

AMCOW ExCom Briefing Note

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/AFRICA/WATER/AMEXCO/](http://www.iisd.ca/AFRICA/WATER/AMEXCO/)
 VOLUME 4 ISSUE No. 1, THURSDAY, 18 DECEMBER 2008

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERS' COUNCIL WATER: 24-28 NOVEMBER 2008

The Executive Committee of the African Ministers' Council Water (AMCOW) met from 24-28 November 2008 at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, Kenya, under the theme "Carrying forward the Sharm El Sheikh Declaration and Commitments on Water and Sanitation (adopted by the African Union Summit, Egypt, June 2008)."

The week's events included meetings of the: AMCOW Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) from 24-25 November; AfricaSan Taskforce on the eThekweni Declaration on 26 November 2008; Steering and Coordination Committees for the African Preparatory Process for the 5th World Water Forum on 26 November; G8 and AMCOW Dialogue session on 26 November 2008; and AMCOW Executive Committee (ExCom) from 27-28 November.

The ExCom adopted recommendations made by the TAC on: the elements of the plan of action for the implementation of the Sharm El Sheikh Declaration and commitments on water and sanitation; the proposed Pan-African mechanism for the monitoring and evaluation of progress in the water and sanitation sector at the country, sub-regional and regional levels; the implementation and coordination of commitments relating to water; the proposals by the Kenyan government for the hosting arrangements of the second Africa Water Week; AMCOW's strategy for strengthening the AMCOW/G8 partnership; AMCOW's strategy for the high level conference on water for agriculture and energy; Africa's road map for the World



A group photo of the participants of the AfricaSan taskforce meeting that was held as part of the Technical Advisory Committee meeting

Water Forum; the strategy and road map for the implementation of the eThekweni Declaration; the road map for accelerating the implementation of the decisions of the sixth session of AMCOW; measures for the restructuring of the AMCOW Executive Committee, strengthening AMCOW's subregional presence and bringing into full operation the secretariat of AMCOW located in Abuja, Nigeria; the chairmanship of the African Ground Water Commission and related arrangements; and the outcomes of the ninth meeting of the Governing Council of the African Water Facility.

This African Regional Coverage Briefing Note summarizes the ExCom's recommendations.

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The *AMCOW ExCom Briefing Note* 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 Tallash N. Kantai and Richard Sherman. The *AMCOW ExCom Briefing Note* is part of IISD Reporting Service's African Regional Coverage (ARC) Project in partnership with South Africa's Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), the UN Environment Programme's Regional Office for Africa (UNEP ROA) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. 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 the *AMCOW ExCom Briefing Note* has been provided by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the International Development Research Centre, Canada, through the African Regional Coverage Project for IISD Reporting Service's 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 *Briefing Note* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD. Excerpts from the *Briefing Note* may be used in other publications with appropriate academic citation. Electronic versions of the *Briefing Note* are sent to the electronic distribution list (in HTML and PDF formats) and can be found on the Linkages WWW-server at <http://www.iisd.ca/afrika/>. For information on the ARC, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11A, New York, New York 10022, United States of America.



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.

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.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATIONS

ELEMENTS FOR THE PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SHARM EL SHEIKH DECLARATION AND COMMITMENTS ON WATER AND SANITATION

The eleventh AU Summit took place from 24 June to 1 July 2008 in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt, under the theme 'Meeting the MDGs on Water and Sanitation.' The AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted a Declaration entitled the Sharm El-Sheikh Commitments for Accelerating the Achievement of Water and Sanitation Goals in Africa. In the declaration

(Assembly/AU/ Decl.1 (XI)), the Assembly committed to: increase efforts to implement past declarations related to water and sanitation; raise the profile of sanitation by addressing the gaps in the context of the 2008 eThekweni Ministerial Declaration on Sanitation in Africa adopted by AMCOW; and address issues pertaining to agricultural water use for food security as provided for in the Ministerial Declaration and outcomes of the AWW-1. The Assembly also committed, *inter alia*, to:

