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6/7. Combating sand and dust storms

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 70/195 of 22 December 2015, 71/219 of 21 December 2016, 72/225 of 20 December 2017, 73/237 of 20 December 2018, 74/226 of 19 December 2019, 75/222 of 21 December 2020, 76/211 of 17 December 2021, 77/171 of 14 December 2022 and 78/158 of 19 December 2023 on combating sand and dust storms,

Recognizing that, in the past few years, exacerbated sand and dust storms as a major challenge have inflicted substantial socioeconomic damage on the inhabitants of the world's arid, semi-arid and dry subhumid areas, especially in Africa and Asia, thus underscoring the need for coordinated action and prompt measures to address this challenge and reduce its impact, notably in the most exposed regions,

Stressing the need to enhance cooperation at the global and regional levels, with a view to combating sand and dust storms and mitigating their adverse impacts, and affirming that resilient action to combat and prevent sand and dust storms requires a better understanding of their severe multidimensional impacts, including the deterioration of the health, well-being and livelihoods of people, increased desertification and land degradation, deforestation, loss of biodiversity and land productivity, and their negative impacts on sustainable economic growth,

Recalling United Nations Environment Assembly resolutions 1/7 of 27 June 2014 on strengthening the role of the United Nations Environment Programme in promoting air quality, 2/21 of 27 May 2016 on sand and dust storms, 4/10 of 15 March 2019 on innovation on biodiversity and land degradation and 5/5 of 2 March 2022 on nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development, as well as decision 14/5 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,¹ in which the Conference of the Parties adopted the voluntary guidelines for the design and effective implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction,

Acknowledging the work done by other United Nations system entities, including the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Meteorological Organization and the World Health Organization, in addressing sand and dust storms and mitigating their adverse impacts,

¹ See document CBD/COP/14/14.

Welcoming the adoption by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification of decision 26/COP.15 of 20 May 2022,² in which the Conference of the Parties urged a proactive approach to enhance cooperation at all levels to address the causes and impacts of sand and dust storms,

Emphasizing the relevance of the efforts of and cooperation by Member States at the regional and international levels to control and reduce the negative impacts of sand and dust storms on human settlements in vulnerable regions,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 72/225, 77/171 and 78/158, in which the General Assembly noted the first International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, held in Tehran from 3 to 5 July 2017, and the second International Conference on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, held in Tehran on 9 and 10 September 2023, and taking note with appreciation of other ongoing initiatives by various countries to combat sand and dust storms, especially at the regional level,

Acknowledging the efforts made by the United Nations Environment Programme to fulfil the request, addressed to the Secretary-General in General Assembly resolution 70/195, to prepare, in collaboration with other relevant United Nations entities, a report entitled “Global assessment of sand and dust storms” to circulate to the General Assembly,

1. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, subject to the availability of resources, to support Member States and members of specialized agencies of the United Nations system through the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms, among others, in collaboration with relevant United Nations conventions and entities and other partners and stakeholders, in addressing the challenges of sand and dust storms, as appropriate, building on the “Global assessment of sand and dust storms” report requested in General Assembly resolution 70/195;

2. *Invites* Member States to build capacity relating to research, modelling and early warning systems aimed at minimizing the impacts of sand and dust storms on ecosystems and livelihoods;

3. *Also invites* Member States to enhance the sharing of best practices and knowledge regarding all relevant aspects of combating sand and dust storms and mitigating their adverse impacts, as appropriate, including the socioeconomic impact of sand and dust storms and the impact on ecosystems and human health and well-being, paying special attention to people in vulnerable situations;

4. *Calls on* Member States to further implement practices, measures and policies responsive to the needs of women and girls when combating sand and dust storms and to ensure the equitable, inclusive, effective, meaningful and informed representation and participation of women at all levels in order to ensure the empowerment of women and girls;

5. *Invites* Member States to promote cooperation, as appropriate, including by:

(a) Preparing and implementing programmes and, wherever possible, action plans at the regional and subregional levels, as appropriate, on a voluntary basis;

(b) Promoting research, technical and scientific collaboration among existing regional centres and, while avoiding duplication with existing centres, setting up new ones, with a view to enhancing the preparation and implementation of the programmes and action plans referred to in paragraph 5 (a) above;

(c) Promoting North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation;

(d) Addressing sand and dust storms through integrated practical interventions at the policy, institutional and technical levels, as appropriate;

6. *Requests* the Executive Director, subject to the availability of resources, to organize a workshop, involving Member States, members of specialized agencies of the United Nations system, technical and financial institutions and other relevant stakeholders, in the margins of the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to explore possible gaps and areas for improvement in order to address sand and dust storms and their adverse effects at the regional and subregional levels;

² See document ICCD/COP(15)/23/Add.1.

7. *Invites* Member States and regional development banks to contribute financial resources to regional initiatives and projects to address the challenges posed by sand and dust storms;

8. *Requests* the Executive Director, subject to the availability of financial and human resources, to report to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its seventh session on progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

ADVANCE