



Third Africa Drylands Week

Capitalizing on the opportunities offered by the Africa's Agenda 2063, Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Land Degradation Neutrality of the UNCCD to promote resilience to droughts in the drylands in Africa.

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REPORT



الوكالة الإفريقية للمسور الأخضر الكبير



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Introduction

The 3rd African Drylands Conference was convened in Windhoek, Namibia from 8-12 August 2016. The conference was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Namibia and was organized by the African Union in collaboration with NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, FAO, the World Bank Group, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Permanent Inter-State Committee on the Control of Drought in the Sahel (CILSS), the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall, and with support of the Monitoring of Environment for Security in Africa (MESA) supported by African Union and the European Union (EU). It was attended by over 100 participants from global, regional, and national institutions involved in drought mitigation, desertification control and dry lands management in Africa.

The commemoration of Africa Drylands Week is an important biennium event aiming at maintaining the visibility of drylands in the international discourse. Since the First Africa Drylands Week in Dakar, Senegal in 2011, the conference have gone a long way in showing that the Dry lands are not areas of liabilities and challenges but areas endowed with potentials and contributing to regional and national development and security. These potentials are increasingly being recognized. Keeping focus on the potentials and challenges of the drylands of Africa remains crucial especially in the light of the Africa's Agenda 2063 and recently concluded international commitments on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) the Paris Agreement on Climate Change Agreement and the Land Degradation Neutrality target of the UNCCD. These agreements offer the world, in particular people in the drylands a unique chance for their challenges and needs to be taken on board and to improve their lives.

The first and the second editions were organized in the Sahara and the Sahel region with strong involvement of the countries of this region who are also involved in the implementation of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative. Moving the venue of the Africa Drylands Week from the Sahara and Sahel region to the Southern Africa region is a clear signal from the African Union Commission in enlarging the geographic scope, underlining the fact the opportunities and challenges in dry lands are not just limited to the Sahara and the Sahel region.

The Third Africa Drylands Week was followed by the African Drought Conference organized by the Government of the Republic of Namibia. This allowed for the integration of the recommendations of the Third Africa Drylands Week into the agenda and outcomes of the Conference.

The Africa Drylands Week ended with the "Windhoek Declaration" which calls for more attention and investment to address the challenges of the dry lands. The Declaration also called for a full blown programme and budget by the African Union Commission on drylands matters.

This report intends to capture the key points of the various and informative presentations and discussions done during the week.

1. OPENING CEREMONY

The opening ceremony was marked by eight interventions.

a. Welcome remarks by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Namibia

The Commissioner for Environment and Tourism, Mr. Theophilus, welcomed participants to the conference. He underscored the importance of commemorating the Africa Drylands Week as it draws public attention to the plight of the dryland populations. He said that Namibia is affected by meteorological problems of drought and this is the same problem that is affecting most of the African countries.

b. FAO Country Representative

Dr Francois Tapsoba on behalf of Dr Babagana, the FAO Country Representative for Namibia expressed FAO's gratitude to the Government of Namibia and the African Union Commission (AUC) for organizing the third Africa Drylands Week which aims at providing a platform to discuss Drylands challenges and opportunities and to prepare the ground for the upcoming Africa Drought Conference. Speaking about drylands' challenges in Africa, Dr Tapsoba said that Africa has plenty of success stories on how Sustainable Land Management practices have proven their efficiency and effectiveness in meeting these challenges. In Africa, arid zones share many similarities, and these good practices offer so many opportunities that deserve to be replicated on a larger scale. "What is still to be improved is the need for an enabling institutional and financial environment that helps development of SLM policies and strategies centred on the population and their needs" Dr Tapsoba conclude.

c. Remarks by UNEP

Dr Samba Harouna, UNEP's Representative to the African Union and UNECA thanked the Government of Namibia for hosting the meeting. He referred to UNEP's responsibilities on environment matters, he emphasised that "UNEP believes that working on drylands matters could constitute a thread with other equally important sectors in the implementation of the newly adopted SDGs as they related to Agenda 2063 of the African Union as well as the Paris agreement which both have given prominent attention to dry land matters with clear targets to be achieved.

Dr Samba urged the participants to learn the lessons from this process and seek best pathways to link it with other regional and global frameworks and Africa development agenda as combatting desertification cannot be done nor should it be perceived as a standalone move. "It's only together within a synergetic approach that we can overcome the serious environmental challenge facing drylands" he concluded.

d. Remarks by the World Bank

The representative of the World Bank, Mr Philippe Dardel thanked the Government of Namibia and the AUC for organizing the 3rd Africa Drylands Week. He stated that it has been projected that Africa's Drylands problems may increase by 70% in the distant future if nothing is done to address it. He said that at the Paris UNFCCC COP21 Conference, many initiatives were adopted on environmental matters related to Agriculture, water, disaster risk management and others. He, recommended that the results of the Third Africa Drylands week should be showcased in the upcoming UNFCCC COP22 in Marrakesh, Morocco, as, among others, this Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC will assess the interventions on environment and their successes in Africa. He pointed out that World Bank is committed to continue supporting African countries and institutions in their efforts towards a continent free of hunger through various SLM initiatives, including the GGWSSI, TerrAfrica and others.

e. UNCCD representative

On behalf of Ms Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary of the UNCCD, Mr. Boubacar Cissé, Coordinator for the Regional Coordination Unit of UNCCD for Africa, thanked the Government of Namibia, FAO, AUC and others for their various contributions to the 3rd Drylands Week. He said that since its inception in 2011, UNCCD institutions (the Secretariat and the Global Mechanism) have been playing an active role in the organization of the Africa Drylands Week, as it offers an opportunity for UNCCD constituencies to discuss about challenges and opportunities for drylands in Africa, and to propose concrete guidance for synergistic and joint implementation of the three Rio Conventions. “The third Africa drylands week comes at a time when the concept of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) is the focus of discussions for effective implementation of the UNCCD” Mr. Cisse stated.

