

The UNCCD

At a Glance

Sergio A. Zelaya

DDD 5th International Conference 2014

Sede Boqer, Israel

17-20 November 2014



United Nations Convention
to Combat Desertification



Introduction

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (The UNCCD)

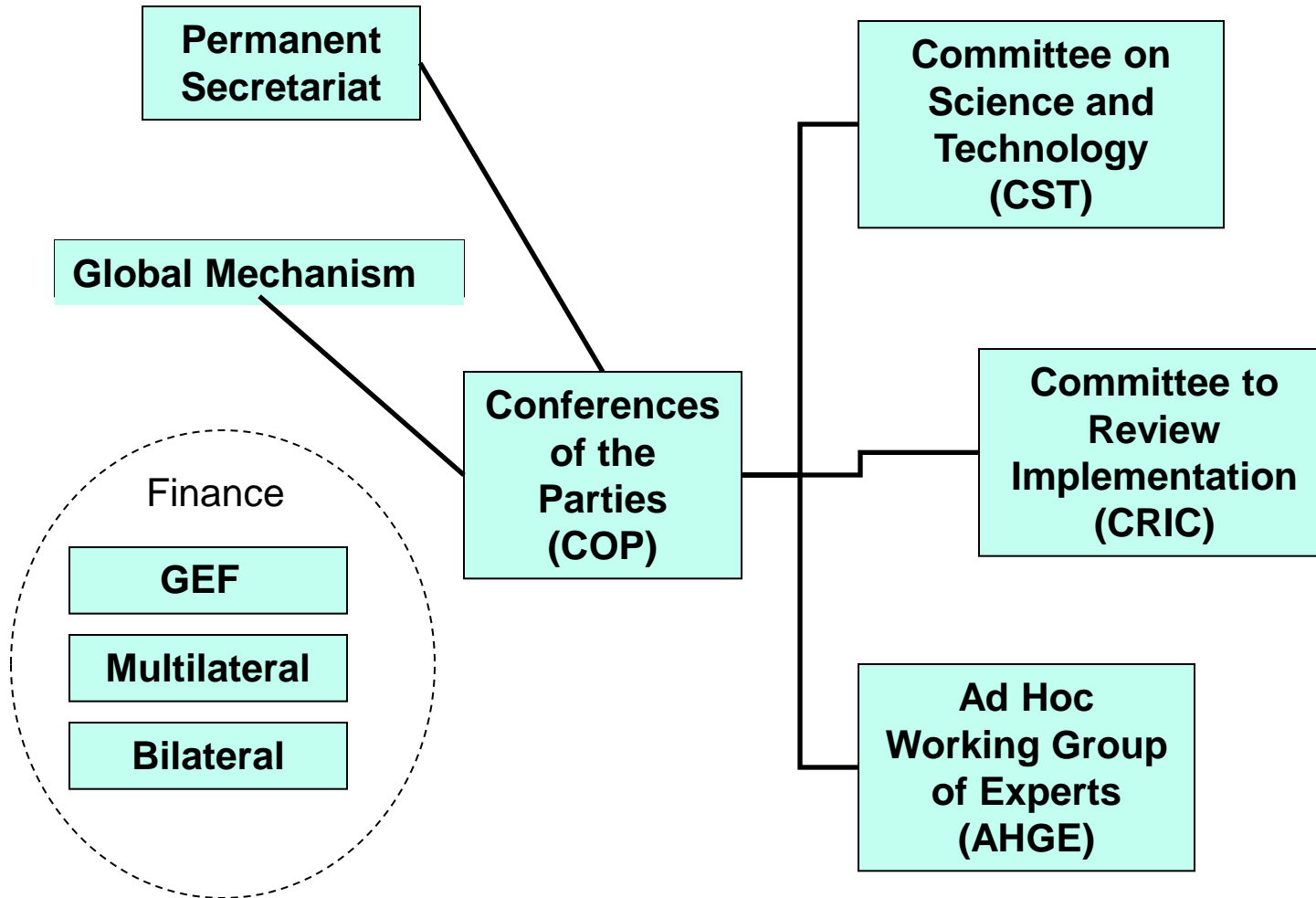
- **The issue**
- **Why does it matter?**
- **What and how does it do it?**

