



African Committee on Sustainable Development Bulletin

A summary report of the Fifth Meeting of the African Committee on Sustainable Development (ACSD-5)

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SUMMARY OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE AFRICAN COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: 22-25 OCTOBER 2007

The fifth meeting of the African Committee on Sustainable Development (ACSD-5), which included the African Regional Implementation Meeting for the sixteenth Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-16), took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 22-25 October 2007. Organized by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the meeting convened under the theme "Transforming African Agriculture and Rural Economy for Sustainable Development."

Throughout the meeting, delegates met in morning and afternoon plenary sessions to consider: a progress report on implementation of the 2006-07 programme of work of the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division of the ECA; a proposed new mandate for the African Committee on Sustainable Development (ACSD or the Committee); and implementation in Africa of the sustainable development agenda, particularly in relation to the CSD-16 themes of agriculture and rural development, drought and desertification, land, and Africa. Additionally, delegates met in two drafting committees, which addressed the draft African Regional Statement for CSD-16 and the revised mandate of the Committee.

Regarding implementation of sustainable development in relation to the CSD-16 themes, delegates considered four review reports prepared by the ECA Secretariat with the guidance of the ACSD-4 Bureau. After proposing amendments, delegates accepted the revised reports, which will be forwarded to CSD-16 for consideration. The meeting resulted in three other key outputs. Delegates adopted the African Regional Statement to CSD-16 on Agriculture and Rural Development, Land, Drought and Desertification, and Africa. As part of the agreed process of ECA repositioning, they also agreed to a new draft mandate for the Committee, which will be considered in April 2009 by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, which is the governing body of the ECA. The new draft mandate means that with the end of ACSD-5, and with the adoption of this new mandate, the ACSD will be reconstituted and known as the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD). If adoption of this mandate proceeds as planned, the next biennial review, in the form of CFSSD-1, will be held in Addis Ababa in October 2009. Finally, delegates approved the report of the meeting.

This bulletin provides a brief history of the Committee and its work, a summary of ACSD-5 and short reports on two side events held during the meeting, together with a list of upcoming meetings of relevance to the work of the Committee and the themes of CSD-16.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UN ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA AND THE AFRICAN COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Established in 1958, the ECA is one of five regional commissions under the administrative direction of the UN Economic and Social Council. It is mandated to support the economic and social development of its 53 member states, foster regional integration and promote international cooperation for Africa's development. One of the key tasks of the ECA is to ensure improved cooperation and coordination between UN agencies and African continental organizations for the effective implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

The ECA was instrumental in the establishment of the African Development Bank (AfDB) and subregional economic groupings, and in articulating major plans of action for Africa's economic and social development. The ECA provides member states with technical assistance in many fields and fosters the development of civil society groups, including non-government organizations (NGOs), professional associations and intellectual networks.

The fortieth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Conference of Ministers), which is the ECA's governing body, was held from 2-3 April 2007, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. At this meeting, the Conference of Ministers adopted a ministerial statement endorsing the repositioning of the ECA to effectively meet Africa's challenges and its key role in promoting economic and social development in Africa. Following this repositioning exercise, the ECA's work is now oriented around ten subprogrammes: trade, finance and economic development

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of the UN Economic Commission for Africa and the African Committee on Sustainable Development	1
Meeting Report	3
Side Events at ACSD-5.	14
Upcoming Meetings	14
List of Abbreviations.	15

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(subprogramme 1); food security and sustainable development (subprogramme 2); governance and public administration (subprogramme 3); information and science and technology for development (subprogramme 4); economic cooperation and regional integration (subprogramme 5); gender and women in development (subprogramme 6); subregional activities for development (subprogramme 7), which includes five components on each of the African subregions; development planning and administration (subprogramme 8); statistics (subprogramme 9); and social development (subprogramme 10).

ECA AFRICAN COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In 1996, the ECA's Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning, as it was then known, adopted Resolution No. 826 (XXXII) establishing the Committee on Sustainable Development and the Committee on Natural Resources and Science and Technology as subsidiary bodies. In 2002, these committees were merged into one, also called the Committee on Sustainable Development.

The Committee addresses critical and emerging issues concerning sustainable development in Africa. It is a forum of experts that provides advice to the ECA in relation to food security, population, environment and human settlements. It provides a platform for advocacy and assesses follow-up activities by African governments in response to regional and global plans of action. The Committee also provides policy and technical guidance to the ECA's subprogramme on food security and sustainable development and its Food Security and Sustainable Development Division (FSSDD), formerly the Sustainable Development Division (SDD).

At its third meeting, which took place from 7-10 October 2003, in Addis Ababa, the Committee approved amendments to its own mandate to provide that it, *inter alia*:

- undertakes periodic reviews of the implementation of global programmes of action such as the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), Agenda 21, the Cairo Programme of Action on Population and Development, the Habitat Agenda and the World Food Summit Plan of Action;
- considers and makes recommendations on a multidisciplinary approach to implementing these programmes of action;
- promotes the formulation of policies and measures for environmental protection, food security, improved human settlements, the integration of population variables into development planning, and cooperation among African countries in the areas of natural resources management and the application of science and technology;
- provides a forum for exchanging information and sharing experiences; and
- advises the ECA on the formulation of programmes and activities to support member states in integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development into national development policies and strategies.

At this meeting, the Committee also considered its relationship with the CSD, and concluded that it would serve as Africa's regional forum of experts dealing with the CSD's various fields of activity. The Committee also agreed that it would serve as the regional advisory arm of the CSD on cross-sectoral activities in Africa as well as on proposed activities and follow-up actions for the implementation of international programmes. At ACSD-5, the Committee once again reviewed its mandate (see page 8).

ECA FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The overall objective of the FSSDD is to strengthen the capacity of member states to design institutional arrangements and implement national measures that reinforce the links between food security, population, environment and human settlements, and to build the capacity of African countries to utilize science and technology to attain sustainable development. Other objectives of the FSSDD include promoting the importance of integrating the three pillars of sustainable development into national development planning and poverty reduction programmes, and improving the stewardship of the natural resource base and the environment by strengthening the capacity of member states to undertake the sustainable exploitation, management and effective utilization of important natural resources.

The FSSDD's programme of work for 2008-09 (UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/61/6.rev1) includes the following activities: fostering structural agricultural transformation, including the African green revolution; promoting diversification in commodity-dependent economies in Africa through adding value to natural resources and agricultural products; and strengthening African capacity to collect data on sustainable development indicators and to monitor and assess progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and NEPAD's sustainable development commitments. This General Assembly resolution also notes that the FSSDD's strategy includes: research, policy analysis and advocacy; gender mainstreaming; institution building and training; knowledge networking, information sharing and disseminating best practices; and providing technical assistance, including advisory services to member states and their institutions. In carrying out such activities, the FSSDD works with other UN organizations, the African Union (AU) Commission, the AfDB, regional intergovernmental organizations, regional economic communities (RECs), institutions of higher learning and research, the private sector and civil society organizations.

AFRICAN COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETINGS

ACSD-1: The first meeting of the African Committee on Sustainable Development was held in Addis Ababa from 25-29 January 1999, under the theme "Ensuring Food Security and Sustainable Development in Africa: the Population, Agriculture and Environment Nexus." Delegates addressed a range of issues, including: a special event on the five year review of the International Conference on Population and Development; methods and tools for analyzing and managing the nexus of population, environmental development and agriculture; interlinkages between population, agriculture, and environment; implementation in Africa of global plans of action such as the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21; the Cape Town Declaration on an African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment; a report on the activities of the then SDD for the period 1996-98; and the SDD's work programme for 1999. The meeting also included a special session on the Committee itself, where delegates discussed the Committee's mandate, objectives, terms of reference, institutional arrangements, modalities of work, and relationships with other committees and bodies, among other matters.

ACSD-2: The Committee's second meeting also took place in Addis Ababa from 26-29 November 2001, on the theme of "Agricultural Intensification: Feeding Ourselves and Sustaining

Africa's Land Resources in the New Millennium." Delegates considered issues pertaining to agricultural intensification as a strategy for food security and sustainable development in Africa, and made a series of related policy recommendations for use by African policy makers and their development cooperation counterparts. Delegates also reviewed progress in the implementation of agricultural intensification strategies, recommended further actions based on the experiences of member states and provided guidance to the work of the ECA in relation to food security and sustainable development.

ACSD-3: The Committee held its third meeting in Addis Ababa from 7-10 October 2003, under the theme "Making Technology Work for the Poor." Delegates discussed emerging and critical issues impacting on the sustainable development of member states with an emphasis on the role of science and technology, agriculture and land policy, mining, energy and water resources development in eradicating poverty in Africa. Delegates also addressed related policy recommendations and measures to facilitate and accelerate sustainable development. They approved amendments to the Committee's mandate, endorsed the 2004-05 SDD work programme and adopted recommendations on food security and sustainable development, water resources, science and technology, and energy.

PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE ON IMPLEMENTATION AND PARTNERSHIP ON WATER AND FIRST REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING FOR AFRICA:

The Pan-African Conference on Implementation and Partnership on Water (PANAFCON) was held in Addis Ababa from 8-12 December 2003. The conference incorporated the first Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) for the CSD, with parallel sessions dedicated to the review of Africa's regional implementation of Agenda 21, the Habitat Agenda and the JPOI in preparation for CSD-12, which was held in April 2004 in New York, United States.

