

CSO PANEL NEWSLETTER

September 2021 – January 2022



Dear Members of the Accredited CSOs to the UNCCD,

We hope that you all had a good start to the New Year and wish that it unfolds successfully and above all peacefully and healthy for all.

It is our pleasure to share with you the latest issue of our newsletter, that brings news related to land conservation and sustainable use of its resources from all over the world.

This ninth issue includes news and updates from the Convention, CSO Panel and networks, UNFCCC COP26 and upcoming global events. Enjoy the reading and stay tuned!

Your CSO Panel (Csopanel@unccd.int)

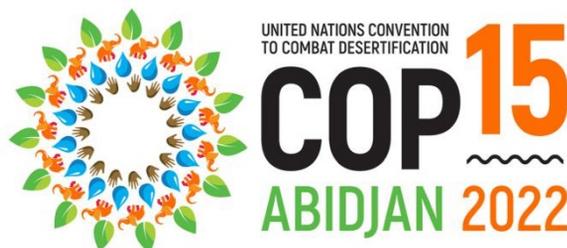
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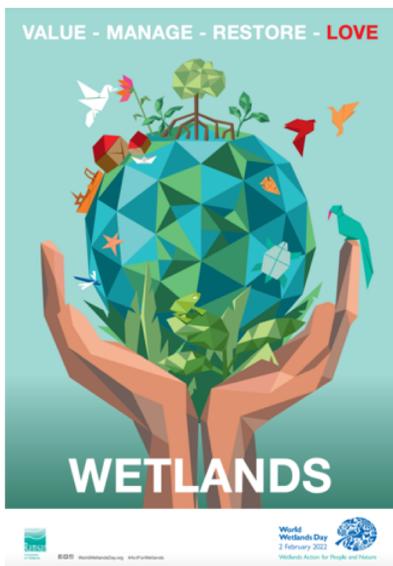
Côte d'Ivoire announces theme of UNCCD COP15

'Land. Life. Legacy: From scarcity to prosperity' is the theme of UNCCD COP15 to be held from 9-20 May 2022 in Abidjan.

Côte d'Ivoire has unveiled the logo and announced the theme of a major United Nations conference on the future of land management that the country is hosting from 9 to 20 May 2022 in Abidjan. Releasing the brand for the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Conference to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP15) 90 days to the start of the in-person event, Mr. Abou Bamba, head of the COP15 Organizing Committee said the theme, **'Land. Life. Legacy: From scarcity to prosperity'** is a call to action to ensure land, the lifeline on this planet, continues to benefit present and future generations.

Negotiations at COP15 will focus on the work of the fifteenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST15), the twentieth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC20), and to other major issues included in the programme of work of the COP. For agenda and relevant documents visit: <https://www.unccd.int/cop15>.





2022 World Wetlands Day

On February 2nd, the world celebrated its wetlands. Wetlands are often viewed as inhospitable wastelands, however they are some of the most productive ecosystems, which filter our water, provide habitat for all kinds of animals, protect our coastlines and help nature adapt to climate change. Though they cover only around 6 per cent of the Earth’s land surface, 40 per cent of all plant and animal species live or breed in wetlands. Wetland biodiversity matters for our health, our food supply, for tourism and for jobs. More than a billion people across the world depend on wetlands for their livelihoods that’s about one in eight people on Earth.

Wetlands are among the ecosystems with the highest rates of decline, loss and degradation. In fact, they are disappearing three times faster than forests.



It is urgent that we raise national and global awareness about wetlands in order to reverse their rapid loss and encourage actions to conserve and restore them. Events celebrating the [2022 World Wetlands Day](#) were hosted all over the world to increase people’s understanding of these critically important ecosystems and discuss the importance for their conservation.