History



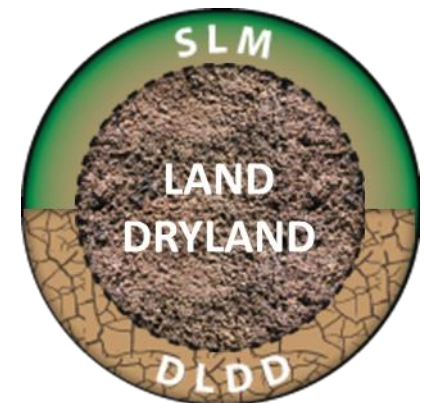
- **UNCED, Nairobi 1977**
- **Earth Summit on Environ. & Develop. (Rio de Janeiro 92): complement the FCCC and CBD**
- **Opened for signature : 15 October 1994 in Paris**
- **Adopted: 17 June of 1996 after 50 signing parties**
- **Entered into force: 26 December 1996**
- **The 10-year Strategy: approved 2008-2018**
- **Rio +20 refers to the UNCCD (mainly paras 206 to 209)**
- **195 country Parties as of June 2014**

Structure of the Convention

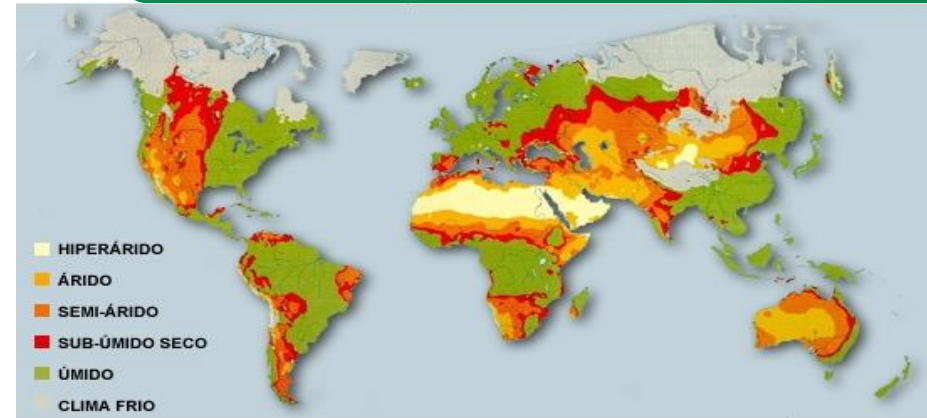


The UNCCD is:

- **A Binding Convention**
linking
- **Environment and Development**
with a
- **Focus on Land**



A sustainable development convention



To combat Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD) through:

- **Effective action at all levels;**
- **Recognizing regional particularities;**
- **Integrated approach (agenda 21);**
- **Long-term approaches, and**
- **Fostering cooperation–partnerships.**

Objective (Art 2)



Combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought

→ effective action at all levels:

1. internat. coop. & partnership arrangements
2. integrated approach consistent with Agenda 21
3. sustainable development in affected areas

Long-term integrated strategies

→ holistic approach on:

1. improved productivity of land
2. rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable
3. management of land and water resources
4. improved living conditions at the community level

Principles of the Convention

- **People-centered**
- **Bottom-up approach**
- **Partnership agreements**
- **Integration of UNCCD action programmes into overall development strategies**



Parties Obligations



All Parties: address the causes of desertification paying attention to the socio-economic factors

Affected country Parties: provide enabling environment through legislation & planning of natural resources use for setting up the priorities of the National Action Programmes to Combat Desertification (NAPS)

Developed country Parties: support affected country Parties through additional financial resources and sound technologies

Developing country Parties: ensure efficient use of available financial resources, internal and external