- develop and/or update national water management policies, regulatory frameworks, and programmes, and prepare national strategies and action plans for achieving the MDG targets for water and sanitation over the next seven years;
- ensure the equitable and sustainable use, as well as promote integrated management and development, of national and shared water resources in Africa;
- put in place adaptation measures to improve the resilience of African countries to the increasing threat of climate change and variability to water resources and capacity to meet the water and sanitation targets;
- mobilize increased donor and other financing for the water and sanitation initiatives including national projects and rural water and sanitation initiatives, the African Water Facility, Water for African Cities programme and the NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility, as committed in the Group of Eight Industrialized Countries (G8) initiatives on water and sanitation;
- promote effective engagement of African civil society and public participation in water and sanitation activities and programmes;
- strengthen AMCOW as a key regional mechanism, and other regional stakeholders, as relevant, for promoting cooperation on water and sanitation;
- strengthen AMCOW's initiative on sustainable management of water resources, to implement its roadmap for the African Groundwater Commission; and
- call on African Ministers in charge of water and finance, in collaboration with the AfDB and development partners, to hold a meeting of Ministers of Water and Finance to develop appropriate financing policies.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom endorsed the integration of the AU Commission's roadmap into the AMCOW triennial work programme, and directed the Executive Secretary to ensure the integration as a key component of the AMCOW Secretariat's work programme. The ExCom also directed the Executive Secretary to distribute the roadmap and work programme to AMCOW's subregional vice-presidents and through them to the other AMCOW members as well as to the regional economic communities (RECs). The ExCom further requested AMCOW to submit to the AUC an annual progress report on the implementation of the Sharm el-Sheikh Declaration, in order to bring it to the attention of the Heads of State and Government at their July 2009 Summit.

PAN-AFRICAN MECHANISM FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The first AWF Governing Council meeting (8 July, 2005) agreed that M&E, and information and knowledge management should be one of the priority areas of intervention for the AWF. The AWF's strategic approach calls for: the development of a framework for coordinated and concerted actions among national and regional partners in M&E for water resources management

outcomes at the country and regional levels; country-led M&E functions to produce monitoring data and evaluations that are credible, valid and useable; and regional M&E processes.

The Tunis Regional Consultative Meeting took place from 21-22 September 2006, in Tunis, Tunisia, and resulted in the adoption of the Tunis Action Plan. Among the key messages agreed to at the meeting, participants stressed that AMCOW, AU-NEPAD and African leaders should be committed to enable sustainable funding for water sector M&E, and adopt a Peer Review approach for M&E in the water sector M&E. The meeting proposed that the AWF undertake a rapid Pan-African assessment of M&E in the water sector, establish a stakeholder M&E Working Group, and prepare a detailed action plan that includes implementation milestones and budget.

Noting that implementation of the AWF initiative on M&E was underway, including the decisions of the Tunis meeting, the Council at its sixth Session agreed to: undertake a comprehensive assessment of existing M&E systems at the national and sub-regional and regional level; support a programme for strengthening national M&E capacity; harmonize and coordinate M&E activities; and build on existing M&E systems rather than create new ones.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom endorsed the finalization of the M&E report based on comments from the M&E working group and that the report be submitted to AMCOW for consideration as soon as possible. The ExCom also called for accelerated support to the AWF for the development of subregional mechanisms in order to show concrete results by 2010.

IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATION OF COMMITMENTS RELATING TO WATER

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.

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.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom endorsed AMCOW taking steps towards the prioritization of water and sanitation in national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), continued advocacy to support the RWSSI at the all levels, and increased synergy

between the Infrastructure Consortium of Africa (ICA) and AMCOW and use of ICA data in policy and strategy development and implementation plans.

AWW-2

At AMCOW-6, the Council decided to launch and institutionalize an annual African Water Week (AWW). The Council further decided that AWW- 1 would be hosted by the AfDB in Tunis in 2007, and requested the government of Kenya to host the event in 2008.

AWW-1 convened under the theme of 'Accelerating Water Security for the Socio Economic Development of Africa', took place from 26-28 March 2008 at the Sheraton Hotel, in Tunis, Tunisia. The meeting's three objectives were to provide a forum for key actors in Africa's water sector to discuss the opportunities and challenges of achieving water security for Africa's socioeconomic development, take stock of the status of achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and related targets on water in Africa, and make recommendations for consideration by the 2008 AU and G8 summits, and the 2009 Fifth World Water Forum (WWF-5).

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom invited South Africa to host AWW-2 in conjunction with the AMCOW-7 in 2009, and decided that Kenya would host AWW-3 in 2010.

AMCOW'S STRATEGY FOR STRENGTHENING THE AMCOW/G-8 PARTNERSHIP

The 2002 Summit of G8 Heads, held in Kananaskis, Canada, from 26-27 June 2002, 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. The 2003 Summit, held from 1-3 June, in Evian, France, 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. In response to proposal from the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), AMCOW-5 held from 4-6 November 2004, in Entebbe, Uganda, approved the German Transboundary Water Initiative within the framework of the G8 action plan for Africa relating to water.

