



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Consultancy – preparation of updated guidance material for the 2026 UNCCD reporting process

Consultancy reference number: CCD/25/C/27

Background

Established in 1994, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the sole legally binding international agreement linking the environment and development to sustainable land management. The vision of the UNCCD and its 197 Parties is to realize “a future that avoids, minimizes, and reverses desertification/land degradation and mitigates the effects of drought in affected areas at all levels – and to achieve a land degradation-neutral world consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” The objective of the Convention is to support countries and communities with the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources, leading to improved living conditions.

Implementation is steered through the UNCCD 2018-2030 strategic framework which comprises five strategic objectives and an underlying indicator framework, and an implementation framework.¹ Implementation is periodically monitored through the UNCCD national reporting process during which Parties report on national level implementation to the COP. In accordance with the procedure established in decision 22/COP.11, reporting is facilitated through the provision to country Parties of national estimates of the indicators derived from global data sources as default data.

Since the adoption of the UNCCD 2018-2030 strategic framework, country Parties have reported twice in a harmonized way on progress made towards the strategic objectives, in 2018 and in 2022. The 2026 reporting process is planned to be launched in mid-2025.

The Convention’s approach to reporting continuously evolves due to advances in data and technology and in response to the political process. In preparation for the 2026 reporting process, the secretariat has been working to further improve methodological guidelines and reporting tools. Namely, the following activities have been conducted, among others:

- Refinements to version 2.0 of Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1 which will be published in the form of an addendum to provide clarifications aimed at improving national estimations of land degradation and enhancing the ability to track changes over successive reporting periods;²
- Enhancements to the UNCCD reporting platform, known as the Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS), including revision and update of reporting forms for all strategic objectives and associated indicators, and for narrative reporting concerning the aims defined in the implementation framework;
- Evaluation of the global data sources to be used as default data, including the identification of high-resolution (i.e. 30 meters) default data for use by small island developing States (SIDS).

The overall objective of this consultancy is to prepare updated guidance material for the 2026 reporting process. More specifically, the consultant will revise and update the UNCCD reporting manual,³ the

¹ https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2022-02/cop21add1_SF_EN.pdf

² <https://www.unccd.int/resources/manuals-and-guides/good-practice-guidance-sdg-indicator-1531-proportion-land-degraded>

³ <https://www.unccd.int/resources/manuals-and-guides/prais4-reporting-manual>



glossary,⁴ the content of the e-learning video tutorials,⁵ and the PRAIS frequently asked questions (FAQs)⁶ based on on-going work on the improvement of methodological guidelines and tools.

The main targeted audiences of this guidance material are UNCCD National Focal Points, national reporting officers and other national technical experts; thus, the guidance should be tailored to technical and non-technical audiences alike.

Objective of consultancy

Updated guidance material at a level of complexity appropriate for the target audiences aimed at enabling UNCCD National Focal Points, national reporting officers and national technical experts to calculate the indicators and compile information for their 2026 national reports.

Duties and responsibilities

Under the oversight of the Science, Technology and Innovation unit Chief, and the direct supervision of an assigned Programme Officer, the consultant will:

- Familiarize him/herself with the available methodological documents, especially: version 2 of the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1 and its addendum (in preparation); the Good Practice Guidance for National Reporting on Strategic Objective 3;⁷ metadata documents of other SDG indicators used in UNCCD reporting (i.e. SDG indicator 1.1.1, 6.1.1, 15.1.2 and 15.5.1);⁸ and the reporting manual, glossary and e-learning video tutorials used during the previous reporting process;
- Familiarize him/herself with PRAIS, especially with its updated reporting forms, quantitative and qualitative tables and its communication, geospatial and other functionalities;
- Consult with the secretariat on all necessary revisions and updates related to strategic objectives 1 to 4, including in terms of indicator methodologies, datasets, reporting forms and reporting workflows in PRAIS;
- Liaise with the Global Mechanism and the consultant responsible for reviewing and updating the sections/terminology related to strategic objective 5 in the reporting manual and glossary, and ensure full integration of related guidance in the final version of the deliverables;
- Prepare an updated version of the reporting manual containing easily digestible guidance, accessible and appropriate for both technical and non-technical audiences, with the understanding that technical experts can refer, for instance, to the Good Practice Guidance for SDG Indicator 15.3.1 for further information;
- Update the definitions of terms contained in the glossary based on available methodological documents, internationally agreed terminology, and other credible sources, and add any missing definition as needed;
- Review and update the content (i.e. voice over script, on-screen text and graphics) of the e-learning video tutorials providing step-by-step guidance on how to report on each indicator in PRAIS. This will also include the review and update of the content of the two videos related to strategic objective 5, based on the updated version of the reporting manual prepared by the GM consultant;
- Assist with insertion of hyperlinks into the PRAIS text to facilitate users in accessing indicator-specific guidance as contained in the reporting manual, glossary and e-learning video tutorials;
- Support the secretariat staff in liaising with the company responsible for the production of the updated e-learning video tutorials to ensure conformity of the product with the update of the content;