PANAFCON made proposals for concrete actions on: meeting basic needs; water, sanitation and human settlements; water for food security; protecting ecosystems and livelihoods; managing risks; water and climate; financing water infrastructure; integrated water resources management and shared water resources; valuing and allocating water; ensuring water wisdom; and water governance.

Ministers attending the conference agreed to establish national task forces on water and sanitation, and to prepare national plans with service delivery targets to achieve water and sanitation goals by 2015. They also signed a joint declaration with the European Commission on the implementation of the African-European Union Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation. Ministers launched several initiatives, including: the African Water Facility, with targeted funding of over US\$600 million for medium-term projects on water and sanitation; the African Water Journal, to disseminate knowledge on water-related issues; Phase II of the Water for African Cities Programme; the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative; and the G8 Action Plan on Water for Africa.

ACSD-4: The fourth meeting of the African Committee on Sustainable Development was held in Addis Ababa from 24-28 October 2005, under the theme "Managing Land Based Resources for Sustainable Development." As part of this meeting, the second RIM for Africa took place from 26-28 October, during which delegates undertook the regional implementation review of energy, climate change, industrial development and atmosphere and adopted the African Regional Statement to CSD-14.

The meeting addressed a range of issues, specifically, policy recommendations for managing land-based resources for sustainable development, the ECA's Sustainable Development Report on Africa, emerging issues on science and technology for sustainable development, the ECA's Programme for Promoting Biotechnology for Sustainable Development in Africa, a report on the follow-up and implementation of the outcomes of the WSSD, and the SDD's proposed 2006-07 work programme.

IISD Reporting Services African Regional Coverage Project is preparing a separate briefing note on the CSD process and related Regional Implementation Meetings. For more information, go to: <http://www.iisd.ca/africa/>

MEETING REPORT

The fifth session of the African Committee on Sustainable Development (ACSD-5) opened on Monday, 22 October 2007. Amb. Obioma Oparah, Chair of ACSD-4 (Nigeria), reported that the ACSD-4 Bureau members met in April and August 2006 to follow up on decisions taken at ACSD-4. He also highlighted activities undertaken since ACSD-4, including the holding of two capacity building training sessions under the Trade and Environment Project of the ECA, and work toward the Pan-African Land Policy for Africa initiative, a joint initiative of the ECA, AU and the AfDB to develop a continent-wide land policy framework.

FSSDD Director Josué Dioné, representing ECA Executive Secretary Abdoulie Janneh, expressed optimism that Africa can eradicate poverty through regional and global cooperation. Noting that investing in improved productivity could transform agriculture and the rural economy in Africa, he stressed the need for: policy reform that can transform Africa from a subsistence-based to a market-oriented region; the inclusion of women in land reform processes; combating drought and desertification to ensure environmental sustainability and social stability; and a reduction of the costs of business transactions.

On behalf of AU Commission Chair Alpha Oumar Konaré (Mali), Ahmadu Babagana, AU Director, Agriculture and Rural Economy, said the inability of Africa to meet agreed international targets relevant to its sustainable development, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the JPOI is "worrying." He drew attention to the recently released World Bank report, "Agriculture and Achieving the Millennium Development Goals," which stresses the critical role of agriculture for the attainment of the MDGs and economic growth in all sectors in Africa, and welcomed Committee recommendations that could motivate African states to attain these targets.

Opening ACSD-5 on behalf of Adissu Legesse, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Ethiopia, Bateno Kabeto, Head of the Plant Development Department in the Ministry, noted that population growth is creating increased pressure on the amount of cultivable land per household in Africa. He emphasized the utility of rural non-farm and industrial activities in poverty alleviation, and the importance of an integrated approach to farm and non-farm activities. He also presented recommendations to reduce the dependence on rain, transaction costs, food insecurity, and other vulnerabilities.

Margaret Sangarwe, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Zimbabwe, delivered a statement on behalf of CSD-16 Chair and Minister of Environment and Tourism of Zimbabwe, Francis Nhema. She emphasized the value of RIMs to the CSD process in that they provide regional perspectives, including ideas on specific barriers

to implementation and opportunities to foster cooperation. Underscoring the significance of the CSD-16 thematic areas for Africa and highlighting some of Africa's challenges in this regard, she highlighted the commitment of CSD-16 Chair Nhema to working with the ACSD Bureau and ECA Secretariat to play a catalytic role at the forthcoming CSD and to ensure RIM outcomes are incorporated into CSD-16 processes.

ELECTION OF THE BUREAU: Regarding election of the Bureau for ACSD-5, ACSD-4 Chair Oparah noted that subregional rotation tends to guide the election of Bureau members and the assignment of their roles, but that it is not mandatory. After an invitation from Chair Oparah, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on behalf of the Central African region, indicated that it could not chair the session but that it could act as a Vice Chair. South Africa, on behalf of Southern Africa, suggested that plenary nominate the five Bureau members and leave those elected to allocate the roles among themselves. Following an intervention from Burkina Faso noting that outgoing chairs assume the post of Rapporteur and Chair Oparah's assurance that the procedure would be democratic and representative, South Africa's proposal was adopted. After consultations among the regional groupings, the following countries were nominated and accepted as ACSD-5 Bureau members: Kenya (Eastern Africa) as Chair; Sudan (Northern Africa), Democratic Republic of Congo (Central Africa) and Namibia (Southern Africa) as Vice Chairs; and Senegal (Western Africa) as Rapporteur.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: On the agenda and programme of work (E/ECA/ACSD/5/1/Rev.1), South Africa noted that CSD-16 would also review the CSD-13 decisions on water and sanitation and that this was not reflected in the ACSD-5 agenda. He proposed that the ECA Secretariat use extra-budgetary resources to prepare a report on these issues for comment by the ACSD Bureau to be forwarded to CSD-16. He also proposed that UN-HABITAT lead a discussion on the issue of urbanization and land, as these issues were not sufficiently covered in the review report on land. The ECA Secretariat responded that it would consider South Africa's proposal regarding a report on water and sanitation, and suggested that in light of time constraints delegates make comments regarding urbanization during the agenda item on consideration of the review report on land. Delegates then adopted the programme of work. On Thursday morning, on the issue of South Africa's proposal for a report to CSD-16 on water and sanitation, the ECA Secretariat reported that regional water bodies with competence in these areas are addressing this matter.

Upon adoption of the agenda, ACSD-5 Chair Ali Mohammed (Kenya) proposed, and delegates agreed, to appoint Vice Chair Erich Petrus (Namibia) as the Chair of an open-ended drafting committee to prepare a statement for adoption by plenary as the African Regional Statement to CSD-16.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FSSDD'S PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES 2006-07

Introducing the FSSDD progress report (E/ECA/ACSD/5/2) on Monday afternoon, FSSDD Director Dioné highlighted the ECA's main activities for the biennium 2006-07. He said the main objective of the FSSDD subprogramme is to improve the national capacity of member states to formulate and implement policies and programmes, including gender mainstreaming, in the areas of agriculture and food security, science and technology, population, human settlements, and natural resources and the environment. He highlighted the key areas of the 2006-07 programme of work, namely: servicing intergovernmental and expert bodies; providing substantive

outputs; promoting international cooperation and inter-agency cooperation; providing advisory services, including technical support; and implementing field projects.

He said the implementation of the programme began under the former Sustainable Development Division (SDD), but noted that following the 2007 ECA repositioning exercise, various subprogrammes were redistributed under the reorganized ECA structure, which includes the: FSSDD, African Center for Gender and Social Development; Information, Communication and Technology (ICT), Science and Technology for Development Division; and NEPAD and Regional Integration Division, among others. FSSDD Director Dioné stressed the need to strengthen partnerships at the continental level to address critical sustainable development issues and to increase inter-agency collaboration within the UN system. He also identified the need to scale up the ECA's international capacity to respond to member states' needs and to mainstream the ECA's work on information gathering and knowledge dissemination relating to sustainable development. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) highlighted the importance of building capacity in environmental impact assessment as a tool to support sustainable development.

OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURE AND RURAL ECONOMY

On Monday afternoon, delegates considered a document entitled "Overview of Sustainable Development in Africa: Transforming Agriculture and Rural Economy" (E/ECA/ACSD/5/7) prepared by the Secretariat with a view to developing a comprehensive thematic study for a regional framework. In presenting the document, the Secretariat noted ways and means of transforming agriculture and rural development, its impediments and possible solutions. He underlined the potential for Africa's agriculture to stimulate growth and alleviate poverty in an increasingly competitive and integrated world, as well as the importance of successful agriculture and rural development in the attainment of economic growth, and poverty and hunger reduction. He said the review found that a dual approach, pro-growth and pro-performance, is used to promote the alleviation of suffering of small farmers with a view to encouraging infrastructure development and to linking farmers to new markets. However, he explained the report found that agriculture has been sidelined in many countries on account of policies such as Structural Adjustment Programmes, underdevelopment caused by a lack of policies to enforce agricultural development initiatives, the under-utilization of fertilizers, low access to energy and communication technologies, and minimal emphasis on institutional issues in agriculture and rural development.

