



Summary of the 8th Meeting of the UNCCD CSO Panel (25 September 2020)

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Panel had its eighth meeting on Friday 25 August 2020.

This meeting was focused on the following issues, the outcomes of which are still ongoing: finalization of the 2020-2021 work program, newsletter, UNCCD CBM and the CSO panel collaboration, CSO Alliance and One logo initiative, preparation for the GLO2, private sector audit, the current process led by FAO and UNCCD to produce a technical guide on inclusion of VGGT into LDN programs, as well as updates on other UN structures.

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

The CSO Panel reviewed the Newsletter and discussed few corrections and additions. The newsletter includes 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 and content coming from several accredited CSOs. The Newsletter was finalized and set to be published on September 30th.

Furthermore, the Panel requested to be put through to the UNCCD Capacity Building Marketplace (CBM) for a better collaboration. One of the members from the Panel was identified to be a lead person for maintaining the connection. As a result of the cooperation a training for the CSOs is expected be arranged by CBM.

The UNCCD Secretariat provided the Panel members with updates on several topics:

- The Secretariat will be meeting with UNFCCC COP26 teams assuring to keep the CSO panel further informed about the outputs of the meeting (2021 agenda/ preparation etc.)
- The new edition of the Global Land Outlook is still under preparation. One member of the Panel will join the GLO steering committee helping the CSO panel to ensure CSOs participation in the preparation process. The next meeting for the steering committee is expected to take place in November. CSOs can start contributing to the GLO by sending case studies on sustainable land management projects.

Online consultations to elaborate a technical guide for integration of Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT) into implementation of the Convention and land degradation neutrality are still going on. One member of the Panel has been participating in the consultations. The timing for the national consultations have not been confirmed yet. The participation of CSOs will be part of the Terms of Reference for the consultation and CSOs will be associated once the countries for national consultations are identified. Inputs and materials of the CSOs will be sent the Secretariat for potential inclusion into the work of the



technical guide. The next consultation is expected to take place in early October and will focus on the challenges of integrating the VGGT principles in the implementation of the convention of UNCCD.

Additionally, the Panel discussed the private sector audit. The Panel member and several CSOs participated in a meeting with the evaluation team, where civil society requested more transparency in private sector engagement: more communication prior to cops about private companies that apply for accreditation as well as putting up environmental and social safeguards.

Finally, the Panel discussed the collaboration between UNCCD and other UN agencies. The Secretariat collaborates closely with the Rio conventions and is involved in the UN decade on ecosystem restoration by UNEP and FAO. Collaboration is also happening with UN agencies particularly dealing with socioeconomic aspects and areas relevant to desertification such as ILO, UNDP. The Panel and the Secretariat will go through the work program together and identify the potential collaboration with UN agencies relevant for each task.

The next meeting of the CSO Panel will be held on the 15th of May at 15:00 (Germany time) on Microsoft Teams. Nahid Naghizadeh will be chairing the meeting.