⁴ <https://support.unccd.int/knowledgebase.php?article=8>

⁵ <https://support.unccd.int/knowledgebase.php?article=10>

⁶ <https://reporting.unccd.int/faq/>

⁷ <https://www.unccd.int/resources/manuals-and-guides/good-practice-guidance-national-reporting-unccd-strategic-objective-3>

⁸ Metadata documents for SDG indicators are available at: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>



- Liaise with the capacity building consultant who provides advisory services on the capacity building programme for 2026 national reporting to ensure that the deliverables contribute to and align with the overall capacity building plan;
- Ensure deliverables adhere to the UNCCD brand guidelines.

Deliverables

The specific outputs will be:

- A. Updated reporting manual
- B. Updated glossary of terms and definitions related to reporting
- C. Updated content (i.e. voice over script, on-screen text and graphics) of the e-learning video tutorials
- D. Updated PRAIS FAQs

These outputs will be submitted electronically.

The reporting manual and glossary are expected to be finalized tentatively by the end of June 2025, while the video content and PRAIS FAQs will be due in September 2025.

Contractual terms

The service of the selected consultant is estimated to be for 07 months between April and September 2025. This Consultancy is home-based. The contract will be paid in two instalments: the first one after finalization of deliverables A and B, and the second one after finalization of deliverables C and D. UNCCD does not provide health insurance to consultant and individual contractors. Incumbents selected for the consultancy are fully responsible for arranging, at their own expense, such life, health and other forms of insurance covering the period of their services as they consider appropriate. Proof of valid health insurance will be required before signing of the contract.

All products resulting from this contractual arrangement are the exclusive property of the UNCCD.

Requirements

- Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in natural/environmental science, geography or related discipline is required. A first-level university degree in combination with qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.
- Ten or more years of work experience related to the above disciplines, including; operational use of Earth Observations for land surface analysis is required;
- Proven track record of developing well written, high-quality technical reports is required; citation and, if available, hyperlink to at least three technical reports and/or publications in the relevant area should be provided as part of the application;
- Experience in developing training material and/or learning products; delivering training events, and creating e-learning courses is required;
- Superior written and oral communication skills, including ability to present ideas in user-friendly language is required;
- Familiarity or basic understanding of the UNCCD reporting process would be a strong asset;
- Competent in collaborative working online using the Microsoft suite of tools: Excel, Word, SharePoint (for file sharing), Teams (for video calls and messaging) ;
- Ability to use Markdown, GitHub and ReadTheDocs to produce well-formatted online documents would be a strong asset;
- Familiarity with a professional video design and production platform ,e.g. Articulate 360, would be an asset.
- Fluency in English (both oral and written) is required. Knowledge of one or more additional UN language is an asset.

Special notice



Only individuals who can act as independent, individual economical operators are qualified to apply. Individuals who can provide their services only on account of an institution or enterprise are not eligible under this procedure.

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations Secretariat and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultant and individual contractor is responsible for determining tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

Submission of application

The following documents should be sent to staffing@unccd.int as **one document**: UNCCD Personal History Form⁹ /CV and cover letter, specifying the following in the email subject line: **CCD/25/C/27**.

The deadline for applications is **31 March 2025**. Only applications submitted by the deadline and with complete documentation will be taken into consideration.

Due to the volume of applications received, receipt of applications cannot be acknowledged individually. Please address your application as indicated above and please do not address or copy your application to an individual at the Secretariat or Global Mechanism. Candidates who do not receive any feedback within three months of the deadline should consider their application as unsuccessful.

Date of issuance : 19 March 2025

⁹UNCCD P-11 form in electronic fill-in .pdf OR .docx format available: <https://www.unccd.int/convention/opportunities/vacancies/guidelines>