The Secretariat further outlined that the agricultural agenda had been revived in the new millennium following the adoption of the NEPAD Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) framework, the goals of which include: the achievement of a minimum economic growth rate of 6%; a new dynamism in the agriculture market; integration of farmers into the market economy; attaining food security; and more equitable distribution of resources. He stated that the review found that agricultural transformation in Africa would require enhancing regional integration, developing coordinated value chains of strategic agricultural commodities, creating an appropriate environment for private sector investment, and designing policies to promote significant investment opportunities in the region. He said Africa must shift from a local to a global outlook, and that World Trade Organization (WTO) rules must not impede Africa's move

toward sustainable agricultural and rural transformation. Finally, he noted the review report found that to create a good investment environment, free regional investment zones need to be created and legal frameworks enhanced.

Discussion: UN-HABITAT called for an elaboration in the document of rural-urban and agriculture linkages. Arguing that agricultural efforts are failing due to a lack of the right crops for the right climate, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) called for continuous research to develop crops appropriate for climate change adaptation. Kenya concurred that WTO rules should not become an impediment to Africa's agricultural development, and called for capacity building to understand the regime's technical aspects. The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) called for a rethinking of Africa's economic development, stating that in the absence of a long-term vision and strategy, programmes and projects alone cannot assure attainment of the MDGs. Reporting on a recommendation from the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP-8) intended for transmission to ACSD-5 and to CSD-16, the UNCCD Secretariat underscored the contribution of unsustainable agricultural practices to desertification. The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) urged the establishment of platforms for interaction that can enhance the unleashing of Africans' innovative capacities.

Senegal emphasized the need for land rehabilitation and building alliances with the key movers of agriculture in the South, specifically Brazil, China and India. Noting the unequal relations between Africa and developed countries, he called for conducting focused impact studies to assess the gains realized from these arrangements. Oxfam called for analyses of the relations between Africa and its development partners, as well as with Brazil, India and China, the major developing country agricultural producers.

The GRATIS Foundation noted the need for:

- awareness of the importance of gender issues in agriculture and rural development policies;
- new opportunities for integrating women's concerns into the work of development cooperation agencies;
- capacity building on gender mainstreaming in agriculture;
- collection of disaggregated data, the provision of accessible data on agriculture and the establishment of an information system on agriculture;
- gender budgeting reviews and assessments to assess the impacts of gender on agriculture; and
- strong technical training in agri-processing and the use of mechanical equipment.

The World Food Programme (WFP), recalling discussions at the 2006 Abuja Food Security Summit, reiterated that a development opportunity exists if the existing US\$25 billion of donated food aid resources can be used to procure food aid locally. Heifer International underscored an increased focus on the livestock sector in Africa and proposed that the sector be made the basis for the "Africanization" of discussions on sustainable development, poverty eradication and environmental strategies. He emphasized the need for the document to address rural and urban linkages, climate change impacts, the role of pastoralists in combating desertification and the importance of a long-term focus on transforming the livestock sector particularly in relation to poverty eradication, nutrition and reconstruction.

The West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) emphasized the important role of the RECs in implementing agriculture- and sustainable development-related programmes. He noted the need for synergies and coherence between

the RECs and the ECA and called for the development of intergovernmental machinery to support implementation and ensure coordination and cooperation among the RECs.

CONSIDERATION OF REVIEW REPORTS REGARDING THE CSD-16 THEMES

In accordance with the CSD Multi-Year Programme of Work, the ECA Secretariat, with the guidance of the ASCD-4 Bureau, prepared review reports of the implementation in Africa, of four thematic areas: agriculture and rural development; land; drought and desertification; and follow-up on the WSSD outcomes in Africa. As the expert group mandated to review these reports on behalf of the African region, ACSD-5 considered the reports and proposed amendments for revision, before accepting that these revised versions could be forwarded for consideration at CSD-16.

REGIONAL REVIEW REPORT ON FOLLOW-UP TO IMPLEMENTATION OF WSSD OUTCOMES IN AFRICA:

On Tuesday morning, the Secretariat presented the WSSD regional review report on Africa (ECA/ACSD/5/5). The Secretariat discussed the challenges, lessons learnt and the way forward in relation to: sustainable development governance in Africa; poverty eradication and socially sustainable development; sustainable consumption and production (SCP); the natural resource base of economic and social development; the means of implementation; and harnessing interlinkages. She outlined concrete actions taken in relation to sustainable development governance in Africa, including: elaboration of a sustainable development framework; consideration of peace and security, and human rights issues; political governance and administration; economic and corporate governance; and private sector development. She noted key concerns in the context of poverty eradication and socially sustainable development, such as: sustainable human settlements, water supply and sanitation, and poverty; gender equality; education; and health, with HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis as diseases of particular concern.

The Secretariat also outlined themes in relation to SCP, including: the African Ten-year Framework Programme on SCP developed jointly by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and others, and corporate social responsibility in Africa. With regard to the natural resource base of economic and social development, she said the review emphasized the importance of managing chemicals and hazardous wastes, the sustainable development of mineral resources, and sustainable management of forests, coastal, marine and freshwater resources. She stressed that gender mainstreaming and the involvement of women in capacity building initiatives are central to the overall sustainable development agenda.

On the issue of means of implementation she said sustainable development rests first with governments, such that domestic resource mobilization should precede external resource solicitation, yet that between 1998 and 2006 only four countries attained the average annual growth rate of 7% required to realize the MDGs. She said other key challenges include low amounts of official development assistance, inadequate regional integration, external trade barriers, a lack of political will regarding regional integration, the multiplication of and overlapping membership in RECs, and a high dependence on external aid.

On important lessons learned, she stressed the need to advocate for grants and debt cancellation for all African countries, the harmonization of trade policies and systems, greater regional integration, and well coordinated and integrated

capacity building programmes that advance the development agenda. She said the review also suggested that peace is a pre-requisite for sustainable development, and that conflict is closely associated with: youth concerns such as unemployment and education; poor governance, ownership and management of natural resources; capital and brain “flight”; and poverty and income shocks. Finally, she drew attention to the interlinkages between the MDGs, and concluded that a holistic and integrated approach to sustainable development is required.

In her overview of Africa’s responses to these challenges, and recalling the three pillars of sustainable development, the Secretariat reported the findings of various studies undertaken in Africa, which showed that: 41 countries have adopted MDG poverty reduction strategies; African national committees for sustainable development (NCSDs) have an environmental bias, but many countries are reforming them to address this imbalance; and although national focal points are being moved from the environmental to the financial sector, integration is required. She also noted that while some countries had adopted NCSDs as part of their long-term vision, others had made national development plans or poverty reduction strategies (PRS) as their NCSDs, while still others still had adopted broader frameworks whose principles are applicable to all sectoral areas. She further commented that a few countries had adopted the National Agenda 21 as part of the NCSDs, mostly in order to mainstream environment in their national plans.

She said that despite this, some key challenges remained, such as integration and coordination, various forms of capacity building, and ownership of and commitment to NCSDs. She said lessons learned included the need for: NCSDs that are responsive to national development; innovative and well targeted financing mechanisms; integrated policy analyses and approaches; effective participation; and the worth of building on existing structures.

Discussion: In the ensuing discussion, several speakers commended the report as comprehensive, with Chair Mohamed noting that it was fair and balanced. He also noted that implementation of sustainable development has yielded mixed results, and that although progress has been made, real challenges remain that must be addressed if Africa is to realize sustainable development and the MDGs. Questions and comments were raised regarding: the objective of the report; the duplication of duties between the AU and NEPAD; the poor quality of education and the setback this poses to sustainable development goals; the “confusing” format of the report; trade barriers faced by African products in the world market; and increasing unemployment among Africa’s educated youth.

Some delegates proposed the report: recognize the success of ground water programmes and that poor governance in African countries is a challenge to realizing the MDGs; highlight the burden placed on “poor” countries by the placing of conditions on aid; reflect what individual countries are doing to honor their commitment to a 10% budgetary allocation to agriculture, as agreed at the AU Maputo Summit; and stress the place of environmental economics in resource allocation. Other delegates emphasized the need to undertake consultation-driven programmes to upgrade slums and to encourage the participation of all countries in Africa’s development agenda. The UN Department of Political Affairs and UN-HABITAT respectively highlighted the roles their organizations play to enhance peace and security in Africa and to align human settlements with sustainable urbanization.

In response to the issues raised, the Secretariat commented that: the political leadership of NEPAD resides with the AU, while NEPAD itself deals with technical issues; recognition

that education must yield development outcomes has motivated development partners to support education; the WSSD regional review report is a systematic examination of Africa’s sustainable development, particularly its commitments, such that it should not be aligned solely to the thematic areas of CSD-16; and although the provisions on internationally shared waters would be improved, the Africa Water Review report captured many of the concerns raised in relation to water.

REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW REPORT

ON LAND: Delegates reviewed the issue of land on Monday. Presenting the report (E/ECA/ACSD/5/8), the Secretariat highlighted the importance of agriculture, including as a source of livelihood, and the various political, economic, social and development drivers of land policy reforms. He identified the major land issues facing Africa, which include insecurity of land tenure, the unequal distribution of land, land grabbing, poaching and occupation, and land access constraints linked to the issues of HIV/AIDS, gender relations, and unsustainable resource management. He outlined measures undertaken by member states at the national level, including: the establishment of commissions of inquiry; the formulation of laws, codes, regulations on land; and land redistribution and restitution. He highlighted various subregional initiatives, noting that challenges to resolving the land issue include the lack of capacity building initiatives to strengthen land administration; the high cost of land reform; the politicization of land issues; and insufficient knowledge of land resources. He said lessons learned included: the overwhelming presence of government in land affairs; the existence of initiatives exploring alternative land systems; and the need to develop land dispute settlement mechanisms, professionalize institutions involved in land administration, safeguard the commons, support new paradigms to manage pastoral lands and decentralize land governance. He pointed to the Pan-African Land Policy for Africa initiative of the AU, the ECA and the AfDB as one of several ways forward.

Discussion: A representative of the women’s Major Group raised the issue of land and gender, emphasizing that their role can be enhanced by participatory policies and capacity building initiatives. Winrock International concurred, adding that the report should include statistics demonstrating better land use, as well as a greater social dimension. She added that issues of urban and non-urban land policies and budgeting need to account for women’s issues.

UN-HABITAT complemented the thrust of the report but suggested that it was “weak and unbalanced.” He raised concerns over: future land prospects in Africa; the slum “time bomb”; access to land given the large number of Africans living in informal settlements; and the fact that ownership and management of urban and rural lands is heavily contested in many countries. South Africa stressed the need to address conflicting land use priorities, and said rural to urban migration will persist as long as urbanization cannot be reversed. He urged UN-HABITAT to support rural economic development as a key measure for reducing urban slum development and underscored the importance of developing partnerships with civil society, increasing technical capacities for land use planning, addressing land claims in protected areas, and censuring the coordination of land reform and tenure processes at the national level. Egypt stressed the differentiation between land and water ownership in Northern Africa. Sudan highlighted the negative impact of human settlements on fertile lands, and stressed the need to protect agriculture, encourage foreign and local investment, and forge partnerships with the private sector. She said land ownership does not equate with

agricultural production, and called for increased training, better land management, investment in forests and addressing desertification.

REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW REPORT ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

Delegates considered the implementation review report of the commitments on agriculture and rural development (ECA/ACSD/5/4) on Tuesday afternoon. The Secretariat explained that the report's objective was to monitor the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, and the JPOI. He focused on the achievements, constraints, challenges and lessons learned from ten agriculture-related commitments made by African governments. Regarding commitments to sustainable land management (SLM), the Secretariat said the key challenges include overstretched institutional resources, the long-term sustainability of the current political momentum, and the coordination of interventions. On the commitment to poverty and hunger alleviation, he said poverty is a rural phenomenon, and that the proportion of people living below the poverty line and the absolute number of malnourished individuals have increased. He said key lessons include: variation across countries on food security trends; the importance of economic growth; expansion of per capita food production and income distribution in promoting food security; and the need for a comprehensive and integrated policy advocacy approach.

Regarding commitments to agricultural production and growth, he said Africa is lagging behind other developing regions. He highlighted changes in rice, cereals, bean and cassava production, and emphasized the value of the WTO in maintaining a fair and rule-based trading system, and the need to go beyond technology production to promote rural infrastructure, health and education. With regard to public investment in agriculture, the Secretariat explained that the review called for strong political commitment, national and regional capacity building, and the integration of monitoring in the agricultural system. Regarding country spending on agricultural research, he said the commercial sale of research results in Africa was low and that farmers do not drive agricultural research and extension services. On the commitment to integrated water resource management, he highlighted the water development initiatives of NEPAD, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agriculture and Development, the AfDB and the African Minister's Council on Water, and their particular application in rural areas. He said key challenges included the non-availability of water, climate change, compromised water quality and quantity and its depletion, and weak institutional policies.

With regard to sustainable agricultural and rural development (SARD), the Secretariat noted as constraints: the lack of support from development partners; the inception of new projects before old ones were completed; and a disconnect between the CAADP and national processes. The challenges he highlighted included the spread of HIV/AIDS, political instability, poor governance strategies, population growth, the lack of an enabling environment for private sector investment, and developed country subsidies that lower the competition of African produce in the global market. He underscored the responsibility of African governments in mobilizing the required funds through internal revenue collection, and linked rural participation, decentralization and capacity strengthening to the commitment to strengthening community development projects.

Concerning integrated pest management (IPM), he said the review found that several countries had embraced the implementation strategies contained in Agenda 21 and the inventory of obsolete stockpiles compiled by FAO. Among the constraints, he said, were poor communication and networking and the low number of countries that had benefited from research on persistent organic pollutants. He said challenges to IPM included barriers to energy access, the low prioritization of energy in PRS, reduced food *per capita*, and a lack of private sector incentives and of research on carbon financing. Nonetheless, he noted that the review acknowledged as opportunities: strong political will for sustainable agriculture and rural development among African governments; globalization; the use of technology for sharing information; and a redefinition of the roles of government, the private sector and civil society.

Discussion: Zambia inquired about the possibility of setting up an information disseminating agency to create awareness on the nutritional value of multiplied food crops, and Women's Land and Water Rights in Southern Africa asked about the inclusion of agriculture as a mitigating factor in the SARD discussion. The FAO proposed highlighting traditional agricultural areas, Women's Land and Water Rights in Southern Africa suggested reference to the role of water in agricultural practices, and HIV/AIDS and its effect on the labor force. Sudan suggested referencing specific cases recognized as successful agricultural models. The WMO said it hosts a considerable amount of information on agriculture that can be provided at no cost to farmers, but that an information gap exists in terms of delivery because scientists often do not know what information farmers need and they encounter problems in interpreting its content for farmers. He said the use of community radio, evaluation of the costs and benefits of information use and farmer outputs, and weather-related insurance could all enhance the critical application of this knowledge.

The Secretariat responded that: it would seek to include the proposals in the draft African Regional Statement to CSD-16 though it was constrained by the CSD mandate; observed the reciprocal nature of the rural-urban phenomenon and the attendant analytical challenge; and, speculated that peri-urban agriculture "suggests that the right conditions have not been put in place in the first place" because agriculture belongs to rural areas. Chair Mohamed noted the need to "standardize the African position," observing that there was some discrepancy between the SARD and WSSD reviews as to whether poverty in Africa is rising or declining.

Land in the Context of Sustainable Urbanization in Africa: Alioune Badiane, Director, UN-HABITAT Regional Office for Africa and the Arab States, stated that there is no sustainable development without sustainable urbanization, and elaborated six reasons why land issues must not be driven by agriculture and rural development alone:

- a total of 55% of Africans will be living in urban areas by 2050 and urban areas are stimulants of innovation and national economic growth;
- given that 77% of Africa's city dwellers live in slums, urban land is subject to disputes and is at the root of the slum phenomenon, it is necessary to ensure that urban land works for all;
- land is a source of many conflicts in Africa and resolving land conflicts has the potential to realize social stability
- given that land is a fixed resource that constitutes up to 70% of the wealth of developing countries, its availability to all, including the poor, can unleash dead capital yet its cost has increased considerably;

- in addition to the common freehold and customary approaches to securing land tenure, additional innovative mechanisms can be developed if land rights are defined along a continuum; and
- land is viewed and understood from various dimensions, thus an integrated, coordinated, multifaceted and multi-stakeholder approach is required in addressing its related concerns.

Senegal highlighted the need for territorial urban planning and the creation of secondary cities to reduce overcrowding in informal settlements. UN-HABITAT noted its intervention in real estate problems in war-torn areas and the Democratic Republic of Congo suggested the Secretariat facilitate the setting up of an information sharing e-group for interested participants. Women's Land and Water Rights in Southern Africa suggested new regimes to replace the foreign ones governing land tenure systems in Africa. Egypt proposed referencing the education of farmers and the provision of relevant guidelines for those concerned with SARD, together with improved relations between the private sector and farmers. FARA attributed rural to urban migration and the lack of sustainable management of soils to inadequate facilities in rural areas. UN-HABITAT responded that it is already involved in the creation of real estate policies in countries affected by conflict, and alerted delegates to its published comprehensive review on Islamic land law.

REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW REPORT ON DROUGHT AND DESERTIFICATION: On Wednesday morning, the Secretariat presented the review report on the implementation of commitments on drought and desertification (E/ECA/ACSD/5/3), which provides an overview of the status of drought and desertification in Africa, the concrete actions undertaken, the challenges and constraints encountered and lessons learned. He said that drought and desertification was at the heart of the challenges facing sustainable development in Africa, and highlighted the direct causes of drought and desertification, and their effects such as food insecurity, water supply shortage, migration and refugees, and reduced economic growth. He stated that the review emphasized the complex, interrelated and interactive nature of the causes of desertification, and argued that integrated, coordinated and holistic responses were required.

He highlighted some of Africa's responses, including: national, regional and subregional plans of action; desertification and climate monitoring activities undertaken in collaboration with intergovernmental organizations; and subregional disaster risk management strategies. He elaborated on the sources of financial resources for implementation at domestic and international levels, which include the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the UNCCD *Chef de files*, the Global Mechanism, and a new initiative, TerrAfrica, concluding that initiatives to address drought and desertification in Africa were grossly under-funded.

