



AMCEN Bulletin

A report of the twelfth Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
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SUMMARY OF THE TWELFTH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT: 7-12 JUNE 2008

The twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN-12) took place from 7-12 June 2008 at the Sandton Convention Centre, in Johannesburg, South Africa. AMCEN-12 began with an expert group segment, held from 7-9 June, which was immediately proceeded by a ministerial segment, held from 10-12 June. The first extraordinary meeting of the contracting parties to the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region (Abidjan Convention) was held in parallel, from 9-10 June.

AMCEN-12 opened with an expert group segment which met from 7-9 June to consider: a report by the AMCEN Secretariat on activities undertaken since AMCEN-11; implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); reports from the African Union Commission (AUC) and NEPAD; AMCEN's draft indicative work programme for the 2009-2010 biennium; and the launch of *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment*. The Expert Group convened in three working groups to prepare draft decisions for the ministerial segment on climate change, AMCEN's Work Programme for the 2009-2010 biennium, and policy-related matters.

The ministerial segment met from 10-12 June to engage in policy dialogue on: Africa's climate roadmap, from Johannesburg through Africa to Copenhagen; financing for NEPAD implementation; and Africa's vision for international environmental governance. It also considered draft decisions forwarded to it by the experts segment and adopted the AMCEN Johannesburg Declaration on the Environment for Sustainable Development. The decisions that were adopted focus on: implementation of the Action Plan of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; climate change, which includes sections on Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012, and on a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes; AMCEN's Constitution; the status and use of the general trust fund; chemicals and hazardous waste management; environmental education and technology-supported learning; Africa Environment Day; and

the Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) process and the Africa Environment Information Network (AEIN). Ministers also welcomed the publication of *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment* and *Environment and Development Decision Making in Africa 2006-2008*.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF AMCEN

AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was established in Cairo, Egypt in 1985 following the adoption of the Cairo Programme for African Cooperation. For over 20 years, AMCEN has facilitated the broadening of the political and public policy debate regarding Africa's environmental priorities and concerns. As the permanent forum of Africa's environment ministers, AMCEN aims to strengthen cooperation between African governments on economic, technical and scientific activities in order to halt the degradation of Africa's environment.

AMCEN's 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 that socio-economic development is realized at all levels; and ensure that agricultural activities and practices meet food security needs of the region.

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of AMCEN	1
AMCEN Milestones 2000-2008	2
Report of AMCEN-12: Expert Group Segment	4
Report of AMCEN-12: Ministerial Segment	12
A Brief Analysis of AMCEN-12	22
Upcoming Meetings	23
List of Abbreviations	24

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In addition, AMCEN's also serves as a forum to:

- provide continent-wide leadership by promoting awareness and consensus on global and regional environmental issues, especially those relating to international conventions on biodiversity, desertification and climate change;
- develop common positions to guide African representatives in negotiations for legally binding international environmental agreements;
- promote African participation in international dialogue on global issues of crucial importance to Africa;
- review and monitor environmental programmes at the regional, sub-regional and national levels;
- promote the ratification by African countries of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) relevant to the region; and
- build African capacity in the field of environmental management.

AMCEN consists of a bi-annual Ministerial Conference, Bureau, the AMCEN Trust Fund, the Regional Specialized Technical Committee (STCs), and a network of national focal points. UNEP's Regional Office for Africa (ROA) serves as the AMCEN Secretariat. AMCEN is currently holding discussions with the AUC on issues related to the harmonization and linkages between the Ministerial Conference and the Commission. The Bureau of AMCEN has also initiated steps to harmonize the roles of the AMCEN Secretariat, the NEPAD Secretariat and the African Union (AU). It is expected by many that AMCEN will ultimately become a STC of the AUC in line with the vision of the AU Summit's *Sirte Declaration* of February 2004.

AMCEN MILESTONES 2000-2008

ABUJA DECLARATION ON AMCEN 2000

The eighth session of AMCEN took place in Abuja, Nigeria, from 3-6 April 2000, and resulted in the Abuja Declaration on AMCEN 2000 containing a political commitment for a renaissance of AMCEN. Among the policy and institutional reforms, Ministers agreed to establish an intercessional meeting comprising of five Bureau members and five additional Ministers representing each subregion. They also agreed to establish the Inter-Agency Technical Committee, consisting of the Organization of Africa Unity, UN Economic Commission for Africa (UN ECA), African Development Bank (AfDB), UNEP, and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) as well as relevant subregional and regional organizations. Ministers also adopted five decisions regarding: programme priorities; global negotiations on the environment; building strategic partnerships; new and emerging environmental matters, and financial resources. Ministers further decided that UNEP should prepare an Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) report to provide a scientific assessment of the African environment and related policies and management programmes. During the 22nd session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC/GMEF), held in February 2003, in Nairobi, the AMCEN decision on the AEO process was endorsed.

KAMPALA DECLARATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT

The ninth session of AMCEN took place in Kampala, Uganda from 1-5 July 2002, and resulted in the adoption of the Kampala Declaration on the Environment for Development

and eight decisions. In the Declaration, Ministers, *inter alia*, endorsed: the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, including its annex on capacity building; and the African Common Position on the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). Adopted decisions included those related to the: role of AMCEN after the WSSD; framework of an Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; AEO report and the Africa Environment Information Network (AEIN); AMCEN Constitution; revised 1968 African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Algiers Convention); Rabat Declaration on the Environmentally Sound Management of Unwanted Stocks of Hazardous Wastes; Nairobi Declaration for Sustainable Development of African Mountain Regions; and resource mobilization and the state of the general trust fund for AMCEN. Ministers also officially launched the first AEO report.

AMCEN SPECIAL SESSION-2

The second special session of AMCEN took place in Maputo, Mozambique from 9-10 June 2003, and resulted in a ministerial declaration endorsing the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. The meeting also provided guidance to the AMCEN President regarding the modalities for submitting the Action Plan to the AU Summit. Ministers reaffirmed that the African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment in sub-Saharan Africa was an integral part of the Action Plan and its recommendations, and that projects should be entrusted to African institutions under the overall coordination of the Nairobi and Abidjan Convention secretariats.

ALGIERS DECLARATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE OF NEPAD

The first Partners' Conference on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD took place in Algiers, Algeria from 15-16 December 2003. The Conference adopted the Algiers Declaration for a Global Partnership on the Environment Initiative of NEPAD in which Africa's development partners expressed their appreciation for the efforts made by African governments in the formulation of their priorities in the Action Plan and their commitment to its implementation, and recommitted themselves to entering into structured dialogue aimed at identifying their respective roles and responsibilities in support of the implementation phase. Eighty-one selected projects, grouped into the following clusters, were presented to the Conference: land degradation and desertification and climate change, natural resources, watershed management; conserving Africa's wetlands; prevention, control and integrated management of invasive species; and capacity-building. The Conference also finalized and adopted the Strategic Plan to Build Africa's Capacity to Implement Global and Regional Environmental Conventions.

SIRTE DECLARATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The tenth session of AMCEN took place in Sirte, Libya from 29-30 June 2004, and resulted in the Sirte Declaration on the Environment and Development and the adoption of eight decisions. In the Declaration, Ministers, *inter alia*, agreed to develop subregional action plans as part of capacity building for the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment

Initiative of NEPAD; committed to promote thematic centers of excellence in support of capacity building, data collection and analyses, and identification of information gaps and needs in Africa; and welcomed the adoption of the revised Algiers Convention by the AU. Ministers also called on the AMCEN President to forge cooperative links with the relevant structures of the AU, its secretariat and its appropriate commissions, as well as with the NEPAD Secretariat with a view to harmonizing institutional arrangements. Ministers further committed to prioritizing and drawing synergies among the issues of chemical management, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) process, environmental impact assessment, the phasing-out of leaded gasoline, sustainable human settlements, post-conflict environmental assessment, health and environment and disaster risk management. Decisions were also adopted regarding: implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; AMCEN's role in the implementation of the Action Plan; the AMCEN Constitution; development of SAICM and other chemical and hazardous waste management initiatives; the phase-out of leaded gasoline in sub-Saharan Africa; a draft Africa strategy for disaster risk reduction; and Africa's submission to the High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on an Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building.