He concluded by assuring the conference that UNCCD institutions, in collaboration with interested partners, with respect to their mandate, will continue to play their roles for a land degradation neutral world.

f. Key note address of the Executive Secretary for CILSS

The Executive Secretary of the Permanent Inter State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), Dr Djime Adoum, commended the Government of Namibia for their contribution to Drylands management and for hosting the meeting. He said that the Sahel and the Horn of Africa include climatic zones ranging from sub-humid to hyper-arid. It is characterized by a strong dependence of populations on natural resources to meet their subsistence needs and income generation. Because of the high population growth and increased livestock population, the region has many conflicts caused by competition for access and control of land resources. “Unfortunately, these conflicts are exacerbated by shortcomings in political governance and weak political will to move towards true integration of states as to populations of farmers and herders living in border areas, the boundaries between states are artificial” Dr Djime asserted.. “Although facing many challenges of various kinds, this area has significant development potential. These Drylands have rivers, lakes and dams and these features are important for livelihoods, as proven by several initiatives, policies, programs and projects led by CILSS with the support of the Governments of Member States and of the donors’ community” he continued. He concluded on the need not only for coordination of activities and actors but also for synergy of actions and means to obtain results relevant to sustainable development.

g. Statement by the African Union Commission (COMREA)

Mr. Almami Dampha (Senior Policy Officer) on behalf of AUC said that the AUC is happy with Namibia for its move towards Africa’s pan Africanism and for hosting the 3rd Dryland Week. He thanked all the institutions for their technical and financial support on desertification and sustainable land management. He lamented the fact that the youths express the hopelessness of Drylands through their precarious migration from these lands. Mr. Dampha said that Namibia’s conference on Drylands will have an important insight for addressing the challenges of Drylands. He hopes that the recommendations the conference will enhance the management of Dryland by coming up with good policies.

h. Opening speech by Ministry of Environment of Namibia (Government)

The Honourable Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism of the Republic of Namibia, extended his warm greetings to all the participants to the 3rd Africa Dry lands Week. He thanked the AUC for choosing Namibia – a hyper arid country, to host this event. “Namibia has been highly affected by drought and had a heavy loss on its meat industry” the Minister said. The Minister stated that 2013 was the driest years in the past 30 years, this is why the celebration of the 3rd Africa Dryland Week is so important to Namibia.

“The implementation of the GGWSSI and its possible extension to Southern Africa is and will be highly welcomed by Namibia, as the Dryland areas will be lost to deserts in 2025 if no intervention is done” he continued.

i. Additional statements

i. Statement by the Federal Minister of Environment of Nigeria

An additional statement was made after the opening ceremony by the Honourable State Minister of Environment of Nigeria who recognized the importance for Nigeria of the conference organized by AU and the Government of Namibia. According to the Minister, Nigeria is being affected by global warming, climate change, desertification and desert encroachment. He pointed out that an average of 0.4 to 0.6 km² land area is lost to desertification annually in the Northern part of the country. He pointed out that around 40 million people are affected by drought while the drying of Lake Chad is affecting the Northern area of the country and other West African countries. He therefore stressed the importance of GGWSSI and he pledged that Nigeria will plant 1500 km of trees. He assured Nigeria’s willingness to work closely with the UNCCD and AU with other partners to ensure that drylands are sustainably managed.

ii. Statement of the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary for West Africa and Sahel

Ms. Hiroute Guebre Sellassie, Deputy Special Representative UN Secretary General for West Africa and the Sahel also addressed the gathering. Ms Hiroute focused on the linkages between land degradation, Migration and security in Sahel in particular. She underscored the need for SLM measures to cut the tides of youth migration which is becoming a security challenge in many regions of Africa.

2. SESSION 1: SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE THIRD AFRICA DRYLANDS WEEK

a. Key Note Address: Perceptions, stereotypes and myths...

This agenda item was presented by Ambassador Denis Garrity (UNCCD Dry lands Ambassador). He started by giving a brief on the African context in terms of dry lands restoration, saying that over 18 countries are currently committed on land restoration. Countries like Ghana, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Namibia are part of this huge land restoration programme. In southern Mali, around 6 million hectares are being restored through agroforestry. Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration programmes (FMNR) are being carried out in Senegal, Burkina Faso and Niger. He gave examples of Malawi, Tanzania and Ethiopia where millions of hectares of land have been restored. Grassroots are the basis for the scaling-up of land restoration and opportunities are there to have grassroots movements for landscape restoration across Southern Africa.

Ambassador Garrity noted that one of the challenges for land restoration over the continent is terrorism. There is a need to strive for peace building at all levels to ensure that the ever-greening efforts in Africa will address the land degradation to serve as an example to the rest of the world. Ambassador Garrity concluded on the way forward, inviting participants and governments to:

- Set national targets and develop tools for monitoring progress
- Have a cross sectorial coordination with good will (Government, local communities and civil society).

b. Objectives, overview and adoption of the Agenda

This agenda item was presented by Mr. Dampha from the African Union Commission (AUC). Key messages include:

i. The background on the event

- Africa Drylands Week: an important biennium event in maintaining the visibility of drylands in the international discourse.
- The First Africa Drylands Week in Dakar, Senegal. Drylands are no longer considered as liabilities, but opportunities.
- The Second Africa Drylands Week in Ndjamena, Chad: call for investing more in Drylands and valorizing the products of drylands.
- The Third Africa Drylands Week in Windhoek, Namibia: called for scaling up of GGWSSI and participation of other regions in particular the Southern Africa region which covers huge mass of drylands.

ii. The objectives

- Share and discuss the lessons and experiences from the previous Africa Drylands Weeks and the different regional and national programmes in building resilience to land degradation and managing the impacts of drought;
- Examine the opportunities presented by the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the Land Degradation Neutrality target of the UNCCD to promote sustainable livelihoods in the drylands.
- Strengthen synergies, learning across regional programmes including the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI), TerrAfrica, SIP NEPAD and other regional flagship programme.
- Build the scientific basis in support of the implementation of African Drylands initiatives and their monitoring

iii. The Agenda

- Day 1: Setting the scene and presenting Africa Union Led Initiatives in combating Desertification, land degradation, drought and promoting drylands investments and economic opportunities.
- Day 2: Discussing Africa Drylands challenges and opportunities and sharing Innovative natural resources management models and best practices for drylands.
- Day 3: Harnessing the potentials of drylands and looking at long term solutions to reducing vulnerability of drylands and communities living in drylands.
- Day 4: importance of M&E in addressing drylands challenges and opportunities.
- Day 5: Field Trip to share Namibia's experience.

