



AMCOW Bulletin

A report of the Sixth Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW-6)

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/](http://www.iisd.ca/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/)
ISSUE No. 1, VOLUME 4, No. 2, SATURDAY, 26 MAY 2007

SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERS' COUNCIL ON WATER: 28-31 MAY 2007

AN INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF WATER GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

The sixth Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW-6) will take place from 28-31 May, in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. It will include an AMCOW Executive Committee meeting and the sixth Ordinary Session of AMCOW. Other scheduled events include, a Youth Forum, organized by the UN Children's Fund, and the Pan-Africa Civil Society Organization's Consultations organized by the African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation.

This bulletin places the AMCOW-6 in the broader context of water governance in Africa. It focuses on how institutions, such as the African Union, African Ministerial Conference on Environment, African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology, African Development Bank, and the United Nations are supporting the sustainable development of Africa's water resources. The bulletin also provides an overview of key meetings, decisions and declarations on water resources in Africa. Coverage of AMCOW-6 by IISD Reporting Services African Regional Coverage Project is available online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/afrika/water/amcow/>

AFRICAN UNION INITIATIVES

AFRICAN UNION

The African Union (AU) is the principal organization for the promotion of socioeconomic integration across the continent. It includes 53 African countries as member states, while Morocco has special status. The Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity called for its establishment in the Sirte Declaration on 9 September 1999, as a means to accelerate integration, so that Africa could play a significant role in the global economy, and to address shared social, economic and political problems.

The objectives of the AU include: achieving greater unity and solidarity between African countries and the peoples of Africa; promoting and defending common African positions on issues; encouraging international cooperation; establishing enabling conditions for the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations; promoting sustainable development and integration of African economies; and advancing the continent's development through research in all fields.

The principal organs of the AU include the: Assembly; Executive Council; Commission; Permanent Representatives Committee; Peace and Security Council; Pan-African Parliament; Economic, Social and Cultural Council; Court of Justice; Financial Institutions; and Specialized Technical Committees.

AFRICAN UNION TREATIES AND PROGRAMMES

THE ABUJA TREATY: The Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC), commonly known as the Abuja Treaty, was adopted at the twenty-seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Organization of African Unity in Abuja, Nigeria, in June 1991. The Treaty entered into force in May 1994. The aim of the AEC is to promote economic, social and cultural development as well as African economic integration in order to increase self-sufficiency and endogenous development, and to create a framework for development and mobilization of Africa's human and material resources. The AEC further aims to promote cooperation and development in all aspects of human activity, with a view to raising the standard of living of Africa's people, maintaining economic stability and establishing close and peaceful relationships between member states. It also aims to ensure the harmonization and coordination of environmental protection policies in Africa.

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The Treaty provides for the AEC to be set up through a gradual process, which would be achieved by coordination, harmonization and progressive integration of the activities of existing and future regional economic communities (RECs) in Africa. The RECs are regarded as the building blocks of the AEC. The existing RECs are the: Arab Maghreb Union; Economic Community of Central African States; Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa; Southern African Development Community; and Economic Community of West African States.

The Treaty, which has been in operation since 1994, recognizes the importance of the water sector to sustainable economic and social development in Africa. Consequently, the Treaty calls for cooperation between member states for the development of river and lake basins, and for the development and protection of marine and fishery resources. Under Article 56 (natural resources), the Treaty commits member states to:

- exchange information on the prospection, exploitation and distribution of water resources;
- coordinate programmes for the development and utilization of water resources; and
- prepare and implement joint training programmes for cadres in order to develop the human resources and local technological capabilities required for the exploration, exploitation and processing of mineral and water resources.

THE AFRICAN CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES:

The African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, also known as the Algiers Convention, was adopted by the Organization of African Unity at its fifth Ordinary Session, in Algiers, Algeria, on 15 September 1968, and entered into force on 16 June 1969. At present, there are 30 contracting states.

At the second Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Maputo, Mozambique, from 10-12 July 2003, member states adopted the revised Algiers Convention. The main features of the revised Convention include requirements that: conservation imperatives be considered in development plans; customary rights be reconciled with the Convention; conservation areas be established and maintained; endangered species be given special protection; wildlife trafficking be controlled; water resources be accorded special management and protection; strategies be designed for rational management of forests; and land resources and grasslands be rationally utilized. The Convention also gives considerable prominence to water resources. Article II declares that contracting states “undertake to adopt measures to ensure conservation, utilization and development of soil, water, flora, and fauna resources in accordance with scientific principles and with due regard to the interests of the people.”

SIRTE DECLARATION ON THE CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING INTEGRATED AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND WATER IN AFRICA:

The second Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly, which took place from 27-28 February 2004, in Sirte, Libya, adopted the Sirte Declaration on the Challenges of Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Water in Africa (Ex/Assembly/AU/Decl.1 (II)). In the declaration, heads of state and government agree to:

- promote the strengthening and establishment of centers of excellence and/or networks on crops, animals, forestry, fisheries, range management, water management, desertification, drought, floods and environmental management;
- support AMCOW in its role of preparing plans and policies related to water resource management on the continent;
- encourage bilateral agreements on shared water resources and enjoin the RECs to develop appropriate regional protocols to guide integrated water resources management (IWRM);
- strengthen existing river and lake water basin organizations, where they exist, and establish new ones wherever appropriate; and
- adopt the African Water Facility (AWF) and acknowledge the African Water Vision 2025 for comprehensive and integrated development of the water sector.

NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA’S DEVELOPMENT:

NEPAD was adopted at the thirty-seventh Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held in Lusaka, Zambia, from 9-11 July 2001. In adopting NEPAD, African heads of state and government realized that Africa can only take its proper place in the international community if it gains economic strength. Hence, the objective of NEPAD is to stimulate Africa’s development by bridging existing gaps in priority sectors, which include agriculture, health, education, infrastructure, information and communication technology, environment, tourism, and science and technology. NEPAD was designed to meet the AU’s development objectives and serves as a programme of the AU. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), adopted at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), recognized that NEPAD provides a framework for sustainable development in Africa.

NEPAD Water Framework: NEPAD’s water and sanitation objectives are to:

- ensure sustainable access to safe and adequate clean water supplies and sanitation, especially for the poor;
- plan and manage water resources to become a basis for national and regional cooperation and development;
- systematically address and sustain ecosystems, biodiversity and wildlife;
- cooperate on shared rivers among member states;
- effectively address the threat of climate change; and
- ensure enhanced irrigation and rain fed agriculture to improve agricultural production and food security.

NEPAD Water and Sanitation Infrastructure

Programme: The NEPAD Water and Sanitation Infrastructure Programme (WSIP) aims to develop regional infrastructure, harmonize sectoral procedures, enhance financial flows towards investment in infrastructure, and develop skills and knowledge for the installation, operation and maintenance of water and sanitation infrastructure. Under the NEPAD Short-Term Action Plan (STAP), the water and sanitation priorities aim to harness available resources to: meet the growing basic needs of water supply and sanitation for a large number of Africans; contribute to food security through better use of water for irrigation; and tap the available renewable hydropower potential of the

continent. The STAP focuses on five thematic areas: ensuring an enabling environment for regional cooperation; supporting the development of national IWRM policies; meeting urgent water needs; improving water wisdom; and strengthening the financial base for desired future water uses. Implementation of the STAP has focused on seven river basins, namely, the Niger and Senegal Rivers in West Africa, the Congo River and Lake Chad in Central Africa, the Nile River in East Africa, and the Zambezi and Okavango Rivers in Southern Africa.

NEPAD is also developing a Medium-to-Long-Term Strategic Framework, which will constitute a framework for sustainable development of infrastructure and services on the continent, as well as a framework for effective coordination of inputs and responses by key partners. Under this framework, the following thematic areas have been prioritized:

- water resources development, including ensuring national and regional water security, management of shared water resources, development of hydropower as part of regional energy programmes, and development of agricultural water use for food security;
- expansion of water and sanitation services (WSS), including achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and related targets for WSS, and supporting country and regional WSS programmers; and
- enhanced financing for water development, including mobilization of international finance and national and regional finance.

Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD:

The development of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD was guided by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and was endorsed by the AU Assembly at its second Ordinary Session in 2003. The overall objectives of the action plan are to complement relevant African processes, including the work programme of the revitalized AMCEN, with a view to improving environmental conditions in Africa in order to contribute to the achievement of economic growth and poverty eradication. The plan also aims to build Africa's capacity to implement regional and international environmental agreements and to effectively address environmental challenges in the overall context of NEPAD.

The action plan is organized in clusters of programmatic and project activities, which are to be implemented over an initial period of ten years, and which cover priority sectors identified in NEPAD's Environment Initiative, including: combating land degradation, drought and desertification; wetlands; invasive species; marine and coastal resources; cross-border conservation of natural resources; climate change; and cross-cutting issues. Three of the programme areas of the plan address water issues: Programme Area 2 on conserving Africa's wetlands; Programme Area 4 on the conservation and sustainable use of marine, coastal and freshwater resources; and Programme Area 6 on transboundary conservation or management of natural resources, including fresh water.

Comprehensive African Agricultural Development

Programme: NEPAD's Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) initiative reflects the commitment of African governments to addressing issues of

agricultural sector growth, rural development and food security. It aims to promote interventions that best respond to Africa's food security issues. The CAADP has been designed to promote investment in four key areas that can make a difference to Africa's food and agriculture situation. It calls for priority investment in: land and water management; rural infrastructure and trade-related capacities for improved market access; increasing food supply and reducing hunger; and agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption. The CAADP estimate for agricultural development is about US\$251 billion. Of this, about US\$37 billion is targeted at increasing the area under irrigation in Africa to 20 million hectares by 2015.

MINISTERIAL COUNCILS AND OTHER AFRICAN INITIATIVES

AFRICAN MINISTERS' COUNCIL ON WATER

Ministers responsible for water in 41 African countries met in Abuja, Nigeria, from 29-30 April 2002, and decided to form AMCOW to promote cooperation, security, socioeconomic development and poverty eradication through the management of water resources and the provision of water supply services. AMCOW's mission is to provide political leadership, policy direction and advocacy in the provision, use and management of water resources for sustainable social and economic development and for the maintenance of African ecosystems. AMCOW is actively engaged in keeping the state of Africa's water under review and in promoting actions of common African interest by all stakeholders.

AU heads of state and government, at their second Extraordinary Session in 2004, declared support for AMCOW and its role in developing plans and policies related to the management of all water resources in Africa. The Sirte Declaration also recommended integrating AMCOW into the AU as one of its Specialized Technical Committees.

MANDATE: AMCOW's major functions are to: facilitate regional and international cooperation through the coordination of policies and actions among African countries regarding water resources issues; review and mobilize additional financing for the water sector in Africa; and provide a mechanism for monitoring the progress of implementation of major regional and global water resources and water supply and sanitation initiatives. It provides a forum for dialogue on water issues with UN agencies and other partners, and promotes government participation in regional studies regarding climate change, and development of observation networks. It also facilitates information exchange and aims to develop policies and strategies for addressing water issues facing the continent. AMCOW's objectives are to:

- keep the state of Africa's water under review and promote desirable actions of common interest to Africa;
- facilitate regional and international cooperation through the coordination of policies and actions among African countries regarding water resources issues;
- support transnational cooperation on water-related issues through the development of common positions on matters of global concern, and cooperation in implementation of relevant conventions and international agreements;

- encourage mechanisms that promote best practices in water policy reforms, IWRM, food security, water supply and sanitation;
- promote participation in regional studies regarding climate change, develop observation networks, encourage information exchange on and set up strategies for the management of water resources during droughts or floods, and develop policies and strategies for arresting the water crisis in Africa; and
- review and constantly seek to strengthen water sector financing in Africa.

STRUCTURE: AMCOW consists of a Council of Ministers and an Executive Committee (ExCom). The ExCom is composed of three water ministers or representatives from each of the African subregions, namely, Western Africa, Eastern Africa, Central Africa, Northern Africa and Southern Africa. The ExCom develops work programmes and budgets for approval by the Council of Ministers, ensures that decisions of the Council of Ministers are implemented and mobilizes the necessary financing for, and supervises the work of, the AMCOW Secretariat. The ExCom is advised in its activities by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

The AMCOW Secretariat is based in Abuja, Nigeria, and is headed by an Interim Executive Secretary and support staff. Each subregion, which is headed by a Vice President, also has a subregional Secretariat, usually housed in the respective REC Secretariat, for coordination of subregional activities. The current AMCOW Chair is Maria Mutagamba, Uganda's Minister of State for Water.

UNEP's Regional Office for Africa also supports AMCOW, including via the AMCOW Trust Fund, to which it has contributed US\$100,000. UNEP also collaborated with AMCOW to review the implementation of water policies in preparation for the thirteenth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13).

AMCOW MILESTONES: Since its establishment, AMCOW has gained international recognition for its efforts to address water challenges in Africa. The goals and objectives of continental bodies have provided inspiration for its work. It has established the AWF, with targeted funding of over US\$600 million for medium-term projects on water and sanitation. Also, at the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON), held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 8-12 December 2003, AMCOW endorsed the portfolios of key water initiatives submitted by each of the five subregions. This constituted the first consolidated portfolio of priority water initiatives from the subregional to regional levels, and provided a stronger basis for engaging development cooperation partners. Additionally, AMCOW has endorsed the Water for African Cities Programme, and the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (RWSSI) supported by the African Development Bank. AMCOW has also entered into a strategic partnership with the European Union (EU), which has culminated in support for programmes in the following areas: river and lake basins; water supply and sanitation; finance; research; and monitoring.

AFRICAN MINISTERIAL INITIATIVE ON WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE: The African Ministerial Initiative on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (AMIWASH) was endorsed by the fifth Ordinary Session of AMCOW, held in Entebbe, Uganda, from 4-6 November 2004. AMIWASH brings together African ministers from various sectors to work on accelerating national progress toward meeting the MDGs and related targets on water supply and sanitation. The objectives of AMIWASH are to:

- support African countries to achieve the MDGs and related targets on water and sanitation, through water, sanitation and hygiene advocacy, coalition building, and policy development and implementation;
- place water, sanitation and hygiene issues high on the political agenda at AMCOW and strengthen AMCOW's capacity in water supply, sanitation and hygiene; and
- strengthen South-South collaboration on water, sanitation and hygiene interventions.

AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

In 1985 African governments established AMCEN as a policy forum to enable ministers responsible environmental issues to better formulate, harmonize and coordinate their activities and programmes. AMCEN remains the primary ministerial-level forum for environment and development issues in Africa. For almost 22 years, AMCEN has facilitated the broadening of the political and public policy legitimacy of environmental concerns on the continent. Its mandate is to: provide information and advocacy for environmental protection in Africa; ensure that basic human needs are met adequately and in a sustainable manner; ensure socioeconomic development is realized at all levels; and ensure that agricultural activities and practices meets the food security needs of the region. The AMCEN Secretariat has been working in concert with AMCOW since the establishment of the latter in 2002 to help provide political leadership, policy and strategic direction, and advocacy for the use and management of water resources in Africa.

AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST) is a policy and political forum for ministers of science and technology from all AU member states. It was established in November 2003 to build a strong political constituency and leadership to promote Africa's scientific and technological development. AMCOST's remit is to enable African countries to collectively harness and apply science and technology to transform their economies and to attain the MDGs. AMCOST is the overall governance structure for setting continental priorities and policies pertaining to the development and application of science and technology for Africa's socioeconomic transformation.

CONSOLIDATED PLAN OF ACTION: At the second AMCOST meeting, held in Dakar, Senegal, from 29-30 September 2005, ministers adopted Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA), which

articulates the continent's commitment to developing and applying science and technology. The overall goals of the CPA are to enable Africa to harness and apply science, technology and related innovations to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, and to ensure that Africa contributes to the global pool of scientific knowledge and technological innovations. The CPA outlines five flagship research and development programmes to be implemented between 2006 and 2010: biodiversity, biotechnology and indigenous knowledge; energy, water and desertification; material sciences, manufacturing, laser and post-harvest technologies; mathematical sciences; and information, communication and space science technologies.

The flagship programme on water is designed to strengthen the continent's ability to harness and apply science and technology to address the challenges of securing adequate clean water and sanitation, and managing the continent's water resources. A specific strategy on ways and means of establishing an African network of centers of excellence in water sciences and technology is being developed. Its specific goals are to:

- improve the conservation and utilization of the continent's water resources;
- improve the quality and quantity of water available to rural and urban households;
- strengthen national and regional capacities for water resources management and reduce the impacts of water-related disasters; and
- enlarge the range of technologies for water supply and for improving access to affordable, quality water.

Projects to be developed include: a scientific assessment of Africa's water resources and systems; research and technologies to assess and monitor water-related disasters; and knowledge and technologies to improve water quality and quantity. These proposed projects will be further elaborated on and implemented by a continental network of centers of excellence. The network will consist of "regional hubs" and "nodes." To identify and designate such hubs and nodes, as well as to create the network as a whole, a multi-disciplinary task team of experts and policy makers has been established to prepare specific criteria and guidelines for identifying and designating centers or institutes. Such criteria and guidelines shall spell out mechanisms for promoting the sharing of centers' facilities and expertise across the continent, as well as means of ensuring the sustainability of the network.

