

including especially local populations. To this end, they shall, as appropriate:

- (a) facilitate and strengthen the functioning of the global network of institutions and facilities for the collection, analysis and exchange of information, as well as for systematic observation at all levels, which shall, inter alia:
 - (i) aim to use compatible standards and systems;
 - (ii) encompass relevant data and stations, including in remote areas;
 - (iii) use and disseminate modern technology for data collection, transmission and assessment on land degradation; and
 - (iv) link national, subregional and regional data and information centres more closely with global information sources;
- (b) ensure that the collection, analysis and exchange of information address the needs of local communities and those of decision makers, with a view to resolving specific problems, and that local communities are involved in these activities;
- (c) support and further develop bilateral and multilateral programmes and projects aimed at defining, conducting, assessing and financing the collection, analysis and exchange of data and information, including, inter alia, integrated sets of physical, biological, social and economic indicators;
- (d) make full use of the expertise of competent intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, particularly to disseminate relevant information and experiences among target groups in different regions;
- (e) give full weight to the collection, analysis and exchange of socio-economic data, and their integration with physical and biological data;
- (f) exchange and make fully, openly and promptly available information from all publicly available sources relevant to combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought; and
- (g) subject to their respective national legislation and/or policies, exchange information on local and traditional knowledge, ensuring adequate protection for it and providing appropriate return from the benefits derived from it, on an equitable basis and on mutually agreed terms, to the local populations concerned.