3. SESSION 2: AFRICA LED INITIATIVES

a. TerrAfrica – Building Resilient African Landscapes

This agenda item was presented by Ms Rudo Makunike from NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency. She said that TerrAfrica is an African owned partnership programme on sustainable land management launched in 2005 to: (i) addressing land degradation in Sub-Saharan Africa and to (ii) harmonizing and scaling up support for country-driven SLM investment. The goal is to stimulate and support African countries to harness renewable natural resources towards sustainable wealth creation, food and nutrition security, improved livelihoods, and ecosystem functions.

TerrAfrica is a three pillars based approach:

- Coalition building through advocacy, networking to mainstream SLM in region/country strategies, planning;
- Investment: aligning all investments and interventions on joint and common identified priorities;
- Knowledge sharing and management, focusing on mitigating climate risks, promoting low-carbon growth, sharing best practices, and enhancing M&E.

Speaking about TerrAfrica achievements in terms of investments, Ms. Makunike said that since 2005, a total of 2.4 billion USD were mobilized to implement 49 projects in 38 countries. A third Generation Investments programme covering the three main drylands zones in Africa (Sahel, Horn of Africa and Southern Africa) is in preparation to: (i) scaling up the GGWSSI, (ii) integrating resilience, security, migration within the development agenda and (iii) mainstreaming gender in SLM and drylands management.

b. African Risk Capacity (ARC)

This session was introduced by Ms Tuga Alaskary who informed the meeting that Africa Risk Capacity was established in 2012. It is aimed to enable participating African Union Members States currently standing at 32 members to manage and finance responses to natural disasters. ARC Agency established a financial affiliate; the ARC Insurance Company Ltd, which provides insurance to governments for natural disasters.

According to Ms Tuga Alaskary, ARC has developed advanced modelling technology to provide timely information on the estimated impact of a given drought, flood or tropical cyclone. “By linking this with insurance and pre-defined contingency plans, governments are able to access timely financing in the event of a shock and to mitigate the impacts on the affected population” Ms. Tuga continued. She further stated that a USD1 invested or used as an early intervention saves around USD4.40 after the disasters unfolds.

The ARC initiative therefore primarily enhances resilience at the very local level. The ARC brings together four critical elements, which include:

- i. Early warning,
- ii. Contingency planning,
- iii. Insurance, and
- iv. Climate Change Adaptation.

In the drought model which has been offered since 2014, the model uses satellite rainfall data and overlays this with a drought index, vulnerability masks and an associated cost per person in

order to provide an output of estimated impact and estimated cost. This serves as a powerful planning tool for governments in itself, but when coupled with an insurance policy, enables risk transfer capabilities and as such prompt action following a disaster.

The ARC Vision 2020, the Agenda for Action, sets out to insure 150 million people across 30 countries in Africa, with coverage of USD1.5 billion. This goal will be achieved through a number of priorities:

- Increased national premium contribution by participating member states through purchase of additional insurance coverage
- Diversification: in addition to the drought insurance offered to governments ARC will offer tropical cyclone insurance coverage by the end of 2016, flood insurance by 2017 and Outbreak and Epidemic insurance coverage by 2018
- Replica coverage will be offered to humanitarian actors to match government insurance policies with ARC, leading to additional coverage of risk
- Extreme Climate Facility will be established to channel adaptation financing to ARC Member States in order to address the challenges associated with climate change

Additional information on ARC can be referenced through website: www.africanriskcapacity.org

After the two presentations, Participants agreed on the following elements:

- It is the countries' national duty to take up their own intervention actions rather than waiting for outside support which may not address problems on time. As such the ARC initiative was created to assist African Governments to use market based approaches to respond to disasters on time.
- Insurance is the most appropriate tool for addressing risk associated to drought. Through the natural diversification of weather patterns across the continent, ARC provides discounts of up to 50% to its Member States compared to market rates.
- Effective coalition building is still needed in the African countries. Sectors have to stop working in isolation, especially in drylands.

c. The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel

Dr. Elvis Paul Tangem, presenting the GGWSSI said that the GWSSI is about Drylands and drylands development agenda in a context of climate change, accelerated demographic patterns and competition for and control over natural resources in Drylands for multiple use and purposes. "More than a tree planting and restoration initiative, the GGWSSI is about how to develop resilience of drylands population – particularly youth and women, to climate change, land degradation and recurrent drought, so that they continue to live in their natural habitat and preserve their specific way of life" Dr Tangem said .

As key achievements, Dr Tangem noted:

- The clarification of the governance of the initiative by AU Heads of States who decided to transform the Pan African Agency, set up by 11 countries into a specialized agency of the African Union Commission.
- The adoption by AU Heads of State and Government of a harmonized regional implementation strategy of the GGWSSI, allowing all players to look in the same

direction and speak the same language when it comes to the implementation of this important initiative that stands as a “Game Changer for Africa”.

- The adoption by more than 12 countries of National strategies and action plans for the implementation of the GGWSSI with the technical and financial support of the AUC and FAO.
- The formulation of Common capacity building strategy and of common Communication strategy.

Dr. Tangem commented on the fact that the GGWSSI community of practice is getting more and more important and new countries and partners are joining the movement. He particularly mentioned the interest expressed by SADC countries to join the initiative and share experiences with Sahelian countries. AUC being mandated by several decisions of the AU Summit to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the initiative at the continental level is ready to support set up of coordination mechanisms for southern Africa Countries, building on the experience of the Sahelian countries.

d. AU - SAFGRAD

The presentation gave a brief on the history of creation of SAFGRAD and the major achievements which focused on 3 main areas: (i) Development of technologies, (ii) Building national research capacities and (iii) building knowledge base. Highlighting one of the programmes titled “strengthening the role of science and technology in combating desertification in Africa”, Mr. Mamadou Koutou mentioned that one of the biggest problems in drylands management in Africa is the weak linkage between Science and Policy making. According to the study undertaken by SAFGRAD, there is a very little interaction and collaboration between scientists and policy makers at all levels, from sub national level to the continental level. Decisions are not science-based made.

Regarding the implementation of the UNCCD, the presenter recommended that African countries, as requested by various UNCCD COPs Decisions have decided to:

- Transform their National Action Programmes into strategic documents supported by biophysical and socio economic baseline information and include them in integrated investment frameworks;
- Base their representation in the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) on professional expertise and include a wide range of disciplines and expertise regarding biophysical and socio economic aspects;
- Develop / set up a mechanism that allows African scientists to usefully share knowledge and lessons learnt.

e. Permanent Inter States Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS)

Dr Sibiri Ouédraogo focused his presentation on two of the several projects and programmes implemented by CILSS: (i) the Regional Programme for Sustainable Land Management in West Africa covering thirteen countries and (ii) the BRICKS project which is covering 12 countries in West to Eastern Africa.