AFRICAN TASK TEAM ON WATER SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT: In order to establish the African network of centers of excellence in water sciences and technology, AMCOST established the African Task Team to: prepare criteria and guidelines identifying and designating centers or institutes to form the network; prepare proposals with various options for governance and financing; and arrange an inter-ministerial dialogue of the AMCOW and AMCOST bureaus to discuss governance and financing of the network. The Task Team's recommendations were presented to the Inter-Ministerial Dialogue on Building an African Network of Centers of Excellence in Water Sciences and Technology, held jointly by the Bureaus of AMCOST and AMCOW on

22 November 2006, in Cairo, Egypt. In its report, the Task Team identified: a proposed process and actions to develop an African network of centers of excellence in water sciences and technology; elements of a work programme for the network; elements of terms of reference for identifying and designating a network; and governance of and financial mechanisms for the sustainability of the network.

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

The African Development Bank (AfDB) is the major multilateral development bank in Africa. The Organization of African Unity established the Bank in 1963, with startup capital of US\$250 million, in order to promote economic and social development. Since then, it has grown into a US\$33 billion, multinational development bank, with 53 African and 24 other shareholders. The AfDB is designed to provide Africa with greater independence from offshore credit. Over 37 years, the AfDB has accumulated broad experience in water resources management in Africa. In 2000, it developed an IWRM policy, and has been actively involved in a number of major policy instruments, namely the NEPAD Water Resources Management Programme, the RWSSI and the AWF.

THE AFRICAN WATER FACILITY: Led by AMCOW, the AWF was established as a Special Water Fund by the Board of Governors of the AfDB, at its Annual Meeting in Kampala, Uganda, on 25 May 2004. It was conceived to facilitate the availability of financial resources to build Africa's water infrastructure institutions and management capacity to meet the targets and goals of the African Water Vision and the MDGs.

RURAL WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION INITIATIVE: The AfDB conceived the RWSSI to respond to the challenge of addressing the water-related MDGs and targets and the African Water Vision targets, as well as to address the problem of low access to water supplies and sanitation in rural Africa. The overall goal of the RWSSI is poverty reduction through the provision of safe water and basic sanitation to 80% of rural populations by 2015, with 100% coverage by 2025. It is estimated that, if successful, about 277 million additional people will have access to drinking water and 295 million will benefit from sanitation services by 2015.

UN SYSTEM SUPPORT

A range of UN declarations and activities are relevant to sustainable development in Africa generally, and to water resources management specifically. The Millennium Declaration, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 8 September 2000 (A/RES/55/2), for example, places particular emphasis on the special needs of Africa and calls for focused support to "Africans in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication and sustainable development."

NEPAD has become the guiding framework for coordinated efforts by UN organizations to help address the special needs of Africa. In November 2002, the UN General Assembly passed a declaration (A/RES/57/2) and resolution (A/RES/57/7) specifically concerned with NEPAD, which affirmed the UN system's support for its implementation and recommended that the international community use NEPAD as its framework for supporting development in Africa. In response to the General Assembly resolution, the Secretary General established the

Office of the Special Advisor on Africa in May 2003 to: coordinate the UN's support to Africa; guide reporting on Africa; and coordinate global advocacy in support of NEPAD. The UN system subsequently adopted a three-tiered approach to coordinating its support for NEPAD. The global level is overseen by the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa, which has responsibility for coordinating: the preparation of Africa-related reports; global advocacy in support of NEPAD; and the work of the interdepartmental task force on African affairs.

At the regional level, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) acts as the UN's key interlocutor with African countries on NEPAD. ECA-hosted Regional Consultations Meetings serve as the principal coordinating mechanism for the activities of UN organizations in Africa. Under a cluster arrangement designed to facilitate interagency coordination, UN organizations carry out support activities, working closely with the AU, and the RECs and NEPAD. Since 2002, the Regional Consultations Meetings have identified eight thematic cluster areas in support of NEPAD's implementation: infrastructure development; governance, peace and security; agriculture, trade and market access; environment, population and urbanization; human resources development, employment and HIV/AIDS; science and technology; advocacy and communications; and industry, trade and market access. Water and sanitation issues are addressed under the infrastructure development cluster, and focus on IWRM and basin development initiatives.

At the country level, UN organizations coordinate their work through the Resident Coordinator System and through existing mechanisms, such as poverty reduction strategies and Country Cooperation Arrangements/UN Development Assistance Frameworks.

UN ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA: Established in 1958, the ECA is one of five regional commissions under the administrative direction of UN headquarters. As the regional arm of the UN in Africa, 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. The ECA reports to the UN Economic and Social Council. It is organized around six substantive divisions: Development Policy and Management; Economic and Social Policy; Gender and Development; Information for Development; Sustainable Development; and Trade and Regional Integration. Additionally, five subregional offices contribute a subregional perspective to the work programme and support outreach. One of the most important tasks of the ECA is to ensure improved cooperation and coordination between UN agencies and African continental organizations for the effective implementation of NEPAD. The ECA has also institutionalized the biennial African Water Development Report and the African Water Information Clearing House.

UN-WATER/AFRICA: UN Water/Africa was formally launched by ECA in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on World Water Day, 22 March 2003. Previously, UN system-wide support was coordinated by the Inter-Agency Group on Water in Africa. The principal objective of UN-Water/Africa is to contribute to the UN system-wide response to freshwater challenges and

opportunities arising from the MDGs, WSSD and other major intergovernmental conferences and summits. UN-Water/Africa coordinates policies, strategic approaches and actions among the agencies and programmes of the UN system working on water issues in Africa. The ECA serves as the Secretariat of UN-Water/Africa. Members of UN-Water/Africa include the: ECA, UNEP, the World Meteorological Organization, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNDP, the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), NEPAD and the AfDB. Members meet routinely to review progress, exchange information and plan follow-up activities.

KEY WATER MEETINGS, DECISIONS, AND DECLARATIONS

AFRICA'S WATER VISION: In preparation for the second World Water Forum, held in The Hague, the Netherlands in 2000, African governments prepared a document entitled "Africa's Water Vision." Developed through consultative processes in 1999 and 2000, and presented at the second World Water Forum, the Vision stresses the need to change attitudes towards water supply and use, and proposes a framework for building on these achievements. The key elements that Africa's Water Vision envisages are that:

- there is sustainable access to safe and adequate water supply and sanitation in order to meet the basic needs of all;
- there is sufficient water for food and energy security;
- water for sustaining ecosystems and biodiversity is adequate in both quantity and quality;
- water resources institutions are reformed, in order to create an enabling environment for the effective and integrated management of water in national and transboundary water basins, including management at the lowest appropriate level;
- basins serve as a basis for regional cooperation and development, and are treated as natural assets for all within such basins;
- there is an adequate number of motivated and highly skilled water professionals;
- there is an effective and financially sustainable system for data collection, assessment and dissemination for national and transboundary water basins;
- there are effective and sustainable strategies for addressing natural and human-made water resources problems, including climate variability and change;
- water is financed and priced to promote equity, efficiency and sustainability; and
- there is political will, public awareness and commitment for sustainable water resources management, including the mainstreaming of gender issues and youth concerns, and the use of participatory approaches.

DECLARATION OF AFRICAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR WATER RESOURCES: A ministerial declaration adopted on 5 December 2001, during the International Conference on Freshwater, held in Bonn, Germany, expressed the resolve of African ministers to put

water, sanitation and hygiene issues at the center of Africa's sustainable development agenda. The declaration identified the need to focus efforts on: governance; intergovernmental policy dialogue; capacity building; technology transfer; meeting urban water needs; access to adequate water, sanitation and hygiene services; women; and the linking of freshwater environments with coastal and marine environments.

In the declaration, ministers agreed to embark on a process of building an African Regional Ministerial Forum for Water for the purpose of strengthening regional efforts on the governance of water resources on the continent, including ensuring coordination, direction and strategic approaches to freshwater-related initiatives on the continent. Ministers noted their resolve to institutionalize ministerial-level policy dialogue on water issues and to establish an African Ministerial Conference on Water by convening an inaugural meeting of the 53 African ministers in charge of water in March/April 2002. The countries that signed the declaration were Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo and Uganda.

STAKEHOLDERS CONFERENCE ON WATER AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA:

The Stakeholders Conference on Water and Sustainable Development in Africa was held in Accra, Ghana, from 15-17 April 2002. More than 200 participants from 42 countries, including six African ministers responsible for water, participated in the conference. The aim of the conference was to: deliberate on the final version of an African Position Paper and Declaration on Water in the continent under the NEPAD framework; prepare a programme to ensure a high profile for water issues in Africa during the WSSD; and prepare proposals for effective African participation at the third World Water Forum and Virtual Water Forum. The primary outcome of the Conference was the Accra Declaration, which identified challenges and water issues in Africa, and made recommendations for action plans to address these challenges.

The declaration states that through stronger policies, strategies and commitments, water use can assist in combating poverty, through:

- improved access to potable water services and sanitation;
- water use to address food security and income generation;
- IWRM in national and shared water basins;
- water-related disaster prevention, mitigation and management;
- empowerment and capacity building focused on improving equity and gender sensitivity; and
- pro-poor water governance and water policies, all undertaken in a manner designed to protect the natural environment.

The declaration also suggests areas of action to achieve these ends, through improved practices in trade, public participation and mobilizing funds.

INAUGURAL MEETING OF AMCOW: The inaugural AMCOW meeting was held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 30 April 2002, and was attended by ministers and their representatives from 41 African countries. At the meeting, ministers adopted the "Abuja Ministerial Declaration on Water: A Key to

Sustainable Development in Africa," which includes a resolution establishing AMCOW and setting out its vision, objectives, institutional arrangements and other aspects.

G8 KANANASKIS SUMMIT: The 2002 Summit of G8 Heads was held in Kananaskis, Canada, from 26-27 June 2002. In response to an invitation from African Leaders, the G8 adopted the G8 Africa Action Plan as the initial response to NEPAD. Under the section on improving water resource management, the G8 committed to supporting African efforts to improve water resources development and management, including by supporting Africa's efforts to:

- promote the productive and environmentally sustainable development of water resources;
- improve sanitation and access to potable water;
- mobilize technical assistance to facilitate and accelerate the preparation of potable water and sanitation projects in rural and urban areas, and to generate greater efficiency in these sectors; and
- ensure reforms in the water sector aimed at decentralization, cost-recovery and enhanced user participation.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: WSSD was held from 26 August to 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa, and resulted in two main documents: the JPOI and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development.

In the JPOI, governments reaffirmed their commitment to the safe drinking water and human settlements goals agreed to in the Millennium Declaration, and further committed to halve by 2015 the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation. Governments also agreed to develop IWRM and water efficiency plans by 2005. In the chapter on sustainable development in Africa, the international community agreed to support Africa's efforts to promote IWRM, optimize the upstream and downstream benefits from the development and effective management of water resources, and protect water quality and aquatic ecosystems. In particular, the international community agreed to:

- prioritize the provision of access to potable domestic water, hygiene education and improved sanitation and waste management at the household level;
- develop and implement integrated river basin and watershed management strategies and plans for all major water bodies;
- strengthen regional, subregional and national capacities for data collection and processing and for planning, research, monitoring, assessment and enforcement, as well as arrangements for water resource management; and
- protect water resources, including groundwater and wetland ecosystems, from pollution.

EIGHTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE RAMSAR CONVENTION: The eighth Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention (COP-8), held in Valencia, Spain, from 18-26 November 2002, adopted a resolution urging parties to provide support for the implementation of actions undertaken through the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. The COP also urged African parties to the Convention to use NEPAD, AMCEN and AMCOW to advance the objectives of the Convention, mindful of the need to adopt a multisectoral approach to the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

FIRST MEETING OF THE AMCOW STEERING

COMMITTEE: The first meeting of the AMCOW Steering Committee was held from 23-24 May 2003, in Dakar, Senegal. The meeting emphasized that the supply and quality of freshwater in Africa remains one of the most critical issues of the twenty-first century. The meeting adopted the “NEPAD Statement on International Solidarity with Africa for the achievement of the water-related targets in the Millennium Development Goals and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.” It also agreed to convene PANAFCON in 2003, in order to develop a roadmap to expedite the translation of commitments into action, through a series of concrete measures and initiatives in the water sector.

At this conference, the Steering Committee further agreed to launch: the African Water Development Report; a regional initiative for IWRM in each country; a master plan for transboundary basins management; an innovative programme for strengthening national and subregional water policies, laws, institutions and other instruments; modalities for the effective implementation, at the national, subregional and regional levels, of the EU-Africa strategic partnership on water; modalities for the full implementation of the African Water Facility; and a regional initiative for financing groundwater assessment and management. The Committee also invited the leaders of the G8 countries to build a new compact with Africa in the field of water, and called on the 2003 Summit of G8 Heads to endorse an action plan to support the water sector in Africa.

G8 EVIAN SUMMIT: The 2003 Summit of G8 Heads was held from 1-3 June, in Evian, France. At the Summit, the G8 adopted a water-related action plan focusing on promoting good governance, utilizing financial resources, building infrastructure by empowering local authorities and communities, strengthening monitoring, assessment and research, and reinforcing engagement of international organizations. As part of international efforts towards implementing the plan, the G8 agreed to support NEPAD and its African partners through two initiatives in the field of transboundary water management. The first initiative focuses on strengthening cooperation among river basin organizations. The second initiative seeks to map donor support by developing an overview of the current activities of G8 member states in the field of transboundary water management in Africa.

FIRST NEPAD MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: The first NEPAD Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 6-7 November 2003, when ministers adopted the “outline” of an action plan to promote the development and application of science and technology in Africa. Ministers outlined 12 initial areas to constitute the first round of NEPAD flagship programmes. These include areas critical to addressing problems of poverty and food security, such as: biotechnology; science and technology for manufacturing; energy; information and communication technologies; post-harvest technology; and water research. In each of these areas, networks of centers of excellence and innovation hubs will be created to promote and develop innovations that will address the continent’s socioeconomic

challenges, including the development of human resource capacity. Ministers decided that water sciences and technologies must constitute one of the main flagship programmes. The programme will be designed to strengthen the continent’s capacity to harness and apply science and technologies to address the challenges of securing adequate clean water and managing Africa’s water resources.

PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE ON WATER:

PANAFCON convened from 8-12 December 2003, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The conference provided a platform for African countries, the international community and UN agencies to reaffirm their commitment to solving Africa’s water crisis and to collectively implement the actions envisaged in the African Water Vision, the NEPAD Water Agenda, the WSSD’s targets and the MDGs and related targets on water. PANAFCON made proposals for concrete actions in nine key areas: meeting basic needs; water, sanitation and human settlements; water for food security; protecting ecosystems and livelihoods; managing risks: water and climate; financing water infrastructure; IWRM/shared water resources; valuing and allocating water; ensuring water wisdom; and governing water wisely.

Ministers agreed to establish, in individual countries, National Task Forces on Water and Sanitation, to prepare national plans, with service delivery targets, for achieving water and sanitation goals by 2015. They also signed a joint declaration with the European Commission on the implementation of the African-EU Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation. During the conference, ministers also launched a number of initiatives, including: the African Water Facility, with a targeted funding of over US\$600 million for medium-term projects on water and sanitation; the African Water Journal, to provide an outlet to disseminate knowledge on water-related issues; Phase II of the Water for African Cities Programme; the RWSSI; and the G8 Action Plan on Water for Africa. In addition, the meeting served as the Regional Implementation Meeting for CSD-12.

FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION OF AMCOW: The fourth Ordinary AMOCW Session took place on 10 December 2003, during PANAFCON, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Ministers endorsed the outcome of the African Regional Implementation Meeting for presentation as Africa’s contribution to CSD-12. They also agreed to present the PANAFCON recommendations to the AU Extraordinary Summit being held in February 2004, in Tripoli, Libya.

FIFTH MEETING OF THE AMCOW EXCOM: The fifth meeting of the AMCOW ExCom was held on 30 June 2004, in Tunis, Tunisia. At the meeting, representatives from AMCOW member countries, AMCOW-TAC and development partners addressed a number of issues, including the: EU Water Initiative; responses to the German G8 Transboundary Water Initiative; Water for African Cities Programme; AWF; AMCOW Constitution and Rules of Procedure; and role of the AMCOW Secretariat.

FIRST AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK WATER WEEK: The first AfDB Water Week was held in Tunis, Tunisia, from 1-3 July 2004, with the theme “Building

Partnerships for Water in Africa.” It brought together 17 African ministers responsible for water from the AMCOW Executive Council and over 400 water sector practitioners from more than 60 countries. The week aimed to engage stakeholders and partners in the African water sector, consolidate existing partnerships and create new ones, and galvanize broad support from stakeholders and the wider international community to advance African water resources development and management. Additionally, the RWSSI and AWF were officially launched during this week.

FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF AMCOW: The fifth Ordinary Session of AMCOW was held from 4-6 November 2004, in Entebbe, Uganda, and addressed various water policy challenges in Africa, including meeting the goals of the AU and NEPAD, financing, and strategies to achieve international water and sanitation targets. Outcomes from the session included agreement on: a Memorandum of Understanding on institutional arrangements; the AMCOW Rules of Procedure; the AMCOW 2005-2007 work programme; modalities for establishing the AMCOW Trust Fund and its hosting within UNEP; a regional position for CSD-13 on the implementation of the MDGs and related targets on water; and a concept proposal on the German G8 Transboundary Water Initiative. Ministers also finalized the nomination of representatives to the AWF Governing Council as the Democratic Republic of Congo (Central Africa), Egypt (Northern Africa), Ethiopia (Eastern Africa), Lesotho (Southern Africa), and Senegal (Western Africa).

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ACHIEVING THE MILLENNIUM GOAL ON WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION IN RURAL AFRICA: This conference was held on 1 April 2005, in Paris, France, and resulted in the adoption of a declaration calling for the mobilization of human and financial resources and the undertaking of projects required to achieve the African Water Vision. It also calls for the inclusion of access to water supply and sanitation at the center of African development strategies by: taking these targets into account in poverty reduction strategies; establishing sectoral policy frameworks and integrated resources management plans; and supporting reforms undertaken in the water supply and sanitation sector with capacity building aimed at more efficient services management.

THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: CSD-13 took place from 11-22 April 2005, in New York, the US. Building on the outcomes of the previous session, CSD-13 focused on policies and options to expedite the implementation of commitments in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. Its main outcome document identified the need to, *inter alia*, provide additional resources, as appropriate, for regional and subregional initiatives, such as the AFW, and support African initiatives in the water sector within the framework of AMCOW, with particular reference to basin-wide initiatives in Africa.

EXPERTS' WORKSHOP ON DEVELOPING A NETWORK OF CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN WATER SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY: International experts from Africa and France met in Nairobi, Kenya, from 9-12 May 2005, to generate recommendations for establishing an

African network of centers of excellence in water sciences and technology. The meeting proposed criteria for identifying and designating centers of excellence as well as a process, actions and a work programme for the network. It also identified means for forging regional and international cooperation, emphasizing partnerships between African and French institutions, and appropriate governance structures and instruments for the proposed network. In addition, it considered appropriate financial mechanisms for ensuring the sustainability of the network. The meeting also recommended that the NEPAD Office of Science and Technology and AMCOW establish a multi-disciplinary task team to prepare specific criteria and guidelines for identifying and designating centers or institutes that would be networked and strengthened to implement specific programmes for water research and related technology development.

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE AMCOW EXCOM: The seventh AMCOW ExCom and TAC meetings were held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 27-30 June 2005. The ExCom meeting accorded particular attention to the AMCOW 2005-2007 work programme, the AMCOW Trust Fund, the AWF, and strengthening AMCOW's work at the country and subregional levels. It also addressed relations between AMCOW and the AU, and between AMCOW and the RECs, and river and lake basin organizations. Ministers reviewed the implementation of the EU Water Initiative for Africa and considered a hosting agreement with respect to the AMCOW Secretariat proposed by the Government of Nigeria. AMCOW's contribution to the 2005 World Summit and the 2005 Summit of G8 Heads were also discussed. Finally, ministers considered implications for AMCOW of the outcomes of CSD-13, the need for regional follow-up on the role of the Private Public Partnership in Water Supply, and AMCOW's role in the fourth World Water Forum.

2005 WORLD SUMMIT: The 2005 World Summit was held in New York, the US, from 14-16 September 2005. In the Summit's outcome document, world leaders resolve to assist developing countries' efforts to prepare IWRM and water efficiency plans as part of their national development strategies, and to provide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation in accordance with the Millennium Declaration and the JPOI. The document also emphasizes the need to carry forward and support NEPAD's implementation of work to improve sustainable growth and development, and reaffirms a commitment to address the special needs of Africa and efforts to meet the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

SECOND AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: The second African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology took place from 29-30 September 2005, in Dakar, Senegal. At this meeting, ministers adopted the CPA and resolved that the AU should provide the necessary policy and political leadership for achieving the CPA's goals. Ministers also agreed to establish an inter-ministerial dialogue with AMCOW and to endeavor to establish partnerships with other ministerial councils or bodies.

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON GROUNDWATER PROTECTION IN AFRICA: The International Workshop on Groundwater Protection in Africa was held from 28-30 November 2005, in Cape Town, South Africa. The meeting

highlighted the need to ensure the introduction of “groundwater and its sustainable utilization” into the AMCOW and international water agendas. The meeting also proposed that one of the first NEPAD centers of excellence be earmarked for “groundwater and its sustainable utilization.”

AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON HYDROPOWER AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

The African Ministerial Conference on Hydropower and Sustainable Development was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 8-9 March 2006. The conference concluded with the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration and Action Plan, under which African ministers of water and energy committed to work together and to prepare a joint action plan to unlock the hydropower potential of Africa to promote sustainable development, regional integration, water and energy security, and poverty eradication in Africa. They also agreed to improve cooperation and coordination between ministers, particularly within the ambit of AMCOW.

STOCKHOLM MESSAGE ON TRANSBOUNDARY GROUNDWATER FOR AFRICA: Developed at the Stockholm Water Week 2006, the Stockholm Message was endorsed by AMCOW, the German Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources, the International Association of Hydrogeologists, the Stockholm International Water Institute, UNEP’s Division of Global Environment Facility, and the International Hydrological Programme. The message calls on decision makers and committed stakeholders to intensify their support for improved cooperation on transboundary aquifers and enhancing sustainable regional development and poverty alleviation by generating economic, social and ecological benefits for African people.

CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN RIVER AND LAKE BASIN ORGANIZATIONS: The AMCOW Conference of African River and Lake Basin Organizations took place in Kampala, Uganda, from 19-20 October 2006, to chart the way forward for a continent-wide effort to address Africa’s water crisis. The conference sought to bring together senior-level African decision-makers on water to agree on the establishment and support for new river and lake basin organizations while rejuvenating existing ones within the framework of a region-wide mechanism under the auspices of AMCOW.

FIRST MEETING OF THE TEKTEKKA COMMISSION: The first meeting of the Tektekka Commission was held from 17-18 November 2006 in Johannesburg, South Africa. This meeting followed the recommendations of the Conference of African River and Lake Basin Organizations, which recommended the establishment of a committee to enhance relations between AMCOW and existing river and lake basin organizations. The commission reviewed the recommendations of the conference and the issues paper that formed the preliminary working document for that conference. The main issues of discussion included institutional and programmatic concerns for mainstreaming relations between AMCOW and the African Network of Basin Organizations (ANBO). The meeting was guided by an examination of ANBO’s statutes and AMCOW’s Memorandum

of Understanding, and resulted in guidance on their possible revision to reflect the new structure of the ANBO to fit within the AMCOW framework.

INTER-MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE ON BUILDING AN AFRICAN NETWORK OF CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN WATER SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY:

The Inter-Ministerial Dialogue on Building an African Network of Centers of Excellence in Water Sciences and Technology was held jointly by the Bureaus of AMCOST and AMCOW on 22 November 2006, in Cairo, Egypt. The dialogue was attended by ministers from Lesotho, Senegal, South Africa and Zimbabwe, senior representatives from Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, and South Africa, and representatives from the NEPAD Office of Science and Technology and the AU Commission. Delegates considered issues related to criteria and guidelines, financial mechanisms and governance for a network.

At the conclusion of the dialogue, ministers adopted a declaration in which they committed to establish an African network of excellence in water sciences and technology development. They called upon the NEPAD and AMCOW Secretariats to prepare and submit to AMCOST and AMCOW ministers a comprehensive document with specific proposals or recommendations on the governance mechanism for such a network. Ministers also encouraged AMCOST to allocate a percentage of funding in the proposed African Science and Innovation Facility to the network, and encouraged AMCOW to explore the possibility of establishing a special fund in the African Water Facility for supporting the network.

CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON PARTNERSHIPS FOR IMPROVING THE PERFORMANCE OF WATER UTILITIES IN THE AFRICAN REGION:

The Capacity Building Workshop on Partnerships for Improving the Performance of Water Utilities in the African Region was held from 6-8 December 2006 in Nairobi, Kenya, and was organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UN-HABITAT. The workshop focused on contributing towards the implementation of the global water and sanitation agenda by strengthening the capacities of water utilities in meeting the dual challenge of service expansion and efficient service delivery. The workshop sought to help public water utility managers to acquire further expertise in numerous issues, including: implementing institutional and policy reforms; strengthening institutional governance and accountability; formulating capacity building plans for public utilities; and developing and administering partnerships among water operators.

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY DECISION ON 2008 AS THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SANITATION:

The UN General Assembly, through its resolution A/C.2/61/L.16/Rev.1 of 4 December 2006, declared 2008 as an International Year of Sanitation. The resolution expresses concern on the slow and insufficient progress made in achieving the global sanitation target, and recognizes that progress can be made through active commitment and action by all states, including at national and local levels, as well as UN agencies, regional and international organizations, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders.

The main thrust of advocacy and promotional activities throughout the year will concern: raising awareness of the importance of sanitation and its impact on achieving other MDGs from the perspectives of hygiene, household sanitation and wastewater; encouraging governments and their partners to promote and implement policies and actions for meeting the sanitation target; and mobilizing communities, particularly women's groups, towards changing sanitation and hygiene practices through sanitation and health education campaigns.

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S ADVISORY BOARD ON WATER AND SANITATION-AFRICA REGIONAL DIALOGUE: The first Regional Dialogue between the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB), AMCOW, NEPAD, the AfDB, and other regional representatives took place on 14 December 2006, in Tunis, Tunisia. The objective of the dialogue was to formulate a framework of collaboration between the UNSGAB and African organizations in support of ongoing African water initiatives and programmes including preparations for the 2008 International Year of Sanitation. The dialogue yielded a joint statement and a set of actions to accelerate progress on the water sanitation-related MDGs and targets.

TWENTY FOURTH SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM: The twenty-fourth Session of UNEP's Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-24/GMEF) took place from 5-9 February 2007, in Nairobi, Kenya. The GC/GMEF concluded its work by adopting 15 decisions on issues relating to, *inter alia*, UNEP's updated water policy and strategy, and support to Africa in environmental management and protection. The GC/GMEF: calls on African countries to take primary action for sustainable development; requests the UNEP Executive Director to work closely with partners, especially subregional economic communities in Africa, the AfDB and UN organizations to support African countries in implementing NEPAD; and invites the UNEP Executive Director to work closely with the AU Commission, AMCEN, AMCOW, the Forum of African Ministers on Energy and others, and NEPAD to undertake a policy-oriented assessment using available means.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN NETWORK OF BASIN ORGANIZATIONS: The third General Assembly of the ANBO took place from 4-7 March 2007, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Assembly concluded with the adoption of the Declaration of Johannesburg on Water for Development and the Fight Against Poverty, which called on African governments to, *inter alia*, strengthen the capacities of basin organizations for them to better manage their respective basins, within the framework of the NEPAD Water objectives, and in close relationship with AMCOW.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND/WORLD BANK SPRING MEETINGS: During the International Monetary Fund/World Bank Spring meetings, held in Washington, D.C., the US, from 14-15 April 2007, donors, international development institutions and developing countries agreed to take on new commitments to tackle the water and sanitation crisis affecting the world's poor. A number of donors committed to increase and improve support to countries

to expand water and sanitation services, including helping countries without water and sanitation plans to prepare them, and renewing the commitment to the RWSSI. These efforts aim to: harmonize, increase and improve donor support behind national plans; give special treatment to those countries that, despite their needs, do not receive sufficient attention from donors; and increase the focus on sanitation services and hygiene education. In addition, participants agreed to better coordinate their actions at a global level to deliver a greater impact on the ground.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACSD	African Committee on Sustainable Development
AEC	African Economic Community
AfDB	African Development Bank
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCOST	African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
AMIWASH	African Ministerial Initiative on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
ANBO	African Network of Basin Organizations
AU	African Union
AWF	African Water Facility
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (NEPAD)
CPA	Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development (UN)
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa (UN)
ExCom	Executive Committee (AMCOW)
GC/GMEF	Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (UNEP)
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MLSTF	Medium- to Long-Term Strategic Framework (NEPAD)
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
PANAFCON	Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water
REC	Regional Economic Community
RWSSI	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (African Development Bank)
STAP	Short-Term Action Plan (NEPAD)
STI	Science, Technology and Innovation
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee (AMCOW)
UNSGAB	UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation
WSIP	Water and Sanitation Infrastructure Programme (NEPAD)
WSS	Water and Sanitation Services
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development



AMCOW Bulletin

A report of the Sixth Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW-6)

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/](http://www.iisd.ca/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/)

ISSUE No. 2, VOLUME 4, No. 3, MONDAY, 28 MAY 2007

SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERS' COUNCIL ON WATER: 28-31 MAY 2007

The sixth Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW-6) will take place from 30-31 May 2007, at the Palais du Parlement, in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. In the lead up to the session, a range of events and meetings will be held on 28-29 May. On Monday, 28 May, a Youth Forum on Water will take place, alongside AMCOW subregional consultations, and a Forum for Civil Society and Media. On Tuesday, 29 May, the AMCOW Executive Committee will convene to receive communications from subregional groups and recommendations from the AMCOW Technical Advisory Committee.

When AMCOW-6 commences on Wednesday, 30 May, ministers will meet for roundtable discussions on partnership issues relating to the financing of water infrastructure; access to the EU-ACP Water Facility; resources for the African Water Facility; follow-up to the G8-Africa Water Action Plan; follow-up to the Africa Commission Report; tracking commitments towards the attainment of the targets created at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and those in the Millennium Development Goals; collaboration between the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation and AMCOW; and preparations for the 2008 Year of Sanitation. On Thursday, 31 May, ministerial discussions will focus on water infrastructure development, water supply and sanitation, and climate change impacts and adaptation.

Side events focusing on groundwater management in Africa, the promotion of rain harvesting in Africa, and the Congo River Basin are also scheduled to take place during the meeting.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF AMCOW AND RELATED MEETINGS

AMCOW's mission is to provide political leadership, policy direction and advocacy in the provision, use and management of water resources for sustainable social and economic development and for the maintenance of African ecosystems. To meet these objectives, AMCOW actively reviews the state of Africa's water and promotes actions of common African interest by all stakeholders. It also facilitates regional and international cooperation through the coordination of water resources policies and actions among African countries.

AMCOW consists of a Council of Ministers and an Executive Committee (ExCom). The ExCom is composed of three water ministers or representatives from each of the African subregions, namely, Western Africa, Eastern Africa,

Central Africa, Northern Africa and Southern Africa. The ExCom ensures that decisions of the Council of Ministers are implemented, develops work programmes and budgets for approval by the Council of Ministers, and mobilizes the necessary financing for, and supervises the work of, the AMCOW Secretariat. The ExCom is advised in its activities by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

INAUGURAL MEETING OF AMCOW: The inaugural AMCOW meeting was held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 30 April 2002. At this meeting, ministers adopted the "Abuja Ministerial Declaration on Water: A Key to Sustainable Development in Africa," which includes the resolution that establishes AMCOW and sets out its vision, objectives, institutional arrangements, and other aspects.

G8 KANANASKIS SUMMIT: The 2002 G8 Summit was held in Kananaskis, Canada, from 26-27 June 2002. In response to an invitation from African leaders, the Summit adopted the G8 Africa Action Plan, which includes provisions supporting African efforts to improve water resources development and management.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (WSSD): The WSSD was held from 26 August to 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. In the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), governments reaffirmed their commitment to the safe drinking water and human settlements goals agreed to in the Millennium Declaration, and further committed to halve by 2015 the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation. Governments also agreed to develop integrated water resources management (IWRM) and water efficiency plans by 2005. The international community also agreed to support Africa's efforts to promote IWRM, optimize the upstream and downstream benefits from the further development and effective management of water resources, and protect water quality and aquatic ecosystems.

FIRST MEETING OF THE AMCOW STEERING COMMITTEE: The first meeting of the AMCOW Steering Committee was held from 23-24 May 2003, in Dakar, Senegal. The meeting emphasized that the supply and quality of freshwater in Africa remains one of the most critical issues of the twenty-first century. The meeting adopted the "NEPAD Statement on International Solidarity with Africa for the achievement of the water-related targets in the Millennium Development Goals and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development."

G8 EVIAN SUMMIT: The 2003 G8 Summit was held from 1-3 June 2003, in Evian, France. At the Summit, G8 leaders adopted a water-related action plan focusing on promoting good governance, utilizing financial resources, building infrastructure by empowering local authorities

The *AMCOW Bulletin* is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was written and edited by Asheline Appleton, Harry Jonas, Leila Mead and Hugh Wilkins. The Digital Editor is Joe Nyangon. The Editor is Ingrid Barnsley <Ingrid@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Programme Manager of the African Regional Coverage Project is Richard Sherman <rsherman@iisd.org>. Funding for coverage of this meeting has been provided by South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism through the IISD/DEAT/UNEP ROA project for IISD Reporting Service coverage of African regional meetings. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate academic citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists (HTML and PDF format) and can be found on the Linkages WWW-server at <http://www.iisd.ca/>. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA. The IISD Team at AMCOW-6 can be contacted by e-mail at <hugh@iisd.org>.

and communities, strengthening monitoring, assessment and research, and reinforcing engagement of international organizations. They agreed to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) through two initiatives in the field of transboundary water management, which focus on strengthening cooperation among river basin organizations and seek to map donor support by developing an overview of the current activities of G8 member states in this field.

PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE ON WATER: The Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON), met from 8-12 December 2003, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Ministers agreed to establish national task forces on water and sanitation and to create national plans with service delivery targets for achieving water and sanitation goals by 2015. They signed a joint declaration with the European Commission on the implementation of the African-EU Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation. Ministers also launched a number of initiatives, including: the African Water Facility (AWF), the African Water Journal, the Phase II of the Water for African Cities Programme, and the G8 Action Plan on Water for Africa.

FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION OF AMCOW: The fourth Ordinary Session of AMCOW took place on 10 December 2003, during PANAFCON in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Ministers endorsed the outcome of the African Regional Implementation Meeting for presentation as Africa's contribution to the twelfth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-12). They also agreed to present the PANAFCON recommendations to the second Extraordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Assembly, held in February 2004, in Libya.

SECOND EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE AU ASSEMBLY: The second Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly, took place from 27-28 February 2004, in Sirte, Libya, and adopted the Sirte Declaration on the Challenges of Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Water in Africa. In the declaration, leaders agreed to: promote the strengthening and establishment of centers of excellence and/or networks on crops, animals, forestry, fisheries, range management, water management, desertification, drought, floods and environmental management; support AMCOW in its role of preparing plans and policies related to water resources management on the continent; encourage bilateral agreements on shared water resources and enjoin regional economic communities to develop appropriate regional protocols to guide IWRM; strengthen existing river and lake water basin organizations and establish new ones wherever appropriate; and adopt the AWF and acknowledge the African Water Vision 2025. Leaders also declared support for AMCOW and its role in developing plans and policies related to the management of all water resources in Africa and recommended integrating AMCOW into the AU as one of its Specialized Technical Committees.

FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF AMCOW: The fifth Ordinary Session of AMCOW was held from 4-6 November 2004, in Entebbe, Uganda, and addressed various water policy challenges in Africa, including meeting the goals of the AU and NEPAD, financing, and strategies to achieve international water and sanitation targets. Outcomes from the session included agreement on: a Memorandum of Understanding on institutional arrangements; the AMCOW Rules of Procedure; the AMCOW 2005-2007 work programme; modalities for establishing the AMCOW Trust Fund and its hosting within UNEP; a regional position for CSD-13 on implementing

the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and related targets on water; and a concept proposal on the German G8 transboundary water initiative.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: CSD-13 took place from 11-22 April 2005, in New York, USA. CSD-13 focused on policies and options to expedite the implementation of commitments in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. Its main outcome document identified the need to, *inter alia*, provide additional resources, as appropriate, for regional and subregional initiatives, and support African initiatives in the area of water, within the framework of AMCOW.

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE AMCOW EXCOM: The seventh AMCOW ExCom and TAC meetings were held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 27-30 June 2005. Participants at the ExCom meeting focused on the AMCOW 2005-2007 work programme, the AMCOW Trust Fund and strengthening AMCOW's work at the national and subregional levels.

2005 WORLD SUMMIT: The 2005 World Summit was held in New York, USA, from 14-16 September 2005. In the Summit's Outcome Document, world leaders resolved to assist developing countries' efforts to prepare IWRM and water efficiency plans as part of their national development strategies, and to provide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation in accordance with the Millennium Declaration and the JPOI.

CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN RIVER AND LAKE BASIN ORGANIZATIONS: The AMCOW Conference of African River and Lake Basin Organizations took place in Kampala, Uganda, from 19-20 October 2006, to chart the way forward for a continent-wide effort to address Africa's water crisis. The conference brought together senior-level African decision makers on water to agree on the establishment and support for new river and lake basin organizations while rejuvenating existing ones within the framework of a region-wide mechanism under the auspices of AMCOW.

TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM: The twenty-fourth session of UNEP's Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-24/GMEF) took place from 5-9 February 2007, in Nairobi, Kenya. Decisions adopted by the GC/GMEF included those on issues relating to UNEP's updated water policy and strategy, and support to Africa in environmental management and protection. The GC/GMEF called upon African countries to take primary action for sustainable development; requested the UNEP Executive Director to work closely with partners to support African countries in implementing NEPAD; and invited the UNEP Executive Director to work closely with the AU Commission, AMCOW, NEPAD, and others to undertake a policy-oriented assessment using available means.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND/WORLD BANK SPRING MEETINGS: At an event held during the International Monetary Fund/World Bank Spring meetings, held in Washington DC, USA, from 14-15 April 2007, it was agreed among donors, international development institutions and developing countries that they would take on new commitments to tackle the world's water and sanitation crisis. Several donors committed to increase and improve support to countries to expand water and sanitation services, including: helping countries without water and sanitation plans to prepare them; and renewing the commitment to the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative.

AMCOW Bulletin

A report on the Sixth Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW-6)

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/](http://www.iisd.ca/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/)
ISSUE NO. 3, VOLUME 4, No. 4, WEDNESDAY, 30 MAY 2007

AMCOW-6 HIGHLIGHTS: MONDAY AND TUESDAY, 28-29 MAY 2007

As part of the lead up to AMCOW-6, the AMCOW Executive Committee (EXCO) convened on Tuesday 29 May to receive recommendations from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and reports from the AMCOW Subregional Vice-Presidents. A Forum for Civil Society and Media took place on Monday, 28 May and Tuesday, 29 May, and a Youth Forum on Water was held on Monday, 28 May.



L-R: Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President, and Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, the incoming President.

MEETING OF THE AMCOW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Opening the Executive Committee on Tuesday 29 May, Maria Mutagamba, AMCOW-5 President and Ugandan Minister of Water and Environment, said AMCOW has been at the forefront of African cooperation, stressing AMCOW's important role in strengthening the regional integration process in Africa and promoting the prioritization of water and sanitation issues in national policymaking. She noted recent AMCOW achievements, including: development and strengthening of the EXCO and TAC; adoption of the programme of work; mobilization of resources from the EU and UNEP; development and strengthening of partnerships; and promotion of the development of national, subregional and regional portfolios of water projects and initiatives. She said AMCOW is a platform for defining African water priorities and developing common perspectives and decisions and provides a single voice for interacting with the international community. President Mutagamba said AMCOW is coming of age and taking its place in the institutional framework of the African sustainable development architecture. President Mutagamba noted future challenges, including: adapting AMCOW's role to meet the requirements of the African Union (AU); improving AMCOW's support structure through a strengthened Secretariat and the establishment of centers of excellence; better engaging civil society and other stakeholders; and better addressing transboundary water issues.

Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, Minister of Energy and Water, Republic of Congo, and incoming AMCOW President, welcomed delegates on behalf of President Denis Sassou Nguesso, noting that this meeting demonstrates a commitment to addressing water and sanitation issues in Africa. He pointed to issues affecting access to water, such as the depletion of water resources in some regions, institutional weakness,

underinvestment and the effects of climate change. He underscored the EXCO's role in promoting effective decision making and the generation of new perspectives on water issues, and called for the consolidation of efforts.

Babagana Ahmadu, African Union Commission (AUC), underlined the significance of AMCOW as a vital policy organ given the context of environmental issues in Africa. He discussed initiatives emanating from the Sirte Declaration to enhance cooperation and strengthen river and lake basin organizations and elaborated on draft AU/UNEP guidelines on a cooperative framework for the integrated management of transboundary basins. Ahmadu drew attention to the consequences of climate change and cited a decision taken during the AU Summit in January 2007 to protect available water resources and implement adaptation measures to avert a water crisis resulting from climate change.

TAC RECOMMENDATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

Henry Ntale, TAC Chair, presented the TAC Report, including its recommendations on issues for consideration by AMCOW.

On rotation of the AMCOW presidency, Chair Ntale said the TAC recommends that the presidency rotate as follows: Central Africa, Southern Africa, Northern Africa, Western Africa, Eastern Africa. He noted that the particular country to be selected would be determined through subregional consultations. LESOTHO announced that South Africa had been selected by the Southern Africa subregion as the next president.

Regarding financing of the triennial work programme, Chair Ntale stated that due to a funding shortfall of 3.3 million Euros for implementing the work programme, the programme was revised to cover 2007-2009. He said TAC recommends that a resource mobilization subcommittee be established and that

the AMCOW President affirm with member states that their contributions should continue to be remitted if AMCOW is integrated as an AU Specialized Technical Committee (STC).

On AMCOW's relationship with the AU, Chair Ntale noted that the AU Assembly agreed in principle that AMCOW become a STC. The AUC stated that this issue was being addressed at the highest level and that the AU Assembly's final decision would be made in July. MOROCCO stated that his country is not part of the AU and does not wish to be excluded from AMCOW. President Mutagamba stressed that a political solution would be found to address this issue.

Noting the availability of seed funds, Chair Ntale, said the AMCOW information and communications strategy will soon be developed.

Regarding the AMCOW Secretariat, Chair Ntale said the TAC recommends that recruitment of the Executive Secretary commence as soon as possible, and that the AMCOW President and the Secretariat consult and establish an interim arrangement for the Secretariat. Following up on a meeting held to discuss administrative issues, Chair Ntale said that the AU would be requested to facilitate the selection of an Executive Secretary. During the discussions, ministers proposed establishing an interim arrangement to support the incoming President, and strengthening the Secretariat by January 2008. BURKINA FASO suggested that these measures be put into operation by 30 October 2007.

On strengthening subregional structures, Chair Ntale noted that the TAC recommends exploring modalities of strengthening them, highlighting that funds are now available to convene regular meetings of subregional organs. BURKINA FASO suggested AMCOW fund at least one meeting per year in each subregion.

Regarding the G8 Action Plan/German Initiative, Chair Ntale explained that following a review of the inception phase, two pillars have been added: strengthening AMCOW subregional structures; and the creation of an AMCOW strategy unit. Ntale discussed collaboration with civil society organizations and explained that a memorandum of understanding (MoU) had been signed with the African Network of Civil Society Organizations on Water and Sanitation (ANEWS). He also observed that the World Bank Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP) sought to formally engage more with AMCOW. He said TAC recommends entering into a MoU between World Bank/WSP and AMCOW, elaborating on areas of cooperation.

On the African Water Facility (AWF), Chair Ntale noted that this key AMCOW initiative had been successfully implemented. A representative of the AWF Governing Council gave an overview of AWF activities, discussing challenges such as the need to accelerate resource mobilization.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) explained that the AWF, which has been operational for one year, was designed to mobilize financial resources for investment in the African water sector and was hosted by the AfDB on behalf of AMCOW. He emphasized that the major challenge would be securing investment resources. REPUBLIC OF CONGO elaborated on the need for the AWF to report to AMCOW to provide follow up on the Facility's activities.

Chair Ntale highlighted recommendations from stakeholder consultations held in Tunis in 2006, suggesting, among other things, the harmonization and coordination of monitoring and evaluation activities.

Regarding the fourth World Water Forum, Chair Ntale highlighted the TAC's recommendation that a task force be created to promote the implementation of recommendations made at the Forum and to take steps to prepare for the fifth World Water Forum in 2009.

Chair Ntale highlighted the need for an annual African water week. The AfDB suggested that the event be held in Tunisia in 2007 and UN Habitat expressed interest in assisting with the event in Kenya in 2008.

Regarding the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board (UNSGAB) Africa Dialogue, Chair Ntale noted the idea of proposing a water summit in 2008. President Mutagamba said a proposed joint water infrastructure financing meeting with the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA) should be linked to the proposed water summit. LESOTHO and REPUBLIC OF CONGO highlighted the value of including both finance and infrastructure ministers at these events.

Concerning a recommendation that a MoU be completed between AMCOW and GWP focusing on, among other things, cooperation in achieving integrated water resources management (IWRM) targets, ETHIOPIA suggested that this task be carried out by the AMCOW President.

ETHIOPIA commended a recommendation on promoting the institutionalization of groundwater management by river basin organizations. President Mutagamba suggested, and participants agreed, that EXCO also examine the promotion of water harvesting in this regard.

Chair Ntale reviewed recommendations on Rural Water



Henry Ntale, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Chair

Supply and Sanitation Issues (RWSSI), the NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility, the Medium to Long Term Strategic Framework Study, Water and Sanitation for African Cities Initiative, the Forum of Energy Ministers in Africa (FEMA), and UN-Water/Africa support to AMCOW. He also said the TAC recommended noting progress made on the Tiger Initiative, which makes

available remote sensing data for water management and water issues analysis in Africa.

Regarding the EU Water Initiative, Chair Ntale reviewed recommendations related to: promoting water and sanitation-related issues within the African-EU Infrastructure Partnership; establishing a water policy dialogue forum; and continuing the EU Water Facility. He said the European Commission is eager to have AMCOW contribute to the EU Water Initiative. SOUTH AFRICA advocated finding an entry point where AMCOW can influence decisions on the EU Water Facility.

On new partnerships and consultations with African river and lake basin organizations, Ntale conveyed TAC recommendations to, *inter alia*, establish a water basin organization subcommittee, noting this would fuse the institutional relationship between AMCOW and the African Network of Basin Organizations (ANBO). Incoming President Itoua noted legal difficulties with establishing such a subcommittee, while SOUTH AFRICA stressed that it would give AMCOW responsibility and knowledge on this issue. BURUNDI cautioned against establishing too many subcommittees, and RWANDA said existing organizations should be utilized. President Mutagamba said basin organizations are functional, have a budget and should be concretely linked with AMCOW.

SUBREGIONAL REPORTS

Asfaw Dingamo, Ethiopian Minister of Water Resources, highlighted major activities undertaken since 2006 in the subregion and described how water policy challenges are being addressed through the promotion of policy dialogue. He explained how ministerial consultations in Addis Ababa in

September 2006 highlighted the need to promote action on key policies in the subregion and develop indicators on IWRM. He said participants at the consultations also noted the lack of full implementation of global water objectives at the subregional level. Dingamo observed how appropriate policies at this level could create opportunities for achieving the internationally recognized targets on water and sanitation, particularly coherent water and infrastructure development plans, and called for preparing national water sector reports.

Ambassador Ahmed Abdessadok, Algeria, presented the report for Northern Africa. Describing AMCOW as a good example of South-South cooperation, he said more work is needed to turn political aspirations into sound water policies for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). He stated that good governance is the key to sustainable development and explained that the region has invested in water infrastructure, involving stakeholders in the process. Abdessadok made a number of recommendations, including: favoring common management of transboundary resources; focusing on the effects of climate change; and creating centers of excellence to improve expertise on water issues.

Bonoudaba Dabiré, Burkina Faso Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Fisheries, presented the report for Western Africa. He emphasized constraints experienced by ministers in the subregion from engaging in consultations and highlighted the need for capacity building and funding. He stressed the need to improve consultations within the group and to accelerate plans of action in various countries in the subregion.

Monyane Moleleki, Minister of Natural Resources, Lesotho, reported on Southern Africa. Regarding the African-EU Water Initiative, he noted concerns relating to it being an overly donor-driven partnership, and supported establishing thematic *ad hoc* subcommittees and a political forum to sustain political interest in the partnership. Moleleki noted support for a clear and reasonable timeframe to guide the process of choosing an AMCOW Executive Secretary, and the transition from softer to hard infrastructure programmes on water. He also highlighted achievements made in his subregion, such as carrying out an assessment of status of progress in implementing IWRM, and establishing a water research fund and a consultative fund. President Mutagamba suggested that other subregions look at how to establish similar funds.

Incoming President Itoua presented the report for Central Africa. He discussed the water situation in the subregion, pointing to a paradox where despite being well endowed with water resources, the subregion had the worst performance indicators for the water sector in Africa. He noted challenges including: ineffectual privatization of public water utilities; a low level of civil society participation; inadequate investment in water-related activities; and a lack of policy coherence regarding the MDG water targets. He also emphasized the need for a water management authority for the subregion.

YOUTH FORUM ON WATER

On Monday morning, Annika Schabbauer, Youth Forum Facilitator, UNICEF/Integrated Family Development Initiative, opened the Youth Forum. She highlighted the importance of water in everyday activities and the important role that children can have in improving water supply and sanitation in Africa.

Chair Ntale discussed the role of AMCOW and the importance of water for social and economic development activities.

Oumar Ndiaye, Senegalese Ministry of Water, discussed the problems of drought and desertification in Africa, stressing the need for good water management, and noted the important role that youth can play in addressing these challenges.



Children constructed models of human interventions in the water cycle during the Youth Forum on Monday.

The children were then divided into groups where they: created wall hangings depicting personal interpretations of threats, needs, opportunities and aspirations regarding river uses; played games and performed water-related experiments; listened to water-related stories; and constructed three-dimensional models of human interventions in the water cycle, including a model village, spring and borehole.

