UNCCD COP17 ULAANBAATAR 2026

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

UNCCD COP17

A COP OF IMPLEMENTATION

17–28 August 2026 | Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia



COP17 at a Glance & Programme Highlights

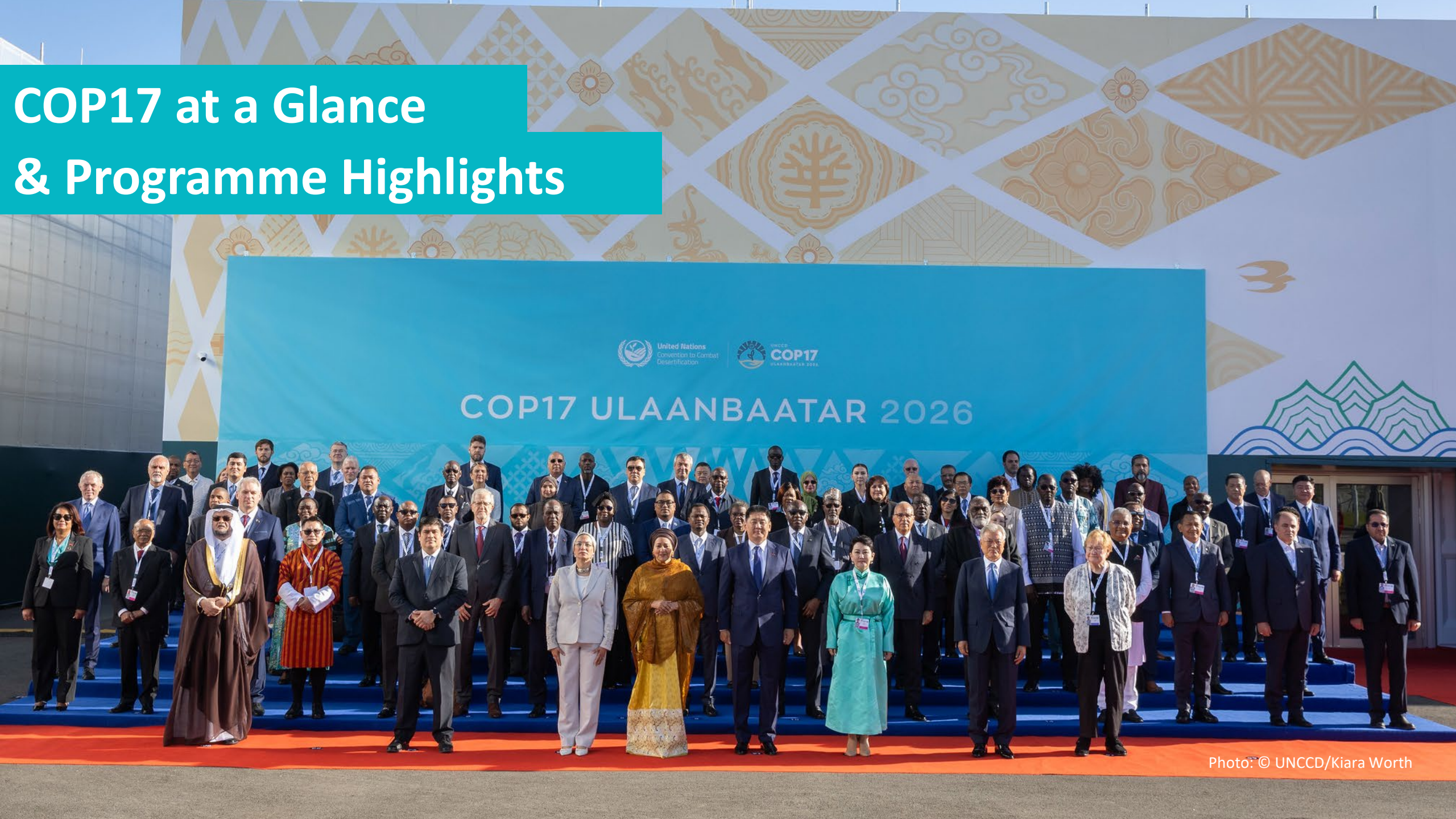


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19,527 participants **197** Parties **422** events *(including side events and Action Agenda events)*

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Programme highlights:

- Land restoration & Land Degradation Neutrality
- Drought preparedness and resilience
- Rangelands and pastoralism
- Finance, investment and private-sector engagement
- Agricultural lands, food and water security
- Indigenous Peoples, local communities, youth and women

Held during the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, COP17 placed rangelands and pastoralists at the centre of the global land agenda.