On the lessons learned, he highlighted the need for:

- thematic integration in order to enhance resource mobilization and foster political commitment;
- increased support and mechanisms to channel resources to front-line actors;
- national action programmes with measurable concrete on-the-ground actions, that are also coordinated with climate change and biodiversity conservation activities;
- capacity building initiatives that mobilize and empower local authorities and civil society;
- centers of excellence and information and networking systems; and

- capacity building in management and adaptation, institutional mechanisms, and resource mobilization.

Discussion: The UNCCD called attention to two additional concerns, namely, the implementation of the UNCCD at the country level, which requires participation from the grass roots level to the highest echelons of government, and finalization of the subregional programme on water resource management, pastoral resources, agro-forestry and the monitoring and implementation of early warning systems. He expressed concern that the report did not mention South-South cooperation, which the UNCCD calls for and which has been advanced by Venezuela's contribution of US\$1million for land amelioration activities. He highlighted the TerrAfrica project and the sustainable management of soils initiative, though he noted that the latter had not been fully established due to funding constraints. Reminding delegates of the stringent processes regarding access to and distribution of GEF funds for this specific area, the UNCCD called for countries to develop the relevant capacities in order to access these funds, which requires proof of their commitment to sustainable development, transparent policies and adequate justifications for funding. He emphasized the need for synergies at all levels regarding the issues covered by the Rio Conventions on biodiversity, desertification and climate change in order to facilitate national implementation of the conventions.

In the subsequent discussion, delegates proposed adding references into the review report in relation to:

- benefits to natural resource management that accrue from good cultural practices, awareness of forest management and the use of solar energy;
- the Ouagadougou Declaration and the Declaration of the Summit on Fertilizers and the related financial mechanism funded by Nigeria;
- creating adequate observation units, strengthening institutional capacities and the information base, and eliminating duplication;
- good management and awareness of drought and desertification, and the involvement of local authorities and major groups in driving these management and awareness processes;
- the link between low Gross Domestic Product and desertification in countries reliant on agriculture, as well as the need to link global dynamics to drought and desertification issues;
- progress made following the institutionalization of monitoring facilities in the region and a yearning for information dissemination on the scientific and technical aspects of the issue;
- inclusion of the impacts of desertification on biodiversity, and of trade and development in the drylands on both human and animal populations, as well as the need to develop market opportunities for drylands products; and
- an emphasis on water harvesting problems and the promotion of research on alternative energy sources in Africa.

REVIEW OF THE DRAFT MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

On Wednesday afternoon, delegates considered a draft mandate for the proposed Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD), which would replace the ACSD. A revised version of this draft mandate, issued as Annex I of the meeting report (E/ECA/ACSD/5/L), was adopted on Thursday evening.

In presenting the draft mandate to plenary on Wednesday, Ousmane Laye, FSSDD, recalled that the ACSD was established in 2003 by the then Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning in response to developments elsewhere in the UN system. He also noted that in April 2007, the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (Conference of Ministers) adopted a resolution to restructure the subsidiary organs of the ECA, including the Committee. He explained that the draft mandate of the CFSSD elaborates the basis on which future reviews of the implementation of sustainable development will be undertaken and that the provisions of its mandate are consistent with past Committee practices. He also explained that if adopted at ACSD-5, the draft would be forwarded for consideration and possible adoption at the next meeting of the Conference of Ministers, scheduled for April 2009. He then explained that the draft mandate consists of six sections covering: background; composition and functions; terms of reference; operational guidelines; the relationship between the Committee and the CSD; and the relationship between the Committee and other institutions. Chair Mohamed further explained that if the draft were adopted, the Committee would have essentially “voted itself out in order to reconstitute as the CFSSD.”

Discussion: The ensuing discussion focused on the CFSSD’s composition and function, especially its relationship with other institutions. Algeria proposed a provision specifying the relationship between the CFSSD and other regional organizations, including the AU Commission, while Morocco commented on the CFSSD’s relationship with the specialized agencies and other regional institutions and organizations. Morocco noted a distinction between members and others involved in the work of the CFSSD, while UEMOA commented on the relationship between the CFSSD and subregional monetary organizations such as UEMOA, and FAO noted the role of specialized agencies, civil society and inter-governmental organizations within the CFSSD. Senegal outlined the need for a clearer definition of the very broad concept of sustainable development in order not to “skip” issues or alter themes. The Major Groups commented on a section that mentioned their role, UN-HABITAT noted that an emphasis on food security might be to the detriment of other sustainable development issues and Guinea highlighted the need for states to publish their food security policies.

In response, the Secretariat said that following extensive ministerial negotiations in March 2007 regarding a proposal similar to that of Algeria, it had been agreed that existing resolutions recognizing collaboration with other institutions were sufficient. He said Morocco’s proposal to distinguish between member states and observers in the section on composition and functions of the CFSSD could be accommodated, but as cooperation with subregional organizations exists and member states are part of intergovernmental organizations, specific provisions regarding cooperation with other institutions might not be necessary. He clarified that subregional organizations would be able to participate as observers but would not be able to vote. Regarding adding new thematic areas and names of organizations, he suggested, with support from Egypt, retaining the current draft because it was the result of lengthy debate and ultimately consensus among the ministers. A drafting committee, comprising the Secretariat, Morocco, Egypt, Senegal, Algeria and Heifer International as a representative of the Major Groups, was established to further revise the text.

On Thursday morning, delegates considered the revised draft, and accepted proposed amendments, in particular in relation to the composition and functions of the CFSSD, the relationship of the CFSSD with the CSD, and the relationship between the CFSSD and other institutions. They then adopted the draft mandate of the CFSSD.

The issue was revisited on Thursday during consideration of the agenda item on other matters. Zimbabwe inquired whether a renaming of the Committee to include reference to food security implied that it would be a recurrent theme of all CFSSD sessions. The Secretariat reiterated the origins of the change and the 2007 decision of the Conference of Ministers and said the Secretariat of the CFSSD would work on all sectors of the economy, but that there would likely be a chapter dedicated to food security in conformity with the JPOI.

Draft CFSSD Mandate: The draft mandate has six sections. The background section draws attention to resolution 853 (XL), adopted by the Conference of Ministers, establishing the CFSSD. Its composition includes high-level experts from governments, academia, research and development institutions, the private sector and civil society organizations in ECA member states.

Its functions include meeting on a biennial basis, serving as a forum to promote cooperation, exchange of information, and sharing of experiences among African countries in the area of sustainable development with a focus on food security, agriculture, human settlements, and environment. In particular, it will provide advice to member states and the ECA, provide a platform for advocacy and assessment of follow-up activities by African governments on global plans of action, especially the JPOI, Agenda 21, the World Food Summit Plan of Action and the Habitat Agenda.

The terms of reference include periodic reviews of global programmes of action, making recommendations on multidisciplinary approaches of relevant programmes of action, formulating policies and measures, providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and sharing of experiences, advising the Secretariat on ways and means of encouraging integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development into national development, and serving as a RIM for the CSD.

The operational guidelines specify the actual work of the CFSSD, specifically its consideration of food security and sustainable development concerns, monitoring progress in implementation of global action plans and reviewing and examining the FSSDD’s proposed programmes and plans of work.

The last two sections of the draft mandate concern the relationship of the CFSSD with the CSD and other institutions. Regarding its relationship with the CSD, the CFSSD will serve as Africa’s regional forum on all CSD-mandated fields, and as its advisory arm on cross-sectoral activities and proposed follow-up actions on the implementation of international programmes. In relating to other institutions, the CFSSD will cooperate with: similar committees on food security and sustainable development; the other technical committees of the ECA; appropriate intergovernmental structures at national, subregional and regional levels; and appropriate AU structures.

AFRICAN REGIONAL STATEMENT TO CSD-16

On Wednesday afternoon, Vice Chair Petrus presented the draft Regional Statement, which the drafting committee had been working on since Monday. Consideration of the revised draft continued in morning and afternoon sessions on Thursday with breaks throughout to allow for further revision of certain

portions of the text. Delegates adopted the statement on Thursday evening as amended during the plenary discussions, and the Secretariat requested a revised version of the text be circulated after the meeting via electronic means.

In his presentation on Wednesday, Vice Chair Petrus said the report was structured around the thematic issues of CSD-16, each containing three main sections on concrete actions, challenges and constraints, and lessons learned. He reminded participants that the statement would be Africa's position to CSD-16.

Before delegates engaged in substantive discussion of the draft, some raised concerns about the absence of adequate interpretation services. Zimbabwe suggested adjourning to allow delegates time to consider the text. Sudan and the OSS noted that some thematic issues considered in plenary were not yet included in the draft statement. Morocco stressed the need to distinguish between the draft statement and the meeting report. Algeria, supported by Burundi, Senegal and Sudan, stressed the need to have at least an Arabic or French translation of the statement if time did not allow for a sentence-by-sentence reading. The UNCCD noted the importance of the three Committee outputs, namely, the draft mandate of the CFSSD, the meeting report and the African Regional Statement to CSD-16, but sought clarification about their relative importance. After an adjournment, delegates agreed to proceed with a section-by-section reading, but the Secretariat emphasized, and UNDESA confirmed, the need to finish consideration of the entire document by Thursday so as to meet UN General Assembly and Conference Services' deadlines for CSD-16 preparations.