In the afternoon, the children viewed a presentation on the MDGs, and were visited by President Mutagamba who highlighted the links between clean water, sanitation, land degradation, health and economic prosperity, and expressed the need for youth to meet the challenges that these issues create so that they will be resolved in the future. President Mutagamba stressed the importance for youth to communicate at home and at school the need to address water problems. She emphasized that water is a finite resource, but because demand is growing, the need to preserve water resources is critical. She also stressed AMCOW's important role in addressing transboundary water issues and improving African cooperation and solidarity. During the ensuing discussion, children posed questions concerning: Republic of Congo's role in AMCOW; the reasons why there is a shortage of clean water in the Republic of Congo; the need for better access to clean water; funding; the links between water access and poverty; and AMCOW's past successes.

The children prepared inputs for a statement to be presented at AMCOW-6, focusing on: maintaining and improving water treatment facilities; reducing the cost of drinking water; facilitating provision of drinking water; and supervising entities charged with the treatment and distribution of safe drinking water.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA FORUM

OPENING SESSION

On Monday morning, Jamillah Mwanjisi, Forum Facilitator, ANEW, opened the Civil Society and Media Forum, noting that participants had come from many countries.

Francis Bougaire, AMCOW Secretariat, provided an overview of AMCOW's aims and organizational structure with emphasis on the role of civil society in regional water policy. Highlighting the importance of water for social and economic development, he underscored the difficulties faced by African countries and detailed AMCOW's programmatic focus. He drew attention to AMCOW's efforts aimed at mobilizing disparate stakeholders working on water issues at the regional level and stated that while ministers in charge of water have a duty to work towards continent-wide reform of water, civil society has the responsibility of reinforcing these reforms at the regional and subregional levels.

Simon Thuo, Global Water Partnership (GWP) - Eastern Africa, described water-related challenges in East Africa, including population pressure, climatic unpredictability, overexploitation of natural resources and armed conflict. Explaining that the majority of the MDGs are directly related to water management, he underscored the importance of using IWRM for attaining the Goals. He stressed the importance of participatory decision making in achieving the MDGs. Thuo highlighted the value that working with AMCOW at the regional level adds to GWP's work and welcomed this "mutually reinforcing relationship."



Jamillah Mwanjisi, ANEW, facilitated the Civil Society and Media Forum.

Evariste Kouasi-Komlan, Regional Center for Water Supply and Sanitation (CREPA), highlighted CREPA strategies, including developing appropriate technologies, participatory approaches and alternative funding mechanisms. He reviewed: CREPA's programmes; challenges faced, including obtaining adequate funding; and expectations, including improving decision making at the local level and improving sectoral coordination.

Edward Kairu, ANEW, said his organization's work focuses on sustainable management of water resources, water supply and sanitation, and achieving the MDGs and World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) targets. He said ANEW facilitates coordination of diverse civil society voices on water issues, and has networks with civil society organizations in over 50 countries. He highlighted ANEW's activities, including advancing dialogue between civil society organizations and governments, maintaining communication and information systems, and developing ANEW as a platform for advocacy activities. He anticipated the signing of a MoU between AMCOW and ANEW, and noted a grant from the EU Water Facility of about two million Euros.

In the ensuing debate, participants discussed, among other things: overcoming domination of the water sector by scientists and researchers, ANEW's involvement in North and Central Africa, partnerships between ANEW and the media, improving water education, IWRM at the local level, and using water to overcome conflict.

CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Goretty Nyassanga, Makerere University, highlighted how journalists and civil society organizations, acting collectively, can influence decision makers to bring about positive environmental change. She discussed advocacy strategies, noting the need to identify key issues for action using a systematic approach to engage policy makers and identify key players. She emphasized coordinated action and information sharing to avoid disseminating conflicting messages.

Frank Habineza, Nile Basin Discourse Forum - Rwanda, explained that his organization, which is active in ten Nile Basin countries, seeks to raise awareness of, and enhance cooperation with, Nile Basin projects and engage in poverty reduction strategies. He highlighted activities undertaken and key achievements such as the establishment of a discussion forum website and interactive radio debates on Nile Basin issues.

Desta Demessie, Ethiopian Kale Heywot Church, explained that his organization provides self-help programmes to groups living in the poorest areas to combat the "dependency syndrome". He explained how groups working on water issues in Ethiopia decided to collaborate on policy proposals which led to a coordinated approach and stronger dialogue between civil society and government. He said his organization also facilitates dialogue between otherwise disparate groups and promotes sharing of information, experiences and best practices. He suggested that civil society must win the respect of governments rather than demand it.

Malick Gaye, Environment and Development of the Third World (ENDA), called for the increased provision of microcredit to individuals and community-based organizations to replicate successful examples already undertaken. He argued that non-governmental organizations should be strengthened and the media should be trained to maximize civil society's impact on the policy process.

During the ensuing discussion, participants made a number of points, including: the heterogeneous nature of civil society; the influence that informed and organized citizens can have on policy; and the need for civil society to concentrate on developing and reinforcing its capacities.

Evariste Kouasi-Komlan, CREPA, discussed development of more equitable and participatory water policies and strategies. He said policies are often not viewed in a positive light, and stressed creating a favorable environment to encourage the water sector to improve water access and sanitation. Kouasi-Komlan said policies must address equity issues and take into account the needs of stakeholders, and stressed the importance of lobbying governments. He also underscored the value of integrating the work of diverse sectors that deal with water issues.

During the ensuing discussion, participants posed questions on, *inter alia*: how to reach the poorest of the poor, particularly the urban poor; having one ministry address all water issues; increasing funding to the water sector; consulting women's organizations when developing policies; the necessity of inviting governments to create, design and implement these policies; training government representatives to ensure that equitable policies are developed; coordination between all stakeholders and relevant institutions involved in water management; and increasing effectiveness and efficiency of networks. Participants urged making a strong statement and submitting concrete recommendations to AMCOW, ensuring that the statement specifies targets and means of achieving those targets, and using the best approach to ensure that the measures proposed in the statement are implemented.

PREPARATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA STATEMENT TO AMCOW-6

On Tuesday, civil society and media participants met separately in the morning to draft inputs to a statement to be presented to ministers on Wednesday. In the afternoon, they convened together to discuss the draft statement. The statement underscores the role of civil society and the media in contributing towards the achievement of MDG targets related to water. On institutional issues, it calls on AMCOW to include participation of all stakeholders in the work of its subregional entities, TAC and EXCO and to nominate a civil society and a media representative to TAC. On financial mechanisms, the statement requests AMCOW to leverage and allocate funds to civil society organizations, the media and women groups and calls on AMCOW to support community empowerment and partnership building with civil society organizations and the media. The Forum was closed by President Mutagamba, who encouraged continued media and civil society engagement with AMCOW.



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AMCOW Bulletin

A report on the Sixth Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW-6)

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/](http://www.iisd.ca/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/)
ISSUE No. 4, VOLUME 4, No. 5, THURSDAY, 31 MAY 2007

AMCOW-6 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 30 MAY 2007

AMCOW-6 commenced on Wednesday, 30 May. During the opening session, participants heard statements from ministers, representatives of international and non-governmental organizations and Isidore Mvouba, Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo. In the afternoon, outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba presented the President's policy statement and ministers discussed the composition of the next AMCOW bureau.



L-R: Kordje Bedoumra, Director, African Development Bank; Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President; Isidore Mvouba, Republic of Congo Prime Minister; Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, AMCOW President; and Babagana Ahmadu, African Union Commission

OPENING SESSION

Halifa Drammeh, UNEP, stated that Africa is a region of contrasts in terms of water availability, with the Congo River Basin alone providing 50 per cent of the water resources available for the entire continent. Regarding achievements, he said AMCOW is fully operational and is the preeminent intergovernmental authority for addressing water challenges in Africa, supported by a collective political will directed towards sound management of Africa's water resources.

Edward Kairu, ANEW, presented a statement on behalf of civil society and the media, which includes sections on institutional issues, financial mechanisms, community empowerment and partnership building for achieving the MDGs. He requested support for AMCOW's activities



Agnes Nansubuga, youth representative, with AMCOW President Itoua.

and said civil society and the media are prepared to work with governments on their national water management plans and engage in research, information dissemination and sharing experiences of pilot water projects. He urged AMCOW to undertake a number of commitments, such as: supporting and funding activities of civil society organizations and the media; endorsing civil society and media efforts at awareness raising, information exchange and capacity building; and ensuring participation of all stakeholders, especially women and children.

Agnes Nansubuga, youth representative, highlighted challenges in water provision, including pollution, conflicts, and the declining health of ecosystems. She called on governments to: protect and manage water resources sustainably; implement cleaner production methods; properly treat industrial waste; undertake education and public awareness campaigns; and involve youth in the planning and implementation of water policies. She noted how joint efforts could be effective in reducing effects of unsafe water, and could improve quality of life. She challenged ministers by stating that: "the children of Africa are ready to work with you, are you ready to work with us?" Paul Lesly Sambala, youth representative, appealed for the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation for all and the extension of water networks in cities and rural areas to enable children to grow and develop in a safe environment. He called for improving and maintaining water infrastructure facilities and making efforts to address deforestation. He also urged for

The *AMCOW Bulletin* is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was written and edited by Asheline Appleton, Harry Jonas, Leila Mead and Hugh Wilkins. The Digital Editor is Joe Nyangon. The Editor is Ingrid Barnsley <ingrid@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Programme Manager of the African Regional Coverage Project is Richard Sherman <rsherman@iisd.org>. Funding for coverage of this meeting has been provided by South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism through the IISD/DEAT/UNEP ROA project for IISD Reporting Service coverage of African regional meetings. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate academic citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists in HTML and PDF format and can be found on the Linkages WWW-server at <<http://www.iisd.ca/>>. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA. The IISD Team at AMCOW-6 can be contacted by e-mail at <hugh@iisd.org>.

increasing children's involvement in water and environmental issues and expressed hope that AMCOW-6 would lead to a brighter future for all children.

Karl Wokalek, German Ambassador to Republic of Congo, emphasized the importance his country attaches to water issues and underscored its commitment during its G8 presidency to build on previous G8 efforts in this area. He acknowledged challenges that may impact on Africa's ability to meet the MDGs, stressing the importance of water for strengthening sustainable development, food security and peace, and for combating poverty in the region. Regarding the transboundary nature of water resources, Amb. Wokalek underscored the benefits of joint management and close cooperation between neighboring countries, in addition to effective strategies for addressing climate change.

Aly Kerdany, GWP, underscored the "visionary theme" of the meeting and explained that multistakeholder partnerships are integral to achieving progress. Highlighting the centrality of improving water supply and sanitation for achieving all the MDGs, he recommended that a number of approaches be undertaken to develop the water sector in Africa: adopting IWRM; including all stakeholders in planning, particularly the most vulnerable groups; building cross-sectoral partnerships, with an emphasis on engaging ministries of finance and the private sector; focusing on the effects of climate change; and promoting dialogue.

Kordjé Bedoumra, Director, African Development Bank, urged African countries to take advantage of their water resources. He said AMCOW acts as a key platform for



Kordjé Bedoumra, Director, African Development Bank

developing African water policy, but that much work remains to be done to achieve the water-related MDG targets by 2015. He underlined the necessity for Africa to prepare for the International Year of Sanitation in 2008 and for the African Water Week, and outlined a number of related preparatory meetings.

Babagana Ahmadu, AUC, drew attention to the forthcoming 2008 AU Summit on water and sanitation. Noting that 25 per cent of all renewable freshwater resources come from the Congo Basin, he urged AMCOW to recognize the region's importance and give the Congo Basin the support it needs. He highlighted climate change deliberations during the January 2007 AU Summit, which recognized the need to implement adaptation measures, and emphasized that 80 per cent of natural disasters in Africa are related to water. He urged integrating adaptation measures into AMCOW programmes and activities at all levels, and taking advantage



Ministre de l'Agriculture et
de l'Économie à l'Union Africaine
Babagana Ahmadu, African Union Commission

of irrigation opportunities to reverse negative trends in agricultural production. He recognized 2007-2008 as a defining period for AMCOW as it moves towards integration with the AU as a specialized technical committee (STC), and urged AMCOW and the AU to work together to harness

international assistance for developing the water sector.

Noting lack of access to water for over 300 million people in Africa, incoming AMCOW President Bruno Itoua, Republic of Congo Minister of Energy and Water, said progress on improving water and sanitation on the continent has been insufficient. He emphasized the need for the rational use of resources and better management of water. Looking towards the future, he said AMCOW must improve its governance and institutional structure. He acknowledged financial support from the EU, GTZ and UNDP, urged others to follow suit, and hoped AMCOW would establish some innovative instruments to address water issues.

Outgoing AMCOW President Maria Mutagamba, Ugandan Minister of Water and Environment, recalled that five years ago AMCOW was conceived by a small group in Nairobi, and has now grown into a continental forum. She said the MDG targets on water and sanitation must be met by 2015 in order to influence the achievement of other water-related MDG targets, and underscored improving water security as critical in achieving these targets. She reviewed measures undertaken by AMCOW, such as promoting implementation mechanisms and partnerships on water. She highlighted the consolidation of water governance in Africa through AMCOW activities



Dancers performed for the delegates during the opening ceremony

and urged the government of Republic of Congo to support the incoming AMCOW President to enable him to preside effectively. Mutagamba also urged Itoua to work on sensitizing finance ministers to water issues. Concluding, she said opportunities for women and children must be guaranteed and hoped women's voices would be better heard at the next AMCOW meeting.

Isidore Mvouba, Prime Minister of Republic of Congo, stressed the importance of tackling the water supply and sanitation challenges facing Africa. Noting the importance of the Brazzaville meeting in bringing together key ministers and stakeholders to address these issues, he stressed the importance of AMCOW as a means for promoting cooperation, security and solidarity. He underlined that water



Isidore Mvouba, Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo

is the source of life and the foundation for development and stressed the need to promote the supply, use and management of water to achieve sustainable development without ignoring the preservation of ecosystems. Mvouba further emphasized the need to mobilize further resources to address water issues and achieve the MDGs.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

POLICY STATEMENT BY AMCOW PRESIDENT

Maria Mutagamba, presented the AMCOW President's Handover Report, observing that a key strategy for engaging in the regional integration process lies in consolidating and strengthening relations with: entities such as NEPAD; parallel ministerial bodies like the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST); and civil society organizations, river and lake basin authorities and regional development organizations. She noted AMCOW's "coming



Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President (right), chats with Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, the incoming President.

of age", adding that her tenure had witnessed the evolution of AMCOW into a credible entity with many African governments now recognizing the pressing and urgent need to address water policy challenges. She emphasized that the outgoing ExCom members' tenure had been a defining period, and that both the regional and international context had been significantly altered. Acknowledging the daunting challenges that lay ahead, she noted successes including: the operationalization of the ExCom, TAC and subregional ministerial committees and structures; the adoption at AMCOW-5 of a triennial work programme containing specific priorities for action; and the leveraging of 2.6 million Euros from the EU and US\$100,000 from UNEP to enable AMCOW to finance its core meetings and activities. She said that AMCOW had succeeded in building a platform for defining Africa's water agenda and priorities and presenting a single voice in interacting with the international community. She outlined how partnerships had been brokered and consolidated with donors and other partners, in addition to the facilitation of interministerial dialogue with regional organizations and civil society organizations, and how resources had been mobilized. Mutagamba spoke of the need to strengthen the AMCOW Secretariat to: enable it to effectively implement Council decisions; and ensure the best strategic input into AMCOW decision making by creating a resource facility or center that builds on past experiences in partnership with relevant institutions and agencies. She paid tribute to people who had been instrumental in AMCOW's success during her tenure and proposed the establishment of an award scheme to honor them.

Mutagamba addressed key challenges and the way forward including: further engaging in the regional integration process by completing AMCOW's transformation into a STC of the AU; strengthening governance structures and support mechanisms; further exploring modalities for strengthening subregional structures and institutional relationships with African river and lake basin organizations and effectively engaging with the private sector. Regarding the AWF, she noted the need to strengthen communication between the AWF and AMCOW and for AWF to establish a monitoring and evaluation system for the water and sanitation sector. She concluded by expressing her appreciation for the honor accorded to her for serving as AMCOW President and officially launched the status report "Getting Africa on Track to meet the MDGs on Water and Sanitation", which is a status overview of sixteen African countries.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSALS FROM THE SUBREGIONS ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE 2007-2009 AMCOW BUREAU

Outgoing President Mutagamba turned to the election of the new AMCOW President, and called on ExCom Western African Subregional Vice-President Asfaw Dingamo, Ethiopia, to announce the nomination of Itoua as President. Itoua was elected by acclamation, and commended the competence of outgoing President Mutagamba, thanked her for a superb job and hoped she would be available for consultations, if needed.