The 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UNFCCC

COP 26: Key achievements

UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), the biggest climate-related conference on the planet, finally took place in Glasgow, with expectations and tensions running high after a year-long delay due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Held on Oct 31 - Nov 12, 2021 in Glasgow, UK the summit produced the “Glasgow Climate Pact” and was welcomed by many for its commitment to doubling adaptation finance and requesting countries to present more ambitious climate pledges next year. But, it will only survive if promises are kept and commitments translate into rapid action.



COP26 also reached finalization of guidelines for the full implementation of the Paris Agreement, a source of contentious negotiations over the last six years. The agreement covers issues around market mechanisms and transparency, which allows countries to continue building trust. Read more [here](#).

Great Green Wall Event at COP26

During COP26 a [high-level ministerial event](#) was held on the African led Great Green Wall initiative. The event identified critical elements to help the public and private sectors to make best use of the billions of dollars pledged this year, and bring to fruition 8,000km of green projects, stretching right across Africa.

The restoration of 100 million hectares of land by 2030 in this part of the Sahel is expected to create an estimated 10 million jobs and lock away 250 million tonnes of carbon in the soil. A decade in and now roughly 18 per cent complete, the Great Green Wall Initiative is bringing life back to Africa’s degraded landscapes.



Land restoration in Africa is indeed a cost-effective nature-based solution to combatting climate change and COP26 represents a unique opportunity to demonstrate that the fight for the climate goes hand in hand with the fight for land and nature.

Massively and quickly restoring African land to reduce poverty, reverse biodiversity loss and store planet-warming greenhouse gases makes compelling environmental, social and economic sense.



Ibrahim Thiaw
UNCCD Executive Secretary

#GreatGreenWall



Nature-based solutions (NBS) at COP 26

Nature-based solutions (NBS) were one of the key action tracks of the UK presidency at COP26. The term found its way into titles of 15 COP side-events and myriad coalitions to drive more funding.

The side events revolving around NbS served to amplify the understanding of NbS and their importance for cities to jointly address the climate and biodiversity crises, creating quality green jobs and wellbeing for local communities in the process. Key best practices were shared on what can be done to harness the full potential of NbS in current and future NDCs. Strategies to meaningfully engage civil society and SMEs were shared, seeking in particular to work with local governments in order to enact enabling policy frameworks.

Three new documentaries showcasing best-practice NbS in Action were screened on the final day of COP – to show what is possible with high quality, sustainable NbS. Each film featured a unique context where NbS has had positive impacts. Watch the [NbSI documentaries trailer](#), and the full films on the [NbSI Youtube channel](#).



Friday, 5 November 2021 | 10:00-12:00 GMT (Glasgow)   

COP26: Subnational Climate Action and Local Solutions in Mexico

Within the framework of the COP26 held in Glasgow, Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda, hand in hand with the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Relations and the Querétaro State Secretary of Sustainable Development, presented the Subnational Initiative for Climate Action. The initiative strengthens ecosystem services through the regeneration of forests and soils by forming carbon dioxide and water sinks to reduce the carbon footprint countrywide. Every ton is for the restoration of critical ecosystems. Learn more at:

<https://sierragorda.net/en/cop26/>



2022 World Wetlands Run campaign

On the occasion of World Wetlands Day an [international run/walk campaign \(#WorldWetlandsRun\)](#) was held between 2-5 February to raise awareness about the challenges wetlands face today. In this regard, on February 3rd, IDEA, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and WWF Azerbaijan organized a [running event in Baku](#) and called everyone to join this symbolic event, dedicated to [Ghizilagaj National Park](#), whose wetland area has been included into the list of internationally recognized endangered wetland areas, vital for many fish and marine birds and designated as a [Hope Spot](#) in 2019, under a global conservation campaign of Mission Blue.

Désertif'actions 2022 – Agroecology right now !

French CSO CARI is launching [Desertif'actions 2022](#) with several activities during the year to build and carry out advocacy.

Desertif'actions 2022 aims to put agroecology at the heart of the agenda in the combat against desertification and land degradation, by sharing and pooling the results of actions carried out by civil society and research.

This fifth edition of Désertif'actions will take place throughout the year 2022 following a three-phase process.

