

# ***The UNCCD***

## ***At a Glance***

Sergio A. Zelaya

DDD 5<sup>th</sup> 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)**

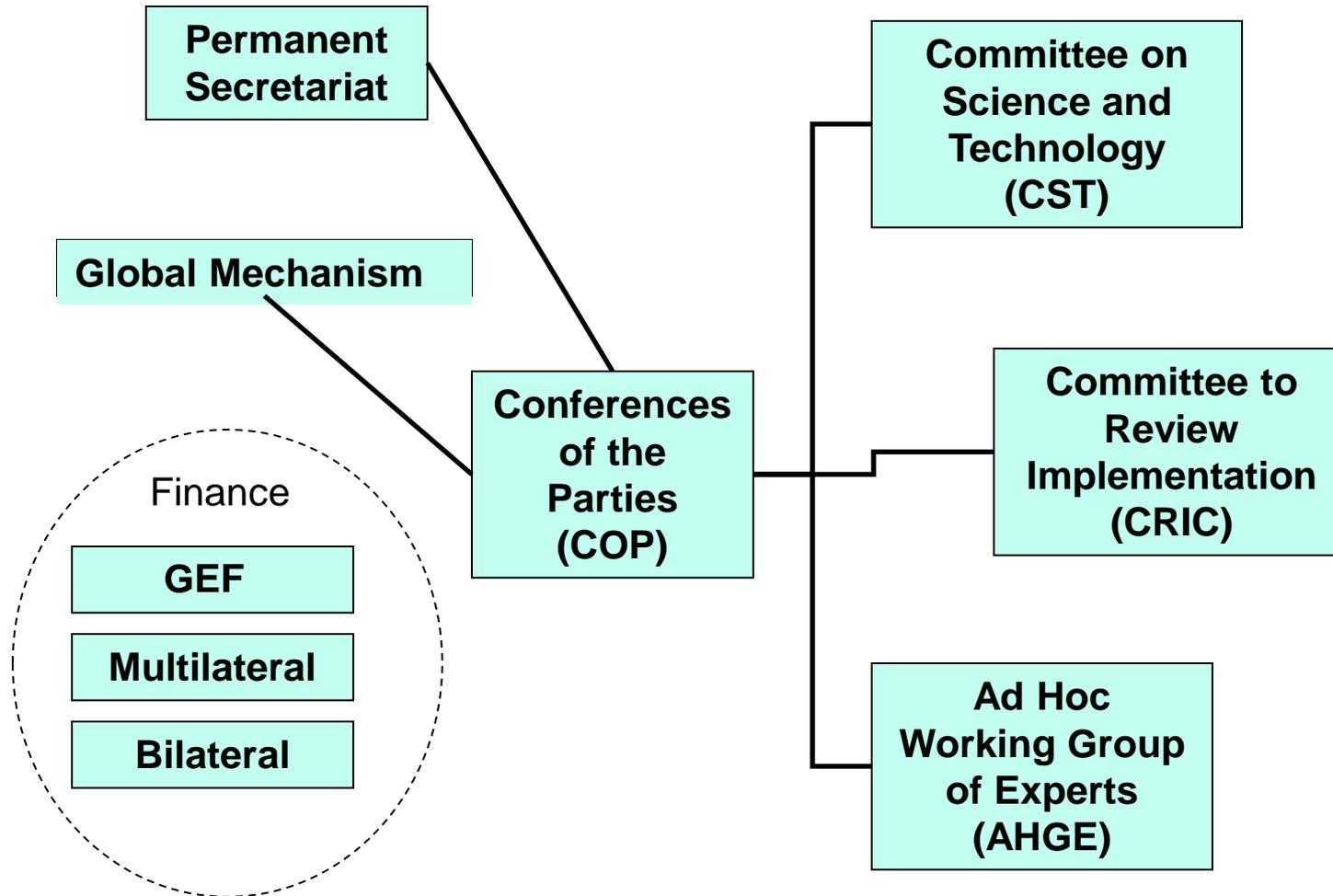
- **The issue**
- **Why does it matter?**
- **What and how does it do it?**

