



Minutes of the Drynet Annual Assembly

15 May 2022

Hotel Seen, Abidjan, Ivory Coast

The Assembly was held in the course of UNCCD COP 15, and was attended by representatives of 12 member organisations.

1. Opening and welcome

Patrice Burger (Co-chair) opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

2. Introductions and check in

The participants at the meeting introduced themselves:

1. Stefan Schuller - Both ENDS, The Netherlands
2. Marioldy Sanchez Santivañez – AIDER, Peru
3. Nahid Naghizadeh - CENESTA, Iran
4. Nathalie van Haren - Both ENDS, The Netherlands
5. Noel Oettlé - EMG, South Africa
6. Ibrahima Séméga - GCOZA, Mali
7. Tanveer Arif – SCOPE, Pakistan
8. Faiz Ahmed - SCOPE, Pakistan
9. Patrice Burger - CARI, France
10. Burcu Genç – TEMA, Turkey
11. Fatima Kaba - ENDA, Senegal
12. Anne Plaatjies- Hanase - EMG, South Africa
13. Sebastian Chailleux - CARI, France
14. Christophe Brosse – CARI, France
15. Mathilde Geay - CARI, France
16. Alice Grinand– CARI, France
17. Jérôme Enjalbert - CARI, France
18. Dharmender Nadimetla - GBS, India
19. Youssef Brahim - La Route du Sel, France (virtual)
20. Miguel Angel Crespo - Probioma, Bolivia (virtual)

Apologies were recorded from Ana Di Pangracio of FARN, Argentina, who was unable to attend the meeting.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The following agenda was adopted for the Drynet Annual Assembly:

1. Opening and welcome
2. Introductions and check in

3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Review of the Minutes of the 2019 Annual Assembly
5. Report from the Board "From India to Ivory Coast"
 - Co-Chairs' report
 - Treasurer's report
 - Q & A and discussion
6. Secretariat Report
 - Activities: Communications: newsletter, website and podcasts
 - Finances: overview of the current budget and membership fees
 - Future prospects
7. Drynet/ GEF LND Concept Note
8. Appointment of the Drynet Secretariat 2022 – 2023
9. Election of the Drynet Board 2022 – 2023
10. Desertif'Actions 2022 and proposed Drynet Retreat in Montpellier
11. Any other business
12. Final reflections
13. Closure

The agenda was adopted (proposer: Tanveer, seconder: Burcu).

4. Review of the Minutes of the 2019 General Assembly in New Delhi

The minutes were presented. The actions from the previous General Assembly had been followed up on, with the exception of the following, which was carried forward:

Action: Marioldy, Nathalie and Noel will prepare a one page document on transformation.

It was noted that it will be important to be specific about what transformation should be in our context and what it relates to and not just use it as a 'buzzword'.

The minutes were adopted (proposer: Nahid, seconder: Marioldy).

5. Report from the Board "From India to Ivory Coast"

5.1. Co-Chairs' report

Co-Chair of the Drynet Board, Patrice Burger, presented a comprehensive reflection on Drynet's role in a changing world and its progress and challenges: please see the Appendix to these minutes: ***Co-Chair's address to the Drynet Annual Assembly, May 2022 "From India to Ivory Coast"***. He noted that during the recent turbulent period of world events the Drynet network has been able to continue its work, with 12 members present at the GA. The secretariat has carried out its mandate and the board of directors has continued its work despite the restrictions of the pandemic

The AVACLIM and Porticus projects have contributed to supporting the activities of some Drynet members, supported the secretariat and enabled members to meet here at the COP. Drynet members have served on the SPI (Noel), the IWG on drought (Nathalie), the CSO Panel (Manon and Nahid) and the LDN Advisory Board (Nahid), influencing the strategic direction of the UNCCD. Patrice noted that this capacity to interact at all levels is unique and must be maintained. It is not only technical, but is also a result of our human relationships.

He noted that if Drynet is to continue to be an influential network, we will have to realise our unfulfilled ambitions in many areas, such as communication, impact and influence,

cooperation between members and collective action. He noted with pleasure that a project on land degradation neutrality is being developed in dialogue with the GEF with IUCN as implementing agency. The forthcoming 5th Desertif'Actions summit (initiated by CARI) that will take place between 5th and 8th October in Montpellier in partnership with the UNCCD and the OSS will be a strategic moment for Drynet to contribute and to influence the implementation of the decisions taken by COP15..