“The Regional SLM Program of CILSS supports SLM actions initiated by CILSS member states. It particularly aims at putting in place an enabling environment and an integrated approach for actions addressing Desertification, Land Degradation, Drought, Climate Change and loss of biodiversity”, Dr Sibiri informed the audience.

Continuing his presentation Dr Sibiri talked about Building Resilience through Innovation Communication and Knowledge Services (BRICKS) project which is a six-year regional knowledge and monitoring project. “It supports the US\$1.1 billion Sahel and West Africa Program (SAWAP) of TerrAfrica, a regional program of 12 World Bank financed country operations plus related partner-supported activities that together contribute to the region’s and clients’ Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) priorities”, he said.

“BRICKS supports SAWAP by providing operational services to 12 country projects (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Soudan, Togo) to help identify regional and global innovations, promote them through better communication, and put that knowledge into use”, the presenter concluded.

4. SESSION 3: AFRICA DRYLANDS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

a. Making drylands resilient to climate change

A panel discussion was conducted under the three following subthemes:

- Sustainable pastoralism
- LDN targets setting programme
- Integrated approach to resilience building in drylands

i. Sustainable pastoralism

The panellist, Mr. Razingrim Ouedraogo of IUCN started by defining pastoralism as a system of dynamically managing livestock and land for economic, social and environmental benefits. “To a large extent pastoralism is an adaptation to ecologic and climatic variability and is not simply a livestock production system but provides significant environmental services” Mr. Ouedraogo stated. “Pastoralism is contributing significantly to national GDP (10 to 44%) through value chains of livestock direct products: live animals, meat products, skins, wool, milk, etc. over 1.3 billion people are estimated benefiting from livestock value chain” he further stated.

Mr Razingrim mentioned the following as the main challenges facing pastoralism in Africa:

- Decline communal land tenure; Reduction of mobility
- Weak rule of law/weak implementation of existing laws
- Emerging environmental risks including climate change and desertification
- Low security/conflicts
- Political marginalization and low public investment;
- Exclusion of pastoralists from the decision making processes
- Poor access to education and health services
- Weakening of local institutions; Decline of local knowledge
- Market risks, including price volatility and poor access

One question that came out was: how to enable pastoralism to continue delivering its potential. The presenter proposed the following action areas:

- Securing land tenure and natural resource governance
- Strengthening communal rangelands management
- Strengthening pastoral capabilities and institutions
- Securing land tenure and natural resource governance
- Ensuring equitable markets for pastoral diversity
- Implementing good policies that allow pastoralism development
- Strengthening local knowledge and developing collaborative learning

ii. LDN target setting programme

Mr Boubacar Cissé, leading the discussion on Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) recalled Sustainable Development Goal 15 and targets and indicators pertaining to land degradation neutrality:

SDG 15: “to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

SDG 15, Target 15.3: “By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world”.

SDG 15, **Target 15.3, Indicator 15.3.1:** “Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area.”

He also pointed out that UNCCD/COP12 endorsed LDN as strong vehicle for driving the implementation of the Convention, as LDN aims at maintaining or enhancing the land based natural capital and associated ecosystem functions and services and aims to ensure “no net loss” at least.

He finally presented the 10 Steps that provide operational guidance on how to define national baselines and to identify voluntary targets and associated measures:

- Step 1: Government leadership and stakeholder engagement;
- Step 2: Setting the LDN baseline;
- Step 3: Assessing land degradation trends;
- Step 4: Identifying drivers of land degradation;
- Step 5: Defining national voluntary LDN targets;
- Step 6: Mainstreaming LDN in land use planning;
- Step 7: Identifying measures to achieve LDN targets;
- Step 8: Facilitating action towards LDN;
- Step 9: Monitoring progress towards LDN, and
- Step 10: Reporting on LDN.

iii. Integrated approach to resilience building: a case of the Dry-lands Development Programme (DRYDEV)

Dr. Phosiso Sola presented the results of Dry-lands Development Programme which is a five-year farmer-led initiative implemented by the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) in collaboration with a Consortium of 21 NGOs, to Enhance Water Management, Food Security, and Rural Economic Development in the Dry Lands of Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali and Niger. According Dr. Sola, the project focuses on households residing in arid and semi-arid areas, seeking to transition them from subsistence farming and emergency aid to sustainable rural development. Main components of the project include:

- Increasing food and water security,
- enhancing market access,
- strengthening the local economy for different categories of farmers,
- Systematic structured action learning activities/research.

“The current concern for the programme is on post-harvest handling. This issue is being look at in Mali and Kenya” Dr Sola said. “In order to enhance marketing and financing, some activities being carried out in the programme are apiculture, poultry and so on. The project is linked to policy and evidence to scaling-up” she continued.

iv. Discussions

Participants agreed to highlight the followings in the final declaration of the Week:

- Need for policy makers to promote synergy in terms of LDN and other SDG programmes, and to consider Land Degradation Neutrality as a mean for achieving synergy in the implementation of the Africa Vision 2063, the MEAs and of the Paris Climate Change Agreement, as well as biodiversity conservation activities.
- African governments to take appropriate policy measures to ensure that the potential of the pastoral sector is enhanced to continue providing the necessary services and products to the Dry land communities.

b. Up scaling investments in Drylands: Panel discussion

Two presentations were made. One by the Pan African Agency of the GGWSSI on “**Investments opportunities for up-scaling the implementation of the GGWSSI**” and the other one by SOS Sahel International on “**Africa Drylands solution and way forward: case study on Family Farming**”.

i. Investments opportunities for up-scaling the implementation of the GGWSSI

Mrs. Aminata Correra of the Pan African Agency provided the context of her presentation and said that Sahel area is typically a dry area affected by desertification, environmental consequences, deforestation, livestock grazing and climate change impacts on livelihoods. She gave a profile (history) of the Pan African Agency and provided the vision linked to the GGWSSI. In 2015 discussed on SD and looking forward to 2025 for achieving GGWSSI targets. The global strategy has investment opportunities. The strategy from 2011 -15 allowed the implementation of projects on tree planting, training, value change development and limited research and development on some activity areas.

