

Management response: Evaluation of the UNCCD Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System

Overview

The evaluation of the UNCCD Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System - PRAIS - was carried out at a time when there was not yet a clear understanding of the components of future reporting, although some new reporting elements and requirements had been decided by the UNCCD Parties. Therefore the focus of this evaluation was to look at the PRAIS as a tool for national reporting, its design, functioning and costs, with some, but less, attention to the substantive side of reporting.

This approach is indeed visible in the evaluation report. Its main content and contribution are in the careful analysis of PRAIS from different perspectives - its efficiency, relevance/effectiveness and sustainability - which provides a rather comprehensive picture of related strengths and weaknesses. The three recommendations that the report makes are purposefully general, taking into account that many key elements of the UNCCD reporting are yet to be defined.

The evaluation report is a timely input to the ongoing internal considerations of the UNCCD secretariat and also the Global Mechanism of how to further develop the UNCCD reporting system. It is likely to be interesting reading also to those country representatives and other stakeholders that work on the future strategic framework for the UNCCD, and on the land degradation neutrality target.

Recommendations

Evaluation recommendation 1: *The effectiveness and relevance of reporting under the UNCCD is improved through the following:*

- *Future focus of national reporting is on progress made 'on the ground', in reaching the strategic objectives and by incorporating the Land Degradation Neutrality national targets.*
- *Affected country Parties will elaborate qualitative narratives, accompanied by quantitative information only where useful, on 'response indicators' (replacing the 'performance indicators'). These will reflect corrective measures that have been taken or are planned, and that are linked to progress toward the strategic objectives or the LDN targets.*

Management response: Provisionally accepted. Future UNCCD national reporting will focus on different aspects of the status of land, with less attention to operational aspects. Depending on decisions made by Parties, qualitative information could be used more on reporting concerning operational aspects.

Evaluation recommendation 2. *The cost-efficiency and sustainability of the UNCCD reporting system is improved, which may include the following:*

- *The secretariat ensures that the reporting templates can be changed without significant costs. One affordable and user-friendly option for this would be to continue developing the templates in .PDF (Adobe Life Cycle/Professional forms) and compatible .XLS (Excel spreadsheets), which provide various analytical and statistical functions for extracting data, checking the quality, and classifying it for analysis.*
- *The secretariat provides public/online access to the reporting tools through a dedicated page as part of the UNCCD website, instead of a separate online reporting portal. As the planned transfer of the UNCCD website to the Drupal content management system advances, the functionality that is available on the current PRAIS portal, such as data mining/filtering/searching, could be taken into use and made publically available. All previously submitted reports and supporting materials will be transferred onto the reporting page on the UNCCD website.*

Management response: Partially accepted. The reporting templates continue in .PDF while options for ensuring the secretariat's capacity to manage the templates will be considered. The improvement of PRAIS related functions will be considered within the broader aspect of knowledge management and the merging of websites and knowledge platforms.

The PRAIS portal will continue two main functions.

The first one is related to the previous reporting cycles under The Strategy, where query functionalities will be available to all Parties and general users. It will be possible for users to query about any information submitted through the national reports and to extract/export the information needed.

The other function is to have PRAIS as a platform for the submitted reports /data in future UNCCD reporting, where templates and other tools are maintained, and with the possibility to extract information for preliminary analysis as was done in the previous reporting cycles.

With regard to functionalities concerning data, those on improved visualization, filtering and searching will be considered and applied where feasible and cost-effective.

Evaluation recommendation 3. *The PRAIS "brand" for UNCCD reporting is maintained, and the new modalities for reporting are 'relaunched' as PRAIS³.*

Management response: Accepted.