PREAMBLE: Discussion of the preambular paragraphs focused on a proposal by a representative of Indigenous peoples, which South Africa supported, to specifically recognize their contributions to the work of the Committee alongside that of the Major Groups. Malawi sought specific examples of such contributions before the proposal was adopted.

Final Text: The preamble highlights the activities of the RIM, which focused on the four thematic clusters of CSD-16, recalling commitments made by African countries to promote sustainable development. It specifies peace, security, good governance and poverty eradication as requirements for sustainable development, and stresses the need for a balance when addressing economic growth and development, social development and environmental protection. The preamble also briefly notes the issues of land distribution and management, and the impacts of climate change, drought and desertification, and agriculture and rural development as addressed by the RIM.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: Delegates began consideration of this item on Wednesday evening, considering the first subsection on reviewing concrete actions taken and progress made in agricultural productivity and food security enhancement, and poverty alleviation. Many delegates proposed mentioning specific entities such as Malawi, the International Livestock Research Institute, and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research group, in the sections highlighting achievements. The WFP highlighted the omission of the effects of climate change, and Kenya and Malawi proposed reference to livestock management and infrastructure concerns, respectively.

When discussion resumed on Thursday morning, delegates continued with a section-by-section consideration of the draft statement. Zimbabwe expressed concern that the lack of expertise in all the areas covered by the review and the absence of a government mandate in the Committee could hamper adoption of the draft statement, and requested that the document

not be "set in stone" as Africa's position. Malawi concurred with Chair Mohamed on the need for precise discussion as the document needed to be further revised from its current 36 pages to 16, in accordance with CSD-16 requirements. He reminded delegates that the ACSO is a committee of experts and that the drafting committee had considered all issues addressed in the document. The Secretariat asked the Committee to remember its mandate as an implementation committee and underscored that the document was to be presented to CSD-16 as Africa's common position. He stressed the need to adopt the document at this level so as not to set a negative precedent. Egypt noted that the document was not legally binding, while Morocco underlined the need for consensus on Africa's common contribution to the debate at CSD-16. Chair Mohamed clarified that the length of the document was due to the theme of CSD-16, which contains a special section on Africa.

Delegates then continued discussions, focusing on challenges, constraints and lessons learned. Delegates proposed new text to address additional challenges, constraints and lessons. The WFP proposed inclusion of a provision on the limited access of small-scale farmers to global markets, and a recommendation that the matter be addressed as a priority for sub-Saharan Africa. The UNCCD proposed a new paragraph reflecting the UNCCD COP-8 consensus that land degradation, desertification and unsustainable agricultural practices remain the main challenges for sustainable agriculture and rural development. With regard to the lessons learned, UEMOA proposed, and delegates agreed, to an amendment to call for donor flexibility not only in their financial conditionalities, but in disbursement procedures as well.

Final Text: The text on constraints and challenges elaborates on:

- poverty as an impediment to food and energy security;
- climate variability, climate change and natural disasters;
- developed country agricultural subsidies;
- inadequate investment, funding and infrastructural investment;
- weak institutional capacity to deliver SARD;
- lack of data and poor access to available information on SARD;
- lack of an enabling environment for private sector development;
- suboptimal policy and regulatory frameworks;
- a low level of water resources development to meet the water demand;
- the slow adoption of the CAADP principles and framework in the work of multilateral programmes;
- non-reflection of the needs of farmers and agri-businesses by agricultural research and extension services;
- the HIV/AIDS burden;
- political instability and human induced disasters;
- skewed income distribution;
- the highest rates of population growth and urbanization; and
- resource management.

Regarding lessons learned and recommendations on the way forward, the text notes the need to:

- align development assistance to the CAADP;
- build on ongoing efforts;
- define the core areas of the Maputo Declaration and build capacity to track agricultural expenditure;
- harmonize approaches and flexibility within countries' strategic frameworks;
- explore and/or widen new and innovative financing approaches;
- build human and institutional capacity;

- develop and promote access to rural infrastructure and agricultural inputs;
- prioritize energy access;
- decentralize institutional arrangements that empower local communities;
- remove agricultural price distortions;
- enhance access to extension services and appropriate technology on water;
- enhance private sector participation;
- increase public and private investment in rural areas;
- improve and promote fair global trade opportunities; and
- upscale policy reforms on land to guarantee secure access to land.

LAND: Discussion on the constraints and lessons learned under this theme concerned proposals to include other significant issues, of which two attracted particular discussion. Zimbabwe suggested that because “most of Africa’s civil society organizations, particularly NGOs, are owned and/or foreign funded,” their aspirations do not always tally with those of governments. Ghana concurred with Zimbabwe on the challenge that whereas civil society organizations are evident in governance activities, they are less involved in field activities on land issues. A representative of the women’s Major Group suggested, and Zimbabwe agreed, to reflect an amended text capturing this constraint in the more general section on the review of Africa. The other matter, raised by UN-HABITAT and Sudan, concerned an over-emphasis on agricultural productivity in the conceptualization of land, pointing to land conflicts associated with competing land uses such as human settlements and pastoralism. Sudan agreed with UN-HABITAT that when such issues are raised in policy venues considering human settlements, they are dismissed as land-related concerns. They stressed the need to address them within this context.

In the discussion on lessons learned, UN-HABITAT proposed amending the recommendation supporting the use of customary land tenure systems so that potential negative effects such as gender, inter-generational, and insider-outsider discrimination, which can hinder investment, are addressed during their administration. South Africa proposed, and delegates agreed, to recast the message regarding high reliance on technical assistance for land reform so as to highlight the potential negative effects of external technical assistance if it is poorly integrated into the national context.

Regional Statement: The statement highlights as constraints and challenges:

- weak institutions restricted to the administration of formal property rights;
- leadership and coordination challenges;
- reliance on external technical assistance that may be poorly integrated in the national context;
- variable capacity in civil society across African countries; and
- inadequate knowledge management and information sharing of empirical knowledge, specific policy analysis and the implications of policy choices.

Regarding lessons learned and the way forward, the text stresses the need to:

- explore and establish systems of divestiture and privatization in the delivery of land services;
- develop alternative systems to eliminate the slow issuing of titles;
- recognize customary land rights that take account of practices that have the potential to hamper investments in land;

- ensure equitable, consensual and coherent new policies with a plurality of tenure;
- professionalize land administration institutions;
- decentralize land governance;
- ensure land policy reforms that safeguard the commons;
- develop new paradigms to manage pastoral lands;
- develop dispute resolutions mechanisms that deliver rapid settlements;
- explore new approaches to the resolution of land issues in post-conflict situations;
- ensure mechanisms to support policy reform and implementation;
- engage stakeholders at all levels of policy development;
- build and re-orient capacity and expertise to develop appropriate land administration;
- extend the coverage of cadastral systems, and accessible land registration and documentation procedures;
- develop centers of excellence on land policy to supply the requisite land policies; and
- pursue the development of a Pan-African framework for land policy.

DROUGHT AND DESERTIFICATION: In relation to drought and desertification, discussion centered on the proposed inclusion of additional constraints, challenges and lessons learned. Algeria proposed that awareness raising on destructive activities begin at the school level, and that if humans are part of soil destruction, they should also be central to efforts to combat desertification. South Africa proposed text recognizing as a challenge, lack of synergies in the implementation of the desertification, climate change and biodiversity conventions, and a corresponding recommendation to strengthen capacity for developing integrated programmes, as well as a proposal emphasizing the strengthening of both scientific and indigenous knowledge systems for SLM. Kenya identified challenges arising from a lack of coherent trade and trade development patterns in drylands, and as a result, a lack of capacity to explore opportunities to market drylands products such as tourism, eco-tourism, indigenous knowledge systems, and biodiversity-related products. Sudan proposed as a lesson learned, the existence of land abuse where preference is given to use fertile agricultural land, such as that situated along major water bodies, for low-risk and highly profitable investments such as real estate.

The UNCCD proposed additional preambular paragraphs for the sub-section on lessons learned and recommendations with a view to capturing the sentiments expressed at UNCCD COP-8, namely: the great concern expressed with regard to the continuing negative impact of desertification and drought at social, economic and environmental levels and on the welfare of African populations; the need to ensure adequate commitment for the implementation of the Ten-year Strategic Plan of the UNCCD; and the expression of concern at the low level of funding allocated to the GEF Operational Programme on Sustainable Land Management (OP 15) compared to other conventions, with a call to consider allocating additional funds within the GEF.

Regional Statement: The text on constraints and challenges highlights:

- poverty, especially in the rural areas;
- climate variability and climate change;
- poor coordination and collaboration among actors;
- weak institutional capacity that constrains coordination;
- inadequate reform and reinforcement of policies that guarantee legal land ownership and access rights;

- lack of financial resources;
- inaccessibility to affordable credit facilities by local communities to tackle land degradation;
- lack of information on key issues of land;
- lack of participatory processes that can respond to local community priorities;
- limited development of economic and social infrastructure in the drylands;
- inaccessible technology options;
- diseases that undermine human resource capacity; and
- political instability and conflict that exacerbate land degradation.

