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: @UNCCDCSO / Twitter: @UNCCDcso

COP15 – Day 6 (May 14)

Valuing local initiatives is essential to combat land degradation

Valuing local initiatives and showing the essential contribution of communities in the dissemination of sustainable agriculture and against land degradation in the arid zones of Africa, this is what motivated the holding of an Event on May 13. The speakers notably returned from the initiatives of Cameroon and Senegal.

In Cameroon:

- Production of 6500 plants in nursery
- Planting trees adapted to harsh climatic conditions

In Senegal:

Establishment of agricultural production systems in arid areas resulting in the production and sale of 3 tons of vegetables from agroecology.

The session was also devoted to the contribution of local communities important in the fight against land degradation. While taking into account the fact that:

- Local communities live mainly on agriculture;
- Communities have a fairly proven potential;
- They have a good ability to adapt;
- According to experience, the best results are obtained when involving communities.
- Overall, it is important to involve local authorities in micro-projects to have their support because they play an important role, so the inclusion of scaling up in our projects and women’s access to land are the barley points.
- This Side Event is an initiative of the Small Grants Programme and SOS SAHEL.

With a full house in room MET12 last Friday to talk about agroecology, on the AVACLIM project, there is no doubt anymore that agroecology has its full place within the UNCCD!
Plenary of the Scientific & Technical Committee

On May 13, 2022, an important session on policy frameworks and thematic agenda items was held at the Sofitel Hotel Ivoire. During the session several statements were made. These focused on the following topics:
• Migration
• Gender
• Sand and dust storms
• Land tenure

Among other statements:
- The participation of the First Lady of Côte d’Ivoire in the women’s caucus which launched a call for capacity building and the implementation of the action plan on gender equality.
- The launch of the Abidjan initiative, which demonstrates the commitment of the Ivorian authorities in supporting initiatives to promote, involve and take charge of gender. The declaration stresses that in the absence of concrete actions by 2030 Africa will lose 2/3 of its arable land. The Africa region recommends:
  • The declaration of the gender action plan at the national level to facilitate its ownership by stakeholders and the consideration of vulnerable communities;
  • The need to strengthen women’s economic and technical capacities;
  • Increasing the representation of women in international decision-making and developing a guide on land tenure.

He thanked the United Nations coalition to combat sand and dust storms, appreciated the collaboration of UNEP and the UN in refining the map of sandstorm and dust sources and welcomed the development of the toolbox.

They stand ready to support the strengthening of country Parties to use its tools. Participation should be involved in the development of a global implementation initiative on this phenomenon in order to address its anthropogenic sources and data and information gaps. The convention should focus on mitigation actions at source such as promoting sustainable land management, combating desertification and land degradation with attention to the participation of youth, women and other enabling groups.

A roadmap for land restoration and food security in grasslands, rangelands and savannahs

The roadmap highlights the necessary imperative to train rural youth on the land issue because they are because of their lack of understanding of the complicit subject of land grabs that is due to the fact that land predators use the naivety of young people to take their land.
This was also the subject of a study conducted by the NGO YILAA. A comparative study between land grabbing in Burkina Faso and Benin will soon be released in order to raise awareness among young people about land.
Other points to take away from this session:
- The urgency of creating a favorable and incentive-based environment that will lead to job creation;
- Collaborative work to drive innovation for the benefit of the earth;
- Massive investment in all sectors;
- Scale up to regenerate the land.