Dear members of CSOs accredited to the UNCCD,

It is a pleasure to share with you this Eco-newsletter that provides daily news of the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) taking place in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire.

At COP15, we urge you all to seize the opportunity to contribute to the framing process and deliberations of the conference in order to strengthen the political impact of civil society. Our ambition is to help CSOs, indigenous peoples and local communities make their voices heard on all land issues, so continue to share your experiences and call for action from the front lines of the desertification crisis.

Follow the actions of civil society at COP15 on the website of the CSO panel (www.csopanel.org), and please don’t forget to use the following hashtags for social media postings: #UNCCDCSO / #UNCCDCOP15

Instagram: @UNCCD_CSO / Twitter: @UNCCDcso

THE GREAT GREEN WALL SIDE EVENT
Together to achieve the Great Green Wall: let’s invest in local initiatives

On May 16, 2022 the French Institute of Abidjan (plateau) hosted a side event at COP 15 whose subject focused on the Great Green Wall.

The central theme of this exchange meeting organized by ‘SOS Sahel’ was titled as "Together to achieve the Great Green Wall: Let’s invest in local initiatives". To address all aspects of this topic, two panels discussed two sub-themes.

The first panel addressed the theme: how to develop Great Green Wall projects that have an impact and attract the interest of investors.

On this note, several initiatives were presented:
- Development of honey sector with shops selling local products;
- Save fuel for farmers and irrigate their field in a natural way;
- Accessing green jobs for young people;
- Access to water through solar panels.

However, the implementation of these initiatives has raised some challenges.

These include difficulties in accessing the market and public funding.

As for the second panel, it focused on the mechanisms to connect project leaders and investors.

Indeed, Jean Marc GARO believes that there are funds and that this is probably not the limiting factor. He also noted that GMV project leaders and investors are not natural partners and do not speak the same language.

The session ended with a strong recommendation: Move towards a relief mechanism for access to finance.
How to mobilize local actors around the Great Green Wall

Cari, Spong, the African Development Bank and several partners organized a side event on Monday, May 16, 2022 with the theme: The Great Green Wall, how to act as close as possible to local actors?
This event was held at the Africa Pavilion with several panelists including the French Development Agency (AFD), the Accelerator of the Great Green Wall and many others. Sandra speaking on behalf of the French Development Agency, said the points concerning the financing of social engineering, the support of states in their decentralization policy and finally the valorization of actors.

Agroecology can save our planet

Another side events organised by civil society saw the entry into the competition of the Dutch organisation BothEnds. It was on May 16, 2022 at the MET 13 of the space that hosts the COP 15, around the theme of financing Agroecology as a means of achieving the neutrality of land degradation by sharing the experiences of some resource persons. Ange David BAIMEY of GRAIN shared the organization’s experience of working with local organizations and communities and insisted on the political side of Agroecology: "We have the key to succeed and counter desertification with peasant Agroecology because for us it participates in food sovereignty". According to him, it is important to differentiate the Agroecology advocated by agro-industrial multinationals and brave peasants. He also recalled that farmers need adequate public policies to facilitate their agricultural activities in their territories rather than policies that promote their placement in value chains to satisfy international markets. Following her, Marioldy Sanchez of the "AIDER" organization in Peru shared the experience of Latin American communities. For her, endogenous knowledge exists, but public funding is not interested in it. Other speakers such as Daniel Moss of AEF in the United States and a representative of IFAD were also engaged in the dialogue.

Following him, Mr. Arona Soumaré of the African Development Bank noted that there are funds available but the main difficulty that blocks the financing of civil society actors is the fact that they come in a dispersed way."
To solve this thorny problem, therefore, the organisations would have to come in consortium because he insists on the existence of funds to accompany Community initiatives. Finally, Mr. SYVESTRE of Burkina calls for a change to have better results.

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AGRO-ECOLOGY AND TERRITORIAL APPROACHES. Beyond words, methods and tools to act.

The Minister-Governor of the Autonomous District of Abidjan, Robert Beugré Mambé, aims to green up the district, as part of the implementation of the Circular Economy initiative, in order to fight against deforestation and climate change.

"We plan to create 35 green crossroads in Abidjan and plant more than 100,000 trees with the support of the African Development Bank (AfDB),” said Mr. Mambé on Monday, May 16, 2022, during a side event initiated at COP 15 on desertification taking place in Abidjan.

According to the Minister-Governor, these actions, which not only contribute to reforestation and urban development but also provide a pleasant living environment, must be supported and preserved by both the authorities and the population.

As such, he pleads for the preservation of trees planted in municipalities that are sometimes cut down during road developments. It also intends to introduce repressive measures against the perpetrators of the felling of these trees.

Actions carried out in the district of Abidjan to contribute to reforestation can also be carried out in other cities, he stressed.

The 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNCCD) opened in Abidjan on Monday, May 9, 2022, in the presence of the Ivorian President, Alassane Ouattara. The conference will end on May 20th.