Patrice reflected on the passing of Drynet stalwarts Bhawani and Khadija, noting that their contributions are already sorely missed.

Patrice noted that at the end of his mandate he wanted to thank all for the work accomplished during these 34 months and to thank the members of the board for their commitment. The energy that Drynet members have invested have allowed the network to seriously influence many changes within the UNCCD and elsewhere in an original and inspiring way. However, Patrice announced that he had decided to step down from the Drynet board, but would remain present and engaged in some activities of Drynet.

5.2. Treasurer's report

Tanveer invited Noel Oettlé to present a report on the finances of the Drynet network.

Noel noted that the report reflected income and expenditure for operations of the Drynet Secretariat based on membership fees only.

In addition to these resources, funding had also been secured from Porticus via Both ENDS to contribute to the salary of the Drynet Coordinator (50% of Anne's working time is dedicated to Drynet).

EMG had been able to fulfil the functions of the Secretariat with the current budget.

All membership fees for 2021 had been paid by members, and 2022 fees had been paid by some members, and were currently outstanding from CENESTA, FARN, GBS, GCOZA, Probioma and SCOPE.

Fees contributed by the members amounted to € 7 300 in 2020, and EUR € 8 100 in 2021.

6. Secretariat Report

6.1. Activities: Communications: newsletter, website and podcasts

Anne Plaatjies-Hanase provide a report on activities undertaken by the Secretariat:

Virtual Meetings

The Secretariat with the support of member organizations, have held 3 Virtual Meetings this year, in February, April and May in preparation for the UNCCD COP. These meetings were well attended by members are served as a space to (i) coordinate Drynet's strategy for the COP, and (ii) to develop Drynet's advocacy priorities for the year.

In the course of the meetings Drynet identified 2 strategic tracks to influence the UNCCD COP15 negotiations and discussions: Drynet advocacy and Drynet cooperation

Drynet advocacy & priorities

The Drynet objective is to engage with policy makers present at COP15 at the national level, at regional level (where appropriate), at UNCCD level and with other relevant actors will focus on the following priorities:

- More focus and effort within policies and finance relevant to LDN on the prevention of land degradation and desertification according to the LDN priority hierarchy (first: prevention, second: reduction, third: restoration)
- More and better financial mechanisms that support initiatives of women, indigenous peoples and local communities on agroecology, sustainable land use, and landscape restoration.
- Meaningful participation of women, indigenous peoples and local communities in land use planning and budget allocation. Acknowledgement of indigenous and local knowledge on sustainable land use as crucial element in the co-creation of solutions for prevention, reduction, and restoration of land degradation

Anne noted that it was important to mention that as a network, we should not lose sight of these advocacy priorities for the year, extending beyond the COP. These advocacy priorities can be used as a guideline for how we work together as Drynet in 2022.

Communications

The Secretariat has had meetings with most of the members to talk about their respective organizational priorities and the work that they think should be further discussed or amplified within the network. This work will be featured on the website/ newsletter in the coming months and as the work progresses.

The newsletter was proposed to be completed before the UNCCD COP, but members were understandably under pressure for the COP and contributions were low. The Secretariat will prepare a special edition newsletter, reflecting Drynet's contributions at the UNCCD COP. This will be intended to bolster Drynet's image by highlighting the important work being done by the network.

This newsletter will also bring to the fore the reflections and opinions of the COP, where the network feels more should be done/ achievements of the COP. Three newsletters will be published this year.

Anne noted that the Secretariat encouraged members to share the work that they are doing, to respond to opportunities to contribute content to the newsletter and to work with the Secretariat to create a better online presence for the Network.

Future plans

With support from Both ENDS, the Secretariat and EMG will host a series of webinars this year to expand conversations around agroecology, better funding for agroecology and the constraints faced by CSOs in the agroecology funding landscape. Drynet members will be invited to participate in the webinars.

The Drynet Podcast series will produce at least two further podcasts this year. Members are encouraged to use this opportunity to promote the work they are doing, and to talk about collaborations within the network.

6.2. Finances: overview of the current budget and membership fees

Noel Oettlé reported to the Assembly.