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People at the Centre of COP17



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Inclusive Participation

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Pastoralists (and Rangelands)

- IYRP 2026 & the platform for Pastoralists
- Coalition of Rangeland States
- Declarations for youth, women, & global declaration

Indigenous Peoples & Local Communities

- Largest participation of indigenous peoples and local communities at UNCCD COPs
- Operationalization of the two separate Caucuses
- Indigenous Peoples declaration
- Stronger calls for land and mobility rights, direct access to finance, recognition of Indigenous and traditional knowledge, and meaningful participation
- Indigenous Peoples and local communities increasingly recognized as rights-holders, knowledge-holders and implementation partners

Gender Caucus

- Elevated the role of women pastoralists and herders as key actors in SLM, restoration and resilient rural livelihoods

Youth Forum

- Highlighted youth-led action, innovation and leadership in land restoration, sustainable livelihoods and community resilience, youth participation and access to resources
- Declaration issued



COP17: A COP of Implementation



Photo: © COP17

From global commitments to delivery on the ground

COP17 brought together the key elements needed to move implementation to scale:

Political Direction: Negotiated decisions and strategic guidance

Science & Evidence: New knowledge, assessment tools and the Science–Policy Interface

Finance & Investment: New financing mechanisms and investment-ready project pipelines

Partnerships: Governments, development banks, funds, business and international organizations

People & Participation: Stronger engagement of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, pastoralists, youth and other stakeholders



Negotiated Outcomes & Main Decisions



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Key Implementation Priorities

Parties concluded negotiations across a broad set of priorities critical to implementation.

Drought

- Progress on the proactive management of drought
- Further negotiations to continue at COP18 (stand-alone agenda item)

Land & productive systems

- Agricultural lands
- Rangelands
- Land tenure
- Sand and dust storms

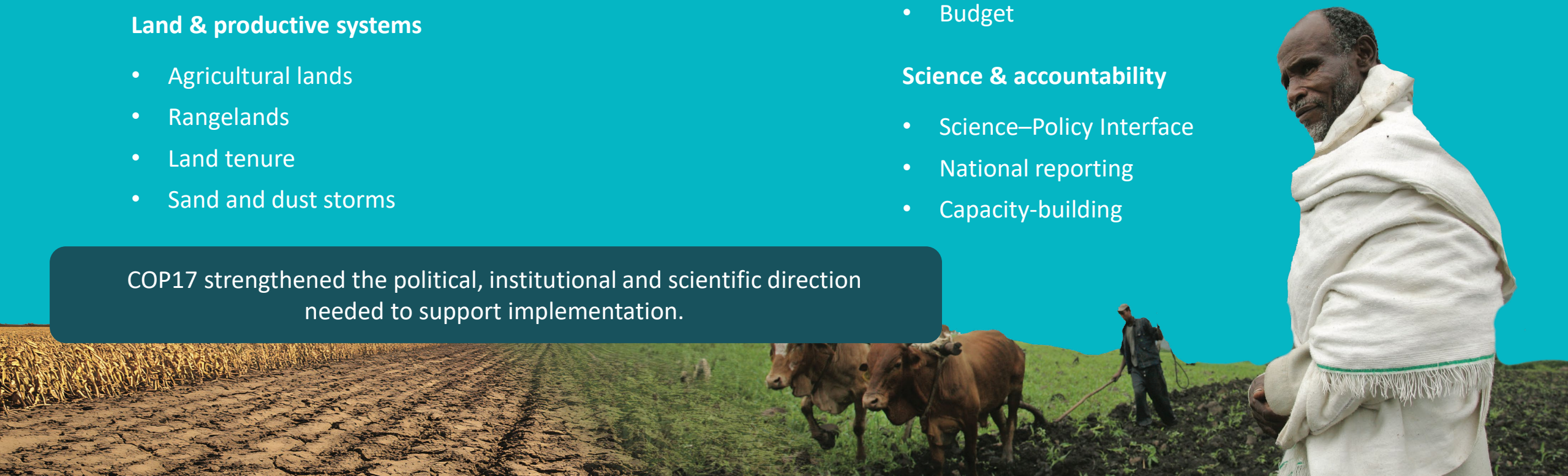
Implementation enablers

- Private-sector engagement
- Future strategic direction of the Convention
- Secretariat programme of work
- Budget

Science & accountability

- Science–Policy Interface
- National reporting
- Capacity-building

COP17 strengthened the political, institutional and scientific direction needed to support implementation.