Regarding the bureau for 2007-2009, ETHIOPIA, for Eastern Africa, communicated the following nominations for his subregion: ExCom members - Sudan, Ethiopia and Burundi as Vice President; TAC members - Kenya, Burundi, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Sudan; AWF Subcommittee - Rwanda and Tanzania; and EU Water Initiative Subcommittee - Kenya, with Sudan as the alternate member.



ALGERIA, for Northern Africa, noted the following nominations for his subregion: ExCom members - Egypt, Tunisia, and with Mauritania as Vice-President; and TAC members - Mauritania, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Libya.

For Western Africa, BURKINA FASO forwarded the following nominations: ExCom members - Ghana, Togo and Senegal as Vice-President; TAC members - Benin, Mali, Senegal, Niger and Nigeria; and AWF Subcommittee member - Burkina Faso.

For Southern Africa, LESOTHO said the ExCom members would be Botswana and Zambia, with Lesotho continuing as Vice-President until further notice. He also said that TAC members would be communicated to the President at a future date, pending consultations.

For Central Africa, Itoua detailed his subregion's nominations: ExCom members - Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo and Chad as Vice-President; and TAC members - Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Cameroon and Central African Republic.

These nominations were accepted by the AMCOW, and Itoua noted that, in accordance with the rules of procedure, Republic of Congo would chair the TAC. He urged other subregions to submit nominations for the subcommittees.

SUMMARY: A summary of the meeting will be available on Monday, 4 June 2007 at <http://www.iisd.ca/africa/water/amcow/>



environment & tourism

Department:
Environmental Affairs and Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



REPORTING ON ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

IISD Reporting Services African Regional Coverage Project

In April 2006 the International Institute for Sustainable Development Reporting Services Division (IISD RS) and South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), in partnership with the UN Environment Programme's Regional Office for Africa, joined together to assist in communicating the policy outcomes of regional meetings on environment and related sustainable development issues to the larger international community. The African Regional Coverage (ARC) project is the result of the identified need to give African meetings and activities a higher exposure to the international community. Building on the success of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* (ENB) in covering international environment and sustainable development meetings, this project expects to replicate this success at the regional level in order to make the outcome of Africa's ministerial meetings available to the world in real-time. The project provides reporting services for African ministerial meetings on sustainable development and environment as well as those on water, energy, transport, human settlements and technology. Through the distribution of targeted policy briefs on upcoming intergovernmental meetings, IISD RS will also be building a network of environment and sustainable development policy experts working in African capitals.

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AMCOW Bulletin

A Summary Report of the Sixth Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW-6)

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/](http://www.iisd.ca/AFRICA/WATER/AMCOW/)
VOLUME 4, No. 6, MONDAY, 4 JUNE 2007

SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERS' COUNCIL ON WATER: 28-31 MAY 2007

The sixth Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW-6) took place from 30-31 May 2007, at the Palais du Parlement, in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. Attended by ministers and government representatives, together with issue experts from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the meeting focused on strengthening regional and international cooperation and solidarity to address the African water and sanitation crisis and to make progress on achieving the water-related targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

A number of events were held in the lead-up to the session. On Monday, 28 May, a Youth Forum on Water was held, in addition to AMCOW subregional consultations. A Civil Society and Media Forum convened on Monday, 28 May and Tuesday, 29 May, while the AMCOW Executive Committee convened on Tuesday, 29 May, to receive communications from subregional groups and recommendations from the AMCOW Technical Advisory Committee.

AMCOW-6 commenced on Wednesday, 30 May, with ministers listening to opening addresses from distinguished guests, including Isidore Mvouba, Prime Minister of Republic of Congo, and policy statements. They also addressed organizational matters. On Thursday, 31 May, ministers participated in roundtable discussions on partnership issues, water infrastructure development, water supply and sanitation, and climate change impacts and adaptation. They also attended side events focusing on: groundwater management in Africa; the promotion of rainwater harvesting in Africa; and the Congo River Basin.

At the close of the meeting, ministers adopted a meeting report summarizing their discussions, and the Brazzaville Declaration containing ministerial decisions on future work. Key issues addressed in these decisions include governance, institutional and operational matters, financial issues and means of implementation, and partnerships and other initiatives. Ministers also decided on the composition of the AMCOW subsidiary bodies for 2007-2009 and confirmed the new President of AMCOW.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF AMCOW AND RELATED WATER GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES

AMCOW was formally launched in April 2002, when African water ministers adopted the "Abuja Ministerial Declaration on Water: A Key to Sustainable Development in Africa," in Abuja, Nigeria. This declaration followed up on commitments made by African ministers at the 2001 International Conference on Freshwater, held in Bonn, Germany, and the 2002 Stakeholders Conference on Water and Sustainable Development in Africa, held in Accra, Ghana.

AMCOW creates a platform for providing political leadership, policy direction and advocacy in the provision, use and management of water resources for sustainable social and economic development and for the maintenance of African ecosystems. AMCOW actively reviews the state of Africa's water and promotes actions of common African interest. It also

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The *AMCOW Bulletin* is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was written and edited by Richard Sherman and Hugh Wilkins. The Editor is Ingrid Barnsley <Ingrid@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Programme Manager of the African Regional Coverage Project is Richard Sherman <rsherman@iisd.org>. Funding for coverage of this meeting has been provided by South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism through the IISD/DEAT/UNEP ROA project for IISD Reporting Service coverage of African regional meetings. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate academic citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists HTML and PDF format) and can be found on the Linkages WWW-server at <http://www.iisd.ca/>. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA.

facilitates regional and international cooperation through the coordination of African countries' policies and actions on water resources.

AMCOW consists of a Council of Ministers and an Executive Committee (ExCom). The ExCom is composed of three water ministers or representatives from each of the African subregions, namely, Western Africa, Eastern Africa, Central Africa, Northern Africa and Southern Africa. The ExCom ensures that decisions of the Council of Ministers are implemented, develops work programmes and budgets for approval by the Council of Ministers, and mobilizes the necessary financing for, and supervises the work of, the AMCOW Secretariat. The ExCom is advised in its activities by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

KEY AMCOW MEETINGS

INAUGURAL MEETING OF AMCOW: The inaugural AMCOW meeting was held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 30 April 2002. At this meeting, ministers adopted the Abuja Declaration, which includes a resolution establishing AMCOW and setting out its vision, objectives, institutional arrangements and other aspects.

FIRST MEETING OF THE AMCOW STEERING COMMITTEE: The first meeting of the AMCOW Steering Committee was held from 23-24 May 2003, in Dakar, Senegal. The meeting emphasized that the supply and quality of freshwater in Africa remains one of the most critical issues of the twenty-first century. The meeting adopted the "NEPAD Statement on International Solidarity with Africa for the achievement of the water-related targets in the MDGs and the outcomes of the WSSD."

FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION OF AMCOW: The fourth Ordinary Session of AMCOW took place on 10 December 2003, during the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON), held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Ministers endorsed the outcome of the African Regional Implementation Meeting for presentation as Africa's contribution to CSD-12. They also agreed to present the PANAFCON recommendations to the second Extraordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Assembly, held in February 2004, in Libya.

FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF AMCOW: The fifth Ordinary Session of AMCOW was held from 4-6 November 2004, in Entebbe, Uganda, and addressed various water policy challenges in Africa, including meeting the goals of the AU and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), financing, and strategies to achieve international water and sanitation targets. Outcomes from the session included agreement on: a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on institutional arrangements; AMCOW Rules of Procedure; the AMCOW 2005-2007 work programme; modalities for establishing the AMCOW Trust Fund and its hosting within UNEP; a regional position for CSD-13 on the implementation of the MDGs and water-related targets; and a concept proposal on the German G8 transboundary water initiative.

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE AMCOW EXCOM:

The seventh AMCOW ExCom meeting was held alongside a meeting of the TAC in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 27-30 June 2005. Participants at the ExCom meeting focused on the AMCOW 2005-2007 work programme, the AMCOW Trust Fund and strengthening AMCOW's work at the country and subregional levels.

KEY CONTINENTAL AND INTERNATIONAL WATER INITIATIVES

G8 KANANASKIS SUMMIT: The 2002 G8 Summit was held in Kananaskis, Canada, from 26-27 June 2002. In response to an invitation from African leaders, G8 leaders adopted the G8-Africa Action Plan, which includes provisions supporting African efforts to improve water resources development and management.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) was held from 26 August to 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. In the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), governments reaffirmed their commitment to the safe drinking water and human settlements goals agreed to in the Millennium Declaration, and further committed to halve by 2015 the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation. Governments also agreed to develop integrated water resources management (IWRM) and water efficiency plans by 2005. The international community agreed to support Africa's efforts to promote IWRM, optimize the upstream and downstream benefits from the development and effective management of water resources, and protect water quality and aquatic ecosystems.

G8 EVIAN SUMMIT: The 2003 G8 Summit was held from 1-3 June 2003, in Evian, France. At the Summit, G8 leaders adopted a water-related action plan focusing on promoting good governance, utilizing financial resources, building infrastructure by empowering local authorities and communities, strengthening monitoring, assessment and research, and reinforcing the engagement of international organizations. They agreed to support NEPAD through two initiatives in the field of transboundary water management, which focus on strengthening cooperation among river basin organizations and which seek to map donor support by developing an overview of the current activities of G8 member states in this field.

PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE ON WATER: PANAFCON met from 8-12 December 2003, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Ministers agreed to establish national task forces on water and sanitation and to create national plans with service delivery targets for achieving water and sanitation goals by 2015. They signed a joint declaration with the European Commission on the implementation of the African-European Union (EU) Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation. Ministers also launched a number of initiatives, including: the African Water Facility (AWF); the African Water Journal; Phase II of the Water for African Cities Programme; and the G8-Action Plan on Water for Africa.

SECOND EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE AU ASSEMBLY: The second Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly, took place from 27-28 February 2004, in Sirte, Libya, and resulted in adoption of the “Sirte Declaration on the Challenges of Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Water in Africa.” In the declaration, leaders agreed to: promote the strengthening and establishment of centers of excellence and/or networks; support AMCOW in its role of preparing plans and policies related to water resources management on the continent; encourage bilateral agreements on shared water resources and enjoin regional economic communities (RECs) to develop appropriate regional protocols to guide IWRM; strengthen existing river and lake water basin organizations and establish new ones, wherever appropriate; and adopt the AWF and acknowledge the African Water Vision 2025. Leaders also declared support for AMCOW and its role in developing plans and policies related to the management of all water resources in Africa and recommended integrating AMCOW into the AU as one of its Specialized Technical Committees (STCs).

THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: CSD-13 took place from 11-22 April 2005, in New York, USA. The meeting focused on policies and options to expedite the implementation of commitments in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. Its main outcome document identified the need to, *inter alia*, provide additional resources, as appropriate, for regional and subregional initiatives, and support African initiatives in the area of water, within the framework of AMCOW.

2005 WORLD SUMMIT: The 2005 World Summit was held in New York, USA, from 14-16 September 2005. In the Summit’s outcome document, world leaders resolved to assist developing countries’ efforts to prepare IWRM and water efficiency plans as part of their national development strategies, and to provide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation in accordance with the Millennium Declaration and the JPOI.

CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN RIVER AND LAKE BASIN ORGANIZATIONS: The AMCOW Conference of African River and Lake Basin Organizations took place in Kampala, Uganda, from 19-20 October 2006, to chart the way forward for a continent-wide effort to address Africa’s water crisis. The conference brought together senior-level African decision makers on water to agree to the establishment of and support for new river and lake basin organizations, while rejuvenating existing ones within the framework of a region-wide mechanism under the auspices of AMCOW.

REPORT OF THE AMCOW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

On Wednesday, 30 May, prior to the opening of AMCOW-6, the ExCom met to address recommendations from the TAC meeting held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 4-5 March 2007, and to hear reports on activities in each of the AMCOW regions. The ExCom reviewed the TAC recommendations and forwarded

them with minor additions to AMCOW-6. This report summarizes the opening statements, TAC recommendations, subregional presentations and related discussions.

OPENING STATEMENTS

Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President and Ugandan Minister of Water and Environment, said AMCOW has been at the forefront of African cooperation, stressing AMCOW’s important role in strengthening the regional integration process in Africa and promoting the prioritization of water and sanitation issues in national policy making. She said AMCOW is a platform for defining African water priorities and developing common perspectives and decisions and provides a single voice for interacting with the international community. Outgoing



Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President and Ugandan Minister of Water and Environment

President Mutagamba noted future challenges, including: adapting AMCOW’s role to meet the requirements of the AU; improving AMCOW’s support structure through a strengthened Secretariat and the establishment of centers of excellence; better engaging civil society and other stakeholders; and better addressing transboundary water issues.

Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, incoming AMCOW President and Republic of Congo Minister of Energy and Water, welcomed delegates on behalf of the President of Republic of Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, noting that the meeting demonstrates a commitment to addressing water and sanitation issues in Africa. He pointed to issues affecting access to water, such as the depletion of water resources in some regions, institutional weaknesses, underinvestment and the effects of climate change. He underscored the ExCom’s role in promoting effective decision making and the generation of new perspectives on water issues, and called for the consolidation of efforts.

Babagana Ahmadu, AU Commission, underlined the significance of AMCOW as a vital AU policy organ given the context of environmental issues in Africa. He discussed initiatives emanating from the Sirte Declaration to enhance cooperation and strengthen river and lake basin organizations and elaborated on draft AU/UNEP guidelines on a cooperative framework for the integrated management of transboundary basins.

TAC RECOMMENDATIONS

Henry Ntale, TAC Chair, presented the TAC Report to the ExCom, including outcomes and recommendations on issues for consideration by AMCOW. On rotation of the AMCOW presidency, he said the TAC recommended that the presidency rotate as follows: Central Africa; Southern Africa; Northern Africa; Western Africa; and Eastern Africa. He noted that presidencies would be determined through subregional consultations. Lesotho announced that South Africa would

assume the presidency on behalf of Southern Africa in the next cycle.

Regarding financing of the triennial work programme, TAC Chair Ntale stated that due to a funding shortfall of 3.3 million Euros for implementing the work programme, the programme had been revised to cover 2007-2009. He said the TAC recommended that a resource mobilization subcommittee be established and that contributions from member states continue even if AMCOW is integrated as an AU STC.



Henry Ntale, TAC Chair

TAC Chair Ntale noted that the AU Assembly agreed in principle that AMCOW become an STC. The AU Commission stated that this issue is being addressed at the highest level and that the AU Assembly's final decision would be made in July 2007. Morocco stated that his country is not an AU member, and does not wish to be excluded from AMCOW. Outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, stressed that a political solution would be found to address this issue.

Regarding the AMCOW Secretariat, TAC Chair Ntale noted that the TAC recommended that recruitment of an Executive Secretary should commence as soon as possible, and that the AMCOW President and the Secretariat should consult and establish an interim arrangement for the Secretariat. He said the AU would assist in selecting the Executive Secretary, and that the TAC recommended strengthening subregional structures, noting that funds are now available to convene regular meetings of subregional organs.

TAC Chair Ntale noted that the AWF had been successfully implemented. The African Development Bank (AfDB) explained that the AWF was designed to mobilize financial resources for investment in the African water sector, and emphasized that the major challenge would be securing investment resources. Regarding the fourth World Water Forum, TAC Chair Ntale said the TAC recommended creating a task force to promote the implementation of forum recommendations and to take steps to prepare for the fifth World Water Forum, scheduled for 2009. He also highlighted the need for an annual African water week, while the AfDB suggested that the event be held in Tunisia in 2007, and UN-HABITAT offered to assist if the event were held in Kenya in 2008.

Regarding the Africa Dialogue of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB), TAC Chair Ntale highlighted the UNSGAB's proposal to hold a water summit in 2008. Outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba said a proposed joint water infrastructure financing meeting with the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA) should be linked to the water summit. Lesotho and Republic of Congo emphasized the importance of including both finance

and infrastructure ministers at these events. Regarding a TAC recommendation on promoting the institutionalization of groundwater management by river basin organizations, Outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba suggested, and participants agreed, that water harvesting be promoted in a similar manner.

On the EU Water Initiative, TAC Chair Ntale reviewed recommendations related to: promoting water and sanitation-related issues within the African-EU Infrastructure Partnership; establishing a water policy dialogue forum; and continuing the EU-ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific states) Water Facility. South Africa advocated identifying an entry point through which AMCOW could influence decisions on the EU-ACP Water Facility. On new partnerships and consultations with African river and lake basin organizations, TAC Chair Ntale said the TAC recommended establishing a water basin organization subcommittee, noting this would fuse the institutional relationship between AMCOW and the African Network of Basin Organizations.

SUBREGIONAL REPORTS

On Wednesday afternoon, representatives from each of the AMCOW subregions reported to the ExCom on recent activities in the subregions. Asfaw Dingamo, Ethiopian Minister of Water Resources, described how water policy challenges are being addressed in Eastern Africa through promoting policy dialogue. He explained that ministerial consultations held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in September 2006 highlighted the need to promote action on key policies in the subregion and to develop indicators on IWRM. Asfaw Dingamo observed how appropriate policies at the subregional level could create opportunities for achieving the internationally agreed targets on water and sanitation and called for preparing national water sector reports.