With regard to recommendations, the statement proposes:

- ensuring adequate commitment to enhance the implementation of commitments;
- integrating the priorities identified in National Action Programmes (NAPs) into national plans in order to mobilize resources and foster political commitment;
- upscaling NAPs with concrete measurable community programmes;
- establishing innovative and accessible funding channels to farmers;
- mobilizing and empowering local institutions and groups and other stakeholders through capacity building for SLM;
- establishing and promoting incentives to invest in drylands;
- improving information gathering, analysis, dissemination, and networking systems and institutions;
- linking drought and desertification programmes to the conventions on climate change and biodiversity;
- strengthening management and adaptation to drought and desertification;
- strengthening institutional arrangements to promote coordination of activities at all levels;
- promoting knowledge management and appropriate technology; and
- strengthening capacity to mobilize financial resources.

REVIEW OF AFRICA: The Secretariat noted that at CSD-16, Africa will be considered as a separate concern as provided for in chapter seven of the JPOI. Egypt raised concerns over the country-specific nature of this section of the draft statement, emphasizing the sensitivity of the issues within the section and, supported by Algeria, proposed that the Secretariat make the text more general. The ensuing discussion centered on a possible duplication of issues already discussed in the preceding sections. The UNCCD recommended including a preamble to the section on Africa, which would clarify its purpose and scope. The Secretariat, responding to a WFP concern regarding the omission of a section on food security, noted that this issue was covered in the section on agriculture and rural development. She also drew attention to the fact that the draft statement covered 40 thematic areas, thus providing a “snapshot” of all sustainable development concerns, constraints and recommended priority approaches.

On challenges, constraints and lessons learned, Zimbabwe proposed an amendment to its earlier proposal concerning civil society organizations, which had been deferred from discussion of the section on land. She added a new proposal for the establishment of a liaison function for the coordination of Africa’s Major Groups’ input on sustainable development, in accordance with the recognized roles of these groups in Agenda 21, CSD-8, and the JPOI.

Egypt expressed concern that this section of the draft statement was not representative of the African position as it was too specific and dealt with sensitive issues that had not

previously been discussed in the plenary sessions, and called for a revision of the tone. Sudan queried whether the language was consistent with that agreed by the drafting committee. Chair Mohamed concurred, but reminded delegates that the Secretariat was time barred and could not have revised the document during the break. Many delegates, including South Africa, Kenya and the women’s Major Group, highlighted concerns with sections of the text and emphasized the need to address contentious issues before the text was adopted. After an adjournment to allow the drafting group, including Egypt and South Africa, further time to revise the text, Vice Chair Petrus reported that consensus had been reached regarding the deletion of some provisions on constraints and challenges. This included sections on: inadequate separation of powers, commitment to sound public financial management, policies, strategies and legislative frameworks; persistent gender inequality in agriculture and rural development; poor governance, political instability and armed conflicts; and overlapping membership and duplication of functions in RECs. Also deleted were provisions recommending the promotion of effective, inclusive and legitimate governance, and an emphasis on the development of systems and measures to avert violent crises. Vice Chair Petrus noted new provisions, which acknowledged: the existence of regional mechanisms to promote and enforce human rights; the need to improve sound public financial management and private sector development; weak institutional capacities; and benefits to some African countries from the establishment of regional satellite facilities. In response to a question from Algeria, Egypt reported that as with references to legal institutions in the section of the text on constraints and recommendations, the corresponding provisions in the section on concrete actions had likewise been deleted.

Kenya proposed and delegates agreed to amend a provision referring to the lack of adequate “mechanisms” for the valuation of the natural resource base of economic and social development. This was broadened in scope so as to include “accounting, the use and application of appropriate economic instruments, and design of indicators for sustainable development.” UN-HABITAT proposed amending the recommendation on slum upgrading, so that activities to promote sustainable human settlements and urbanization address “access to land and security of tenure along with adequate mechanisms for financing housing and shelter for the poor,” and slum prevention, while ensuring that slum upgrading uses local resources and technology, and promotes employment creation.

Regional Statement: In the statement, concrete actions taken toward sustainable development in the region are organized around five overarching themes: sustainable development governance; poverty eradication and socially sustainable development; SCP; natural resource base of economic and social development; and the various means of implementation.

The challenges and constraints in Africa recognized by the RIM include:

- sustainable development and governance: inadequate integration of NEPAD in AU Commission activities; the broad spectra of inequities and weak regional mechanisms for human rights enforcement; lack of separation of powers in the three arms of government; and poor public financial management;
- poverty eradication and socially sustainable development: unstable macroeconomic conditions; ensuring that economic growth provides employment opportunities; uneven wealth distribution; income poverty; gender inequality in

- agriculture and rural development; poor governance and weak institutional capacity; political instability; insufficient infrastructural investment; and natural disasters;
- SCP: poverty; inadequate policies, strategies and legal frameworks; lack of private sector incentives; and a weakening of local economies by political instability;
 - natural resource base of economic and social development: inadequate capacity for natural mineral resource development; poverty and weak institutional capacities; insufficient scientific research and technology; poor understanding of natural resource issues; lack of mechanisms for natural resource valuation; and lack of political and financial support; and
 - weaknesses regarding means of implementation: low and unpredictable flows of official development assistance; insufficient debt forgiveness; inadequate policy coordination, implementation and harmonization of national laws; inadequate government initiatives and investments in institutions of science, technology and innovation; and poor coordination of capacity building efforts.
- The lessons learned and recommendations proposed include:
- sustainable development governance in Africa: integration of NEPAD in AU structures and processes; promotion of effective, inclusive and legitimate governance; capacity building at AU, REC and national levels; consolidation of support for peace, stability and democratization; monitoring of progress in governance and administration; capacity for reforms in economic and corporate governance and the private sector; and the adoption of a holistic approach to governance and improvement of public financial systems;
 - poverty eradication and socially sustainable development: sustenance of high growth rates; adoption of multiple strategic interventions; provision of additional resources and adoption of better farming practices and uses of technology and reform; gender mainstreaming in economic analyses; gender equality; successes in the educational sector; design and implementation of results-oriented health interventions; the inclusion of slum upgrading in the human settlement dimension; and the development of rural and urban water and sanitation infrastructures;
 - SCP: maintaining political momentum and commitment to the African Ten-year Framework Programme on SCP; promoting sound corporate governance and risk management systems; ensuring meaningful community-public-private partnerships; encouraging domestic capacity building in sustainable industrial development; addressing energy concerns in rural and peri-urban areas; implementing frameworks to attract investment; and promoting understanding of the impacts of chemical and hazardous waste, as well as creating synergies between related multilateral environmental agreements;
 - natural resource base of economic and social development: strengthening natural resource governance regimes; linking regional and subregional initiatives to national development processes; creating stakeholder incentives; enhancing adaptive capacity to foster sustainable development; promoting development-coherent policy programmes; and ensuring equitable growth and sustainability through natural resource valuation; and
 - means of implementation: promoting growth that is pro-poor and equitable; providing incentives for capital flow policies into national economic development; advocating for external aid in the form of grants; canceling debt; coordinating and harmonizing policies in the global trading system; expanding investment opportunities to increase income; increasing infrastructure financing and building relevant to human

and physical capacities; preparing young people for future leadership positions; promoting awareness of science, technology and innovation issues; repositioning with regard to outsourcing and external employment opportunities; and coordinating capacity building strategies.

OTHER MATTERS

THEMES, DATE AND VENUE OF CFSSD-1: Ousmane Laye, FSSDD, explained that the themes of the Committee have traditionally followed those of the CSD, whose agreed themes for the 2010-11 cycle are transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and the Ten-year Framework Programme on SCP patterns. He explained that these would likely constitute the areas of focus for the CFSSD's first meeting in 2009. He proposed following the Committee's past practice in order to decide on the theme for CFSSD-1, and requested delegates allow the Secretariat time to consult with other UN agencies and to work with the Bureau during its follow-up sessions in order to take a final decision on the theme.

Regarding the date of the next meeting, Ousmane Laye said that consistent with the Committee's previous biennial gatherings, the next meeting, which would likely take place as CFSSD-1, was scheduled for October 2009. He explained that in considering the exact dates, the Secretariat would pay attention to all major international events. Regarding the venue, no offers to host the meeting were forthcoming, and it was established that the meeting would likely be held in Addis Ababa, the location of the Secretariat.

OTHER BUSINESS: The UNCCD sought clarification on follow-up arrangements given that the Committee meets biennially, while the CSD holds annual meetings. With Senegal, he also inquired about the participation modalities for CSD sessions, since not all member states are currently UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) members. Ousmane Laye and UNDESA explained that whereas only 15 African countries are currently CSD members, all member states of the UN are welcome to participate in CSD activities, except vote. Ousmane Laye also explained that as a regional institution, the ECA's contributions to the CSD focus on preparation of the regional-level reports. UNDESA explained the biennial workings of CSD, drawing on the CSD-11 decisions establishing the Multi-Year Programme of Work and the biennial rotational cycle, which were endorsed by the 2003 meetings of ECOSOC and the UN General Assembly.

Malawi, posed several questions regarding the impact of meetings such as ACSD-5, and expressed his pleasure that the RIM was demanding "concrete actions," which suggested a comprehensive monitoring system existed. He also emphasized the importance of domestic resources for the attainment of sustainable development. In closing this agenda item, Chair Mohamed expressed the Committee's appreciation of these sentiments.