The Pan African Agency has 5 priority areas for action. These action plans have ensured the inclusion of communities in projects. The activities among others are livestock grazing and management and tree planting. “The Agency will work closely with forestry and other land users for soil fertility improvement and enhancement” Ms. Corera said.

According to the panellist, the mechanism of financing by the Agency is multi-faceted from multi to bi-lateral and local levels. It has established a carbon bank that ensures carbon reduction and the financial target institutions are the World Bank, IMF and all interested partners.

ii. Africa Drylands solution and way forward: case study on Family Farming

Mr. Rémi presented SOS Sahel’s approach to food security and nutrition which is based on three pillars:

- Programme engineering: innovate and share;
- Social engineering: working together, and
- Technical engineering: enhancing local potential.

According to Mr. Remi, the current challenges for SOS Sahel are on governance, energy access, market and knowledge. “Therefore, SOS Sahel is working towards having professional producers and engaging the youths with incentives and to that end SOS Sahel works with local authorities and involves all stakeholders so that they become owners of the project” Mr. Remi said.

According Mr. Remi training is a key area for improving farmer’s capacity to work effectively and individual farmers are trained as an individual.

iii. Recommendation

Participants, recommended to AUC and the pan African Agency to work towards mapping out funding opportunities and conditions for the GGWSSI, so that countries are able to mobilize external resources and boost the implementation of the GGWSSI at national level.

5. SESSION 4: INNOVATIVE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT MODELS IN THE DRYLANDS

This session was made of three presentations followed by discussions.

a. The oasis systems management and lessons

Mr. Youssef Brahimi from the Association “La Rose” defined the oasis system as a unique ecosystem organized around the date palm cultivation. “It reflects the human genius adaptation to extreme weather conditions through an efficient and optimal management of natural resources (space, water, biodiversity)” he said. “The oasis is a universal heritage that needs to be preserved and sustained”, Mr. Brahimi stressed.

He pointed out that in a regional context marked by armed conflicts, illegal migrations, informal economy fuelled by criminal networks, the oasis area has considerable assets that could be of benefit to the people living in these ecosystems. To that effect, it is proposed to better integrate the oasis space in the GMV through:

- Preserving the biodiversity and promoting agro ecology of the oases;

- Promoting south to south cooperation between the different countries having this unique ecosystem;
- Developing and implementing an Africa Regional plan for the promotion of the use of solar energy in the oases, and
- Developing synergies with NEPAD programs, including the Trans-Saharan Road, by giving priority to green investments along the Trans-Saharan Road (create “green corridor” or “desert gardens”).

b. Fire as a management tool in the drylands ecosystems

The Kishugu Group of South Africa presented a film funded by the World Bank which supported the view that fires are part of the African continent dryland ecosystem management. According to the Group most of the trees are fire tolerant and wildlife birds can escape fire menace and fire is also used across the continent by pastoralists for their livestock management. “Without fires in the drylands there will be an increased fuelwood loads and this favours trees over grass in land areas. Savannah and drylands need disturbance regimes, and fire is one of these disturbance forces” the Group said. “To control fires, some of the key points are reducing the intensity, time and vegetation volume” the presenter pointed out.

c. “Building non wood forest products businesses that are inclusive to rural women: case of the social enterprise Sahara-Sahel Foods in Zinder, Niger Republic”

Mr. Josef Garvi from Sahara-sahel Foods, presenting their experience said that the idea of creating a social business around drylands products comes from the observation that drylands produce abundantly and easily resilient wild plants: trees, shrubs or grasses; and it is important and possible to make use of what they give.

“Gathering and processing wild crops is traditionally a domain for women and children and it is possible to develop small and medium size enterprises as means of women and youth empowerment and poverty alleviation in rural area, as well as incentives to SLM in drylands” Mr. Garvi mentioned.

According to Mr. Garvi around 1000 rural people (mainly farmer wives, pastoralists, refugees from Boko Haram, and beggars) are involved in the social enterprise of Sahara and Sahel Food as suppliers of raw materials or seller of products.

Participants commended this example of Sahara – Sahel Food, which shows the potential of SLM and of None Wood Forest Products (NWFP) in terms of job creation, peace building and conflict resolution in the drylands.

Discussions around the presentation were focused on the need to support such kind of initiatives by linking them to the international market, especially the diaspora people.

6. SESSION 5: HARNESSING THE POTENTIALS OF DRYLANDS

a. Building institutions for sustainable rangelands management

Even though rangelands account for the largest part Africa's land surface they are under-represented in development investment according to Mr. Ouedraogo of the IUCN. Continuing his presentation he pointed out that conserving and benefiting from rangelands need strong institutions with clear mandate of strengthening actions for sustainable rangelands management including: (i) enabling local governance of communally-managed rangeland resources; (ii) strengthening resource rights; (iii) protecting and regulating livestock mobility; (iv) coordinating planning between institutions for rangeland ecosystem management; and (v) linking pastoralists to appropriate markets, including markets for environmental goods and services.

The current initiative, Healthy Ecosystems for Rangeland Development (HERD) is a multi-country, multi-donor partnership initiative with an overall goal **“to protect the rangelands through sustainable pastoral management in order to safeguard rangeland ecosystem services”**. Its objective is to restore and sustainably manage rangelands through stronger local governance and increased benefit-capture of the multiple environmental benefits of pastoralism. The results areas of the initiative include: (i) Evidence-based decision making; (ii) Effective institutions for rangeland management; (iii) Appropriate investments for sustainability; (iv) Learning and policy dialogue.

HERD initiative is supported by UNEP, GEF and is already started to be implemented in Egypt and Jordan and other countries that have expressed their will to join the initiative.

Participants raised some concerns that could be summarized as follow:

- The livestock sector is a cross cutting issue. This means that the livestock sector needs synergies with other institutions like Agriculture, Environment, and Forestry and so on. There is a need to think about a coordination mechanism for the sector instead of thinking about one single institution for it.
- Are cows the right animals for the dryland or are other animals the right animals for managing in the drylands?
- In pastoralism, the regulation of space and movement of animals is critical. How do you deal with the character of livestock movement?

b. Restoration of degraded landscapes for food security in southern Africa: examples from South Africa and f Namibia

Prof James Blignaut (of the University of Pretoria made a presentation on soil degradation which according to him is compromising the future of agriculture production and hence the future of the continent. Studies in South Africa has shown that maize production using conventional methods will, in all likelihoods, have negative returns in time going forward due to the degree to which the soils have been eroded. Using conservation agriculture, meaning the use of cover crops, crop rotation and minimum soil disturbance, however, has the potential to reverse the losses experienced by the maize industry into positive returns due to increasing yields, and a reduction in costs. Applying the wrong, or ineffective rangeland management practises, leads to a much higher demand in terms of water, carbon emissions and fodder requirement. These inappropriate management practises compromises the quality of the rangelands and also food security.