At the 2008 Hokkaido Toyako Summit, held from 7-9 July 2008 in Japan, G8 leaders adopted a Declaration on Development and Africa. In the declaration, the G8 agreed to tackle the



development agenda with a multi-faceted approach, promoting synergies among MDG-related development sectors particularly among health, water and education, in a framework of sustainable development. The G8 called upon national governments to prioritize access to sanitation, building on the initiatives agreed at conferences on sanitation in Asia-Pacific and Africa. In this regard, they support the AMCOW's and the AfDB's leadership roles. They agreed to support efforts to improve the governance of the water and sanitation sector with a view to ensure that monitoring and reporting, at the international and national levels, are improved and that institutions responsible for delivering water and sanitation services are more capable, accountable and responsive to the needs of users.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the Excom agreed to embark on a joint effort and joint implementation strategy between AMCOW and the G8 to implement the AU and G-8 Summit commitments, including: identifying successful approaches, and modalities at country and regional level which could be multiplied and up-scaled as key pillars of a joint implementation framework; and submitting draft Terms of Reference for joint work (for consideration on the occasion of the G-8 expert meeting in Hokaido, Japan in December 2008).

AMCOW'S STRATEGY FOR THE HIGH LEVEL CONFERENCE ON WATER FOR AGRICULTURE AND ENERGY

As a follow-up to the Sirte Declaration of 2004 and the High Level conference on Food Security and the Challenges of Climate Change, held in Rome in June 2008, FAO, as the Chair of UN-Water in close collaboration with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, African Union, AfDB and ECA are convening a Conference to be hosted by Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in Sirte from 15-17 December 2008. The Conference will: assess the challenges faced by the agricultural sector, in view of the impending food crisis in Africa taking into account the strong linkages with energy and climate change; examine how investment in the rural space can reverse trends to obtain well balanced sub-sectors that offset production risks, close food production gaps and ensure food security; analyze bottlenecks and constraints to accelerated water development in support of the continent's food and energy needs; and propose ways to promote and secure investment in water to maintain food and energy security in the region.

As part of the preparatory process a series of consultations ensuring wide involvement, and facilitates a broad information and knowledge sharing among all the stakeholders. The Joint Meetings of AMCOW, AfDB and UN Water/Africa Partners held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 7-9 October 2008, recommended that AMCOW and FEMA play a significant role in steering the process and in the conduct of the conference itself, and invited the conference organizers to liaise closely with AMCOW and the Energy and Agriculture Ministers in the region in the preparatory planning process. The meeting further suggested that in the spirit of strengthened collaboration and participation of African actors, the organizers of the conference should involve UN-Water/Africa in the preparations.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom endorsed the recommendations that all AMCOW members participate in the conference, and that AMCOW's contribution to the conference include a report on its decisions related to the theme of the conference. The ExCom directed the Executive Secretary to cooperate with relevant institutions

to prepare AMCOW's contribution to the conference and to explore possibilities for arranging dialogues among participating Ministers of water, energy and of agriculture.

AFRICA'S ROAD MAP FOR THE 5TH WORLD WATER FORUM

The 5th World Water Forum on "Bridging Divides for Water" will take place from March 16-22, 2009 in Istanbul, Turkey. The Forum is the largest multi-stakeholder process among the water community. It will involve several thousands of stakeholders from a great variety of situations, cultures, perspectives, and responsibilities. The Forum's objectives are to use the political, thematic and regional processes to raise the importance of water on the political agenda, to deepen discussions towards solving international water issues, formulating concrete proposals, and generating political commitment. The main Forum event is composed of political, thematic and regional processes. Political processes are aimed at a Ministerial agenda on 'water adaptation management strategies for global changes including climate change/ variability', an Istanbul Urban Water Consensus among local authorities, and engagement of Parliamentarians on legislation, rights and decentralization issues. The Forum Organizing Committee has adopted six major themes, namely: global change and risk management; advancing human development and the millennium development goals, managing and protecting water resources and their supply systems to meet human and environmental needs; governance and management; finance; and education, knowledge and capacity development.

At AMCOW-6, the Council decided to create a task team to promote and follow up the implementation of the recommendations emerging from the regional document, thematic presentations and local actions. The Council further decided that AMCOW take the necessary actions to prepare for the 5th Forum.

The African Development Bank is the designated regional coordination institution following requests from AMCOW, the World Water Council and the 5th World Water Forum Secretariat.

