



UNCCD
CSO Panel



United Nations
Convention to Combat
Desertification



UNCCD
COP16
Riyadh | 2024



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CSO Voices

OPEN DIALOGUE SESSION #1

INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS

- 5 December, 2024
- 10:00 - 13:00 (Plenary)

COP 16 Venue, Al Imam Saud Ibn Faysal Rd, Hittin Riyadh Saudi Arabia

Inclusive and sustainable agri-food systems

Agriculture is at the heart of the land degradation challenge, and the solution. As we strive for a future that ensures food security and environmental sustainability, the transformation of agri-food systems becomes both urgent and inevitable. To address this pivotal issue, the CSO Panel invites you to the Open Dialogue Session #1: Inclusive and Sustainable Agri-Food Systems, a cornerstone event of COP16's plenary agenda.

This session offers a unique platform for governments, CSO and other stakeholders to engage in open, honest, and constructive dialogue about the pathways to truly inclusive and sustainable agricultural practices.

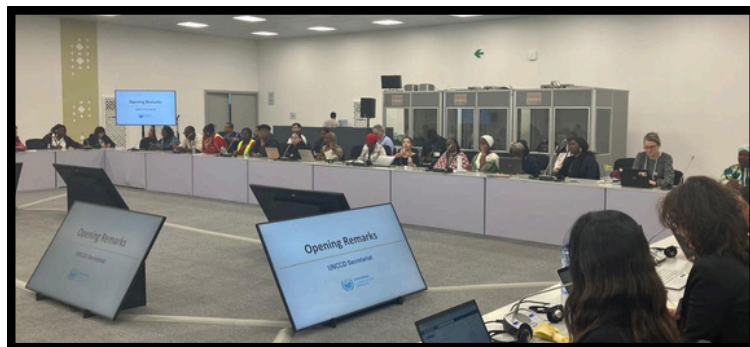
From grassroots innovations to systemic shifts, the discussion will highlight the indispensable role of CSOs in bridging the gap between global ambitions and local realities.

What does it take to make agri-food systems both sustainable and equitable? How can smallholder farmers, indigenous communities, policymakers, and private sector actors collaborate to ensure no one is left behind? This dialogue will tackle these pressing questions, emphasizing the voices and experiences of those most impacted by the challenges of land degradation and food insecurity.

Attending this session means more than listening. It means actively participating in shaping a future where food systems work for people and the planet. It's a chance to hear real-world insights, amplify civil society's perspectives, and contribute to solutions that prioritize inclusivity and resilience. **Join us to champion the CSO, foster collaboration and drive the urgent transformation needed in agri-food systems.**

Key Message of the Day

Support, develop, and implement plans in line with the UNCCD decisions at the national and sub-national levels that are complementary to and coherent with the plans of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Conventions.



Panelists and participants of the CSOs side event “30 years of the UNCCD and COP16: the good, the pending and the role of civil society in combating desertification at all levels” on December 4.

CSO QUOTES

“Environmental sustainability is everyone's responsibility. We must join hands together to protect women's land rights in order to have a green future”.

Rita Otu, People Environment and Sustainability Foundation, Nigeria.

Indigenous leaders demand global action on desertification

For the first time, 75 Indigenous leaders from around the world, including women and youth, have united to demand meaningful representation in the fight against desertification. This historic gathering highlights the indispensable role Indigenous Peoples (IPs) play in combating land degradation, restoring ecosystems, and fostering sustainability. As stewards of the land, IPs have long been at the forefront of protecting our planet, and their voices must now take center stage in the efforts of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

Indigenous leaders emphasized the urgent need to recognize and integrate Indigenous knowledge as a cornerstone of global restoration efforts. Traditional practices, honed through generations of deep connection with the land, provide innovative and sustainable solutions to environmental challenges. Equally critical is the recognition of Indigenous land tenure rights. Secure land rights and respect for territorial sovereignty are essential for protecting biodiversity, ensuring sustainable development, and empowering Indigenous communities to continue their stewardship. Without these rights, the ability of IPs to contribute meaningfully to global environmental goals is severely limited.

The leaders also called for the establishment of a permanent space for Indigenous Peoples within global frameworks. Such a space would ensure their meaningful participation and self-determination in shaping policies that directly affect their lands and futures. Finally, they urged global leaders to prioritize financial support—both monetary and non-monetary—to empower Indigenous organizations. These resources are crucial for addressing land degradation, advancing biodiversity conservation, and leading effective restoration initiatives.