**Submission by the Republic of Gabon on behalf of the Africa Group of Negotiators (AGN) on the dialogue on Land and Climate Change Adaptation under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA)**

The 25th Conference of the Parties decision 1/CP.25 Paragraph 32 requested the Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice to convene at its fifty-second session land and climate change adaptation related matters, not intervening in other processes under the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, including those carried out under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice.

In Paragraph 33 of 1/CP.25 further invites Parties and non-Party stakeholders to submit inputs via the submission portal to inform the dialogue on land and climate change adaptation.

Following the invitation of paragraph 33 of decision 1/CP.25, the African Group welcomes the opportunity and presents views for the session on land and climate change adaptation related matters.

*I- Background:*

The Africa Group takes note of the IPCC special report on land and climate change and welcomes the efforts by all experts exerted to produce the report, in this regard it is important to highlight the following findings included in the report:

- Increases in global mean surface temperature are projected to result in continued permafrost degradation and coastal degradation, increased wildfire, decreased crop yields in low latitudes, decreased food stability, decreased water availability, vegetation loss, decreased access to food and increased soil erosion. Furthermore, climate change exacerbates land degradation, particularly in low-lying coastal areas, river deltas, drylands and in permafrost areas.
- Over the period 1961–2013, the annual area of drylands in drought has increased, on average by slightly more than 1% per year, with large inter-annual variability. In 2015, about 500 million people lived in areas that experienced desertification between the 1980s and 2000s. The highest numbers of people affected are in South and East Asia, the circum-Sahara region including North Africa.
- Warming over land has occurred at a faster rate than the global mean and this has had observable impacts on the land system, these warmer temperatures (with changing precipitation patterns) have altered the start and end of growing seasons, contributed to regional crop yield reductions, reduced freshwater availability, and put biodiversity under further stress and increased tree mortality.
- In some dryland areas, including Sub-Saharan Africa, increased land surface air temperature and evapotranspiration and decreased precipitation amount, in interaction with climate variability and human activities, have contributed to desertification. In addition, climate change has resulted in lower animal growth rates and productivity in pastoral systems in Africa. Based on indigenous and local knowledge, climate change is affecting food security in drylands, particularly those in Africa.

- Land degradation impacts extend beyond the land surface itself, affecting marine and freshwater systems, as well as people and ecosystems far away from the local sites of degradation
- Asia and Africa are projected to have the highest number of people vulnerable to increased desertification. West Africa has a high number of people vulnerable to increased desertification and yield decline. North Africa is vulnerable to water scarcity.
- Furthermore, frequency and intensity of droughts has increased in some regions (including the Mediterranean and in most countries in Africa).
- Changes in climate can amplify environmentally induced migration both within countries and across borders, reflecting multiple drivers of mobility and available adaptation measures.
- Extreme weather and climate or slow-onset events may lead to increased displacement, disrupted food chains, threatened livelihoods, and contribute to exacerbated stresses for conflict.

The Africa Group also request SBSTA to consider under the relevant agenda items and throughout its work issues related to concrete adaptation measures on land to deal with adverse effects of climate change and to combat current levels of global warming and associated risks including increased dryland, water scarcity, soil erosion, vegetation loss, wildfire damage, coastal degradation and tropical crop yield decline, ways to enhance cooperation and coordination at all levels including through international cooperation;

Developed countries will have to take the lead in reducing food losses and wastes. This would translate into reduction in GHG emissions, and that failing to do so would mean a further degradation of land resulting in increased threat to food security, biodiversity and ecosystem services, in particular to developing and African countries.

In China and Africa, many land-based responses can contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation, help combat desertification and land degradation, as well as enhance food security. The SRCCL identifies 40 response options for the land sector with most of them having multiple consequences for adaptation,

*II- <u>Way forward</u>*

The Africa Group request SBSTA to organize workshop(s) on the following topics;

- Unpacking the new scientific knowledge and key findings in the IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Land (SRCCL).
- Interlinkages between desertification, land degradation, food security and GHG fluxes: Synergies, trade-offs and integrated response options
- Sustainable land management and Policies/Programmes/Instruments that support response options.
- Sustainable management of land resources at all levels, including cooperative approaches and ways to mitigating negative impacts of climate related actions.
- Cooperation at all levels to enhance response to land related climate change issues.

The Africa Group request SBSTA to organize workshop(s) in the continent on the following topics;

- Assessment of inclusion of land related issues within the NDCs,
- Further topics like; adaptation to land degradation and reduction of soil fertility as well as the importance of land to humanity, including as a home, source of nutrition, protection and amusement etc.
- Food system response options.
- The special circumstances of all African countries. The African group solicit funds to review work done or not done at country, sub-regional and regional levels; identify gaps and necessary measures to be put in place to fill those gaps, particularly linked to direct and indirect climate change impacts and adverse effects on land, being socioeconomic, environmental, technological and financial, at all levels.

Finally, The African Group will engage in the dialogue on land and adaptation considering that agriculture is the backbone of most African countries and contributes significantly to their GDP. Therefore, Africa should be well represented in future discussions; meetings and or workshops planned that may be conducted, including any climate related technical/scientific analysis or reports that need to be considered under the UNFCCC, FAO and IPCC processes on land and adaptation.