Applying conservation agriculture management practises have become essential to avoid a continent-wide disaster with respect to food security. It therefore has become an issue of

national

security.

Prof Blignaut quoted Franklyn Roosevelt (1937); “a nation that destroys its soils, destroys itself.” This sentiment is repeated by a former minister of agriculture in South Africa, Mr SP le Roux (1959) when he said “A nation that embraces its agriculture, embraces its future”. Conservation agriculture has therefore become the meeting place of the science, business and practise of restoring natural capital & food security.

c. Climate Change and Agriculture adaptation and Mitigation: Sudan case study

Dr. Salhadien made a presentation on a case study in Sudan on Climate Change and Agriculture Adaptation and Mitigation. The case study area is around 7,000 ha, in 5 localities. Most of the water in the proposed site of the project, originates in the Nubian sandy stone basin, which is characterized by the water accessibility in reasonable quantities for the implementation of most of the agricultural projects.

He also talked about the objectives of the Khartoum State Green Belt project on trees planting to contribute to climate change, desertification control, and protection of environment to enhance the livelihood in the area.

The project comprises of four components:

- Establishment of the green belt by planting forest trees, agro forestry, farming practices system.
- Enhance the livelihood and income generation through bee keeping, fish farming, and animal husbandry.
- Empower women participation by establishment of women nurseries, handcraft and farming activities.
- Capacity building and awareness raising by conduction trainings, demonstration workshops, case studies...etc., for farmers, women, communities, teachers, and students, etc.

The expected results included the following:

- Promotion of biodiversity;
- Reduction of emission of GHG by Carbon sequestration, possibility of carbon credits;
- Food security;
- Improvement of local people livelihood, and
- Income generation opportunities.

d. Dryland investments in the global agenda (World Bank)

Mr. Philippe Dardel of the World Bank made a presentation on financing windows for addressing dry land issues. Most of these windows are known. The most important question is: “how to access them”? According to Mr. Dardel, some of the windows are directly for drylands matters but others, even if they are not directly tailored for drylands development, could be used for addressing some of the issues of drylands development. This is especially the case of the Green Climate Fund.

The speaker noted that various institutions, including AfDB, Islamic Development Bank and IFAD are supporting some of the activities in the drylands. According to Mr. Dardel, the Word

Bank Group is supporting various initiatives addressing SLM in drylands: SIP, SAWAP, IAP and IAD, GEF/ (GEF7).

Other avenues of funding are:

- World Bank Up-coming Africa Business Plan (ACBP) focusing on forests, dryland scrapes, agriculture, energy...
- WB: GEF 7, IAD loans Convincing MoFinance and CMU...
- Convincing international donors: Marrakesh COP...
- Impact investors: What experience? Facilitate exchange
- GCF, LDN fund

7. SESSION 6: REDUCING VULNERABILITY IN DRYLANDS

a. Drought management and mitigation: State of response to El Nino in the Horn of Africa

Three complementary presentations were made by UNOCHA, FAO and IGAD which focused on the impacts of El Nino. The phenomena was explained as the warming of the Pacific Ocean that causes more warming on lands resulting to droughts taking 2 to 7 years. The opposite of El Nino called El Nina. This provides heavy rains and floods in some regions.

The impact of El Nino is either drought or flood or both. Drought and/or floods affect food security and livelihoods. The increase of El Nino has a corresponding impact on the lives of the people. It causes large exodus of people (Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia and so on). However, El Nino can result in good rainfall, vegetation growth and bumper harvests in some areas. It causes outbreak of communication diseases.

The objective of responding to El Nino in the dryland areas is to save lives and property. There should be contingency plans through communication programmes to minimize the impact of El Nino.

The major challenges in trying to address the effects and impacts of El Nino are the following:

- Limited or not available funds;
- Inadequate services;
- Violence against aid workers; and
- Conflicts.

In order to reduce the impact of El Nino, there is a need for timely interventions and provision of early warning information to all people. Solutions to these problems must be durable so that it is not only solving the problem but avoid the occurrence of the problem.

The presenters stated that what is important is to shift from crisis management to risks management, as it is not possible to avoid the occurrence of the El Nino phenomenon. National governments and international community should join efforts in giving responses/answers to the following questions:

- How do we move away from crisis management to risk management?
- To that effect, how will the early warning information reach the communities on time?
- Which kind of Positive coping mechanisms to put in place at national and sub national levels?
- How could we build on local knowledge and help local communities and individual families receive timely support?

During the discussions, participants stressed that based on the data provided on the African continent, the El Nino and El Nina will be more severe than before. This means that communities should be well prepared and well capacitated to stand against these problems of El Nino. Governments, donors and local communities should take the bull by the horns and make good plans to overcome the challenges of the El Nino and El Nina. Governments should have contingency plans with safety social nets that will provide a better live in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel. Youths should have more access to funds, so that they can innovate and find solutions to addressing the impacts and effects of drought and climate change in general.

b. Reducing vulnerability in drylands: Drought preparedness towards long-term solutions; to the Sahel and Horn of Africa's recurrent crisis

The first intervention in this session was that of Ms. Hiroute Guebre Sellassie, Deputy Special Representative UN Secretary General for West Africa and the Sahel. Her discussion centred on migration and conflicts. According Ms. Hiroute the Sahel has become important for the Africa to Europe youth migration for a better life. "The movement of people of Sahel has ever been a phenomenon fro time memorial and is part of the lives of pastoralists" she continued.

She underlined the interrelation between the communities in the Sahel has been cordial. However, conflicts exist between communities. "The problems in the Sahel are the development of slums and with little or no prospects of good livelihoods' she added.

