

Fourteenth meeting of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions

24 August 2016 @ 14:00

**Room 1511, Langer Eugen, UN Campus
Bonn, Germany**

Report of the meeting

Introduction

The fourteenth meeting of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions was held at the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in Bonn, Germany on 24 August 2016. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD. The provisional agenda is provided in annex to this document.

I. Welcome and opening

Ms. Barbut opened the meeting and welcomed Mr. Braulio Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Mr. Daniel Violetti representing Ms. Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

II. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted with the understanding that the discussion would focus on concrete, potential lines of cooperation within the mandate of the JLG and the respective conventions.

III. Potential lines of cooperation within the JLG context for 2016 and 2017

Ms. Barbut opened with a proposal to begin coordinating messages on the land-use sector as an important element of the Paris Agreement, relevant to each of the Conventions, in particular for Articles 5 (sinks) and 6 (sustainable development mechanism). She suggested that it would follow logically for the Rio Conventions' secretariats to promote the adoption of common indicators relevant to their respective reporting processes and in alignment with the global indicators being developed in the SDG process, in particular relating to land cover and carbon stocks above and below ground.

Mr. Dias indicated that a decision on indicators in line with this proposal is expected to be adopted in Cancun at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP 13). Mr. Violetti highlighted that progress was being made for indicators on adaptation (SDG 13) and recognized that an inter-agency process has been established for SDG indicator 15.3.1 which includes the Rio Conventions and other partners.

Ms. Barbut then turned to national level synergies and the need to pursue flexible instruments for integration such as options for the convergence of reporting guidelines. Mr. Violetti felt, as the Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) of the Paris Agreement is yet to be defined, that there was significant potential in this idea and that perhaps a working group among the three secretariats should be established to take stock and make recommendations on this and other issues relevant to the JLG. Mr. Dias also concurred with this proposal and highlighted the recent recommendation of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation to the COP, requesting the CBD Secretariat, in collaboration with the secretariats of the biodiversity-related conventions and Rio conventions, and the United Nations Environment Programme's World Conservation Monitoring Centre, to explore options for enhancing synergy on national reporting among these conventions, including consideration of the possibilities of common sets of indicators, where appropriate; common reporting modules on shared issues; interoperability of information management and reporting systems and; harmonization of tools for national reporting.

All agreed on the need for a permanent JLG working group to take up these and other issues on an ongoing basis, including in order to stay updated on significant intersessional processes and to anticipate decisions to be taken at future COPs. Ms. Barbut asked Mr. Dias and Mr. Violetti for their nominations of focal points for this working group at their earliest convenience.

Ms. Barbut introduced and described the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Fund that will be launched at UNFCCC COP 22. She stressed that the challenge was not funding but finding projects ready for implementation at the scale required. She suggested that the Rio Conventions could develop a proposal for a “project preparedness technical facility” that would support proponents to fully develop projects for access to the LDN Fund as well as the Global Climate Fund. In addition, she suggested that joint training workshops for national focal points (NFP) of the three conventions could be organized on how to write project proposals.

All agreed that this idea had great potential and that the UNCCD would take the lead in preparing a draft concept and identifying potential partners. Mr. Dias indicated that perhaps this could be taken into consideration at COP 13 under the agenda item on capacity building to get agreement to start such collaboration. He also mentioned that the CBD has voluntary funding for such capacity building and has been successful in outsourcing training workshops to partners, including non-governmental organizations such as the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) on the issue of governance and legal frameworks.

Mr. Dias raised the issue of the Rio Conventions Pavilion as an area for enhanced collaboration. Ms. Barbut suggested that it could become a more valuable tool if it moved away from being a platform for information-sharing towards a more forward-looking role, enabling pre-negotiation of potential areas of common action; for example instead of talking about gender, discussing what could be the common indicators.

Possible Joint Publications

Mr. Dias pointed out that the implementation of the Rio Conventions will contribute to the achievement of the SDGs while at the same time benefiting from SDG implementation. Building on the existing mapping done by the individual conventions, he suggested a publication to bring together the bearing of the Rio Conventions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It was agreed that the CBD will develop and circulate a more detailed concept note for further consideration, including the potential target and impact of such publication.

Mr. Dias also proposed a publication on ecosystem-based approaches in land degradation neutrality and Nationally Determined Contributions. Mr. Violetti proposed a short, more tightly focused publication, to be made available in English and French at UNFCCC COP 22, which addresses ecosystem-based approaches for reducing land degradation with case studies that support the revision of NAPs (NAPAs) in Africa. This was agreed. The UNFCCC will develop and circulate a more detailed concept note for this publication recognizing the short timeline.

All agreed that the Rio Conventions’ secretariats should work together on the upcoming IPCC special report on climate change and land degradation taking into account that the scoping nominations will open in September 2016.

IV. Closing

After a brief summary of the above action items, it was decided that, in accordance to the practice of rotation, the next meeting of the JLG would be chaired by the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC sooner rather than later.

Annex 1

Provisional Agenda

1. Welcome and opening
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Potential lines of cooperation within the JLG context for 2016 and 2017
 - 3.1. Contribution of the Rio Conventions towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - how can synergies at national level be harnessed?
 - 3.2. Ecosystem-based approaches (including ecosystem restoration) in Land Degradation Neutrality and Nationally Determined Contributions
 - 3.3. Common indicators among the Rio Conventions and the SDG indicator framework
4. Closing