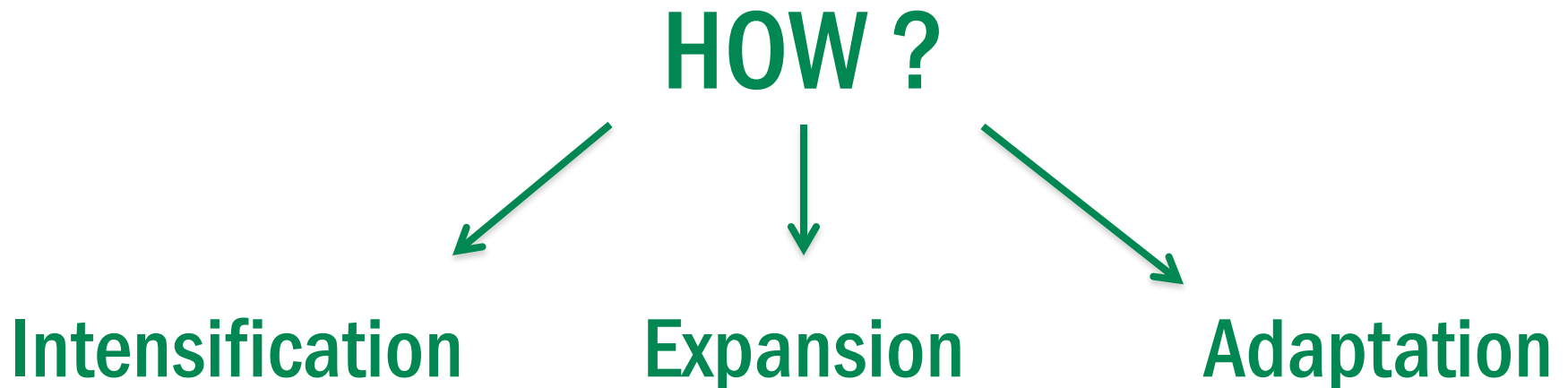
Regional Implementation Annexes

- I Africa
- II Asia and the Pacific
- III Latin America and the Caribbean
- IV Northern Mediterranean
- V Central and Eastern Europe

Land Degradation: Not Just ‘Their’ Problem

- 10-20% of drylands affected by land degradation
- 72% of drylands in developing countries
- Dryland populations have poorest economic conditions & only 8% of renewable water supply
- 50% of the world’s poor live in drylands and the number of people affected by land degradation is larger than any other environmental problem

« By 2050 [FAO, 2009, *How to Feed the World in 2050*] food production must increase by 70% »



**75 billion tons of
fertile soil lost
every year**

SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT (SLM)

Agro-ecological
intensification

Restoration of
degraded land

Adaptation to
climate change

Back to the UNCCD: How does it work?

- Implement Action Plans (NAPS)
- Scientific Advice
- Policy advocacy
- Education and Awareness Raising

The NAPs: national policy tool to combat DLDD



- Formulated nationally within a participatory approach
 - ✓ problems identified
 - ✓ causes singled out
 - ✓ strategies mapped out
 - ✓ policies and projects proposals initiatives formulated
 - ✓ policies / project implementation
 - ✓ if successful, causes of desertification reversed and / or prevented

SLM
(management that does not degrade the land) key for UNCCD implementation

Improve livelihood affected populations:

- Biomass and raw material production

- Cultural services

Improve conditions of affected ecosystems:

- Primary production

- Water and nutrient cycling

Provide Global Benefits:

- Carbon stock

- Biodiversity

Food security

**Land degradation
Desertification**

**Climate change mitigation and adaptation;
Biodiversity conservation**

The 4 Strategic Objectives of the 10-Year Strategy

1. To improve livelihood conditions of affected populations (around 2 billion people directly affected)
2. To improve conditions of affected ecosystems (Globally, focus on developing)
3. To generate global benefits
4. Effective partnerships (resource mobilization)

At Rio+ 20...