DAKAR DECLARATION FOR ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE OF NEPAD

The second Partners' Conference on the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD was held in Dakar, Senegal from 15-16 March 2005. The Conference concluded with the adoption of the Dakar Declaration for Enhanced Partnership in the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD in which Ministers, *inter alia*, reaffirmed that international support for the implementation of the Action Plan was essential. Ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation with development partners and all regional and subregional bodies in the pursuit of the successful implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD and to keep its implementation under review. Ministers further adopted proposals for the creation of an African Environment Facility at the AfDB, the utilization of the existing financial mechanisms within Subregional Economic Committees and other subregional organizations, and the utilization of inter-state mechanisms for the implementation of joint programmes where appropriate.

BRAZZAVILLE DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT

The eleventh session of AMCEN took place from 22-26 May 2006 in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. The session resulted in the adoption of the Brazzaville Declaration on Environment for Development, which seeks to further AMCEN's goal of halting environmental degradation and promoting sustainable development in Africa.

The session also adopted 11 decisions regarding: implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; institutional linkages and harmonization of activities in the context of the implementation of the NEPAD

Environment Initiative; the AMCEN Constitution; status and use of the AMCEN general trust fund; implementation of SAICM and other chemical and hazardous waste management initiatives; the AEO and the AEIN; integration of environmental dimensions into disaster risk reduction programmes in the context of the Africa regional strategy for disaster risk reduction; implementation of UNEP's Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building (Bali Strategic Plan); the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel initiative (GGWSS); resource mobilization for the implementation of environmental projects and programmes at national, subregional and regional levels; and the African Environment Facility. A resolution on the work of the Bureau was also adopted. During the meeting the second AEO report *Our Environment, Our Wealth* was launched.

Related to this, the eighth AU Summit, including the tenth Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council held in January 2007, adopted a decision on the Implementation of the AMCEN-11 Work Programme for 2007-2008 (EX.CL/Dec.322 (X)). In the decision, the Executive Council endorsed the decisions and the Brazzaville Declaration on the Environment; expressed support for the proposal to establish an African Environment Facility at the AfDB and called on the AfDB to facilitate the establishment of the Facility; and requested the Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and UNEP, as well as other development partners, to support AMCEN in the implementation of its programme of work for 2007-8.

DECLARATION OF THE AMCEN SPECIAL SESSION ON THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY'S (GEF) STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROGRAMME FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (SIP)

The AMCEN Special Session on the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) Strategic Investment Programme for Sustainable Land Management in sub-Saharan Africa (SIP) was held from 24-25 April 2007, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The session resulted in the adoption of a declaration in which Ministers committed to advance the sustainable land management (SLM) agenda at local, national and regional levels. Ministers also agreed to request the GEF Council to approve the SIP for SLM in sub-Saharan Africa, called on donors and development partners to join sub-Saharan Africa in scaling up SLM, and urged donors and development partners to align and harmonize their activities to build and share knowledge and develop investment to support African countries, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), NEPAD and the AU in their efforts to scale-up SLM in sub-Saharan Africa. Ministers also called for a concerted approach to deal simultaneously with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) national adaptation programmes of action and the action programmes of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), to be funded through the GEF. Ministers further called upon the GEF to simplify its procedures in order to facilitate speedy implementation of the SIP.

The session also adopted a Joint Partner Declaration of Collaboration in support of the Implementation of the SIP, which establishes core principles and actions in support of the Programme.

REPORT OF AMCEN-12: EXPERT GROUP SEGMENT: 7-9 JUNE

OPENING OF THE EXPERT GROUP SEGMENT

On Saturday, Peter Acquah, Secretary for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and Officer in Charge, UNEP ROA, opened the expert group segment of the 12th session of AMCEN (AMCEN-12) on behalf of the President of AMCEN. In his introductory remarks, Expert Group Segment Chair Alexis Minga, Director General, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo, thanked the South African government for its hospitality and underscored the importance of AMCEN-12.

In the opening presentation, Foday Bojang, Head of Division, Environment and Natural Resources, AUC, on behalf of the Director of the AUC, described progress towards formalizing the integration of AMCEN as an STC of the AU and noted that there are high expectations for the imminent conclusion of the process. He underlined that the AUC will continue to work with UNEP to provide assistance to AMCEN in the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. Bojang highlighted the status of various regional initiatives, including the GGWSS, Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDevAfrica), and collaboration with the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and African River Basin Organization (ANBO) to develop guidelines on the management of transboundary water resources.

Peter Acquah, UNEP, described AMCEN-12 as the most crucial meeting since AMCEN's inception because of the unprecedented environmental challenges facing Africa, especially due to climate change. He underscored the need for African environmental experts to ensure that the continent is not further marginalized in the face of this. Acquah outlined UNEP technical support to AMCEN member states and activities relating to resource efficiency, hazardous waste management, climate change, ecosystem management, disaster management and environmental governance. He urged participants to work towards providing Ministers with comprehensive draft decisions.

Nosipho Jezile, Acting Director General, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa, drew attention to constraints facing Africa relating to poverty and environmental degradation. She emphasized AMCEN's vital role in fostering policy dialogue and initiatives on addressing environmental challenges and climate change impacts. She said AMCEN-12 should be used as a platform to strengthen AMCEN's role as the strategic voice on African environmental issues.



Nosipho Jezile, Acting Director General, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: The expert group segment was conducted under the auspices of the Bureau of AMCEN-11, with Alexis Minga, Republic of Congo, as Chair and

Atwa Hussein, Egypt, as Rapporteur. Peter Acquah requested nominations for regional representatives to serve on the Bureau: North Africa elected Libya, West Africa elected Mali, and East and Central Africa called for further time to confer. Acquah stated that South Africa, as incoming AMCEN President, will automatically serve on the Bureau. Mali offered to host AMCEN-13.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND PROGRAMME OF WORK: The Expert Group adopted the agenda (UNEP/AMCEN/EGM/12/1 and 1/Add.1) without amendment.

CONSIDERATION OF THE SECRETARIAT'S REPORT

Peter Acquah presented the AMCEN Secretariat report on activities undertaken since AMCEN-11. He highlighted progress made in six thematic areas covered by the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, including: expanding GEF funding to cover land degradation; collaborating with the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention to develop implementation plans and conducting reviews of national wetlands policies; progress in implementing the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions on Marine, Coastal and Freshwater Resources; facilitating meetings to draw up common African positions in the UNFCCC process; and contributing to the development of subregional action plans for transboundary conservation and management of natural resources.

Acquah further highlighted actions in a number of cross-cutting areas, including: capacity building for negotiators and legislators on MEAs, improved coordination between AMCEN, UNEP, AUC and NEPAD; and linkages between health and the environment, chemicals management, environmental impact assessment, disaster risk reduction, and the flagship 10-year Framework on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). On the implementation of AMCEN-11 decisions, he highlighted work on the forthcoming publication of *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment (Africa Atlas)* and the third AEO. He concluded by noting the low level of member state contributions, which is negatively impacting follow-up activities, notably the formation of an interagency technical committee to guide the Secretariat's work.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE OF NEPAD

Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong, NEPAD, reported on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD (UNEP/AMCEN/EGM/12/4 and 4/

Add.1) and development of NEPAD's five subregional environment action plans. Highlighting the process leading to the finalization of the subregional action plans, she explained that a number of consultative meetings had been held, with the participation of environment ministers, experts, civil society organizations and other partners. Priorities identified included: combating desertification, land degradation and drought; invasive alien species (IAS); marine and coastal resource management; climate change; and cross-border



Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong, NEPAD

conservation. The subregional action plans were subsequently endorsed and adopted by the respective Ministers and resolutions were passed to facilitate joint implementation with subregional organizations. She stated that ministers called for, among other things: a network of national focal points for implementing subregional action plans; enhanced human and institutional capacity; resource mobilization; public-private partnerships; support for implementing and integrating action plans in national development strategies; and including environmental assets in national accounting systems.

PRESENTATION BY THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

Foday Bojang, AUC, presented an information note on the activities undertaken with regard to the 2004-2007 Strategic Plan, highlighting progress made in implementing the ClimDevAfrica Programme

and the completion of a draft implementation plan for the GGWSS in 2007. He also reported that a Programme Steering Committee for the Africa Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) Programme is now in place and that implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action for Disaster



Foday Bojang, Head of Division, Environment and Natural Resources, AUC

Reduction adopted by the 2nd World Conference on Disaster reduction in January 2004 is on track. He reported other positive developments, including: the strengthening of existing river and lake basin organizations under the umbrella of ANBO and its incorporation into AMCOW; the continuing process to integrate AMCOW and AMCEN as STCs to the AU; the launch of the Africa Environment Day, commemorated on March 3; and collaborative efforts with the European Commission to utilize the AUC as a hub for the enhanced implementation of MEAs in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.