# 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**

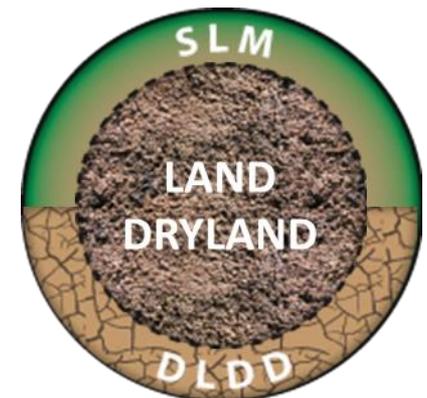
# Structure of the Convention



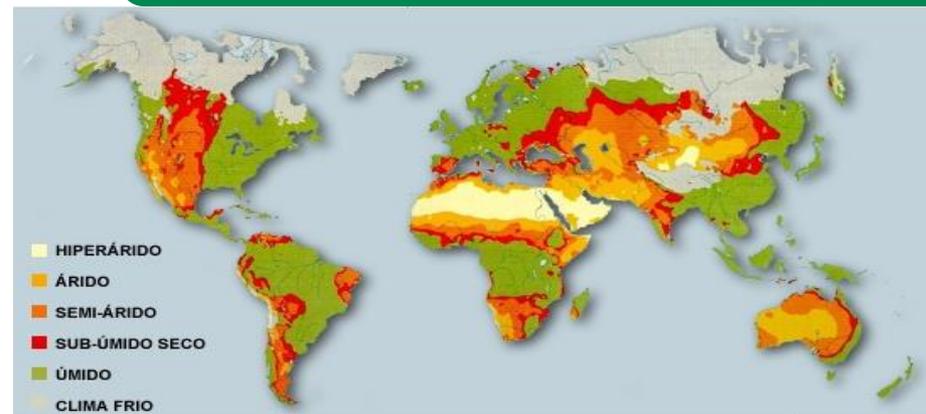
# ***The UNCCD is:***



- **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



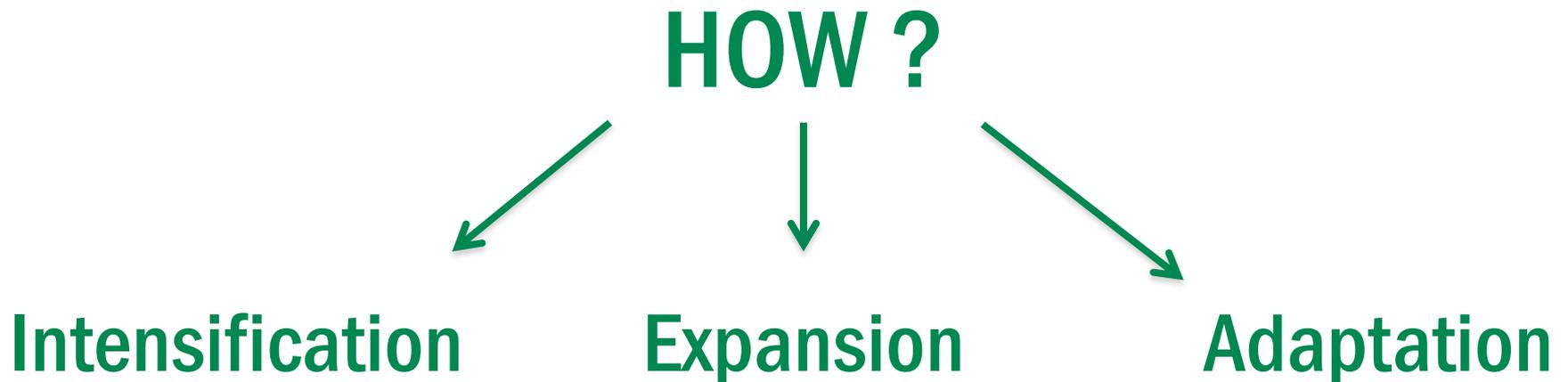
# ***Regional Implementation Annexes***

- 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...