REPORT OF THE MEETING: Chair Mohamed introduced, and delegates considered, the draft report of the meeting (E/ECA/ACSD/5/L), with the revised draft mandate of the Committee included as an annex. The report was adopted with minor amendments.

CLOSING SESSION

Morocco expressed regret at the late adoption of the Committee's outputs due to the limited translation services, and suggested Secretariat documents should be distributed so as to allow ample time for review and preparation, and to enable the Rapporteur to reflect on all of the Committee's deliberations. Concurring, Senegal, supported by Burundi, pointed out that while they agreed with the African Regional Statement, none

of the Francophone countries had taken the floor during its consideration. She suggested the draft statement could have been translated and transmitted by email. Egypt emphasized the importance it attached to sustainable development and proposed that Arabic versions of the documents be provided at future sessions. Burundi queried when it could expect to receive the translated outputs of the Committee.

UN-HABITAT noted that CSD-16 would not be “easy due to the manner of reporting” used, but emphasized that if the region held together, a lot could be realized. Democratic Republic of Congo reiterated its call for an informal e-group to foster dialogue and to exchange information between willing participants. Zimbabwe, as CSD-16 Chair, said she had listened keenly to concerns raised that had helped to articulate the African position, and pledged to take very seriously the concerns raised by delegates throughout the meeting.

In his closing remarks, Ousmane Laye, on behalf of Executive Secretary Janneh, thanked delegates for the high quality input and hard work under difficult conditions, which had resulted in a consensus statement. He concurred that the task ahead at CSD-16 would be difficult because the international community was counting on the review of Africa that the Committee had prepared. He said the Secretariat would endeavor to finalize translations of relevant documents within two weeks and said the ECA’s repositioning had rendered knowledge management a key pillar of its mandate, thus it would work on the proposal of an e-group.

Chair Mohamed expressed appreciation for the support of the Secretariat, Bureau and participants, acknowledged the high quality of discussions during the meeting and reaffirmed his dedication to serving as Chair of the ACSD-5 Bureau. He closed the meeting at 8:05 pm.

SIDE EVENTS AT ACSD-5

AFRICAN ECO-LABELING MECHANISM

A side event on the development of an African Eco-Labeling Mechanism (AEM) was held on Tuesday. Jointly organized by the AU Commission, the ECA and UNEP, the event provided an opportunity for ACSD-5 delegates to discuss and review progress on the establishment of an AEM. The side event, moderated by the AU Commission, included a focus on emerging trends on environmental labeling and their impact on Africa, and the proposed structure and functions of the AEM. This was followed by a general discussion, during which participants underlined the importance of having such a regional mechanism in place.

IISD’s African Regional Coverage Briefing Note of this side event is available online at <http://www.iisd.ca/africa/brief/briefing1001e.pdf>

URBAN LANDS IN AFRICA

The UN-HABITAT side event on “Urban Land in Africa” took place on Wednesday. It focused on UN-HABITAT’s perspectives and work in the area of urban land, particularly in Africa, as well as urban land challenges and opportunities for African countries. Participants stressed that given the majority of populations in African cities live in slums, urban and peri-urban land is central to any strategy to improve conditions and achieve sustainable development. Participants also stressed the urgency of reversing the trend of attending to agriculture for agriculture’s sake, and urged a broader focus on markets. Regarding the MDGs, UN-HABITAT said there was “complete blindness” in the discourse, and too often the issues of slum upgrading and prevention are overlooked.

IISD’s Africa Regional coverage Briefing Note of the side event will be available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/africa/>

UPCOMING MEETINGS

MEETING OF THE JOINT CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE NAIROBI AND ABIDJAN CONVENTIONS:

Joint meetings of the parties to the Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment will take place from 5-8 November 2007, in Johannesburg, South Africa. For more information, contact: the Programme Officer, Secretariat of the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions, Division of Environmental Policy Implementation, UNEP; tel: +254-20762-2025 or +254-20-762-1250; fax: +254-20762 3203 or +254-20762-3928; internet: <http://www.unep.org/NairobiConvention/default.asp>

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE ON IMPACTS AND ADVANCED CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGIES FOR THE AFRICAN AND MEDITERRANEAN REGIONS:

This meeting will convene from 18-20 November 2007, in Tunis, Tunisia. For more information, contact: General Direction of Environment and Quality of Life, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Tunisia; tel: +216-70-728-679; fax: +216-70-728-595; e-mail: DGEQV@mineat.gov.tn

THIRD CONFERENCE OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:

This meeting will be held from 12-16 November 2007, in Nairobi, Kenya. For more information, contact: John Mugabe, NEPAD Office of Science and Technology; tel: +27-12-841-3653/3688; fax: +27-12-841-4414; e-mail: john@nrf.ac.za; internet: <http://www.nepadst.org>

EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION:

An Extraordinary Session of UNCCD COP-8 will take place on 26 November 2007, in New York, United States. For more information, contact: UNCCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.int; internet: <http://www.unccd.int>

MEETINGS OF THE UN CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS KYOTO PROTOCOL:

UNFCCC COP 13 and the Kyoto Protocol COP/MOP 3 will convene from 3-14 December 2007, in Bali, Indonesia. These meetings will coincide with the twenty-seventh meeting of the UNFCCC’s subsidiary bodies and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments from Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol. It is also expected that a meeting of the UNFCCC Dialogue on Long-Term Cooperative Action on Climate Change will be held, in addition to other events. For more information, contact the UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; internet: <http://www.unfccc.int>

AFRICAN MINISTERS MEETING ON LAND: This meeting is scheduled to take place in February 2008, in Nairobi, Kenya. For more information, contact: Alioune Badiane, Director, UN-HABITAT Regional Office for Africa and the Arab States; tel: +254-20-762-3075 or +254-20-763-3221; fax: +254-20-762-3904 or + 254-20-762-3328; email: alioune.badiane@unhabitat.org; internet: <http://www.unhabitat.org>

RENEWABLE ENERGY CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA:

This meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place in February 2008, in Dakar, Senegal. For more information, contact: Pradeep Monga, United Nations Industrial

Development Organization Secretariat; tel: +43-1-26026-3018; fax +43-1-26026-6855; email: p.monga@unido.org; internet: <http://www.unido.org>

SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: CSD-16 will take place from 5-16 May 2008, in New York, United States. The review session will focus on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. The session will also review the decisions on water and sanitation adopted by CSD-13. For more information, contact: Division for Sustainable Development, UNDESA; tel: +1-212-963-8102; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: dsd@un.org; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd>

NINTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: This meeting will take place from 19-30 May 2008, in Bonn, Germany, and will include a high-level segment from 28-30 May. For more information, contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@cbd.int; internet: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=COP-09>

TWELFTH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT: AMCEN-12 is scheduled to take place in June or July 2008, in South Africa. For more information, contact: Peter Acquah, AMCEN Secretary, tel: +254-20-7624289; fax: +254-20-7623928; e-mail: amcensec@unep.org; internet: <http://www.unep.org/roa>

SUBSIDIARY MEETINGS OF THE UNCCD: The seventh meeting of the UNCCD's Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and the ninth meeting of the Committee on Science and Technology will convene from 20-29 October 2008, in Istanbul, Turkey. For more information, contact: UNCCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.int; internet: <http://www.unccd.int>

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR CSD-17: This meeting will convene from 23-27 February 2009, in New York, United States. Participants will prepare for the May 2009 policy session of CSD-17, which will focus on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. For more information, contact: Division for Sustainable Development, UNDESA; tel: +1-212-963-8102; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: dsd@un.org; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd>

SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: CSD-17 will convene from 4-15 May 2009, in New York, United States. For more information, contact: Division for Sustainable Development, UNDESA; tel: +1-212-963-8102; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: dsd@un.org; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd>

NINTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION: UNCCD COP 9 is tentatively scheduled to take place in Bonn, Germany, in Autumn 2009, in the event that no party makes an offer to host that session and meet the additional financial costs. For more information, contact: UNCCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.int; internet: <http://www.unccd.int>

FIRST SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CFSSD-1): This meeting is scheduled to take place in October 2009, and will likely be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. For more information, contact: Ousmane Laye, CFSSD-1

Coordinator, Chief, Environment and Sustainable Development Section, Food Security and Sustainable Development Division, ECA; tel: +251-11-551-5761/544 5319; fax: +251-11-551-4416; e-mail: olaye@uneca.org; internet: <http://www.uneca.org/csd/csd5.htm>

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACSD	African Committee on Sustainable Development
AfDB	African Development Bank
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AU	African Union
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
CFSSD	Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSD	(UN) Commission on Sustainable Development
ECA	(UN) Economic Commission for Africa
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FSSDD	(ECA) Food Security and Sustainable Development Division
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture and Development
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IUCN	World Conservation Union
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NAP	National Action Programme
NCSD	National Committee for Sustainable Development
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OSS	Sahara and Sahel and Observatory
PANAFCON	Pan-African Conference on Implementation and Partnership on Water
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RIM	Regional Implementation Meeting
SARD	Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
UEMOA	West African Economic and Monetary Union
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
WFP	World Food Programme
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Trade Organization