During the discussions, participants pointed out that the issue of illegal migration is a great concern for Africa and should be addressed as a priority area by decision makers. Participants recommended to include in the final declaration, provision for incentives for adoption of good practices for restoration of drylands and for the development of small and medium enterprises and value addition of dryland products including non wood forest products, as means of women and youth empowerment and poverty alleviation in drylands Africa.

8. SESSION 7: REDUCING VULNERABILITY IN DRYLANDS: THE ROLE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

a. Monitoring and Evaluating NR in drylands: the Add value of MESA

Mr. Abraham of the AU/EU MESA project underlined the importance of earth observation for decision making. He defined earth observation as the collection of information using satellite. It is important to forecast weather, tracking biodiversity, land use change and manage natural resources sustainably according to Mr. Abraham. MESA use Sentinels that are fleets of satellites that capture information from space.

The thematic areas that MESA follows are agriculture, water, vegetation and others he gave the example of MESA's involvement in earth observation like the trends of El Nino effects in the entire African country.

MESA use different approaches (ground trothing exercise) that support the satellite information for decision making. All information given from the satellite imagery is confirmed by ground confirmation which is supported by community involvement.

Participants urged MESA to seek how to use indigenous knowledge for supporting the satellite information.

b. The role of meteorological information for building resilience in African Arid lands

Dr. Adama Alhassane Diallo, Director of ACMAD made a presentation on his institution which was created in 1987 as an African response to the droughts that occurred on the continent in the 70's and 80's. ACMAD provides weather and climate and information available for Africa's sustainable development.

Dr. Diallo said that the main role of ACMAD is to contribute to climate resilience in arid lands by providing user-driven and tailored climate information for policy, planning and practices. Specific climate information to be provided for arid lands includes:

- Hazards, trends and disturbances scenarios, impacts and response measures for the coming decades to support policies, strategies in water, agriculture, health, disaster management, energy and other climate vulnerable sectors;
- -Sub-seasonal , Seasonal to decadal climate outlooks and early warning for droughts, floods, wet/dry spells, heat waves and other extremes to support contingency planning and emergency management in arid regions;
- Weekly, decadal, monthly , seasonal and annual Climate monitoring products to track and detect climate events, extremes and impacts guiding and raising awareness of policy makers and society at large on climate variability and change impacts.

ACMAD is working on products, and services that contribute improving the resilience of natural and artificial systems (agriculture, water resources, livestock, environment, etc.) to climate shocks and change.

Challenges that ACMAD is facing include:

- The need for products to be tailored to ultimately become useful for development and have effective value to users.
- The need to expand services over DRR and embrace other major development sectors in Africa, including reforestation, fight against bush fires, promotion of irrigated agriculture, promotion of arid land cover with grass and other materials to reduce erosion by rain and winds are areas of intervention to support resilient arid lands.

Perspectives of ACMAD

- Support *smart agriculture initiatives in arid lands*;
- Improve access to climate data and climate knowledge management for sustainable development of arid regions;

- ❑ Support AUC to mainstream climate resilience in the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and other relevant initiatives over Arid Lands.

c. UNEP's drylands interventions

Mr. Adamou Bouhari of UNEP made presentation on their key interventions. Key messages from the presentation of Mr. Adamou Bouhari are:

- A lot has been done in development of tools, methodologies and knowledge on SLM monitoring (LADA/FAO, WOCAT, etc.)
- Partners will not continue investing on the same issues so countries need to show ownership
- There is a need to capitalize and move forward for concrete investment on the Ground

Mr. Bouhari further stated that UNEP and GEF are currently developing a project to conduct large scale assessment of SLM initiatives and investments in Great Green Wall countries using modern tools and space sciences to guide future investments and decision making. Key partners in this project include IUCN, NASA, European Space Agency, GEF; Universities, GGW Initiatives and Countries.

d. Collect Earth as a monitoring tool

FAO made a presentation Collect Earth which is a tool that enables data collection through Google Earth. In conjunction with Google Earth, Bing Maps and Google Earth Engine, users can analyze high and very high resolution satellite imagery for a wide variety of purposes, including:

- Support multi-phase National Forest Inventories
- Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) assessments
- Monitoring agricultural land and urban areas
- Validation of existing maps
- Collection of spatially explicit socio-economic data
- Quantifying deforestation, reforestation and desertification

The application is able to show global trends on tree cover particularly in drylands and is an important tool for decision making at local level.

In the ensuing discussions, participants noted that there are too many tools for monitoring but countries are poorly benefiting of their use. They also noted that the presentations done so far have shown that there are many institutions doing the same work and there is a need for rationalization and synergy among them. To this regard, it was recommended that AUC sets up a committee in charge of overseeing the capitalization of tools, methodologies and knowledge related to monitoring drylands activities and development of policies briefs accessible to end-users.

9. SESSION 8: WAY FORWARD IN ADDRESSING DRYLANDS CHALLENGES IN AFRICA

a. The GGWSSI for Southern Africa – Elvis Tangem

Dr. Elvis Paul Tangem again presented the proposal on expanding the GGWSSI to Southern Africa. The condition in the Sahara and the Sahel is the same in Southern Africa. Participants unanimously agreed that there is urgent need to replicate the GGWSSI experience in South Africa.

However, the commercial nature of Southern Africa (ecotourism, cultural tourism etc.) as opposed to West Africa will bring many new variants between the two regions.

The business nature of Southern Africa will pull many investors to commit themselves into the Great Green Wall for Southern Africa (GGWSA). The criteria for having a GGWSA would need a number of guidelines and this is available in the presenter's paper.

b. Positioning for COP22: African committing for land restoration in the context of the GGWSSI

The road to UNCCD – COP 22 in Marrakech, Morocco

The final session of the Third Africa Drylands Week was the discussion on how Africa should prepare itself for the UNFCCC COP22 in Marrakesh, Morocco in 2016. The International Conference on the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative held in Dakar, Senegal, came up with a recommendation to the GGWSSI Community to speak with one voice in Marrakech, during UNFCCC/COP22 so as to strengthen and help make effective the commitments taken by the international community in Paris in term of financing the operations of the GGWSSI.

After Dakar, a consultant was recruited by FAO to make an estimation of the size / mapping of the GGWSSI, and help countries to commit on the number of ha to be restored. Based on the national commitments, it will be easier to mobilize resources for the GGWSSI.

It is worth noting that some participants disagree with the methodology and the objectives of the study. For those participants, the work is reducing the GGWSSI to a tree planting initiative. It is another attempt to adapt the old idea of a wall of trees from Dakar to Djibouti.

