



COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

SUBJECT CATEGORY:

Climate Change

TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:

Multilateral

FORM:

Legally binding treaty

STATUS:

- Signed by Canada: 1994
- Ratified by Canada: 1995
- In force in Canada: 1995
- In force internationally: 1996
- Canada withdrew in 2014, rejoined in 2016, became a full party on March 21, 2017

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:

Lead: Global Affairs Canada

Partners: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada,
Environment and Climate Change Canada

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**Web Links:**

- [UN: Sustainable Development Goal 15 – Life on Land](#)
- [UNCCD: Homepage](#)
- [UNCCD: Text of the Convention](#)
- [UNCCD: 2018-2030 Strategic Framework](#)
- [UNCCD: Gender Action Plan](#)
- [UNCCD: Fifteenth Session of the Conference of the Parties \(2022\)](#)

Contacts:

[GAC Inquiry Centre](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:

August 2022

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

The UNCCD (the Convention) is the only legally binding agreement that brings together the environment, development, and sustainable land management. The Convention addresses specifically arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid areas, known as drylands, where some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and communities can be found. Since rejoining in 2017, Canada has played a leadership role during negotiations held as part of the UNCCD's Conference of the Parties, which have led to key outcomes including the adoption of the Convention's Gender Action Plan and Roadmap, as well as the establishment of the Gender Caucus.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the Convention are to promote sustainable land management, improve peoples' living conditions in affected areas, and lessen the impacts of drought. The implementation of the UNCCD is helping to achieve a land degradation-neutral world, consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

KEY ELEMENTS

Affected Parties in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Northern Mediterranean, and Central and Eastern Europe prepare plans to address land degradation/drought and cooperate at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Developed country Parties support affected countries (particularly developing countries) by providing financial resources and facilitating knowledge sharing, technology transfer, and capacity building.

A permanent Secretariat located in Bonn, Germany, services the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies. This includes organizing formal meetings, coordinating reporting processes, and supporting the Convention's overall implementation. The UNCCD Global Mechanism works to mobilize and channel financial resources (including grants, loans, and other types of funding) to affected developing country Parties in support of the Convention's objectives.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The UNCCD has an important role to play in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 15 – Life on Land. Through the implementation of the Convention, Parties aim to build a future that avoids, minimizes, and reverses desertification/land degradation and mitigates the effects of drought in affected areas. Furthermore, Parties strive to achieve land degradation neutrality, a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources necessary to support ecosystem functions and services to enhance food security remain stable or increase.

CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

This Convention is important to Canada given the damaging environmental, social, and economic impacts of desertification, land degradation, and drought both at home and abroad.

With the dryland areas located in Western Canada, Canada is considered to be an affected developed country party under the Convention. Canada provides scientific and technical expertise related to sustainable land management, soil health, drought monitoring, land restoration, and landscape resilience to ensure that the UNCCD's work is based on the most up-to-date scientific knowledge.

Canada supports developing countries in meeting the objectives of the Convention notably through the Global Environment Facility, the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund, and institutional support provided to the UNCCD to further integrate gender equality into the Convention's implementation.

RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

Canada attended the UNCCD's Fifteenth Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in May 2022. The Canadian delegation played an active role at COP15 to ensure continued support for gender mainstreaming and implementation of the Convention's Gender Action Plan. Canada will continue to work with its international partners, both under the UNCCD and in other forums, to remain firmly engaged in the Convention's key areas of work, particularly as they relate to gender equality.

Reports

Every four years, the UNCCD national reporting process monitors progress made in the implementation of its 2018-2030 Strategic Framework. The UNCCD has also contributed to the follow-up of

progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the custodian agency for Sustainable Development Goal indicator 15.3.1 "proportion of land that is degraded over total land area".

Results

- 129 countries have committed to setting voluntary targets to achieve land degradation neutrality and more than 80 countries have already set their targets.
- 60 countries have prepared drought action plans, while another six countries are in the process of developing such plans.
- Since 2006, the Global Environment Facility has invested more than \$1 billion in resources for at least 190 projects and programs that encourage the use of sustainable land management practices to support national and regional development priorities. 143 million hectares are now under sustainable land management, benefitting more than 80 million smallholders.
- The Land Degradation Neutrality Fund currently has six active investments (totalling \$85.5 million) in Peru, Colombia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nicaragua, Kenya, Laos, and Bhutan.