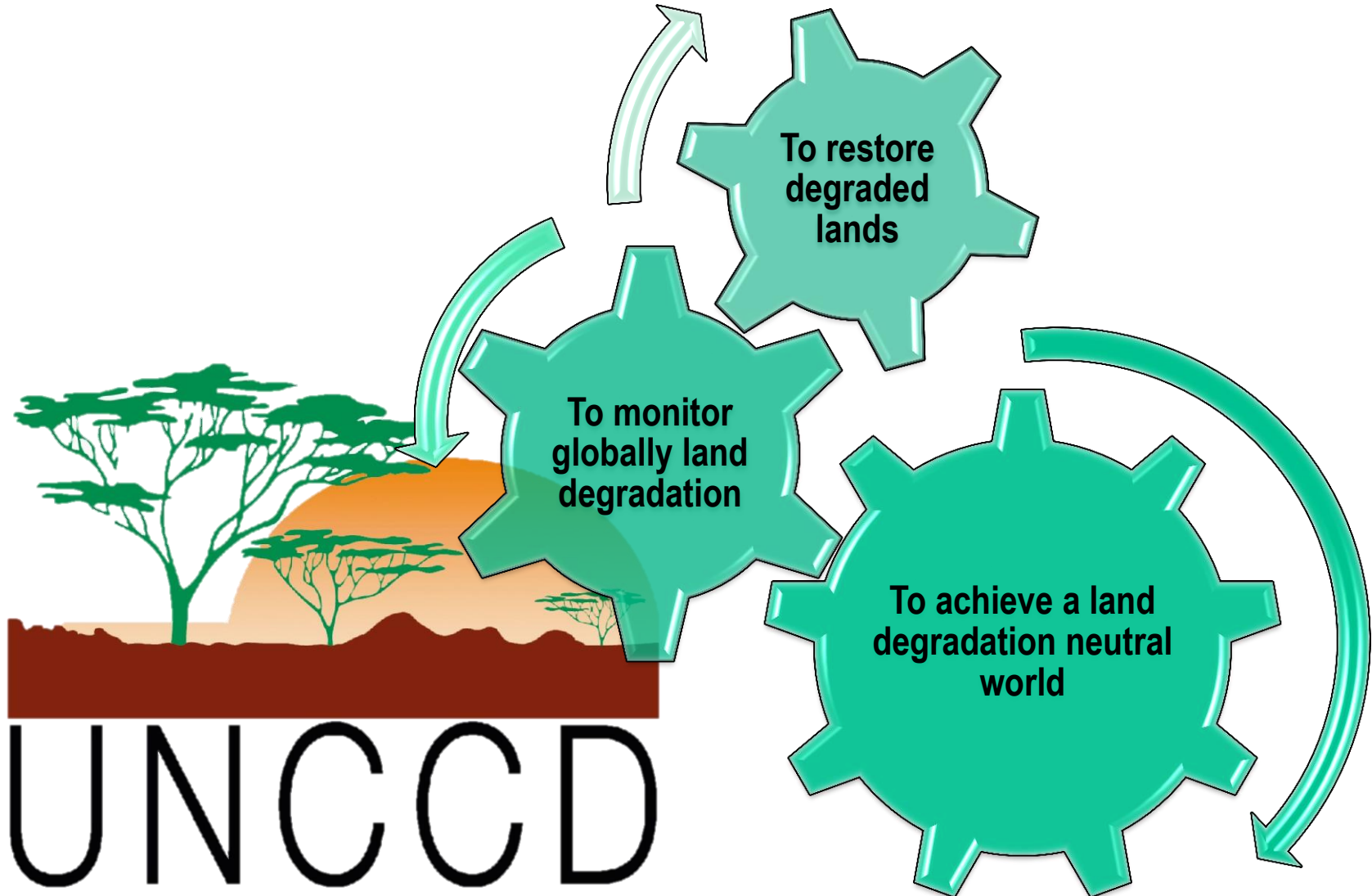


Summit Declaration: The Future We Want Outcome on desertification, land degradation and drought (Paragraph 205-209)

At Rio+20 a focused political support was agreed to “...the economic and social significance of **good land management**, including soil, particularly its contribution to economic growth, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture and food security, eradicating poverty, women’s empowerment, addressing climate change and improving water availability”. Furthermore, Rio+20 stressed that “...**desertification, land degradation, and drought are challenges of global dimension and continue to pose serious challenges to the sustainable development of all countries**...and call for urgent action through short, medium and long-term measures at all levels”. (para. 205)

In view of these concerns, governments recognized “...the need for **urgent action to reverse land degradation**... [by striving]... **to achieve a land degradation neutral world in the context of sustainable development**. This should act to catalyze financial resources from a range of public and private sources”. (para. 206)

At Rio+ 20...



To finalize:

At COP 11 (2013)

Creation of an Intergovernmental Working Group on the follow up to Rio+20,

The first two meetings in 2014 (February in Brussels and July in Beijing) two task forces produced two working papers: one on the science-based definition of land degradation neutrality (LDN) and another on the options for achieving LDN.

Also at COP 11



Establishment of a Science-Policy Interface Mechanism

UNCCD parties agreed on a (necessary) mechanism to assist in the further implementation of the convention, through an effective interface between existing (and new) scientific inputs with appropriate policy design under the convention.



Thank you!