10. WORKSHOP CLOSURE

The Closing ceremony was made of two interventions: one from Dr Ahmed Elmekass from the AUC and one from Mr Petrius, MEAs Focal Point on behalf of the Minister of Environment of Namibia.

Dr. Ahmed made a closing remark on behalf of the African Union Commission. He thanked the government and people of Namibia for hosting the event. He also expressed the gratitude of the African Union Commission to all the partners for their technical and financial support. He further thanked the participants for their participation and excellent ideas on the way forward.

In closing the Week on behalf of the government of the Republic of Namibia, Mr. Petros, the focal point for Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) at the Namibian Ministry of

Environment and Tourism thanked AUC and partners for the confidence in choosing Namibia to host the Third Africa Drylands Week. He expressed his satisfaction that many African countries have developed national targets on LND. He said that the workshop should guide participants for implementing their works in their various countries. He thanked the participants for their active involvement throughout the Week. He finally wished everybody safe travel to their respective destinations.

11. FINAL DECLARATION

1. **The 3rd African Drylands Conference was convened in Windhoek, Namibia from 8-12 August 2016.** *The conference was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Namibia and was organized by the African Union in collaboration with NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, FAO, the World Bank, UNDP, UNEP, CILSS, the UNCCD Secretariat and the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall. It was attended by over 100 participants from global, regional, and national institutions involved in drought mitigation and drylands management in Africa.*
2. **The participants reviewed opportunities, successes as well as challenges** facing the development of the drylands, including the interface between science and policy making, resilience to drought, land restoration, sustainable land management and preservation of historical cultural endowments.
3. **The participants noted** the following elements:
 - a. Environmental degradation, hunger and poverty are persistent challenges in drylands and recognized the urgent need to assist dryland populations to produce more food, to generate income, and to restore, regenerate and sustain the natural resource base for future food production and environmental health.
 - b. **Land degradation in Africa is a very serious crisis**, but restoration efforts have taken roots and are spreading rapidly; enabling millions of smallholders to adopt effective land regeneration methods.
 - c. **Addressing the challenges of land degradation in the drylands** will require more political commitment, adequate allocation of national budget resources and external resources, inclusive involvement of local communities, including youth and women, and effective cross-sectoral coordination.
 - d. **There is a** clear link between peace, security, development agenda and access and control of land resources and need for more integration of environmental dimension in peace building and conflict resolution initiatives.
 - e. **There are** close links between disaster risk reduction and sustainable environmental management in the drylands and the urgent need for timely interventions and building strong synergies in order to enhance resilience of the local communities.
 - f. **The global target of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) by 2030** is an important contributor to the attainment of Africa's vision 2063 and a strong vehicle for synergy between Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) and the Paris Agreement that includes support to ecosystem functions and services and enhanced food security.
 - g. **Significant progresses are made** in the implementation of the African environmental flagship programmes, including the Great Green Wall, the TerrAfrica and the Africa Forest and Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100).

- h. **The deployment of farmer-managed natural regeneration (FMNR) and assisted natural regeneration (ANR)** has now proven successful in regenerating millions of hectares in the drylands of the Sahel as well as in Eastern and Southern Africa, and are now recognized as foundational practices for building resilience to climate change on the Continent.
4. Participants also noted that the 3rd African Drylands Week is commemorated during the time when most African countries particularly the Eastern and Southern Regions of the continents are experiencing extreme weather conditions due to the El Nino phenomenon. **They recognized the need** for Long Term solutions to address issues of reducing the vulnerability of countries particularly to cyclical natural phenomena/ disasters. They also stressed the importance for building resilience of local communities by (i) availing timely accessible early warning information, (ii) providing incentives for adoption of good practices for restoration of drylands and for the development of small and medium enterprises and value addition of dryland products including non wood forest products.
 5. **The participants recognised** also the importance of pastoralism and the challenges and constraints faced by pastoral communities across the continent.

Recommendations

Participants to the 3rd Africa Dry Lands therefore:

- a. **Recommend** that the Commemoration of the Africa Drylands Week be a formal work programme of the African Union Commission to serve as a platform for raising awareness on drylands and drought matters and be organized on regional basis every biennium. AU Member States are requested to offer to host the event and partners are requested to support its organization.
- b. The African Union Commission **is requested to ensure** that at each session, the Africa Drylands Week monitors/follows up the status of implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted in the preceding session.
- c. **Recommend** that all African drylands countries consider joining regional programmes and initiatives like the Great Green Wall, TerrAfrica's Africa Resilience Landscape Initiative (ARLI) and the AFR100 Initiative and make a national commitment to promote their implementation.
- d. **Further recommend** that African governments take appropriate policy measures to ensure that the potential of the pastoral sector is enhanced to continue providing the necessary services and products to the Dry land communities
- e. **Recommend that countries**, international, regional and sub-regional organizations (i) conduct large scale assessment of tools, methodologies and knowledge in support of drylands initiatives monitoring (ii) develop policies briefs and knowledge products accessible to the end users and (iii) create platforms to promote synergies and South-South Cooperation. To that effect, AU, in collaboration with partners, is requested to create a committee in charge of overseeing the capitalization of tools, methodologies and knowledge related to monitoring Drylands Activities and development of policies briefs accessible to end-users.

- f. Sustainable natural resources management is key in addressing socio economic issues that will curb illegal migration and clip the wings of criminal networks in the Sahel and the Sahara regions. **It is thus recommended** that Policy makers and the international community realize and consider Sustainable Land Management as an integral part of peace building and conflict resolution mechanisms at national, regional and continental level. In particular, AUC and Member States are strongly requested to integrate the oases space where it exists into the national development plans as well as regional initiatives.
- g. **Request** African Governments and private sector, as well as donors' community to support the development of small and medium enterprises and promote value addition in drylands as as means of women and youth empowerment and poverty alleviation.
- h. **Further request** countries, international, regional and sub-regional organizations to consider Land Degradation Neutrality as a mean of achieving synergy in the implementation of the Africa Vision 2063, the MEAs and recommend LDN consideration in the implementation of the Paris Climate Change Agreement, biodiversity conservation activities, Sustainable Land Management and efforts to achieve food security among others.

Done in Windhoek, Namibia, this day of 11 August, 2016

The participants.