The African Development Bank submitted the report of Stakeholder Kick-off Workshop on preparatory processes for Africa's participation in the 5th World Water Forum held in Tunis from August 8-9, 2008. The presentation highlighted the outcome from the stakeholder consultation and the recommendations made with respect to regional participation. The aim of the Africa preparatory process is to mobilize actors to act as a catalyst for specific African contributions to the Forum; to contribute to the thematic process by providing their region's perspectives on the issues and on the priority actions required, and to contribute to the political process through political mobilization. The Tunis workshop concretized the objectives and modalities of regional participation agreed on coordination structure, regional road map, content of regional paper, communication, resources mobilization and participation in side events. The proposed organizational structure consisting of the Regional Steering Committee, Regional Coordination Committee and Regional Secretariat and their composition and specific function was presented for endorsement.

The Joint Meetings of AMCOW, AfDB and UN Water/Africa Partners held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 7-9 October 2008, endorsed the Tunis stakeholder workshop outcomes and road map and agreed that this provides the required framework and guidance to undertake the regional preparatory process for Africa's participation in the Forum. The meeting also endorsed the proposed organization framework, its composition and the functions allocated to each unit. The meeting gave further

guidelines for organs of the regional process and the Secretariat to embark on resource mobilization, ensuring contribution to thematic and political processes, preparing the regional position paper with input from key stakeholders and organization of regional and sub-regional consultations processes, including parliamentarians and local authorities. The meeting brought to the attention of AMCOW the need for engagement in the Forum's political process and to create the necessary links with the Forum Secretariat and coordinator of this process.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom endorsed the regional roadmap for Africa's participation in the Forum and took note of the preparations towards Africa Day to be held during the Forum. The ExCom encouraged Ministers to participate in the Africa Day, and ensure national participation of public, private and civil society organizations and called for the setting of a date in January 2009 for the Regional Steering Committee to meet to endorse the regional document.

STRATEGY AND ROAD MAP FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ETHIKWENI DECLARATION

The second African Conference on Sanitation and Hygiene, AfricaSan +5, was held in Durban, South Africa from 18-21 February 2008. At the end of the event, the attending ministers jointly agreed to the eThekweni Declaration and Action Plan. In the eThekweni Declaration, ministers agreed to review, update and adopt national sanitation and hygiene policies within 12 months of AfricaSan 2008; establish one national plan for accelerating progress to meet national sanitation goals and the MDGs by 2015, and take the necessary steps to ensure national sanitation programmes are on track to meet these goals. They also agreed to establish specific public sector budget allocations for sanitation and hygiene programmes, including via an 'aspirational' allocation of at least of 0.5% of GDP for sanitation and hygiene. Ministers also agreed to support the leadership of AMCOW to track the implementation of the eThekweni Declaration and prepare a detailed report on progress in mid-2010, when AMCOW will provisionally host a follow-up AfricaSan event.

The Joint Meetings of the AMCOW, AfDB and UN-Water/Africa Partners, held from 7-9 October 2008, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, noted AMCOW's request to the WSP to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the Declaration and Action Plan, to be developed and undertaken under the leadership and ownership of AMCOW and member states. The meeting recommended that WSP develop partnerships with all relevant individuals and organizations to leverage capacities and resources for the effective implementation of the Declaration and Action Plan, including a comprehensive tracking system to monitor the implementation of the commitments, including clear indicators for progress evaluation and regular reports to be submitted to AMCOW, the International Task Force and the AfricaSan stakeholders and partners.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom called on the WSP and partners to develop a work programme for the implementation of the AfricaSan follow-up activities (Awards, communication and knowledge, M&E, monitoring commitments implementation, country action plans, International Task Force meeting, and preparation of the AfricaSan 03) and a funding proposal for the activities of implementation, including a staffing plan by the end of February 2009. The ExCom also requested the WSP and partners to: assist

countries to develop national AfricaSan action plans and conduct a peer review approach to enhance cross-learning and improve the sanitation profile; open an AfricaSan window within the AMCOW web site; report to AMCOW every 6 months on the implementation of the eThekweni commitments implementation using the proposed indicators and with the support of the AMCOW TAC members; work with relevant initiatives on M&E and to include sanitation and hygiene in all national M&E activities and programmes; hold a meeting of the AfricaSan International Task Force every quarter and a face-to-face meeting every 6 months; develop a concept note for AfricaSan 03 by the end the first quarter of 2009; and systematically follow up on country level implementation of the eThekweni Declaration.

AMCOW-6

AMCOW-6 took place from 30-31 May 2007, at the Palais du Parlement, in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. 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. 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 the water discourse.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom directed the Executive Secretary to prepare an integrated work plan and implementation roadmap, and to update the AMCOW triennial work programme.

