



United Nations

United Nations Secretary-General's Framework for the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (2025-2034)

Sand and dust storms pose significant challenges to sustainable development, impacting agriculture, infrastructure, transport, communications, energy, ecosystems, biodiversity and human health. Driven by strong winds that lift dry soils into the atmosphere and carry them across continents, these storms are especially severe in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid regions, emerging as a transboundary threat, with multidimensional risks to human health, well-being and livelihoods. Addressing this challenge demands proactive actions to prevent new sources from emerging, curbing the expansion of existing sources, and strengthening collective efforts to reduce the harm these storms inflict on people, planet and prosperity. Sand and dust storms jeopardize progress towards 11 out of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), making coordinated global action not just necessary, but urgent.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 78/314 in July 2024 proclaiming the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms for the period from 2025 to 2034 with the ***aim of enhancing international and regional cooperation and supporting and scaling up efforts to prevent, halt and mitigate the negative effects of sand and dust storms, especially on the affected countries, within existing structures and available resources.*** The Decade seeks to: (1) accelerate and sustain action towards the mobilization of means of implementation; (2) scale up international cooperation and collaboration in science, research and innovation at the local, national and regional levels; and (3) foster public-private and multi-stakeholder partnership.

The resolution invites the Secretary-General, with the support of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Stormsⁱ, to take appropriate steps to plan and organize the activities of the Decade at the global, regional and country levels. All member States of the United Nations, members of the specialized agencies and observers of the General Assembly, United Nations system organizations, other international and regional organizations, civil society, the private sector and academia, and other relevant stakeholders are invited to contribute to the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms.

The Decade will be implemented through a collaborative approach that addresses the multifaceted challenges posed by sand and dust storms and the opportunity to more effectively manage them. Four work streams will support the goal and objectives of the Decade to:

- (1) **Raise awareness and improve understanding** – by enhancing public understanding of the causes and multidimensional impacts of sand and dust storms and encouraging awareness-raising campaigns at the global, regional, and national levels. This will be achieved through dialogues, conferences, and meetings at the international, regional and national levels and supporting coherence of Decade activities with those of the International Day on Combating Sand and Dust Storms.
- (2) **Share knowledge and good practices** – by supporting scientific research, innovation and the dissemination of knowledge products on early warning, advisories and assessment tools, as well as the use of artificial intelligence and foresight tools; developing guidelines, toolkits and good

practices; strengthening institutional capacities on the collection, monitoring and use of indicators related to land degradation, drought, disaster risk reduction, climate and biodiversity; strengthening interoperability of UN digital knowledge and data platforms; and encouraging the establishment of a Friends Group among member States to raise political visibility.

- (3) **Mobilize action** – by encouraging the articulation of priorities to combat sand and dust storms in global agendas; promoting preventive and mitigation measures to combat the negative impacts of sand and dust storms, including through collaborative frameworks at the global, regional and country levels; scaling up successful projects and programmes; promoting cross-sectoral joint initiatives and collaborative projects that can generate socio-economic and environmental benefits across multiple SDGs, including those related to food security, health, infrastructure, gender among others; and mobilizing technical and financial resources to accelerate implementation and attract investment through innovative financing mechanisms.
- (4) **Foster collaboration** – by encouraging cross-sectoral collaboration and joint commitments during the Conferences of the Parties to the three Rio Conventions and meetings of the Sendai Framework due to the interconnectedness of challenges related to biodiversity, desertification, climate change and disaster risk reduction; foster collaboration and commitments to address the transboundary nature of sand and dust storms; facilitating regional and international dialogues and knowledge networks; establishing and strengthen multistakeholder platforms and partnerships; and engaging Champions for Combating Sand and Dust Storms to amplify awareness, foster the exchange of experiences and increase collaboration.

The success of the Decade will be determined based on its ability to: raise awareness, enhance collaboration and engagement, facilitate access to knowledge, encourage innovation, strengthen partnerships, and mobilize means of implementation that combat sand and dust storms. The Decade will seek coherence across global agendas, including follow-up related to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Environment Assembly, and disaster risk reduction platforms.

Monitoring and reporting will be pursued through: (1) mandated reports submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, prepared with the support of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms; (2) a mid-term review during the eighty-fourth session of the General Assembly in accordance with resolution 78/314 and resolution 80/143, consisting of reporting by the Secretary General and a high-level ministerial meeting convened under the auspices of the President of the General Assembly;ⁱⁱ and (3) end of Decade closing.

A dedicated webpage and communications materials will be developed with the support of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms including links to activities, platforms and knowledge resources organized in support of the Decade using various media tools.

The cost of all activities that may arise from the implementation of the Decade should be met from voluntary contributions, including from the private sector.ⁱⁱⁱ The United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms will support the mobilization of contributions to support the Decade and its associated work streams. This includes inviting contributions from United Nations member States, specialized agencies, civil society, the private sector, and academia to host, organize and support the Decade's activities, according to United Nations rules.

ⁱ The United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms promotes and coordinates a collaborative United Nations System response to sand and dust storms. It is comprised of 21 organizations that work to combat sand and dust storms from diverse perspectives, namely the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), United Nations University (UNU), World Health Organization (WHO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the World Bank.

ⁱⁱ Resolution 80/143, paragraph 24. *Emphasizes* the importance of reviewing the implementation of the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms at its eighty-fourth session, as a means to assess progress made and identify challenges encountered, with a view to enhancing international cooperation and support for affected countries and providing timely opportunities to advance discussion on the matter, including through the convening of a high-level ministerial meeting on the mid-term review of the Decade, under the auspices of the President of the General Assembly, through voluntary contributions and without duplication of effort, to advance international cooperation and support for affected countries and to discuss their challenges, needs and priorities, including ways to enhance regional and global policy coordination, in coordination with the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms and other relevant United Nations entities, which will result in a summary of the proceedings to be prepared by the President of the General Assembly as its outcome document.

ⁱⁱⁱ Resolution 78/314, paragraph 7. *Stresses* that the cost of all activities that may arise from the implementation of the present resolution should be met from voluntary contributions, including from the private sector.