Membership fees for 2022 amounted to:

Organisation	Invoiced	EUR Received
AIDER	200	200

Both ENDS	2 000	2 000
CAATINGA	500	500
CARI	1 000	1 000
CENESTA	200	0
EMG	500	500
ENDA	1 000	1 000
FARN	500	0
GBS	200	200
GCOZA	200	0
La Route du Sel	200	200
Probioma	200	0
TEMA	1 000	1 000
SCOPE	200	200
Totals	7 900	6 800

Financial Report for the period January 2020 – May 2022:

	Income (Euros)	Expenditure (Euros)
Balance brought forward from 2019	1 489	
Membership fees received 2020	7 300	
Membership fees received 2021	8 100	
Membership fees received 2022	6 800	
Pending payments	1 100	
Salaries Jan 2020 – April 2022		13 125
Website		832
Communications		2 421
Management overheads		1 400
Office accommodation		1 400
Project costs		431
TOTALS	<u>24 789</u>	<u>19 609</u>
Balance	<u>5 180</u>	

The proposed budget for the Secretariat for May – December 2022 was:

	Income (Euros)	Expenditure (Euros)
Balance on hand	5 180	
Salary, Secretariat Manager (part-time)		3 750

Website		50
Communications		180
Management overheads		400
Office accommodation		400
General expenses		100
TOTALS	<u>5 180</u>	<u>4 880</u>
Anticipated balance carried forward to 2023		<u>300</u>

6.3. Future prospects

In discussion, it was noted that we should better utilize Drynet channels to improve the network's image. We can also improve on both internal and external communications. The website is the visual representation of the network, and the richness of the network should be reflected on the website. It should also be an information resource. The social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram should be activated and it was suggested that the communication officers of Drynet members should have access to the Drynet website and communication tools. The Drynet website could be used, for example, to share information about the AVACLIM project or the work of individual member organizations.

Action: the Secretariat and Board will organise a virtual meeting of the Communication Officers of the members to discuss how best to improve Drynet's communication, including assessing the current website

Action: The Board and Secretariat to develop a workplan for communications

7. Drynet/ GEF LND Concept Note

Noel reported that after Bora Masambuko of IUCN had initially submitted the PIF, she had received feedback from the GEF, shared this with Drynet and subsequently incorporated this into the PIF. This revised version has been shared with the Drynet Board. The proposal has been made by the GEF that the budget could now once more be increased from US\$1,000,000 to US\$1,500,000. This is driven by the impulse of the GEF CEO to provide further support for CSOs to engage across the UN MEAs, linking the issues of biodiversity, climate change and sustainable land use. The incoming Drynet Board will have to engage with the IUCN and the GEF to take the process forward in May.

If the process of developing the full proposal goes forward Drynet will be able to engage in a proposal development workshop. Drynet should be eligible to received funding for the work of the Drynet and the Secretariat in 2023. In the interim the Secretariat will continue discussions with the GEF about this proposal.

Action: A critical mass of Drynet members should participate in the workshop to develop the full project proposal.

8. Appointment of the Drynet Secretariat 2022 – 2023

Noel reported that EMG had taken the decision not to continue hosting the Secretariat for a further biennium. The in-coming Secretariat will have to be able to manage the implementation of the GEF project.

It was proposed that on the occasion of the Desertif' Actions conference in October 2022 a Drynet 'retreat' should be held to enable the membership of the network to map out a sound strategic course for the coming years. By this time there will be more clarity on the GEF funding. Prior to the retreat, candidate member organisations will be invited to submit proposals for the hosting of the Secretariat for the next 2 years. Prior to the conclusion of the retreat, the membership will appoint one of the candidates as the in-coming Drynet Secretariat.

Following discussion, it was **agreed** that EMG will continue to host the Secretariat for the coming months. Following the appointment of the in-coming Secretariat, EMG will support the transition of the administrative function between October and December 2022.

It was further **agreed** that the decision on the appointment of the Drynet Secretariat for the next biennium is deferred to the Drynet Retreat.

Action: A notice will be circulated to all Drynet members well in advance of the Drynet Retreat to enable potential host organisations to prepare proposals for network hosting.

