

Concept Note

EMG High-Level Roundtable

"Strengthening Action for Change: Promoting Coherence and Synergies for Sustainable Land Management"

A Roundtable for Heads and Senior Officials of United Nations Agencies at the High-Level Segment of the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

Date: Wednesday 4th December 2024 (HLS)

Time: 18:15 – 19:45 AST

Venue: MET-01, Area A – Farasan, Blue Zone

Format: In-person

Organizers: *United Nations Environment Management Group (EMG), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)*

Background

The [Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the Parties](#) of the [United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification](#) (UNCCD COP 16) is set to become a landmark event for accelerating action on land and drought resilience and will be a gamechanger for the green transition. Based on the legacy of [COP15](#), COP16 aims to raise global ambition and boost measures through a people-centered approach. The high-level sessions are expected to explore the vital connections between land and sustainability, such as, during the Heads of States Summit and interactive dialogues. As part of its focus, COP16 will consider pathways for strengthening collaboration between relevant United Nations entities and other partners,¹

In alignment with the convening of the three Conferences of the Parties of the Rio Conventions in 2024, Senior Officials of the [UN Environment Management Group](#) (EMG), at their 29th meeting in October 2023, agreed to organize a series of dialogues aimed at addressing the drivers of environmental change. These discussions are intended to foster synergy between the three Rio Conventions and other agreements addressing pollution, as part of a unified response to the planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, desertification, drought, and pollution.

Against this backdrop, the EMG has previously convened Heads and Senior Officials of UN entities in the margins of [CBD COP16](#) in Cali and [UNFCCC COP29](#) in Baku². At UNCCD COP16, the third roundtable in this [series](#) will focus on how the UN system can support the Convention's implementation while advancing synergies with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). The discussion will build on the recently launched [Rio Trio Initiative](#), showcasing the value of coordinated actions and efficient resource allocation for more impactful outcomes.

¹ [Decision 8/COP.15, paragraph 5.](#)

² Summaries of EMG High-Level Roundtables: [CBD COP16](#), [UNFCCC COP29](#)

Recognizing the interconnectedness of land degradation, climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, this dialogue aims to explore integrated solutions to address these planetary crises holistically while advancing the Sustainable Development Goals. The outcomes of these discussions will guide future collaboration among UN entities, promote synergy across the Rio Conventions and other MEAs, and identify opportunities for collective action through the EMG framework.

Possible Discussion Questions

In their deliberations the panel will focus on the following key questions:

1. How can the UN more effectively promote collective action to address the interconnected challenges of land degradation, climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution?
2. What specific role can the EMG play in enhancing synergies of MEAs to accelerate action on land and drought resilience?

Agenda

Time	Events	Speaker
5 min	Opening and welcoming remarks	<p>Ms. Inger Andersen Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Executive Director of UNEP, and EMG Chair</p> <p>Mr. Ibrahim Thaiw Executive Secretary of the UNCCD (TBC)</p>
65 min	Moderated interactive roundtable discussion with guiding questions	A panel of Heads and Senior Officials of United Nations agencies
10 min	Q&A	Panel & participants
10 min	Closing remarks and summary of key points	<p>Mr. Hossein Fadaei Head, EMG Secretariat</p> <p>Mr. Ibrahim Thaiw Executive Secretary of the UNCCD (TBC)</p>