

ACCARD advancing a DeltasUNite Initiative

Calling for a

United Nations Convention for Conserving River Deltas (UN-CCRD)

<https://sdgs.un.org/partnerships/urgent-call-establish-new-un-convention-conserving-river-deltas-un-ccrd>

Climate change induced variability in the distribution of water poses a complex and significant environmental security challenge both in developed and developing countries. If not well managed in the future can potentially throw an estimated half a billion people (mostly indigenous people and resource dependent communities) living on ocean-facing river deltas and coastal communities around the globe into hunger, poverty, and homelessness, among others has the indicators to increase global conflicts. This figure will be higher if inland deltas and hinterlands of existing deltas are included.

In addition, to the disturbing and worrisome numbers of science reports on disappearing deltas, in West Africa's Niger River Delta, Pakistan's Indus Delta, Vietnam's Mekong Delta and Netherlands Rhine Delta, for example, has further underscore the urgent need for the protection of global deltas. With notable geomorphological changes mainly due to natural processes, social and ecological vulnerabilities in deltas accentuated by human activities such as deforestation, mangrove destruction, dredging, land development, oil and gas exploitation, agriculture, and greenhouse gas emissions.

This has serious implications for biodiversity and livelihood losses, food systems security and human survival. It is time to address the worrisome and growing evidence of environmental changes, creeping and sometimes pronounced demographic-related changes in the deltaic ecosystems mostly due to sea level rise, storm surges, coastal erosion, and human-induced ecosystem degradation, which are common problems of Delta's globally. This has resulted in the loss of lives, livelihoods, and ecosystems with dynamic alterations in their characteristics, structure and function.

DeltasUNite Initiative is a local-to-global assembled stakeholders is focusing on specific water-related concerns: (a) Ocean-facing River deltas confronted by sea level rise and saltwater intrusion and (b) Melting glaciers in highlands leading to streamflow variability in lowlands and deltas of river basins (c) promote the protection and conservation of coastal ecosystems which largely includes mangroves and wetlands.

UN-CCRD and its justification

DeltasUNite Initiative approached the United Nations Headquarters in New York asking for “**special recognition**” and **Convention for Conserving the River Deltas**” to (i) build greater multi-stakeholders' collaboration nationally, regionally as well as globally and between the Global North and the Global South (ii) bring about a novel scientific knowledge to community action partnership initiative, for the conservation of river deltas and ecosystems across the globe and also (iii) work towards establishing a global standard for access to clean water, towards a unified water quality standards in river deltas and in the highland sources that feed the rivers.

UN-CCRD joyfully received the United Nations acceptance and approval to operate as a new convention. We are also receiving guidance and support to articulate the operationalization of the new convention (UN-CCRD). To address some of the following:

- (i) Reduce coastal ecosystem and biodiversity losses, especially wetlands and mangroves protection.
- (ii) The lack of access to clean, safe and potable water due to poor infrastructure and a lack of investment in the sector, groundwater degradation, pollution, salinization and negative fisheries subsidies, particularly in Africa and Asia.
- (iii) Incessant flooding leading to loss of livelihood and the disproportionate participation of indigenous people and local communities (IPLCs), and other local stakeholders in national and regional policymaking processes as well as governance in the water sector.
- (iv) Mitigate the continuing loss of habitable land, reduced access of IPLCs to natural resources and potable water sources in the river deltas. This will result to more human out-migration towards the hinterlands and beyond, will exacerbate poverty, hunger and engender communal conflicts. With serious future implications for the peaceful coexistence within and between countries with shared transboundary water resources around the globe, and especially in sub-Sahara Africa (SSA), South Asian and South-East Asian nations.

DeltasUNite Initiative and UN-CCRD is currently championed by African Centre for Climate Actions and Rural Development Initiative. Other collaborations are Nigeria's Bayelsa State Government, the Centre for Capacity Building at the University of Colorado, the Institute for Environmental Diplomacy and Security at the University of Vermont, , Transboundary Water In-Cooperation Network (TWIN), Akassa Development Foundation, Water Environment Forum Pakistan, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam, Centre for Environment and Sustainable Livelihood projects (CESLP), Institute of Environmental Diplomacy and Security (IEDS) and the Sustainability Office at Dawson College.

Helpful links:

<https://businessday.ng/opinion/article/a-call-for-un-convention-on-conserving-river-deltas/>

<https://www.app.com.pk/national/pakistans-indus-delta-emerges-on-un-radar/>

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2410962/river-indus-delta-shrinking-un>

<https://arynews.tv/un-recognises-pakistans-indus-delta-for-global-convention/>

Our key Side Event at COP28:

(a) Unveiling of UNCCRD and High-level Panel discussion.

Date: December 4, 2023

Venue: SE Room 7

Time: 16:45 – 18:15 (4:45 pm to 6:15pm)

(b) UNCCRD Media Event

Date: December 1, 2023

Venue: Solar+ Pavilion

Time: 14:00 – 15:30 hrs (2pm to 3:30pm)

Freeman Elohor OLUOWO

Founder and Centre Coordinator, African Centre for Climate Actions and Rural Development Initiative (ACCARD)

Focal Person UNCCRD and DeltasUNite

+2348055303634, 8067359303

www.accard.org

www.deltasUNite.com