9. Election of the Drynet Board 2022 - 2023

Patrice led a discussion of the roles and responsibilities of board members, which include but are not limited to:

- Attendance at meetings
- Flexibility in finding dates/times for meetings of the Board
- Willing to take on roles and responsibilities
- Responsive and accessible
- Focus and engagement with the content of the portfolios and the issues under consideration
- Willing to facilitate meetings and/or workshops and processes
- Membership management
- Engage with donors in an ongoing way about fundraising
- Expand membership base (a member of the board should hold this function)

Following a processed of nomination and seconding of candidates by the members, an election was held and the following members were elected to the Drynet Board:

1. Ana Pangraccio
2. Fatima Kaba
3. Marioldy Sanchez
4. Burcu Genç
5. Manon Albagnac
6. Dharmender Nadimetla
7. Nahid Naghizadeh
8. Nathalie van Haren

10. Desertif' Actions 2022 and proposed Drynet Retreat in Montpellier

The 5th edition of Desertif' Actions initiated by CARI will be held in Montpellier from 5th to 8th October 2022. For the first time Desertif' Actions will be held after the COP. The process has been divided into three phases : (i) national preparatory meetings before the COP, (ii) participation in COP15 and finally (iii) the summit in October. DA22 will thus focus primarily on implementation (e.g. on COP 15 decisions and other actions flowing from the COP)

Several Drynet members (some of whom are also partners in the AVACLIM project) have initiated a preparatory meetings in their countries between January and April.

As the UNCCD is one of the organizers of DA22, it is expected that the transition from one CSOs Panel to the next one will happen in Montpellier.

As was the case in the past, members of the Drynet network are warmly invited to participate in and contribute to the program of DA22, in particular with regard to presentations, facilitation and reporting. Information of the provisional program will be shared during June. If all funding of Desertif' Actions is confirmed, it is expected that CARI will be able to invite between 80 to 100 sponsored participants. In the light of the number of participants that to register and ask for sponsorship, the decisions about sponsorship will be taken by end of August.

11. Other business

It was **agreed** that members would follow up with and other CSOs that are interested in joining Drynet by meeting with them to share information about the value of the Drynet network.

Drynet has been invited to speak in Madrid, Spain on the International Day of Drought on 17 June. Nathalie will coordinate a Drynet response to ensure that the network is represented there.

12. Final reflections

The participants shared their thoughts on what had gone well with the meeting:

- Encouraged, hopeful and enthused
- Coordination and facilitation
- Professionalism
- Hand-holding and dynamics of the group
- Retreat proposal and the possibility to reinvent ourselves
- Women on the Board!!
- Renewal and sharing
- Organization and kindness
- Availability and togetherness
- Presence of people: being here makes a good difference.
- Capacity to build again
- Cooperation and motivation
- Consensus
- Perspective
- Refreshments

What didn't go so well?

- Heat/ room temperature
- Timing and breaks
- Snacks missing
- The online members struggled to connect
- Disturbing noises (from hotel staff)

13.Closure

The meeting closed at 19:53 with a vote of thanks to Patrice Burger, the out-going Co-Chair, for his dedicated service to the network.

Appendix: Co-Chair's address to the Drynet Annual Assembly, May 2022

"From India to Ivory Coast"

Co-Chair of the Drynet Board, Patrice Burger gave the following speech as the moral report of Drynet from 2019 to 2022:

Dear colleagues and friends,

It has been 34 months since we held a face-to-face General Assembly since the one held in New Delhi during the COP14 in 2019. This is a very long time.

Of course, some of us have seen each other at various short and partial times, such as in early 2020 at the launch of AVACLIM exactly within three days of the declaration of the COVID 19 pandemic which considerably changed many of our plans.

In Delhi we were 11 members in the GA and had decided to entrust EMG with our secretariat, and we had constituted a board of 6 members to which we added Ana Di Pangracio. Ana was subsequently elected Co-Chair along with me and has served until today.

In 2019 our budget was almost balanced, but we had decided to strengthen our fundraising efforts to ensure Drynet had a more sustainable base. We had also decided to launch an internal survey that was not completed, to better characterize our network, our areas of expertise.

Since January 2020, the pandemic has plunged the world into a sort of helpless stupor, then into the realization that the world was living through an unprecedented experience that was going to affect its trajectory, and finally into the beginning of multiple forms of adaptation, some of which are positive, such as working remotely and communicating, and some of which are negative, such as attempts at deprivation of liberty or psychological consequences, the full consequences of which we have yet to measure. Finally, recent developments in terms of political instability, in Palestine, in Burma, during elections such as in the United States Capitol, or during the withdrawal of American forces from Afghanistan, in Europe itself with the war in Ukraine, are a brutal reminder of the forces that run through the world we live in. Contrary to our beliefs, there is no protected territory, and everywhere, "barbarism sleeps with one eye open".

In this context, the ecological injunctions that are imposed on us will be treated through the prism of a world forced to reform itself. Dear friends, if in the course of history past generations have often fought for this world to be made, perhaps we, especially the youngest among us, are part of the generations whose responsibility it is to prevent the world from unraveling.