Asfaw Dingamo, Ethiopian Minister of Water Resources

Ambassador Ahmed Abdessadok, Algeria, presenting the Northern Africa report, described AMCOW as a good example of South-South cooperation, and said more work is needed to turn political aspirations into sound water policies for achieving the MDGs. Ambassador Abdessadok made a number of recommendations, including: sharing management of transboundary resources; focusing on impacts of climate change; and creating centers of excellence to improve expertise on water issues.

Bonoudaba Dabiré, Burkina Faso Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Fisheries, presented the report for Western Africa. He emphasized constraints experienced by ministers in the subregion in engaging in consultations on water issues and highlighted the need for capacity building and funding.

Monyane Moleleki, Lesotho Minister of Natural Resources, reported on Southern Africa. He noted support for a transition from softer to hard infrastructure programmes on water, and highlighted achievements in his subregion, such as assessing progress made in implementing IWRM and establishing a water research fund and a consultative fund.

Incoming AMCOW President Itoua presented the report for Central Africa. Discussing the water situation in the subregion, he noted challenges, including: ineffective privatization of public water utilities; the low level of civil society participation; inadequate investment in water-related activities; and a lack of policy coherence regarding the MDG water-related targets. He also emphasized the need for a subregional water management authority.

REPORT OF THE AMCOW MEETING

The sixth Ordinary Session of AMCOW convened on Wednesday, 30 May and Thursday, 31 May. This report summarizes the various sessions held at AMCOW-6, including the opening and closing plenary sessions, organizational matters and roundtable discussions. It also summarizes the Brazzaville Declaration, adopted on Thursday, which incorporated all decisions taken by ministers at the meeting.

OPENING PLENARY

AMCOW-6 opened on Wednesday morning, with statements from ministers and other participants. Regarding AMCOW's achievements, Halifa Drammeh, UNEP, said that AMCOW is fully operational and is the preeminent intergovernmental authority for addressing water challenges in Africa, supported by a collective political will directed towards sound management of Africa's water resources.

Edward Kairu, Africa Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation (ANEWS), presented a statement on behalf of participants at the Civil Society and Media Forum held earlier in the week, focusing on institutional issues, financial mechanisms, community empowerment and partnership building for achieving the MDGs. He urged AMCOW to undertake a number of commitments, such as: supporting and funding activities of civil society organizations and the media; endorsing civil society and media efforts at awareness raising, information exchange and capacity building; and ensuring the participation of all stakeholders, especially women and children.

Presenting a statement on behalf of participants at the Youth Forum on Water, also held earlier in the week, Agnes Nansubuga, youth representative, highlighted challenges to water provision, including pollution, conflicts and the declining health of ecosystems. She called on governments to: protect and

manage water resources in a sustainable manner; implement cleaner production methods; properly treat industrial waste; undertake education and public awareness campaigns; and involve youth in the planning and implementation of water policies. Paul Lesly Sambala, youth representative, appealed for the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation for all and the extension of water networks in cities and rural areas to enable children to grow and develop in a safe environment. He called for improving and maintaining water infrastructure facilities and making efforts to address deforestation.

Karl Wokalek, German Ambassador to Republic of Congo, acknowledged challenges that may impact on Africa's ability to meet the MDGs, stressing the importance of water for strengthening sustainable development, food security and peace, and for combating poverty in the region. Regarding the transboundary nature of water resources, Ambassador Wokalek underscored the benefits of joint management and close cooperation between neighboring countries, in addition to effective strategies for addressing climate change.

Highlighting the centrality of improving water supply and sanitation for achieving all the MDGs, Aly Kerdany, Global Water Partnership (GWP), recommended that a number of approaches be taken to develop the water sector in Africa: adopting IWRM; including all stakeholders in planning, particularly the most vulnerable; building cross-sectoral partnerships, with an emphasis on engaging ministries of finance and the private sector; focusing on the effects of climate change; and promoting dialogue.

Kordjé Bedoumra, AfDB, said AMCOW acts as a key platform for developing African water policy, but that much work remains to be done to achieve the water-related MDG targets by 2015. He underlined the necessity for Africa to prepare for the 2008 International Year of Sanitation and the proposed African Water Week and outlined a number of related preparatory meetings.

Babagana Ahmadu, AU Commission, drew attention to the AU Summit scheduled for 2008, which will address water and sanitation issues. He highlighted the climate change deliberations held during the January 2007 AU Summit, which took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and urged integrating adaptation measures into AMCOW programmes and activities at all levels, and taking advantage of irrigation opportunities to reverse negative trends in agricultural production.



Halifa Drammeh, UNEP



L-R: Kordje Bedoumra, Director, African Development Bank; Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President; Isidore Mvouba, Republic of Congo Prime Minister; Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, AMCOW President; and Babagana Ahmadu, African Union Commission

Noting lack of access to water for over 300 million people in Africa, incoming AMCOW President Itoua said progress on improving water and sanitation on the continent has been insufficient. He emphasized the need for the rational use of resources and better management of water. Looking toward the future, he said AMCOW must improve its governance and institutional structure.

Outgoing AMCOW President Maria Mutagamba recalled that five years ago, AMCOW was conceived by a small group in Nairobi, and has now grown into a continental forum. She said the MDG targets on water and sanitation must be met by 2015 in order to influence the achievement of other water-related targets, and said the improvement of water security is critical to achieving these targets. She highlighted the consolidation of water governance in Africa through AMCOW activities and urged incoming AMCOW President Itoua to work on sensitizing finance ministers to water issues. She said opportunities for women and children must be guaranteed and expressed hope that women's voices would be better heard at the next AMCOW meeting.

Isidore Mvouba, Prime Minister of Republic of Congo, stressed the importance of tackling the water supply and sanitation challenges facing Africa. Noting the importance of the meeting in bringing together key ministers and stakeholders to address these issues, he stressed the importance of AMCOW as a means for promoting cooperation, security and solidarity. He underlined the need to promote the supply, use and management of water to achieve sustainable development without ignoring the preservation of ecosystems. He also emphasized the need to mobilize further resources to address water issues and achieve the MDGs.

Halifa Drammeh, UNEP, on behalf of Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), said AMCOW provides a forum for the coherent and concerted implementation of policies to improve IWRM and achieve the MDGs in Africa. He emphasized the need to exchange hydrological and other water-related data and information to ensure better planning, improved forecasts and timely flood warnings, particularly with respect to increasing climate variability. He said the majority of natural disasters are water-related, for which early warning systems are needed, and drew attention to the World Hydrological Cycle Observing System programme, which assists in improving the quality of hydrological data and information.



Isidore Mvouba, Prime Minister of Republic of Congo

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

POLICY STATEMENT BY AMCOW PRESIDENT:

In the afternoon on Wednesday, outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, presented the AMCOW President's Handover Report, observing that a key strategy for engaging in the regional integration process lies in consolidating and strengthening relations with: entities such as NEPAD; parallel ministerial bodies like the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST); and civil society organizations, river and lake basin authorities and regional development organizations. She noted AMCOW's "coming of age," adding that her tenure had witnessed the evolution of AMCOW into a credible entity with many African governments now recognizing the urgent need to address water policy challenges.

She noted successes, including: the operationalization of the ExCom, the TAC and subregional ministerial committees and structures; the adoption at AMCOW-5 of a triennial work programme containing specific priorities for action; and the leveraging of 2.6 million Euros from the EU and US\$100,000 from UNEP to enable AMCOW to finance its core meetings and activities. She said that AMCOW had succeeded in building a platform for defining Africa's water agenda and priorities and presenting a single voice for interacting with the international community. Outgoing President Mutagamba spoke of the need to strengthen the AMCOW Secretariat to: enable it to effectively implement AMCOW decisions; and ensure the best strategic input into AMCOW decision making by creating a resource facility or center that builds on past experiences, in partnership with strategic institutions and agencies.

Outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba addressed key challenges and the way forward, including: further engaging in the regional integration process by completing AMCOW's transformation into an STC of the AU; strengthening governance structures and support mechanisms; further exploring modalities for strengthening subregional structures and institutional relationships with African river and lake basin organizations and effectively engaging with the private sector. Regarding the AWF, she noted the need to strengthen communication between the AWF and AMCOW and for the AWF to establish a monitoring and evaluation system for the water and sanitation sector. She concluded by officially launching the status report "Getting Africa on Track to Meet the MDGs on Water and Sanitation," comprising a status overview of sixteen African countries, and by presenting the President's Handover Report to incoming AMCOW President Itoua.

COMPOSITION OF AMCOW BODIES: On Wednesday afternoon, ExCom Eastern Africa Subregional Vice-President Asfaw Dingamo (Ethiopia) announced the nomination of Bruno Itoua as the next AMCOW President. Bruno Itoua was elected by acclamation.

Regarding the composition of AMCOW subsidiary bodies for 2007-2009, the following members were elected for Eastern Africa: ExCom members - Sudan, Ethiopia and Burundi as Vice-President; TAC members - Kenya, Burundi, Ethiopia,

Tanzania and Sudan; AWF Subcommittee - Rwanda and Tanzania; and EU Water Initiative Subcommittee - Kenya, with Sudan as the alternate member.

For Northern Africa, the following members were elected: ExCom members - Egypt and Tunisia, with Mauritania as Vice-President; and TAC members - Mauritania, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria and Libya.

For Western Africa, the following members were elected: ExCom members - Ghana and Togo, with Senegal continuing as Vice-President; TAC members - Benin, Mali, Senegal, Niger and Nigeria; and AWF Subcommittee member - Burkina Faso.

For Southern Africa, the following members were elected: ExCom members - Botswana and Zambia, with Lesotho continuing as Vice-President until further notice. Lesotho, for the Southern Africa region, said that the TAC members would be communicated to the AMCOW President at a future date, pending consultations.

For Central Africa, nominations included: ExCom members - Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo and Chad as Vice-President; and TAC members - Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Cameroon and Central African Republic.

Ministers accepted these nominations, and AMCOW President Itoua noted that, in accordance with the rules of procedure, Republic of Congo would chair the TAC. He urged other subregions to submit nominations for the subcommittees.

PARTNERSHIP ROUNDTABLE

On Thursday morning, Abakar Ramadane, Chad Minister of Environment and Water, and Odette Kayitesi, Burundi Minister of Territorial Management, Tourism and Environment, chaired a partnership roundtable. Partners outlined their commitments to AMCOW, addressing, among other matters: financing of water infrastructure; access to the EU-ACP Water Facility; mobilization of resources for the AWF; follow-up to the G8-Action Plan on Water for Africa; follow-up to the Africa Commission Report; tracking commitments toward achieving the WSSD and MDG targets in Africa; collaboration between UNSGAB and AMCOW, particularly in relation to the proposed 2008 AU Summit on water and sanitation; and preparation for the 2008 International Year of Sanitation.

UNEP reiterated its commitment to support and renew AMCOW, and to assist the AMCOW President and his team. Stressing the importance of the proposed 2008 AU Summit, he offered UNEP's assistance in preparing for the Summit. The AfDB emphasized the importance of water security, and cooperation with AMCOW in preparing for the 2008 Year of Sanitation and the proposed African Water Week. AMCOW President Itoua suggested formalizing an agreement between the AfDB and AMCOW to define goals on water and sanitation, organizing "silent partners" to contribute money, and convening a high-level meeting with the AfDB to define a common programme.

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reiterated its support for AMCOW, and said it was working on the valuation of water resources. Germany underlined the G8-Africa Action Plan's call for more focus on

development cooperation on water supply and sanitation issues. Highlighting Germany's partnership with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Germany pledged support to promote cooperation on river basins, water management and capacity development at the regional level. UN-HABITAT reaffirmed its commitment to assist AMCOW in achieving targets on water and sanitation, particularly as they relate to urban areas, and drew attention to the Water for African Cities Initiative. UN-WATER said it would continue supporting AMCOW through UN agencies.

MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE

A ministerial roundtable was held on Thursday morning, co-chaired by outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, Omar Salem, Chair of Libyan General Water Authority, and John Mutua Katuku, Kenyan Minister of Water and Irrigation. The discussions focused on: water infrastructure development; water supply and sanitation; and climate change, impacts and adaptation.

Emphasizing the importance of developing effective water infrastructure for development, outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba said water security must be addressed at all levels, from the family to national and regional levels. She advocated the enhancement of water storage initiatives at all levels and the use of water harvesting to improve water security in Africa. Stressing the need for international support for such projects, she suggested that a World Water Forum be held in Africa.

The AfDB suggested dams provide an important means of addressing water storage issues and generating electricity. Ethiopia reviewed recommendations made by Eastern African ministers during recent consultations in Nairobi. He noted the recommendations urged the development of a pan-African declaration on water financing, which would call for an annual review of progress, and requested a coordinated approach on financing efforts to achieve the MDG water-related targets.

Roundtable Co-Chair Katuku underscored the importance of joint efforts and adequate financial resources to address climate change, while Roundtable Co-Chair Salem emphasized the importance of awareness raising and knowledge building to support decision making, and the need for robust institutional and legal frameworks to enable countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Chad drew attention to the shrinking of Lake Chad due to climate change. Roundtable Co-Chair Salem proposed the use of interbasin transfers as a solution to problems in Lake Chad. Ethiopia called for all developed countries to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. Namibia emphasized the importance of approaching water from an economic



L-R: John Mutua Katuku, Kenyan Minister of Water and Irrigation; Maria Mutagamba, outgoing AMCOW President; Omar M. Salem, Chair of Libyan General Water Authority; and Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, AMCOW President.

perspective and using it to create wealth, and gave the example of hydroelectric power generation. Sudan noted the importance of adequate water storage infrastructure such as dams and reservoirs to provide water during droughts. Namibia expressed hope for a time when every African house has a tap, and urged African countries to invest in and retain control of their water resources. Libya drew attention to a recent UNESCO decision to establish a regional center on managing shared aquifers, to be based in Tripoli, Libya.

WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) used the example of Lake Chad to highlight how poor water management, including unplanned infrastructure, leads to diminishing access to water resources. Burundi called for a solution to Lake Chad's worsening condition, and Chad attributed the situation to water mismanagement. The Niger Basin Authority called for a "shared vision," which would engage all stakeholders to avoid water wars. AMCOW President Itoua said urgent reforms to Africa's water sector had still not been implemented. He stated that continued inaction is adversely impacting the continent's population and ecosystem, and called for assessing how Congo Basin countries can jointly manage water resources.

CLOSING PLENARY

SUMMARIES OF THE PARTNERSHIP AND

MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLES: On Thursday afternoon, John Mutua Katuku presented the recommendations from the ministerial roundtables. He said recommendations included: measures to be taken by African countries to ensure the provision of infrastructure to foster economic growth; response strategies and actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change; and actions to develop markets and "fair trade." Babagana Ahmadu, AU Commission, reported on the partnership roundtable, highlighting activities being undertaken by partners to support AMCOW.

ADOPTION OF THE BRAZZAVILLE DECLARATION:

AMCOW President Itoua invited ministers to consider and approve the Brazzaville Declaration. He presented a number of amendments to the original text circulated earlier, including: Tunisia hosting the African Water Week in 2007, followed by Kenya in 2008; commencement of preparations for the fifth World Water Forum; a proposed MoU between GWP and AMCOW; promotion of the institutionalization of groundwater management by river basin organizations; and initiation of a rainwater harvesting programme.

Noting the absence of reference to the media in the AMCOW decisions contained within the declaration, a media representative proposed adding language stating that AMCOW

welcomes GWP's assistance in deepening media's involvement in water issues, and supports developing an action plan for media to highlight and track progress on achieving the MDGs and adaptation to climate change.

Delegates then adopted the declaration by acclamation.

CLOSING SESSION: AMCOW President Itoua conveyed his appreciation for the support he had received, particularly from outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, and noted that the meeting was key to confirming the role of AMCOW in Africa's sustainable development agenda. Stressing the importance of international cooperation, he welcomed support from international partners and emphasized that financial assistance is critical to the sustainability of AMCOW and achievement of the MDGs. AMCOW President Itoua closed the meeting at 6:47 pm.

BRAZZAVILLE DECLARATION

In the declaration, AMCOW recognizes equitable and sustainable management of water as the top development challenge for Africa, affirms the importance of meeting the MDG targets on water and sanitation in Africa by 2015-2025, and underlines that the African water crisis can only be tackled through strong partnerships between governments, the private sector, civil society and development cooperation partners. It further states that ministers welcome discussions on the prospects of convening an AU Summit on Water and note the need to include all stakeholders, including youth and women, in decision making at the local level. It states that African countries are committed to mobilizing support to facilitate the preparation and implementation of IWRM plans, and stresses the need to improve financing and the engagement of finance ministries in water discourse.

Decisions: The declaration contains decisions taken by ministers at AMCOW-6. The key decisions contained in the declaration relate to the following over-riding themes:

- further engaging in regional integration processes and involving all African countries;
- strengthening AMCOW governance structures, and the technological and technical capacities of its organs, including the Secretariat, and the effective implementation of decisions and the work programme;
- consolidating and coordinating existing regional and international partnerships, as well as identifying and engaging in new partnership arrangements;
- securing self-reliance regarding means of implementing decisions, while counting on international solidarity for augmenting efforts and resources; and
- promoting and monitoring actions on the MDGs related to the water and sanitation sectors in Africa, and enhancing AMCOW's capacity to catalyze the necessary measures.