PHASE 1: January - April 2022 in as many countries as possible on a voluntary basis.

Preparation of a common advocacy of the civil society on agroecology as an answer to issues related to Land, Biodiversity and Climate.

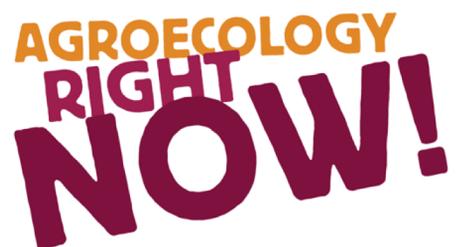
PHASE 2: May 2022 in Côte d'Ivoire during the COP15 of the UNCCD.

The joint advocacy is carried during the COP15 of the UNCCD in the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire in order to influence the decision making in favor of the implementation of agroecology.

PHASE 3: October 2022 in Montpellier (France) the International Desertif'actions Summit.

A multi-stakeholder meeting open to the world, allowing international civil society to meet and deepen its advocacy.

At the beginning of this year, in order to provide elements of advocacy on agroecology as an answer to issues related to land, biodiversity and climate CARI is launching an **online consultation**, to which you are invited to contribute. Do not hesitate to relay it in your networks <https://desertif-actions.org/reseau/?Survey> (available in French, English and Spanish).



CARI is proposing that civil society organizations involved in sustainable land management and the promotion of agroecology meet in **national workshops** to develop common positions before the end of March. Workshops are being prepared in about 15 countries, following common TORs: <https://desertif-actions.org/en/national-workshops-2022/>. Finally, the results of the consultations and workshops will be shared during an international webinar in April.

Contact CARI if you wish to organize or participate in a country workshop: contact@cariassociation.org

CARI is available to provide methodological support to any organization that needs to organize a preparatory workshop. However, CARI does not provide financial support for the organization of country workshops.



A new Ph.D. on Land degradation and Desertification launched

The University of Sassari in Italy (UNISS), supported by DesertNet International (DNI), has recently established a [Ph.D. program on Desertification and Land Degradation](#). It is the result of a partnership between UNISS, 2 Universities in Burkina Faso (Nazi Boni and Aube Nouvelle), and Hawassa University (Ethiopia). The ambition is to involve many other universities worldwide and create a network of top-level experts able to develop national programs/plans on combating desertification and land degradation.

Zai Plant Pit System in Burkina Faso to restore degraded drylands.



Water Sowing and Harvesting & Ecosystem Services: exchange between Peru and Costa Rica

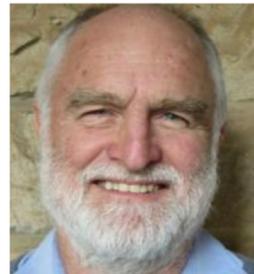
Water is a scarce natural resource on which the rural population's economic activities depend. Peru and Costa Rica have joined in a binational knowledge exchange project of sowing and harvesting water of rain, granted by European Union, facilitated by Expertise France, and deployed by AIDER. Peru exports the ancient pre-Incan technique of sowing and harvesting of water consisting in building reservoirs to store water. In exchange, Costa Rica shares its payments for ecosystems services scheme, where the beneficiaries of an ecosystem service make payments to the providers of that service. As a result, new water flows have appeared increasing resource availability in the surrounding reservoir areas.

Read more at [Siembra y cosecha de agua – AIDER](#)



An invitation to contribute to Science Day at COP 15

Noel Oettlé, CSO Observer to the SPI



Following the build-up to UNFCCC COP 26 in Glasgow, we all hoped that the international community would get serious about taking action. The rather disappointing results show us that there is still so much work to be done to secure the future of our small green, brown and blue planet.