Action Agenda



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Thematic Days: Connecting Land to the Wider Global Agenda

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COP17's thematic days brought governments, experts, communities, business and partners together around the practical links between land, resilience and sustainable development.



Finance Day

Mobilized public and private finance, strengthened investment pipelines and advanced efforts to make land restoration more investable.

Water Day

Highlighted the land–water nexus, drought resilience and the role of healthy land in strengthening water security.

Land and People Day

Placed people at the centre, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, pastoralists, youth and other land stewards.

Agriculture and Healthy Soils Day

Connected land restoration and soil health with sustainable agriculture, food security and resilient food systems.

The thematic days connected different dimensions of the land agenda with solutions that can be taken forward on the ground.

Finance, Initiatives & Pledges

- **Over $1 billion** portfolio of finance for land restoration and drought resilience across 23 countries on five continents
- **US$644.5 million** identified as new finance
- **US$216.4 million** already confirmed and moving toward implementation
- Portfolio spans rangeland and landscape restoration, drought resilience and locally led adaptation

Key implementation mechanisms:

- Rangelands Flagship Initiative: US$1.2 billion across 45 projects
- Drought Resilience Investment Facility aiming to mobilize up to US$400 million
- Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership moving toward operational delivery
- Business 4 Land expanding private-sector engagement and land finance
- Greater use of guarantees, first-loss capital, insurance and project-preparation facilities

COP17 marked a shift from commitments to investable action, but finance remains far below the scale required to meet global restoration ambitions.



Rangelands & Drought: Two Defining Outcomes

Rangelands | US$1.2 billion | 45 projects

- Rangelands Flagship Initiative launched at COP17 — the largest single mobilization for rangelands in UNCCD history
- Rangelands cover 54% of the Earth's land Surface and support around 2 billion people
- Stronger focus on sustainable management, restoration, livelihoods and investment

COP17 moved rangelands from recognition toward investment and implementation

Drought | Up to US$400 million

- Drought Resilience Investment Facility (DRIF) launched by UNCCD and Luxembourg
- Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership moved closer to operational delivery
- Proposed pooled fund intended to support around 70 vulnerable countries
- First Drought Resilience Index introduced to strengthen preparedness and guide policy and investment
- Continued shift from crisis response toward preparedness and resilience

Ulaanbaatar moved both agendas closer to implementation — combining political recognition with finance, tools and project pipelines.

Major Announcement & Achievements

- **Over $1 billion** portfolio of finance for land restoration and drought resilience across 23 countries on five continents
- **US$644.5 million** identified as new finance
- **US$216.4 million** already confirmed and moving toward implementation
- Portfolio spans rangeland and landscape restoration, drought resilience and locally led adaptation

<u>Key implementation mechanisms:</u>

- Rangelands Flagship Initiative: US$1.2 billion across 45 projects
- Drought Resilience Investment Facility: $5 million catalytic first-loss capital + aiming to mobilize up to US$400 million
- International Drought Resilience Alliance: $5 million for phase II
- Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership moving toward operational delivery [$12 billion from COP16]
- Business 4 Land expanding private-sector engagement and land finance
- Zambezi River Basin Programme: $100 million
- Launch of FIELD (Asia Pacific): $2 billion ambition
- Greater use of guarantees, first-loss capital, insurance and project-preparation facilities



COP17 marked a shift from commitments to investable action, but finance remains far below the scale required to meet global restoration ambitions.

Mongolia’s Legacy and the Steppe Plan

Three international initiatives launched:

- Rangelands Flagship Initiative
- Water–Land Nexus Initiative
- SDS Action Initiative (w ESCAP)
- Nature-based Solutions for Sustainable Infrastructure Initiative (w UNDRR)

COP17 broadened the implementation agenda — strengthening participation, accelerating national action and creating new pathways for projects, partnerships and investment.





Challenges & Legacy

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Challenges & Legacy

Three agenda items deferred to COP18:

- Gender
- Promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and international organizations, institutions and agencies (Synergies)
- Participation and involvement of civil society organizations in UNCCD meetings and processes

Parties will continue discussions on the proactive management of drought.