In the ensuing discussion, a representative from Tunisia expressed his country's willingness to provide more information on the Tunis Declaration and Action Plan issued following the International Conference on International Solidarity for the Protection of Africa and the Mediterranean, held in 2007. Ethiopia emphasized the importance of engaging in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the UNFCCC's Kyoto Protocol. Mali stressed that, although there was potential incoherence of having separate World and Africa environment days, it provided an opportunity to highlight regional priorities. On the GGWSS, the Democratic Republic of Congo questioned the AU's role in the project and Nigeria called for the publication of the AU action plan to implement the GGWSS.

AFRICA: ATLAS OF OUR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Charles Sebukeera, UNEP, gave an overview of the forthcoming publication of *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment* (<http://www.na.unep.net/AfricaAtlas/>), which aims to strengthen the information base for decision making and programme implementation. He described the *Africa Atlas* as a "picture book," providing visual evidence of important changes

to environmental assets, using satellite data and supported by ground photographs. He noted that the focus is on Millennium Development Goal 7 (MDG-7) on ensuring environmental sustainability as well as on events that impact on Africa in the global context and those requiring attention in terms of regional cooperation. He observed that the *Atlas* highlights success stories and emphasizes key environmental issues in the region such as deforestation, threats to biodiversity, soil erosion and land degradation, pollution, desertification and overfishing.

During the ensuing discussion session, many participants commended the *Africa Atlas* publication. Responding to concerns about the accuracy of the *Africa Atlas* data, Sebukeera noted that while earlier images contained large margins of error, the latest satellite images are more accurate.

CONSIDERATION OF THE SECOND DRAFT REVISED CONSTITUTION OF AMCEN

Peter Acquah noted that consideration of the draft decision relating to the revised draft constitution (UNEP/AMCEN/12/7) would be deferred until the AU has concluded internal restructuring relating to consideration of this issue, which includes carrying out an audit and making an announcement relating to the AMCEN's status as an STC.

Participants discussed the merits of AMCEN becoming an STC of the AU, with Peter Acquah underscoring that its role and *modus operandi* would remain relatively unchanged.

STATUS OF THE GENERAL TRUST FUND FOR AMCEN

Regarding the general trust fund for AMCEN (UNEP/AMCEN/12/5), Peter Acquah underlined that, notwithstanding the recently improved financial situation, further monetary contributions are required. He reported that, for the first time, AMCEN had been obliged to pay for direct conference costs from its own resources, and stressed the need for AMCEN to become self-reliant.

CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT INDICATIVE WORK PROGRAMME OF AMCEN FOR THE BIENNIUM 2009-1010

Peter Acquah said that the draft indicative work programme (UNEP/AMCEN/12/3) envisaged continuing work on chemicals, environmental assessment, environmental education, early warning, environmental impact assessment and SCP. He highlighted other matters to be addressed by the programme, including: capacity building at the sub-regional and country level; resource mobilization; land degradation and desertification; marine coastal and freshwater resources under the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions; enhanced regional and sub-regional forest management; and support for UNFCCC implementation.

In the ensuing discussion, Foday Bojang stressed that the Bamako Convention lacks implementation and gave structural reasons for this. He also highlighted the capacity constraints facing the AU and urged countries to take initiative. Ethiopia



Peter Acquah, Secretary for AMCEN and Officer in Charge, UNEP ROA

underscored the importance and the difficulties involved in linking regional, subregional and national implementation. Noting the turnover of people involved in negotiating MEAs, Djibouti called for capacity building and the continued use of negotiators. He also called for more coordination meetings and proactive work on position papers to contribute to regional negotiating strategy. Peter Acquah stressed UNEP's support for the proposed African Climate Policy Centre, which is intended to promote the integration of climate change-related issues into economic policy.

WORKING GROUPS

On Sunday and Monday, three working groups (WGs) convened in parallel session to consider climate change and financing; AMCEN's work programme for the 2009-2010 biennium; and environmental policy and related matters. The WGs reported back to plenary on Monday afternoon and extended discussions followed the presentation of the reports.

WORKING GROUP I – CLIMATE CHANGE: WG-I considered climate change and was chaired by Alf Wills



Youba Sokona, Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS)

(South Africa) with Kwashirai Chigodora (Botswana) as Rapporteur.

On Sunday, Youba Sokona, Sahara and Sahel Observatory, presented a scoping paper on climate change adaptation in Africa, emphasizing AMCEN's potential role in linking national strategies to international agreements and connecting climate change negotiations with action across

the continent. He highlighted a number of Africa's needs, including capacity building to support adaptation planning and implementation and the development of strategies and measures to protect vulnerable regions, sectors and populations. He underscored the importance of moving from reactive adaptation to proactive policy strategies and plans.

Sekou Toure, GEF, explained that the GEF is focusing on carbon markets and other mechanisms to create financing opportunities for Africa. He highlighted the ancillary role that AMCEN could play by fostering a better understanding among ministers of carbon financial mechanisms. On funding, he noted the need to increase the level of resources available to those most affected by climate change and urged ministers to focus on securing predictable funding sources from the international climate change regime beyond 2012. Toure further highlighted improved streamlining and accessibility of GEF funding and noted the need for capacity building at the national level to access and use these resources.

Herbert Acquay, World Bank, discussed the development perspective of climate change adaptation in Africa in the context of the link between macroeconomic performance and climate variability, where economies are highly dependent on climate-related sectors. He discussed emerging priorities, such as: disaster risk management; scaling-up investment; renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies; and climate-proofing economic investments. On mobilizing financing for adaptation and mitigation he outlined existing World Bank instruments such as zero percent investment loans for low income countries, grants, risk management, and other financial

instruments. He highlighted the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and the proposed climate investment funds to bridge the funding gap from 2008-2012. Noting the high transaction costs of accessing funds, he acknowledged the need to streamline access to finance.

Hany Shalaby, AfDB, presented a strategic framework on access to energy, mitigation and risk management in the context of climate change and financial resources. He highlighted the AfDB's activities in the renewable energy sector, particularly regarding hydroelectric power. On adaptation, he discussed short- and long-term climate variability in addition to a strategic approach involving climate proofing.

Hammadi Bel Hardji Ali, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Tunisia, gave an overview of the Tunis Declaration and Action Plan on International Solidarity against Climate Change in Africa and the Mediterranean Region emanating from the International Conference on International Solidarity for the Protection of Africa and the Mediterranean Strategies held in November 2007. He explained that the declaration highlights a number of needs, including: combining adaptation and development strategies; reinforcing different support mechanisms; and enhancing stakeholder engagement.

Foday Bojang, AUC, presented the ClimDevAfrica Programme. He said the programme was developed to improve climate-related information and services to support sustainable development and the achievement of the MDGs. He highlighted challenges such as the lack of climate data in a usable format and weak information networks.

Jian Liu, UNEP, discussed financing climate mitigation for Africa. He explained that UNEP has taken the lead on assessing the impacts of, and adaptation to climate change and would pursue a regional approach to enhance key adaptive capacity through integrated planning, piloting and implementation.

Charles Akol, UN ECA, described the African Climate Policy Centre to be established under UN ECA. He said its objectives are to contribute to poverty reduction through climate change adaptation and mitigation in Africa, improve the capacity of countries to participate in multilateral climate negotiations and, enable them to benefit from emerging carbon markets.

A representative of the International Centre of Energy Environment and Development, on behalf of African civil society organizations, outlined a consultative process for promoting African interests within an international climate change regime beyond 2012, which includes: applying the polluter pays principle to historical and current greenhouse gas emitters; streamlining funding mechanisms; enhancing capacity



Participants during WG-I

for adaptation at all levels; strengthening and supporting civil society networks; and promoting debt cancellation to free-up funds for adaptation.