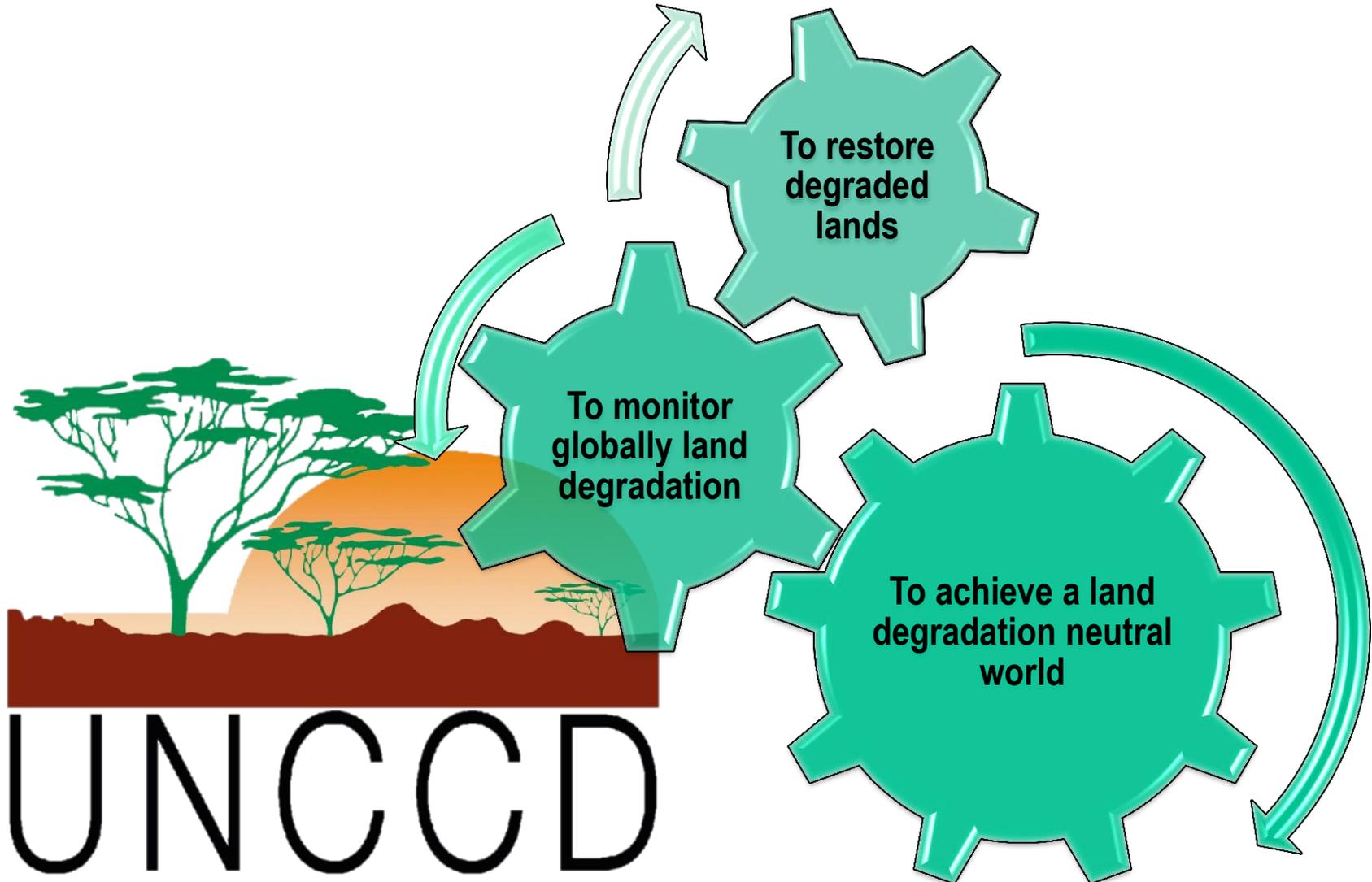


## Summit Declaration: The Future We Want Outcome on desertification, land degradation and drought (Paragraph 205-209)

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!**