and insist in the need to show properly the nature of the CSO activities in the future.