Following a general discussion, delegates turned to adaptation and mitigation issues. WG-I Chair Wills recalled a decision at the eighth AU Summit mandating AMCEN to address climate change, the Tunis Declaration and the establishment of a high level panel on climate change at the 10th AU Summit. He stressed the importance of articulating the “African voice” in future climate change negotiations, and proposed coordination meetings as a way to develop regional positions and strategies, and human resources to achieve this aim. In the ensuing discussion, UNEP highlighted the value of the African Climate Policy Centre, calling it a “one stop shop” for the region’s coordination of financial, environment and development policy relating to climate change.

On adaptation, South Africa stressed that while early warning systems, plans and response measures are important, economic resilience is critical. Zimbabwe called for localized forms of capacity building and knowledge management and stressed that cultural sensitivities should be considered. Malawi highlighted that land pressure in a number of African countries restricts availability of land for climate-related projects. UN HABITAT provided details on that organization’s support for local government as a component of its Cities and Climate Change programme

On mitigation, WG-I Chair Wills stressed the need for Africa to adopt a proactive approach and to access energy



WG-1 Chair Alf Wills (South Africa)

technologies. He also highlighted the need to foster technology transfer, and suggested incentive-based approaches to address African priorities.

A number of participants raised the issue of Africa’s limited participation in the CDM and questioned whether the region could play a role in determining the price

for carbon. Discussion also centered on the development potential of mitigation activities, biofuels, and achieving low carbon economies.

On Monday, WG-I met in the morning to consider two draft decisions: the first on Africa’s preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a new international climate change regime beyond 2012; and the second on a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes. Regarding the first draft decision, South Africa called for the word “new” to be deleted, while Nigeria preferred to retain it, asserting that the negotiation of a new agreement beyond 2012 provides the opportunity for Africa to articulate concerns and priorities. WG-I Chair Wills pointed out that the international regime beyond 2012 did not seek to replace agreed principles or open up the UNFCCC for renegotiation, adding that developing countries are seeking full implementation of existing obligations under the convention. Participants eventually agreed to “a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012.” On preparing for negotiations, Togo proposed language urging African countries to actively participate in international climate change negotiations, particularly the 3rd meeting of the *Ad hoc* Working Groups

in Accra, Ghana, and the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) in Poznan, Poland, in August and December respectively.

On the draft decision concerning a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, Zambia called for reference to technology transfer developed at the local level. Language was added to “enhance and support the research and development capacity in Africa to foster the development of clean technologies.” Participants also agreed on the need to develop human resources through, *inter alia*, focused training, mentoring and learning-by-doing approaches. Regarding capacity building, the Seychelles highlighted the need to establish regional centers of excellence to provide member states with research and other necessary support with regard to climate change adaptation. Participants also proposed other textual amendments, which WG-I Chair Wills said would be reflected in the revised draft decisions.

WORKING GROUP II: DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

FOR THE 2009-2010 BIENNIUM: WG-II, chaired by Mohamed Hamoud, Libya, with David Ombisi, UNEP, as



WG-II Chair Mohamed Hamoud (Libya)

Rapporteur, met on Sunday and Monday to consider the Work Programme for the 2009-2010 Biennium (UNEP/AMCEN/EGM/12/3).

On Sunday, WG-II addressed the annex to the Work Programme for the 2009-2010 Biennium which contains a table setting out: programme elements and overall cost estimates; main objectives and key components of the work programme; specific activities; and collaborators

or partners. On the role of AMCEN in the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, participants commented on efforts to prepare AMCEN member states for sessions of the UNEP Governing Council, Rio conventions meetings and chemicals conventions meetings. Djibouti mentioned the recent AU preparatory meeting on Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)-related topics in Bonn, supported by Germany, as an example to follow. Cameroon suggested text on strengthening negotiating skills especially on biodiversity-related topics beyond biosafety.

Participants also addressed the links between AMCEN and NEPAD. UNEP stressed AMCEN’s role in supporting inter-agency cooperation among AMCEN, AMCOW, the AU and NEPAD. At the practical level, it was pointed out that 68 projects, all regional in scope, had been identified at the Conference of African Ministers in February 2008 that are ready for implementation, pending funding availability. Uganda and Ethiopia noted their concern about the progress of project implementation. UNESCO highlighted its collaboration with AMCEN on coastal management related to the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions. Malawi, BirdLife International and others noted that AMCEN’s support for implementation should not be restricted to the Rio conventions, but should also include support for regional conventions.

On environmental law, the Democratic Republic of Congo suggested assessing Africa’s legal instruments. Kenya pointed to the importance of sharing environmental law information in Africa, and of enhancing access to such data. Cameroon



Participants during WG-II

mentioned UNEP's Registry of Environmental Conventions as a useful tool in this regard, and called for this document to be updated and widely circulated. UNEP drew attention to ECOLEX, a national and international legal resource website developed with IUCN and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). South Africa identified the importance of building legal capacity on access and benefit sharing and biosafety for the region. Cameroon noted that in addition to environmental inspectors, training for customs officials is imperative given their role in implementation.

On land degradation and desertification, Cameroon, supported by many, stressed that desertification is an important issue for countries. Cameroon and Ethiopia reported that they had adopted a national action plan in this regard. Senegal called for the expansion of the GGWSS.

The Democratic Republic of Congo drew attention to the links between mining and land degradation and noted that in time this may put areas at risk of desertification. Cameroon and Djibouti also expressed concern about the impact of mining activities on the environment and Cameroon further emphasized the importance of environmental assessments and audits.

Regarding coastal and marine ecosystems, Cameroon pointed out that, in addition to reference to the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions, the text should include reference to other conventions related to coastal and marine ecosystems. Djibouti added that reference should also be made to AMCEN supporting the Jeddah Convention, with WG-II Chair Hamouda adding that support should also be given to the Barcelona Convention for the Mediterranean.

Addressing forests and biodiversity, Djibouti called for the inclusion of other thematic areas in addition to protected areas. Cameroon called for the consideration of IAS as well as awareness raising on carbon sequestration to be included in the draft. Regarding climate change, Uganda cautioned against duplication of activities included in the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. Cameroon said that biofuels should be added, and Sudan emphasized the need for information sharing.



Henry Aryamanya-Mugisha (Uganda)

Turning to sound management and sustainable use of chemicals, South Africa, supported by others, called for implementation of the African Stockpile Programme and asked if nuclear waste should be included under this section.

Nigeria emphasized the need for creating synergies between governments in order to promote the sustainable use of chemicals on the continent.

On environmental and integrated assessment and early warning and environmental security, Egypt called for the strengthening of environmental indicators, while Sudan suggested that countries build on existing observatory systems to strengthen these indicators. BirdLife International proposed that stakeholder involvement be enhanced at all levels and South Africa stressed the need to link impact assessment with environmental law.

On SCP, the issue of capacity building in the Lake Victoria region drew comments from Djibouti and Cameroon, which wanted the programme expanded to benefit other African countries.

WGII then heard four presentations. Jonathan Allotey, Environment Protection Agency, Ghana presented on steps taken by his country to implement the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD and detailed Ghana's concerns about threats posed by IAS.

Fatoumata Keitoo-Ouane, Stockholm Convention, presented on sound chemicals management and public health, stressing that chemicals may have harmful effects, and emphasized the special vulnerability of poor people in this regard. She encouraged countries to become signatory to chemicals-related conventions and to increase their understanding of the processes to access technical and financial assistance. Keitoo-Ouane suggested that the AMCEN Johannesburg declaration include a request to make funds available for chemicals management.

Abiola Olanipekun, Ministry of Environment Housing and Urban Development, Nigeria, presented on opportunities and challenges arising from nanotechnology and manufactured nanomaterials. She emphasized the need for governments to develop effective frameworks for the responsible introduction of these materials, taking into consideration impacts on human health and the environment, by applying the precautionary approach and developing a global code of conduct.

Khathutshelo Tshipala, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), discussed the implications of locating the African Environment Facility within the DBSA. He noted that the Facility would have to be complimentary to other funding sources and that arrangements would be governed by certain terms and conditions including the Bank's mandate, adding that such a request could be pursued further with the DBSA.

On Monday, WG-II met to hear two presentations and consider draft decisions on: the status and use of the AMCEN general trust fund; environmental education; the AEO process and the AEIN; and chemicals management.