The Ulaanbaatar legacy and COP17 achieved:

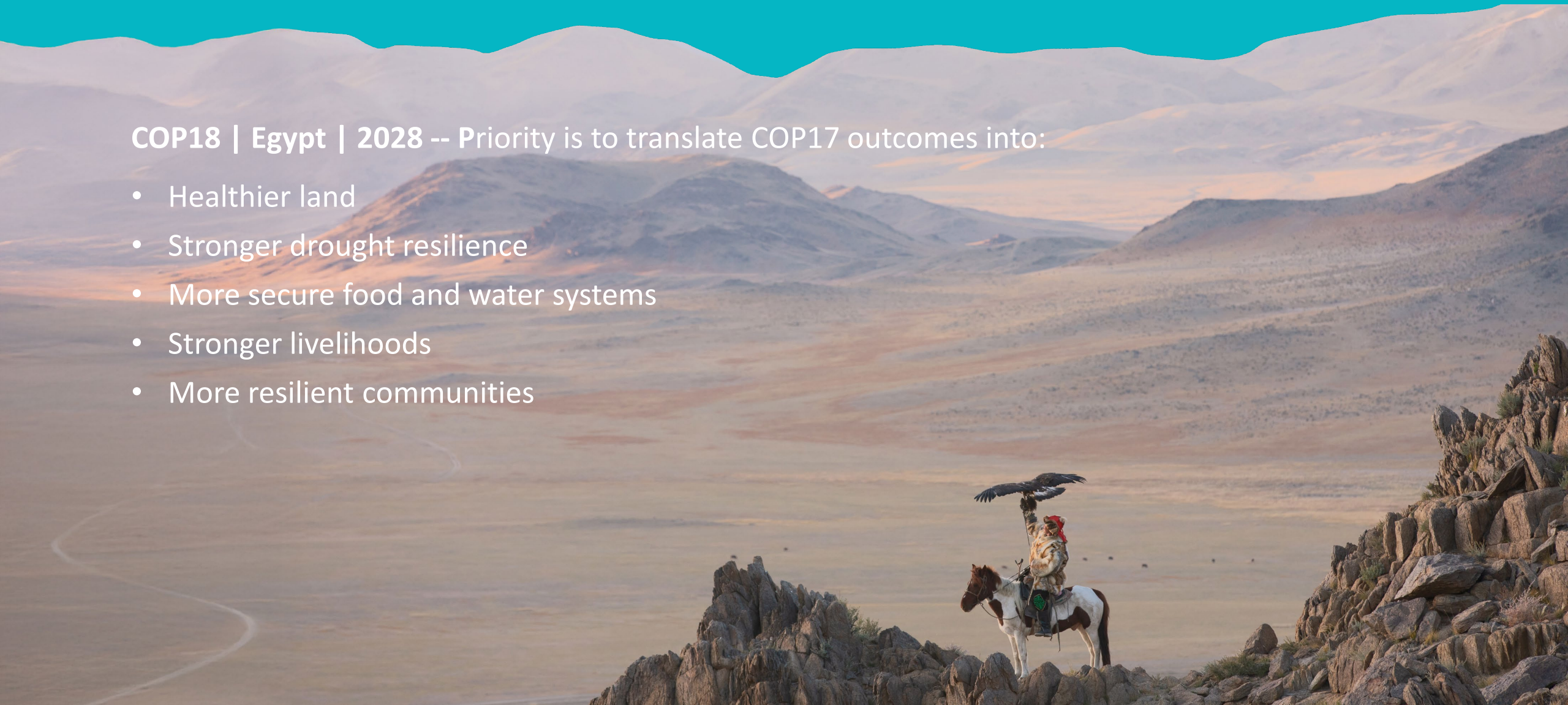
- Rangelands and pastoralists closer to the centre of the global land agenda
- Stronger drought resilience tools and investment mechanisms
- New finance, partnerships and project pipelines
- Stronger participation of Indigenous Peoples, youth and local communities
- A more connected architecture linking policy, science, finance and implementation



Road to COP18

COP18 | Egypt | 2028 -- Priority is to translate COP17 outcomes into:

- Healthier land
- Stronger drought resilience
- More secure food and water systems
- Stronger livelihoods
- More resilient communities



Thank You



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