AMCOW GOVERNANCE

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.



EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom requested the AMCOW President to establish a working group to review the MoU with respect to the AMCOW governance structures and make appropriate recommendations for a more efficient restructuring. On measures for the strengthening AMCOW's subregional presence, the ExCom directed the Executive Secretary to: develop strategies for strengthening the subregional presence of AMCOW; urged that all efforts be made to strengthen the function of AMCOW at the subregional level and significantly enhanced cooperation with the RECs as well as related water and sanitation institutions; and to consult with partners on how they can support this initiative. On measures to bring into full operation the Secretariat of AMCOW located in Abuja, Nigeria, the Committee recognized the urgent needs of the AMCOW secretariat, ranging from staffing, financial resources, communication, political commitment and operational issues and directed the Executive Secretary to prepare a plan for the implementation of the report findings, taking into account the process of finalization of the status of AMCOW as a Specialized Technical Committee of the AU. The Committee acknowledged that in order to facilitate servicing of the AMCOW work programme activities, following discussions with the UNEP Executive Director, they would need to explore modalities for authorizing the Executive Secretary to act as the focal requesting officer for utilization of the AMCOW Trust Fund.

CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE AFRICAN GROUNDWATER COMMISSION AND RELATED ARRANGEMENTS

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."

At AMCOW-6, the Council requested the TAC to: promote the institutionalization of groundwater management by river basin organizations to ensure regional ownership of the Initiative; create synergy with the RWSSI to ensure groundwater's inclusion in resource assessment and the sustainable management of groundwater resources; and become the custodian through whom the strategic initiative can be fast-tracked and a continent-wide impact can be ensured. The Council further requested the TAC to endorse and support efforts to secure core financial support from the AWF that could be leveraged to raise additional resources from development cooperation partners, such as the European Union. At the 2006 World Water Week in Stockholm, Sweden, AMCOW and partners adopted the Stockholm Message on Transboundary Groundwater for Africa, in which they called for support to improve cooperation on transboundary aquifers enhancing sustainable regional development and poverty alleviation by generating economic, social and ecological benefits for the people in African states. The message called on international financial institutions to acknowledge the importance groundwater plays for the development in Africa and support processes for its better understanding and development through funding of monitoring networks and exploration.

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.

At its meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya from 22-23 November 2007, the ExCom decided to establish a Commission on ground water management, and directed UNEP, in close cooperation with TAC and other partners to develop proposals for the consideration of the President of AMCOW regarding the overall institutional architecture of AMCOW to facilitate decision making on the governance of the Commission.

Participants to the International meeting on Groundwater and Climate in Africa, held in Kampala, Uganda from 24-27 June 2008, adopted the Kampala Declaration, in which they called upon the international community to support the AGWC and allied initiatives for coordinating research and advisory activities related to African groundwater. At AWW-1 in March 2008, AMCOW agreed to harness local groundwater resources to improve livelihoods and manage risks associated with climate change; and institutionalize dialogue on groundwater management in Africa and implement the AGWC roadmap. In the AU's 2008 Sharm El-Sheikh Declaration, Heads of State and Government committed to strengthen AMCOW's initiative on sustainable management of water resources, and implement the AGWC roadmap.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom welcomed the proposals for the establishment of an interim secretariat, and supported Kenya as the Commission's interim chair. The ExCom endorsed the suggestion that North Africa be the first Chair of the Commission and accepted the offer of UNESCO and UNEP to act as the interim Secretariat, with partners being encouraged to support the work of the Commission.

OUTCOMES OF THE NINTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL OF 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. At AMCOW-6, the Council decided to set up a committee of 10 AMCOW TAC members to work with the AWF and AfDB to review the AWF's operational programme 2005-2009. The Council also encouraged Ministers of Water to promote the AWF to their respective Ministers of Finance and Planning, and to international partners.

EXCOM RECOMMENDATION: In the recommendations, the ExCom welcomed the decision by Algeria to be the first African country to contribute to the Facility, and noted, with appreciation, the commitments from Spain, Senegal and the UK. The ExCom directed the Executive Secretary to monitor and report on the next ExCom Meeting, and called for continued engagement with donors, particularly the G8, to assure increased and sustained contributions. The ExCom also requested the AWF manager and the AMCOW Executive Secretary to undertake a resource mobilization tour to development partners in order to solicit support for both the AWF and the AMCOW Trust Fund and suggested that a special appeal to be made during the high-level conference to be held in Sirte, Libya.