Onesmus Thiong'o, UNEP, presented on the financial status of the AMCEN general trust fund highlighting the fact that although income increased during the 2006-2007 period because a number of countries settled their outstanding contributions, real contributions decreased by 68%. Ethiopia suggested setting up a committee to investigate why governments are failing to contribute financially to AMCEN. In response, Egypt and Kenya stressed that AMCEN must persuade governments to provide timely and adequate funds. Eritrea suggested that AMCEN come up with a flexible payment schedule to assist countries to clear unpaid contributions. Uganda requested the Secretariat to provide a list of activities requiring funding. Cameroon proposed encouraging donor countries to contribute to the general trust fund.

Gerard Cunningham, UNEP, presented on mainstreaming environmental education and technology-supported learning in Africa. He highlighted different forms of “e-Learning,” the importance of linking it to environmental education and outlined various initiatives such as the e-Learning Africa series of conferences. He explained that UNEP is interested in using technology-supported education to raise awareness of environment and sustainable development issues, and as a tool to implement the Bali Strategic Plan.

Jane Gaithuma, BirdLife International, outlined her organization’s efforts to support the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. She highlighted the close connection between AMCEN and NEPAD objectives and BirdLife International’s work programmes and current projects, BirdLife’s contributions to the AEO, and its work on building Africa’s environmental expertise through internships and nongovernmental organization (NGO) training programmes. She concluded by urging AMCEN to: link livelihoods with conservation; carefully consider the implications of biofuel production on food security; support the ratification and implementation of the revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources; and recognize BirdLife International as a partner in the implementation of its work programme.

On the draft decision concerning environmental education, Cameroon proposed collaborating with the African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology (AMCOST). Reference was also added to working with UNEP and UNESCO as part of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. BirdLife International added language to enhance greater stakeholder involvement, and UNEP, reporting on outcomes from the recent third International Conference on Information and Communication Technology for Development Education and Training, held in Ghana, suggested establishing an African Environmental e-Learning Network.

Regarding the draft decision on the AEO process and the AEIN, participants welcomed the publication of the *Africa Atlas* and other processes generating African environment information. Uganda, supported by Nigeria, Sudan and others, urged UNEP to support subsequent editions of the *Africa Atlas*. Cameroon suggested requesting the UNEP Executive Director to liaise with the secretariats of relevant conventions and other international organizations to mobilize resources for the continuation of the AEO, AEIN and *Africa Atlas* processes.

During Monday’s lunch break, WG-II reconvened to consider two decisions, namely the draft decision on the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD and the draft decision on chemicals management. Nigeria proposed extensive amendments to the draft text on chemicals, including language to reflect: the development of an African regional plan of action and submissions for project funding requests under the SAICM Quick Start Programme; requests to governments



El Amin El Awad Hug Ahmed (Sudan)

to promote building national institutional capacity on sound chemicals management; requests for bilateral and multilateral donors and the GEF with support of UNEP to make funds available to support least developed countries to implement the Stockholm Convention and other chemicals management instruments; and requests to the AMCEN Secretariat in collaboration with others to periodically review progress on chemicals management. Taking into account the link between chemicals and public health, Nigeria proposed that the AMCEN President submit the subsequent decision to the joint conference of Health and Environment Ministers in Africa and the International Conference on Chemicals Management for further consideration.

WORKING GROUP III – POLICY AND RELATED MATTERS: WG-III met on Sunday and Monday to hear presentations, review the draft Johannesburg declaration, and consider two draft decisions: on the AMCEN Constitution and on Africa Environment Day. WG-III was chaired by Amadou Maïga, Mali, with Zaheer Fakir, South Africa, as Rapporteur.

On Sunday, WG-III Chair Maïga invited the Secretariat to present a brief overview of the draft Johannesburg declaration. Robert Wabunoha, UNEP, explained the process used to develop the draft declaration, noting that it is primarily based on African expertise. He explained that the draft declaration would be submitted to AMCEN’s ministerial segment for consideration, and subsequently to the AU Summit in July and the UN General Assembly’s high level segment on Africa in September.



WG-III Chair Amadou Maïga (Mali)

The draft declaration, contained: a general preamble; a section on progress made in implementing the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; an overview of eight key themes and cross cutting issues relating to environment and sustainable development; and concluding remarks.

During the discussion, Morocco, supported by many participants, stressed that the Ministerial declaration should be a brief political statement setting out the key priorities for African governments over the next biennium. Participants also highlighted the importance of sending a clear message to African heads of state and the international community.

WG-III then considered the language in the draft declaration. Regarding the preamble, Morocco highlighted the need to emphasize AMCEN leadership at the political level and to include priorities for implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. Morocco further proposed making reference to the links between poverty and sustainable development.

Turning to progress in implementing the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, the AUC stressed the need to include commitments on the financial obligations for African countries to implement the decisions taken, noting that past financial commitments have not always been honored. Swaziland, supported by several participants, pointed out that human and technological aspects are also important.



Participants during WG-III

On policy, advocacy and environmental law, South Africa, Morocco and several others suggested avoiding references to specific projects unless they are part of the AMCEN Work Programme. Several participants called for an emphasis on African-developed initiatives.

Regarding capacity building and technology support, South Africa requested language to underline their importance, and suggested that the outcome of the other working groups on these matters should be taken into account.

Regarding land degradation and desertification, Burkina Faso, supported by the GEF, called for an emphasis on broader research and monitoring of land degradation rather than a focus on specific technical tools. The AU called for mention of relevant African initiatives such as the AMESD programme and GGWSS, which were set up at the request of African countries to address these issues.

On conserving Africa's wetlands, the AU asked that the text recognize initiatives by individual African countries, and suggested that synergies between the Ramsar Convention and other conventions should be highlighted.

On prevention and management of IAS, the AUC emphasized the need to recognize ongoing initiatives in different countries. UNEP, opposed by South Africa, proposed linking this to the AUC proposed formulation relating to the Biosafety Protocol.

Turning to the conservation and sustainable use of marine, coastal and freshwater resources, UNEP stressed the need to highlight the slow pace of implementation of the Abidjan Convention. Morocco, supported by Ghana, highlighted the need for integrated management approaches for freshwater resources.

On combating climate change, South Africa suggested coordinating input on this section with WG-I. South Africa mentioned a request to the AUC to hold back-to-back meetings with the AU Summit in 2009 to enable the drafting of a common African position, and requested that the declaration mention South Africa's interest in hosting the UNFCCC COP 17 in 2011. Birdlife International proposed mentioning links to the CBD and the outcomes of its recent COP. South Africa also raised the issue of the financing gap to meet Africa's adaptation needs and called for enhanced regional cooperation in this area.

Regarding transboundary conservation or management of natural resources, several participants disagreed with a reference to forests, stating that it is just one of many shared resources. It was agreed that ongoing subregional initiatives on transboundary resource management should be highlighted in the final text.

WG-III considered the declaration's section on cross-cutting issues under two headings: capacity building and financing. Ghana called for stronger language on the need to mobilize

resources for capacity building. South Africa argued that current priorities of global financial arrangements are contributing to further marginalization of issues important to Africa and called for this to be reflected in the text. The UNCCD further emphasized the importance of operationalizing the African Environment Facility at the AfDB. Morocco underscored the need for Africa to allocate regional resources to finance its priority environmental issues, including exploring innovative funding mechanisms such as eco-taxes.

On Monday, WG-III reconvened to consider the revised draft AMCEN Johannesburg declaration, review two draft decisions, and hear presentations. Regarding the draft Johannesburg declaration, participants drew attention to several missing elements, including: the GGWSS and its potential for integrated implementation of the CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC; the threat of IAS; gender mainstreaming; and capacity building. Nigeria questioned whether the name of the declaration might cause confusion because of the similarity to WSSD's Johannesburg Declaration.

Regarding the draft decision on the AMCEN constitution, the AMCEN Secretariat recalled an earlier request to postpone consideration of this matter pending the outcome of the AU restructuring process. Delegates agreed to defer this until the next AMCEN session. On the draft decision on Africa Environment Day, the AUC clarified that since it emanated from an AU Summit decision, any amendment would necessitate a second AU decision.

WG-III also heard three presentations on new regional initiatives relating to the implementation of MEAs. Mohamadou Mansour N'Diaye, UNCCD, briefed participants on the roadmap for implementing the UNCCD-10 year strategic plan adopted at COP 8, and the alignment of desertification and climate change initiatives at national and regional levels taking into account the links between land degradation and climate change. In response to a question by Morocco on the connection to the GGWSS, N'Diaye confirmed that the UNCCD is in discussion with the AUC and other partners, and will continue to facilitate this process.