The global scientific community has been producing ever-more evidence from the natural world about what we can do to sustain the living systems of the natural world for the future generations. Through contributions of “citizen science”, farmers and many other knowledge-holders have also broadened our understanding of what we need to be doing. A major challenge for us all is how to ensure that the decision makers understand what is on offer, and how it can be used to shape important decisions at the COPs and also back home in all of our countries. UNCCD Science Day has been created and curated by the SPI and others to just this. Since COP 13 it has provided an excellent platform for sharing cutting edge science in accessible ways that country delegates can enjoy and easily relate to.

Between now and next May, the SPI’s Science Day Organising Committee will be planning the event. We would like it to be innovative, engaging and hands-on so that delegates can learn experientially and interact with the scientists and from on displays.

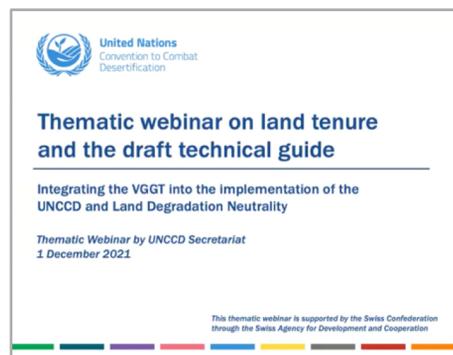
Contributions by civil society that can share scientific insights to promote sound solutions to the global environmental crisis will be very welcome. We will welcome proposals, suggestions and inspirations about what civil society could offer for Science Day.

This is really a great opportunity to get attention from the Parties and others at the COP. The agenda for Science Day is still shaping up. Please share your thoughts and suggestions, however wild they might be, by sending an email to me at dryland@global.co.za.

OTHER NEWS

Thematic Webinar on Tenure & Draft Technical Guide

The UNCCD Secretariat held a thematic webinar on land tenure for UNCCD country Parties, CSO panel and observers. The webinar introduced key tenure concepts and how land tenure is linked with UNCCD’s work. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) presented the draft technical guide on how to integrate the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of land, fisheries, and forests in the context of national food security (VGGT) into the Convention and land degradation neutrality (LDN). Participants who represented various countries and regions had ample opportunity to ask questions and familiarize themselves with the draft technical guide.



The outcomes of this consultation process will contribute to the final version of the technical guide, which will be presented for the consideration of the UNCCD COP15 in May 2022.

For those who could not attend the webinar, you can access the recordings in the different languages through the link [here](#).

The second extraordinary session of the Conference of the Parties COP (ES-2)

The second extraordinary session of the Conference of Parties (COP (ES-2) took place from 6 to 9 December 2021 through a silence/written procedure to consider and approve an interim programme budget for the Secretariat's operations in 2022 that will enable the Convention and the Secretariat to continue functioning until COP 15 can take place in Côte d'Ivoire in May, 2022. Report of this meeting is available [here](#).

UPCOMING/ ONGOING EVENTS



02-06 MAY 2022 / Seoul, Korea

The XV World Forestry Congress will take place under the theme "Building a Green, Healthy and Resilient Future with Forests" to further develop the outcomes of major global events scheduled before the Congress, including the Rio Conventions' Conferences of the Parties, the IUCN World Conservation Congress and the UN Food Systems Summit. More information [here](#).



9-20 MAY 2022 / Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

The fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and the meetings of its subsidiary bodies will focus on the work of the fifteenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST15), the twentieth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC20), and to other major issues included in the programme of work of the COP. For agenda and relevant documents visit: <https://www.unccd.int/cop15>.

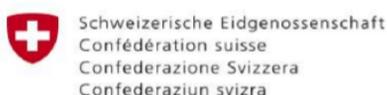


27-30 NOVEMBER 2022

8th International Conference on Deserts, Drylands and Desertification organized by the Ben Gurion University of the Negev in Israel will focus on the intersection of land and water and the impact of land degradation and drought on populations across the world. More details on the event are coming soon [here](#).



THANKS EVERYONE FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!



Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

This newsletter has been produced by the UNCCD CSO panel with financial support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The content of this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views of SDC.

Previous issues of the newsletter available [here](#)