On governance, institutional and operational matters, AMCOW decides, *inter alia*, to:

- continue progress made by the AU Commission toward integrating AMCOW into an STC;
- strengthen subregional presence and structures;
- circulate the AMCOW-AU MoU to member states;



Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, incoming AMCOW President and Republic of Congo Minister of Energy and Water

- rotate the AMCOW presidency in the following order: Northern Africa; Western Africa; Eastern Africa; with Southern Africa assuming the presidency following the Republic of Congo representing Central Africa;
- request the subregional Vice-Presidents to initiate consultations with subregional communities with a view to reaching a formal agreement on collaboration of their respective water units with AMCOW; and
- enhance AMCOW's relations with youth, women and parliamentarians.

On financial matters and means of implementation, AMCOW decides to, *inter alia*:

- form a subcommittee on developing a resource mobilization strategy; and
 - write to all member states affirming that contributions from member states should continue to be remitted even if AMCOW is integrated into the AU as an STC.
- On initiatives, AMCOW decides to, among other matters:
- endorse the proposal to launch and institutionalize an annual African water week;
 - hold the 2007 African Water Week, hosted by the AfDB, in Tunisia in 2007 and in Kenya in 2008;
 - take the necessary actions to prepare for the fifth World Water Forum;
 - enter into an MoU with the World Bank Water and Sanitation Programme, outlining areas of cooperation;
 - enter into an MoU with GWP, spelling out areas of cooperation;
 - consider the proposal to jointly host a water infrastructure financing meeting with the AfDB in 2008;
 - promote the institutionalization of groundwater management by river basin organizations to ensure regional ownership; and
 - initiate a rainwater harvesting programme within AMCOW to promote best practices.

REPORT OF FORUMS AND SIDE EVENTS

YOUTH FORUM ON WATER

A Youth Forum was held on Monday, 28 May, at which local children: discussed water supply and sanitation issues and the role of AMCOW; engaged in water-related educational activities; met with outgoing AMCOW President Maria Mutagamba; and prepared a statement to be presented to AMCOW-6.

Facilitator of the forum, Annika Schabbauer, UNICEF/Integrated Family Development Initiative, highlighted the importance of water in everyday activities and the key role that children can play in improving water supply and sanitation in Africa. Oumar Ndiaye, Senegalese Ministry of Water, discussed the problems of drought and desertification in Africa, stressing the need for good water management and noting the importance of youth in addressing these challenges.

The children were divided into groups, in which they: created wall hangings depicting personal interpretations of threats, needs, opportunities and aspirations regarding water issues; played games and performed water-related experiments;



Children constructed models of human interventions in the water cycle during the Youth Forum on Monday.

and constructed a three-dimensional model of human interventions in the water cycle, including a model village, a spring and a borehole.

In the afternoon, the children viewed a presentation on the MDGs, and were visited by outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, who highlighted the links between clean water, sanitation, land degradation, health and economic prosperity, and expressed the need for youth to engage with these issues. Outgoing President Mutagamba stressed the importance of youth communicating, both at home and at school, the need to address water problems. She emphasized that water is a finite resource, but because demand is growing, the need to preserve water resources is critical.

The children prepared inputs for a statement to be presented at AMCOW-6, focusing on: maintaining and improving water treatment facilities; facilitating the provision of drinking water and reducing its cost; and supervising entities charged with the treatment and distribution of safe drinking water.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA FORUM

A Civil Society and Media Forum convened on Monday, 28 May and Tuesday, 29 May, during which participants exchanged views and experiences relating to water supply and sanitation issues in Africa, and prepared a statement for presentation at AMCOW-6.

OPENING SESSION: After the forum was opened by its facilitator, Jamillah Mwanjisi, ANEW, Francis Bougaire, AMCOW Secretariat, provided an overview of AMCOW's aims and organizational structure. He stated that while ministers responsible for water have a duty to work towards continent-wide water reform, civil society has a corresponding responsibility to reinforce these reforms at the regional and subregional levels.

Simon Thuo, GWP - Eastern Africa, stressed the importance of participatory decision making in achieving the MDGs, highlighted the value that working with AMCOW at the regional level adds to GWP's work, and welcomed this "mutually reinforcing relationship." Evariste Kouassi-Komlan, Regional Centre for Water Supply and Sanitation (CREPA), highlighted CREPA's strategies, including developing appropriate technologies, participatory approaches and alternative funding mechanisms, and presented a review of CREPA's programmes. Edward Kairu, ANEW, explained that his organization's work focuses on sustainable management

of water resources, water supply and sanitation, and achieving the MDGs and WSSD targets. He said ANEW facilitates coordination of diverse civil society voices on water issues, and has networks with civil society organizations in over 50 countries.

Discussion: Participants discussed, among other issues: overcoming the dominance of scientists and researchers in the water sector; ANEW's involvement in Northern and Central Africa; partnerships between ANEW and the media; improving water education; IWRM at the local level; and using water to overcome conflict.

CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT: Goretti Nassanga, Makerere University (Uganda), highlighted how journalists and civil society organizations, acting collectively, can influence the decision making process to bring about positive environmental outcomes. Frank Habineza, Nile Basin Discourse Forum - Rwanda, explained that his organization, which is active in ten Nile Basin countries, seeks to raise awareness of, and enhance cooperation with, Nile Basin projects and to engage in poverty reduction strategies. He highlighted activities undertaken and key achievements, such as the establishment of a discussion forum website and interactive radio debates on Nile Basin issues.

Desto Demessie, Ethiopian Kale Heywot Church, explained that his organization provides self-help programmes to groups living in the poorest areas to reverse the "dependency syndrome." Arguing that civil society must win the respect of governments rather than demand it, he exemplified how groups working on water issues in Ethiopia collaborated on policy proposals, which led to a coordinated approach and enhanced dialogue between civil society and government.

Malick Gaye, Environment and Development of the Third World (ENDA), called for the increased provision of microcredit to individuals and community-based organizations to replicate successful examples already undertaken. He argued that NGOs should be strengthened and that the media should be trained to maximize civil society's impact on the policy process. Evariste Kouassi-Komlan, CREPA, discussed the development of more equitable and participatory water policies and strategies. He said policies must address equity issues and take into account the needs of stakeholders. He stressed the important role of lobbying governments and underscored the value of integrating the work of diverse sectors that deal with water issues.

Discussion: Participants raised a number of issues, including: how to reach the poorest of the poor, particularly the urban poor; consulting women's organizations when developing policies; training government representatives to



Goretti Nassanga, Makerere University (Uganda)

ensure that equitable policies are developed; and increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of networks. Participants urged the making of a strong statement that specifies targets and means of achieving those targets, submitting concrete recommendations to AMCOW and using the best approach to ensure that the measures proposed in the statement are implemented.

PREPARATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA STATEMENT TO AMCOW-6: On Tuesday morning, civil society and media participants met in parallel to draft inputs to their statement. In the afternoon, they convened to further discuss the draft statement, before the forum was closed by outgoing AMCOW President Mutagamba, who encouraged media and civil society involvement in promoting water issues.

Statement: The statement as drafted underscores the role of civil society and the media in contributing to the achievement of the water-related MDGs and targets. On institutional issues, it calls on AMCOW to include participation of all stakeholders in the work of its subregional entities, the TAC and the ExCom, and to nominate a civil society and a media representative to the TAC. On financial mechanisms, it requests AMCOW to allocate funds to civil society organizations, the media and women's groups. It also calls on AMCOW to support community empowerment and partnership building with civil society organizations and the media.

SIDE EVENTS

Three side events were held on Thursday, 31 May. Two events, on "Ground Management in Africa" and on "Promotion of Rainwater Harvesting in Africa," took place in the morning, while an event on "The Congo Basin" was held in the afternoon.

GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA: Eberhard Braune and Yongxin Xu, both from the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, gave a presentation on "Groundwater Management in Africa." Explaining that, excluding polar ice caps, groundwater accounts for 97% of all freshwater worldwide, they demonstrated its importance for Africa, especially for mitigating against the impacts of drought. Presenting the "UNEP-UNESCO Groundwater Initiative," they detailed its aims, which include: raising awareness; developing capacity; transferring knowledge; and creating a multiplier effect through NEPAD centers of excellence. Eberhard Braune and Yongxin Xu concluded by urging the creation of an African groundwater commission.



L-R: Eberhard Braune and Yongxin Xu, University of the Western Cape, South Africa

PROMOTION OF RAINWATER HARVESTING IN AFRICA: Halifa Drammeh, UNEP, highlighted the potential of rainwater harvesting in Africa and expressed hope that events such as the African Water Week would bring it wider attention. Elizabeth Khaka, UNEP, explained how a recent

study by UNEP and the International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) demonstrates that Africa's rainfall potential is sufficient to meet the water and food needs for nine billion people.

THE CONGO BASIN: Benjamin Ndala, Secretary-General, International Commission of the Congo-Oubangui-Sangha Basin (CICOS), emphasized that his organization aims to promote the sharing of water resources among various water users and to guarantee the preservation of the basin's natural heritage. Noting challenges faced in the Congo Basin, including risks of human and environmental disasters, erosion causing the silting of ports and channels, and threats to food security, Benjamin Ndala described regional and international cooperative efforts undertaken by CICOS to address these challenges. Albert Pandi, CICOS, reviewed monitoring and evaluation efforts that are being undertaken in the basin, noting that water levels in recent years have been low and that more research is needed.

Discussion: Libya and Algeria highlighted the important role of groundwater resources in their respective countries. Libya explained that it had developed technologies for its exploitation and management, which it could share with interested countries. Tanzania emphasized the importance of awareness raising and capacity building, and stressed the need for developing relevant hydrological maps to determine the location of groundwater resources and for developing the capacity to assess these resources. The AfDB outlined several AWF initiatives on water harvesting in Africa, including a water harvesting pilot project in Rwanda. Namibia discussed the benefits of IWRM, highlighting basin and aquifer water management. Kenya observed that understanding of the complexity of groundwater resources is limited and that surface water resources are concentrated in limited areas.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

SEVENTH WORLD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF BASIN ORGANIZATIONS:

The seventh World General Assembly of the International Network of Basin Organizations will take place in Debrecen, Hungary, from 7-9 June 2007. The World General Assembly will be organized around four strategic topics for the implementation of river, lake and aquifer basin management: prevention and management of the extreme climate phenomena of floods and droughts; transboundary basin management; monitoring networks, reporting, and inter-collaboration; and preparation of action plans for basin organizations and their financing. For more information, contact: Permanent Technical Secretariat; tel: +33-1-44-90-88-60; fax: +33-1-40-08-01-45; e-mail: inbo@wanadoo.fr; internet: http://www.inbo-news.org/ag2007/index_eng.htm

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON IMPROVING GLOBAL HEALTH THROUGH SAFE WATER: This workshop will take place in Hamilton, Canada, from 9-11 June 2007. It will aim to analyze the linkage between human health and wellbeing and the provision of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. For more information, contact: Conference

Secretariat; tel: +1-905-525-9140; fax: +1-905-529-4261; e-mail: conference@inweh.unu.edu; internet: <http://www.inweh.unu.edu/inweh/Health/HealthWorkshop2007.htm>

WATER FOR A CHANGING WORLD - ENHANCING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY SYMPOSIUM:

This symposium will be held in Delft, the Netherlands, from 13-15 June 2007. On the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, UNESCO-IHE is organizing the symposium to formulate recommendations on three themes related to "Enhancing Local Knowledge and Capacity": knowledge for development; knowledge generation and innovation; and knowledge sharing. The discussions will be framed by five leading water-related themes: water security; environmental integrity; urbanization; water management and governance; and information and communication technologies. For more information, contact: Nicolas Dickinson; tel: +31-15-2151-715; fax: +31-15-2122-921; e-mail: n.dickinson@unesco-ihe.org; internet: <http://www.unesco-ihe.org/news/symposium.htm>

NINTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AU

ASSEMBLY: The ninth Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly will take place in Accra, Ghana, from 25 June to 3 July 2007. The meeting will be devoted to a "Grand Debate on the Union Government," and will include the fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee, from 25-26 June, and the eleventh Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, from 28-29 June. For more information, contact: AU Commission; tel: +251-11-551-7700; fax: +251-11-551-7844; e-mail: dconference@africa-union.org; internet: <http://www.africa-union.org>

GEF BIENNIAL INTERNATIONAL WATERS

CONFERENCE: The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Biennial International Waters Conference will be held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 31 July to 3 August 2007. The conference will seek to: share experiences and innovative practices among GEF's Global International Waters portfolio; promote learning and capacity building; develop strategies to enhance stakeholder collaboration; and encourage GEF International Waters projects to apply evolving GEF policies and procedures during implementation. For more information, contact: Mindy Butner; tel: +1-703-379-2713; fax: +1-703-820-6168; e-mail: iwc2007@gef.org; internet: <http://www.gef.org/iwc4/index.cfm>

WORLD WATER WEEK IN STOCKHOLM 2007: PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS ON WATER - STRIVING FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN A CHANGING WORLD: The "World Water Week in Stockholm 2007" will take place from 12-18 August 2007 in Stockholm, Sweden. It will scrutinize progress on water-related developments, anticipate and promote prospects for achieving a desirable future and look to renew partnerships for sustainable development. The overall theme of the event is "Progress and Prospects on Water - Striving for Sustainability in a Changing World." For more information, contact: Conference Secretariat; tel: +46-8-522-139-60; fax: +46-8-522-139-61; e-mail: sympos@siwi.org; internet: <http://www.worldwaterweek.org/>

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SANITATION 2008: The year of 2008 has been designated as the UNESCO International Year of Sanitation. Focus areas will include: raising awareness of the importance of sanitation and its impacts on achieving other MDGs from the perspectives of hygiene, household sanitation and wastewater; encouraging governments and their partners to promote and implement policies and actions for meeting the sanitation target; and mobilizing communities, particularly women's groups, towards changing sanitation and hygiene practices through sanitation and health education campaigns. For more information, contact: UN DESA Division for Sustainable Development, tel: +1-212-963-8102; fax: +1-212-963-4260; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/sanitation/iys.htm>

EXPO ZARAGOZA 2008: WATER AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: This expo will be held in Zaragoza, Spain, from 14 June to 14 September 2008. The three-month public event, which has as its theme "water and sustainable development," is expected to attract a large audience, and will feature a specially-constructed "Water Tower" that will have a capacity of 1630 visitors per hour. For more information, contact: Expo Zaragoza 2008; tel: +34-9-76-70-20-08; fax: +34-9-76-20-40-09; internet: <http://www.zaragoza2008.com/>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GROUNDWATER AND CLIMATE IN AFRICA: This conference will take place in Kampala, Uganda, from 25-28 June 2008. It is being organized by the University College London (UK), the Directorate of Water Development of Uganda and UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme. The conference seeks to bring together water and climate scientists from research and academic institutions, government departments and the private sector, as well as representatives from international agencies and donors, to share knowledge and expertise and to improve current understandings of the impacts of climate variability and change on groundwater resources in Africa. For more information, contact: Conference Secretariat; e-mail: info@gwclim.org; internet: <http://www.gwclim.org/>

THIRTEENTH WORLD WATER CONGRESS: The thirteenth World Water Congress will be held in Montpellier, France, from 1-4 September 2008. The congress will aim to enhance knowledge and raise global consciousness of the impact of global changes on water resources. Its main themes will be: water availability, use and management; towards the future: water resources and global changes; climate change and disasters; the development of water resources and infrastructure; water governance and water security; water conservation and demand management; financing water development and capacity building; and capacity building in developing countries. For more information, contact: International Water Resources Association (IWRA); tel: +33-4-67-61-29-48; fax: +33-4-67-52-2-29; e-mail: wwc2008@msem.univ-montp2.fr; internet: <http://wwc2008.msem.univ-montp2.fr/>

FIFTH WORLD WATER FORUM: The fifth World Water Forum will be held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 5-22 March 2009. The theme of the forum will be "Bridging the Divides for Water," which refers to bridging the divide between rich

and poor, and the developed and developing world, to enhance understanding between water users, decision makers, experts and water practitioners at all levels. For more information, contact: Forum Secretariat; e-mail: dilekkayis@dsi.gov.tr; internet: <http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/index.php?id=6>

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific states
AfDB	African Development Bank
AMCOST	African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
ANEW	African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation
AWF	African Water Facility
AU	African Union
CREPA	Regional Center for Water Supply and Sanitation
ENDA	Environment and Development of the Third World
ExCom	Council of Ministers and Executive Committee (AMCOW)
GWP	Global Water Partnership
ICRAF	International Center for Research in Agroforestry
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (WSSD)
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PANAFCON	Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water
REC	Regional Economic Communities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
STC	Specialized Technical Committee (AU)
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee (AMCOW)
UNSGAB	UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



Dancers performed for the delegates during the meeting.