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, UNEP, discussed a new five-year European Commission-UNEP Programme to enhance the capacity of ACP countries to implement and enforce MEAs in four key areas. She reported that the project would strengthen the African hub at the AUC to coordinate, among other matters: the training of national and regional MEA negotiators; development and dissemination of policy guidelines; and harmonization of national reporting for MEAs.

Bather Koné, AUC, presented on the AU-GTZ Biosafety Initiative. He cited several achievements and ongoing studies on genetically modified commodities in Africa.

He noted a concrete outcome of the project is the decision by AMCOST to extend a budget line in 2008 to integrate the biosafety unit into the AUC. He highlighted the challenge of reaching a common position on biosafety, and the need to link biotechnology and biosafety.



Bather Koné, AUC

A representative of the African Network of Environmental Journalists urged AMCEN to recognize the work of the network in its resolutions, particularly its contribution to environmental awareness raising and behavioral change on the continent.

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUPS

WORKING GROUP I – CLIMATE CHANGE: On Monday afternoon, WG-I Rapporteur Kwashirai Chigodora



WG-I Rapporteur Kwashirai Chigodora (Botswana)

presented two draft decisions on: Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012; and the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, which contains an annexed indicative list of Africa's climate change decisions and an annexed indicative conceptual outline of a comprehensive framework

of African climate change programmes. He said the draft decision on the comprehensive framework had been drafted to avoid "reinventing the wheel" by acknowledging the range of climate change initiatives in Africa and creating a consolidated framework. He explained that the conceptual outline aimed to address gaps in African climate change programmes with the main issues identified as: adaptation; mitigation; and supporting and enabling measures consisting of building capacity, financing, and technology development and transfer.

On the comprehensive framework, Togo supported by Uganda and others, proposed strengthening language on financing to ensure adequate funding for activities within the framework of African programmes on climate change and other climate change activities. South Africa noted that financing should take into account existing as well as future programmes. A small group was then established to refine the text and incorporate other proposals.

Delegates subsequently accepted language on: strengthening and mobilizing capacities of existing facilities and institutions to address climate change; and mandating the AMCEN President to present progress in developing a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes to relevant AU and UN ECA conferences, to ensure the adequate financing of programmes under the framework. Participants also agreed to language requesting multilateral financial institutions and others to support the implementation of the comprehensive framework; and to invite these institutions and other development partners to take into account the special needs of Africa in ongoing decision making on international financing schemes and to streamline their procedures to improve access to finance. The two draft decisions were accepted with amendments in plenary.

WORKING GROUP II: DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE 2009-2010 BIENNIUM: On Monday afternoon, WG-II Chair Mohamed Hamouda outlined the work completed by the WG, including: deliberations on the draft indicative work programme for the biennium 2009-2010, particularly amendments to the annex setting out major objectives and key components, specific activities and collaborating partners. He then presented five draft decisions addressed by the WG, including on: the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of

NEPAD; the status and use of the AMCEN's general trust fund; chemicals management; environmental education; and the AEO process and the AEIN. He noted that an extensive review had taken place of the chemicals management draft decision.

The draft decisions on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, the status and use of the AMCEN general trust fund, and the AEO process and the AEIN were agreed with minor amendments.

Regarding the draft decision on chemicals management, the AUC suggested adding a reference to the Bamako Convention in addition to the international chemicals management conventions. An NGO proposed including text on prohibiting the dumping of chemicals and hazardous waste in Africa. Taking into account the scope of the draft decision, which extends beyond chemicals, the Seychelles suggested amending the title of the decision to also include hazardous waste. The draft decision was agreed on with these amendments.

On the draft decision regarding environmental education, UNEP recalled discussions within WG-II to amend the title to reflect the component on e-learning and technologies for learning. The decision was subsequently titled "Environmental Education and Technology-supported Learning" and was accepted with this amendment.

WORKING GROUP III – POLICY AND RELATED

MATTERS: On Monday afternoon, WG-III Rapporteur Zaheer Fakir reported that participants had considered the draft Johannesburg declaration, reviewed draft decisions on the constitution of AMCEN and on the commemoration of Africa Environment Day, and heard presentations by UNCCD, the EU-UNEP ACP project on capacity building for implementation of MEAs, and the AU-GTZ Biosafety Initiative.

Fakir noted that in addition to a general preamble, the draft declaration contains 35 operational paragraphs that highlight, *inter alia*: the leadership role of AMCEN; the need for continued implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD as the overall guiding framework for African environmental activities; the need to harmonize institutional arrangements, policies and programmes, and strengthen links between AMCEN and UN bodies; key MEAs of relevance to Africa; and required technical and institutional capacity building and financial mechanisms for the effective implementation of the identified actions.

The plenary discussed the draft declaration at length, and suggested amendments as well as substantive additions. New issues raised included the need to: mention the UN Decade for Education on Sustainable Development, and emphasize capacity building on technology-supported learning; strengthen language on strategic chemicals management; facilitate the continued production of the *Africa Atlas*; recognize the specific vulnerabilities of African small island developing states (SIDS); highlight key African environmental conventions, including calling on member states to accelerate ratification of the African Convention on Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources; include the role of civil society organizations; and up-scale best



WG-III Rapporteur Zaheer Fakir (South Africa)

practice from subregional and continental initiatives such as TerrAfrica and GGWSS. A drafting group was established to further consider the draft declaration.

Peter Acquah, UNEP, explained that the draft Johannesburg declaration's name may need to be amended to distinguish it from the 2002 Johannesburg Declaration adopted at the WSSD, and explained that it was being reviewed to include previous proposals. The Democratic Republic of Congo asked for a meeting of a small group to review the French version of the draft declaration ahead of submission to the ministers, and participants agreed that Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo and Mali would constitute the group.

With regard to the draft decision on the constitution of AMCEN, WG-III Rapporteur Fakir reported that participants agreed to defer the discussion to the next AMCEN session to allow institutional arrangements within the AU to be finalized. This proposal was agreed.

On the decision relating to Africa Environment Day, Fakir noted that the rationale for creating an additional environment awareness day, separate from the World Environment Day, had been questioned. Many participants reiterated this position and called for the expert meeting to draft advice for consideration by African Heads of State. After further discussion, the draft decision was agreed without amendments.

The draft decisions on the constitution of AMCEN and on Africa Environment Day were agreed and forwarded to the ministerial segment for adoption.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP SESSION

Participants reviewed and adopted the report of the expert group segment (UNEP/AMCEN12/3) with minor amendments.

CLOSING CEREMONY

Chair Minga thanked the experts for their contributions and closed the meeting at 8:23pm on Monday.

REPORT OF AMCEN-12: MINISTERIAL SEGMENT: 10-12 JUNE

OPENING OF THE MINISTERIAL SEGMENT

Marthinus van Schalkwyk, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa, welcomed delegates to Johannesburg, observing that demands for water and energy combined with escalating food and oil prices are creating new environmental challenges. He acknowledged efforts during the past ten years towards mainstreaming environment concerns, but drew attention to the stagnation of new science and policy capacity as well as the proliferation of environmental agreements, funds and entities. He emphasized the need for greater coordination and further strengthening of AMCEN's voice and leadership in the context of international environmental governance. Turning to immediate challenges, van Schalkwyk highlighted the need for: strong political debate and coordinated negotiating positions; inter-agency coherence; and for the gap between commitments and action to be addressed. Highlighting UNEP as the authoritative voice for the environment, he called for the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan. He emphasized that climate change was the appropriate focus for AMCEN-12, and called for the adoption of an "African road map" from Johannesburg to the UNFCCC COP-15.

Babagana Ahmadu, Director of Rural Economy and Agriculture, AUC, highlighted several regional initiatives launched since the last AMCEN session, including: ClimDevAfrica; AMESD; GGWSS; and the integration of disaster risk reduction into development policy and programmes. He urged AMCEN-12 to endorse the 2002 AU Summit decision on commemorating Africa Environment Day on 3 March, and to support its implementation on a regional rotational basis. Ahmadu concluded by reiterating the AU commitment to finalize the integration of AMCEN and AMCOW as independent STCs of the AU.

Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, urged assembled environment ministers to work towards overcoming marginalization of environmental concerns in national portfolios by actively linking them to the development agenda. He drew attention to the *Africa Atlas*, which he said highlights the finite nature of Africa's natural resources. In this context, he noted that: 60% of the continent's arable land is eroded and damaged by chemicals and a third of its pastures are classified as degraded; forests and woodlands are in decline; and many communities face water shortages on a seasonal or permanent basis. Reaffirming UNEP's commitment to the continent, Steiner reiterated the importance of Africa speaking as one voice on priority areas such as climate change, and expressed hope that AMCEN will emerge as the platform for regional dialogue on the environment.

André Okombi Salissa, Minister of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo, and AMCEN-11 President, gave an overview of activities undertaken by AMCEN during the Republic of Congo's presidency. He detailed efforts to address land degradation and acknowledged support from the GEF through TerrAfrica. He listed activities carried out relating to addressing IAS, marine and coastal water resources and the implementation of the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions. Regarding climate change, Salissa said AMCEN had organized preparatory meetings for African negotiators before UNFCCC COP 12 and 13, which had resulted in common negotiating positions. He concluded by discussing the future of AMCEN as an STC of the AU and declared the meeting open.

LAUNCH OF AFRICA: ATLAS OF OUR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Following opening statements, a short film was shown to mark the launch of *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment* (<http://www.na.unep.net/AfricaAtlas/>). The film informed that



L-R: Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, and André Okombi Salissa, outgoing President of AMCEN (Republic of Congo), officially launching *Africa: Atlas of our Changing Environment*, during the opening ceremony of AMCEN-12.

the *Africa Atlas*, compiled by UNEP and partners, is the first to use high quality satellite images for all 53 African countries, providing an important tool for raising public awareness and supporting policy making and action.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

ELECTION OF THE OFFICERS: Following the announcement of regional candidates to the Bureau, AMCEN-12 elected the following by acclamation: Libya for North Africa; Eritrea for East Africa; Burkina Faso for West Africa; and Gabon for Central Africa. South Africa, as AMCEN-12 President, serves automatically for Southern Africa. The incoming AMCEN President, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, paid tribute to outgoing AMCEN-11 President, André Okombi Salissa, for his leadership. He described AMCEN as an instrument for harmonizing policies across Africa, specifically regarding climate change. Emphasizing the urgency of developing a unified African position at climate change negotiations, he noted the need for a special meeting of AMCEN to be held six months prior to UNFCCC COP 15.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: The agenda for the meeting (UNEP/AMCEN/12/1 and 1/Add.1) was adopted without amendment.

PRESENTATIONS OF SUBREGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLANS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE OF NEPAD

Mahmoud El Fallah, Libya, briefed delegates on AMCEN's capacity building initiative for the implementation of the NEPAD Environmental Action Plan, elaborated at AMCEN-10 in Sirte, Libya. Noting that the preparation of subregional environment action plans (SREAPs) is a central element in the approach, he reported that SREAPs for North, West, East, Central and Southern Africa had been completed and endorsed during ministerial consultations in 2007. He informed delegates that, following additional support from Norway, the project had moved into its second phase with the launch of pilot projects to develop national action plans for Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Libya and Mozambique.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXPERT SEGMENT

Chair Minga presented a brief report on the expert segment (UNEP/AMCEN/12/L.1). Noting that the expert meeting was attended by almost 40 country delegations, and representatives of specialized UN agencies, secretariats of relevant MEAs, regional and subregional organizations and civil society, he reported that during their deliberations the experts had reviewed 11 documents and finalized eight decisions for consideration and adoption by ministers.

He further noted that Mali had offered to host the thirteenth session of AMCEN in 2010.



Chair Alexis Minga, Director General, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo

MINISTERIAL POLICY DIALOGUE

On Tuesday, ministers engaged in policy dialogue on: Africa's climate roadmap, from Johannesburg through Africa to Copenhagen; financing for NEPAD implementation; and Africa's vision for international environmental governance.

AFRICAN CLIMATE ROADMAP - FROM JOHANNESBURG THROUGH AFRICA TO COPENHAGEN:

Policy Dialogue I was chaired by Juliette Biao Koudénoukpo, Minister of the Environment and Protection of Nature, Benin, who opened by expressing condolences to the governments of Kenya and Sudan for lives lost in plane crashes in their respective countries. Turning to climate change, she drew attention to the UNFCCC's Bali Action Plan, which was agreed in December 2007, and highlighted five constituting pillars of the "Bali Roadmap": a shared vision, mitigation, adaptation, technology development and transfer, and financial resources and investments. She urged delegates to exchange views towards determining a common African negotiation position.



Juliette Biao Koudénoukpo, Minister of the Environment and Protection of Nature, Benin

Recalling the 2007 Tunis Declaration and Action Plan on International Solidarity against Climate Change in Africa and the Mediterranean, Ali Goutali, Ambassador of Tunisia to South Africa, highlighted his country's commitment to prioritize climate change, and called on the assembled ministers to endorse the declaration. Referring to the Stern Review on the economics of climate change, he noted the need to act proactively, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. He listed national activities to compel prompt action, including: strategic adaptation programmes in vulnerable sectors; an early warning system for extreme weather events; programmes to promote renewable energy, energy-effective transport and cleaner waste management; and a strategy to implement the CDM. He concluded by reiterating the importance of international cooperation and solidarity to counter the effects of climate change in Africa.

Jackson Kiptanui, Assistant Minister for Environment and Mineral Resources, Kenya, welcomed the Bali Roadmap as a window of opportunity to forge common African negotiating positions. Highlighting adaptation as Africa's key climate priority, he called for more financial and technological resources. Noting the low number of Africa-based CDM projects, he called for greater awareness raising and capacity development to create regional financing opportunities.

Ogunlade Davidson, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), defined climate change as a development challenge, given Africa's limited capacity to respond. Emphasizing that climate policy alone cannot solve this problem, he called for an effective carbon price, independent of market forces, and for integrating climate change into sustainable development. Addressing ongoing international climate change negotiations, he highlighted several issues, including that developing countries will now be required to demonstrate measurable, reportable and verifiable steps taken to

reduce emissions to have negotiating credibility, and the need to expand renewable energy production. In conclusion, Davidson discussed the mobilization of local financing, including bonds, insurance funds and local share markets.

In response to questions, Davidson emphasized that climate change presents an opportunity to change agriculture and water management practices. Davidson also highlighted the importance of national innovation systems, market assessment and business demonstrations and models.

Juliette Biao Koudénoukpo, discussed a forthcoming ministerial conference in October, intended to forge a West African regional strategy to address climate change. She informed representatives that the dialogue would focus on UNFCCC implementation constraints and aim to increase the level of participation in future negotiations.

Abdelkader Mekideche, Ministry of Land Management, Environment and Tourism, Algeria, discussed the opportunities that harnessing Africa's natural resources through, for example, hydropower and solar energy generation present as a response to climate change. Highlighting the importance of cooperation with Africa's development partners in the EU and the G8, he called for new and renewed partnerships. He then outlined Algeria's proposal, supported by Tunisia, for NEPAD to establish a high level panel on climate change to draft an African programme of action on climate, and proposed that Algeria host its first meeting.



Abdelkader Mekideche,
Ministry of Land Management,
Environment and Tourism,
Algeria

In the ensuing discussion, South Africa argued that the climate change regime must reflect Africa's commitment to sustainable development, poverty alleviation and the MDGs. He noted that climate change presents severe challenges but suggested that African countries can profit by reducing the carbon intensity of their economies, while building competitiveness. He proposed that the African Group call for a significant reduction in developed country emissions as a way to stimulate the carbon market in Africa's favor. Namibia drew attention to its engagement in the CDM and stressed that technology transfer, information sharing and community engagement are required to operationalize the mechanism. Sudan called for the CDM to be developed in the Africa context as a pillar of an African action plan on climate change.

The Gambia stressed that technology transfer is critical to the implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. Eritrea detailed national efforts to combat desertification and urged other countries to take local initiatives. Libya called for a continent-wide comprehensive assessment of African countries' laws relating to climate change. Senegal invited African stakeholders to a carbon fair that will be held in Dakar, Senegal, from 3-5 September 2008.

Climate Network Africa welcomed the focus on climate change and urged delegates to negotiate African interests into an international regime beyond 2012. The African Network of Environmental Journalists highlighted its work towards meeting the need for information and awareness raising about climate change.

