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INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE
FOR THE ELABORATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN
THOSE COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING SERIOUS
DROUGHT AND/OR DESERTIFICATION,
PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA

Tenth session
New York, 6-17 January 1997
Agenda item 2

PREPARATION FOR THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Draft decision submitted by the Chairman of Working Group II

Committee on Science and Technology: work to be undertaken on
networking of institutions, agencies and bodies

The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee,

Recalling the requirements of article 25 of the Convention,

Taking note of the report contained in document A/AC.241/66,

Requests the interim secretariat to solicit proposals, in accordance with the terms of reference contained in annex I to this decision, from the organizations listed in annex II to undertake the survey and evaluation referred to in article 25 of the Convention of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies willing to become units of a network that shall support the implementation of the Convention;

Recommends that the Conference of the Parties, at its first session, adopt the following decision regarding the Committee on Science and Technology:

Committee on Science and Technology: work to be undertaken on
networking of institutions, agencies and bodies

Upon recommendation of the Committee on Science and Technology,

Approves the terms of reference contained in annex I, for work to be undertaken on the survey and evaluation referred to in article 25 of the Convention of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies willing to become units of a network that shall support the implementation of the Convention,

Further approves the request of the Committee on Science and Technology to appoint an ad hoc panel to review the draft contractor's report in the inter-sessional period, in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

ANNEX I

TERMS OF REFERENCE ON WORK TO BE UNDERTAKEN ON NETWORKING
OF INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES AND BODIES

1. Phases

Recognizing that a complete inventory and evaluation of all networks, institutions, agencies and bodies will be a lengthy process, the work plan of the survey and evaluation activity of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) will need to be broken into three phases (document A/AC.241/66, para. 7), namely:

(a) Identification of the principal potential units, particularly networks;

(b) A pilot, in-depth survey and evaluation of potential units in a particular region and subregion; and

(c) Replication of the pilot survey and evaluation of units in other regions and subregions.

In all three phases, the units surveyed and evaluated will include governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental, academic and other private sector entities. Pursuant to the programme of work outlined, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee seeks proposals for services from a competent contractor to carry out the preliminary survey and evaluation of "potential units, particularly existing networks" and to propose a methodology for carrying out the second and third phases, for consideration at the first session of the Committee on Science and Technology.

2. Tasks to be completed by the contractor

(a) Identify the principal existing networks relevant to the effort to combat desertification and their role in areas such as information collection

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and exchange, research, technology transfer, benchmarks and indicators, capacity-building, policy formulation and local level activities;

(b) Describe the actual components (including structure, mode of operation and willingness and capacity to contribute to the work of the Convention) as well as categories of users, and map their geographical distributions;

(c) Enumerate the information needs of actual and potential users and the extent to which such needs are being met in relation to the provision of articles 16 to 19 of the Convention;

(d) Identify and describe the linkages among the principal networks, including gaps and possible overlaps;

(e) Elaborate the purposes, methods and benefits of strengthening networks at various levels;

(f) Develop criteria by which institutions, agencies and networks will be evaluated in terms of their capacity and effectiveness in contributing to the implementation of the Convention;

(g) Recommend:

(i) Methods and candidate regions and subregions for in-depth pilot surveys;

(ii) A practical cost-effective methodology to permit the CST to update the inventory of networks on a regular basis;

(iii) A strategy by which a global network of networks, institutions, agencies, and bodies can be established for the purpose of supporting implementation of the Convention.

3. Solicitation of bids from organizations

Immediately following the tenth session of the Committee, the interim secretariat shall invite organizations listed in annex II to submit proposals to carry out phase 1 activities. The proposals, which can come either from the organizations individually, or from two or more such organizations jointly, must be received by the interim secretariat by 15 May 1997. Each proposal must be accompanied by an executive summary not exceeding six pages in length. The interim secretariat shall arrange for the circulation of the executive summaries of these proposals prior to the first session of the Committee on Science and Technology. Copies of the complete proposals will be available to the members of the Committee on Science and Technology on request.

4. Timing of implementation of the contract

(a) Prior to the first session of the Conference of the Parties and the first session of the Committee on Science and Technology, the interim secretariat will prepare a draft contract for consideration by the first session of the Committee on Science and Technology. After any essential changes, the

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Committee shall propose that the first session of the Committee on Science and Technology recommend that the first session of the Conference of the Parties approve the issuance of the contract and its administration by the Secretariat.

(b) Within one month after the first session of the Committee on Science and Technology, the Secretariat will formalize and sign a contract with the selected contractor.

(c) During the second through seventh months after the first session of the Committee on Science and Technology, the contractor will complete the tasks enumerated in subparagraphs 2 (a) to (g) and submit a draft final report to the Secretariat. This report will be accompanied by an executive summary not exceeding 12 pages in length.

(d) During the first session of the Committee on Science and Technology, the Committee recommends that the Committee on Science and Technology request approval of the Conference of the Parties to appoint an ad hoc panel of five experts who will review the contractor's draft report. This advisory panel will form for a fixed period of up to two weeks (during the eighth month after the first session of the Committee on Science and Technology) during which time the panel will review the contractor's report and executive summary and make appropriate recommendations for editorial and other changes to ensure fulfilment of the terms of the contract.

(e) In light of the panel's review, the contractor will make any necessary revisions to the draft report and submit its revised version to the Secretariat at least three months prior to the start of the second session of the Conference of the Parties.

(f) The Permanent Secretariat will arrange for the translation of the executive summary of the report into English and/or French and circulate copies to members of the Committee on Science and Technology. Copies of the complete report submitted by the contractor will be available to members of the Committee on Science and Technology on request.

4. Communication between contractor and client

If in the course of implementing the contract, the contractor considers it would be appropriate to clarify objectives or to consult on other technical matters not foreseen in the contract, the contractor will correspond with the Secretariat, which will in turn consult as necessary with the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology.

ANNEX II

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS

Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD), Damascus

Desert Research Centre, Cairo

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome

International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM),
Paris

International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT),
Hyderabad

International Development Research Centre, Ottawa

International Soil Science Society, Vienna

United Nations Development Programme, New York

United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi

University of Arizona, Tucson