During this recent turbulent period, we have been able to keep our Drynet network afloat and we now have 12 members present at our GA. We must be congratulated for this.

The secretariat to which we had entrusted the mandate of ensuring the tasks of current management carried out these more than honorably. The board of directors has continued its work in a formal or informal way depending on the circumstances and from a distance.

The AVACLIM project has served a function of keeping at least six Drynet members in touch with each other, and the funds transferred to these partners have directly supported members in their activities and enabled them to meet here at the COP. The work and results

of AVACLIM will allow these same members to consider future developments in agroecology alone or together. This is to be welcomed, even if we initially had greater ambitions.

The Porticus project brought by Both ENDS has allowed to support the function of the secretariat as well as the expenses to come to this COP. This is a good news.

To the credit of the network, the members of Drynet who were elected, often with the explicit or implicit support of Drynet to the SPI (Noel), to the IWG on drought (Nathalie) and to the CSO panel (Manon and Nahid) and the LDN advisory board (Nahid) are an illustration of Drynet's ability to interfere and influence in strategic places.

This capacity to interact at all levels is unique and must be maintained. It is not only technical, it has been the result of our human relationships.

Although Drynet continues to be an influential network, we have to admit that has become less flamboyant than when it started, and we all remain hungry in many areas, in terms of communication, in terms of impact and influence of the network, in terms of cooperation between members, in terms of collective action that we would like to develop and many others.

In this regard, after years of dialogue with various donors, we should be pleased that the idea of a project on land degradation neutrality in dialogue with the GEF with IUCN as implementing agency has come to fruition. The planned participation of the CSO panel as one of the partners in this project is certainly a good thing in theory. But the panel is primarily the UNCCDs voice. Let's look at the practice. We are at the very first stage of this project with an agreement on the PIF document, and the detailed elaboration of the project (PPG) associated with the intervention of consultants will be a delicate phase where it will be necessary to ensure that the spirit and identity of Drynet are not diluted or evacuated. Let's make the right choices.

At the end of that mandate I would like to thank you all for the work accomplished during these 34 months, to thank the members of the board for their commitment and to ask for your kindness on all that we could have done better, or more. If we did not achieve all our ambitions, know that we at least intended to.

As the chair of CARI, let me finally return to two aspects that are particularly dear to me:

Firstly, as you may know, CARI is pursuing its philosophy of taking initiatives in all areas related to combating land-degradation by using all possible windows and opportunities of the framework of the Convention to combat desertification; a progressive architecture started in France in 2001 with the creation of the French NGO desertification CSOs working group (GTD) , by maintaining a pro-active link with the French and European public authorities, by co-founding eniD (European networking initiative on Desertification, which later led to the formation of Drynet), by co-founding and coordinating the activities and means of the RADDO network (2001) on oasis ecosystems in the Maghreb and the ReSaD network (2010) in the Sahel region. As well as in 2015 co-founding the Agroecology Working Group (GTAE) which itself implements agroecology projects.

Acting as an articulator of energies is one of our aims.

In this spirit, and having started this process in 1996, the 5th Desertif'Actions summit initiated by CARI will be held from 5 to 8 October in Montpellier in partnership with the UNCCD and the OSS . For Drynet it will be a strategic moment of contribution to influence

the implementation of the decisions taken by this COP15. But also to bring to a successful conclusion the work of the preparatory workshops in 17 countries before this COP on eight topics including food security, neutrality and agroecology.

I hope that Drynet will be able to make a strong organized contribution for mutual benefit. The CARI team in charge is a great team, let's find ways and means to support each other.

Secondly and in conclusion, let me address one last point that is close to my heart. Time has come to do so. I have had the intense pleasure, and also the honour, of co-founding and especially serving the Drynet network and its members since its inception. I have met some wonderful people. Lived passionate and exciting moments. Happy evenings and mornings and sometimes long and difficult hours. I have gained and lost friends dear to my heart, most recently Bhawani and Khadija, I already miss them.

But all this energy invested has allowed, I sincerely believe, to seriously influence many changes within the UNCCD and elsewhere in an original and inspiring way.

But time has passed, the view changes, mine, but also yours. Any past work is still and always to be started again. It is time for me to hand over my position on the board.

If I will remain present and attentive in certain activities, I will leave to my team at CARI the task of continuing on Drynet's path, within the next Board or not.

I thank all of you very much

Patrice Burger