POLICY DIALOGUE II - FINANCING FOR NEPAD

IMPLEMENTATION: Policy Dialogue II was chaired by Halima Tayo Alao, Minister for Environment, Housing and Urban Development,

Nigeria, who opened with a presentation on financing climate adaptation. She highlighted that Africa requires capacity building to identify its adaptation needs, including on: disaster management, early warning systems, insurance mechanisms, regulation enforcement,



Halima Tayo Alao, Minister for
Environment, Housing and Urban
Development, Nigeria

and risk management strategies. Regarding the Kyoto climate change framework beyond 2012, she urged delegates to emphasize the equity principle. Turning to public-private partnerships, she highlighted the need to consult with national entrepreneurs and industry leaders on mobilizing investment. On international funding for adaptation, she called for simplified mechanisms, fewer conditionalities, and increased financial contributions. She concluded by noting that despite recent efforts to streamline GEF procedures, further technical capacity development on accessing funding is critical.

Sylvia Lemmet, UNEP, gave an overview of financing climate projects and programmes in Africa. She noted that adaptation costs

are uncertain and dependent on stabilization levels to be agreed at UNFCCC COP 15, because deeper cuts will reduce the price of adaptation. She underscored the importance of making the economic case for adaptation and for identifying its scope



Sylvia Lemmet, UNEP

and approximate cost. On suggested actions by AMCEN, she observed that the consolidated framework for climate change initiatives in Africa will help to mobilize existing and future financial resources. She observed that investment capital is available but requires an enabling policy environment. Lemmet noted that UNEP could: help define the scope of adaptation and assist in developing policy to foster investment; build the capacity of the private financial sector to facilitate technology transfer; and enhance capacity to access market mechanisms and funds.

Yogesh Vyas, AfDB, noted that environmental, social and gender concerns have been mainstreamed into the AfDB's vision. He described the AfDB's climate activities, including the Congo River Basin Forest Management Programme, and the Clean Energy Investment Framework, which promotes access to electricity in rural areas including by small scale power generation. He introduced the "milestone" Climate Management and Adaptation Programme, which aims to transform energy sectors by introducing clean technology for maximizing CO2 reductions. He reported that Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria and South

Africa will be the first African countries to benefit from the programme, and concluded by unveiling a CleanDev Initiative, funded by the AfDB, to promote the wider use of climate information.

Pointing out that the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD is the only such regional framework, Sekou Toure, GEF, emphasized its relevance for the GEF's involvement in Africa. Turning to the framework of international climate funding, he noted that, notwithstanding increased accessibility to GEF funding, complementary support through national and bilateral frameworks is required, including mobilizing private sector and other non-traditional sources of funding.

Peter Acquah, UNEP, presented on the status of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, with respect to resource mobilization efforts. Noting the completion of five subregional action plans and the launch of national planning processes in five countries, he emphasized that further progress is contingent on adequate funding and enhanced synergies with partners. In this regard, he reported that the AU Summit in January 2007 had reaffirmed the need to establish an African Environment Facility at AfDB, although little progress has been made to date. He urged ministers to suggest concrete solutions to resolve the funding impasse by identifying: strategic and policy obstacles inhibiting the funding of programmes under the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; actions to leverage development and private sector funding; guiding principles for the governance of multilateral funding, with a focus on national priorities; and ways to increase contributions to AMCEN.

In the ensuing discussion, South Africa requested the AfDB to clarify whether it will host the African Environment Facility. The AfDB responded that it will provide a response to a formal request from AMCEN.

POLICY DIALOGUE III - AFRICA'S VISION FOR INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE:

Policy Dialogue III was chaired by Ibrahim Thiaw, UNEP. Momodou Cham, the Gambia, presented an African perspective on the state of international environmental governance.

Chair Thiaw noted that the proliferation of regional and international legal agreements has stretched Africa's capacity to implement sustainable development programmes and meet basic financial obligations to regional agreements. Lamenting that conflicting demands from other multilateral processes led to the attendance of only 14 African ministers at AMCEN-12, he stressed the need to review AMCEN's role in coordinating regional processes and programmes. Remarking on the linkages between AMCEN and UNEP roles, he called for institutional strengthening of UNEP as envisaged in UNEP's 2000 Malmö Declaration to support environmental governance in Africa.



Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, discussed the future of global environmental governance.

Alf Wills, Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa, focused on institutional development of UNEP since the Malmö Declaration. Calling it "work-in-progress" he pointed out that while advances have been made to raise environmental awareness, mainstream environment and integrate scientific capacity, the institutional landscape remains fragmented and discussions on strengthening international environmental governance have stagnated. He maintained that this was due to sustainable development discussions taking place in "conceptual and institutional silos," and the absence of international support for reform. To remedy this, he urged ministerial dialogue at AMCEN and elsewhere to have a political rather than institutional focus to foster the required trust. Concluding, he reiterated strengthening UNEP's leadership role in the UN system to fulfill its mandate to link environmental governance globally and provide technical and capacity building support.

Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, observing UNEP's architectural development over the past 30 years, acknowledged certain weaknesses which call into question its credibility. Reflecting on whether the economic, social and environmental "triangle" is still relevant, he emphasized providing a "sustainability perspective" to development choices in order to overcome this artificial separation. On global environmental governance, he underlined the need to use regional and multilateral environmental platforms more effectively and called for increased coherence and synergy. Regarding a future UN Environment Organization, he said that in the absence of agreement on function, it would be inappropriate to discuss its form. Turning to international governance from an African perspective, Steiner highlighted the importance of clearly articulated negotiating positions and effective international cooperation. He urged environment ministers to articulate their perspectives and priorities beyond financing and technology transfer and suggested establishing an AMCEN working group to engage in deliberations.

During the ensuing discussions, Egypt emphasized the value of locally driven environmental programmes while Morocco, supported by Togo and South Africa, called for a focus on processes, synergies and coordination, rather than the creation of new structures. South Africa specified tapping into the GEF and other existing funding mechanisms to boost implementation, and integrating ongoing discussions under the CBD on access and benefit sharing on which there is a unified African position.



L-R: Alf Wills (South Africa); Achim Steiner, Executive Director, UNEP; Momodou Cham, First Vice Chair of the Bureau to the Abidjan Convention; and Peter Acquah, UNEP ROA

The Gambia, supported by Namibia questioned the legal status of AMCEN-12 decisions since only one-quarter of AMCEN ministers were present. Suggesting that this might point to a deeper problem, Namibia called for a review of previous attendance and a stronger AU role in environmental governance. Togo described institutional arrangements at national and international levels as “antiquated” and called for greater inter-ministerial consultation on environment issues, particularly with ministries responsible for development, foreign affairs and finance. Botswana, Mali, Djibouti and others urged national governments to support their diplomatic missions at UNEP and UN headquarters by issuing prompt advice and seconding qualified technical staff to negotiation processes.

Regarding the number of ministers in attendance, Peter Acquah, UNEP, clarified that the average number of ministers and Ambassadors attending AMCEN sessions is between 35 and 40. He called on members who have not made financial contributions to AMCEN to reconsider their responsibilities.

PRESENTATIONS

On Thursday, delegates heard presentations from various international organizations. Michel Jarraud, Secretary General, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), provided a brief history of the WMO, including its contribution to the UNFCCC and ClimDevAfrica.

Highlighting the human impact of climate change, he outlined the WMO’s support of inter-agency activities to achieve the MDGs. He announced the upcoming third World Climate Conference to be held in Geneva in 2009, and concluded by praising AMCEN’s leadership on climate change.



Michel Jarraud, Secretary General, WMO

Dirk Reinermann, World Bank, noted that while 65% of Africa’s population lives in high growth economies, the continent continues to face tremendous challenges in balancing its development needs with environment sustainability. He noted that the latest replenishment of the International Development Association, a division of the World Bank that services the world’s 80 poorest countries, has been the largest in the Bank’s history, with sub-Saharan Africa receiving US\$5.7 billion in 2007. Reinermann highlighted: new financial instruments such as carbon funds; the draft strategy on making Africa climate resilient; and the Bank’s prioritization of programmes to combat land degradation.

Mohamadou Mansour N’Diaye, UNCCD, recalled the UNCCD’s special link with Africa and expressed his appreciation for a reference to the desertification challenge in the AMCEN Johannesburg Declaration. Describing soils as the “foundation of wealth” in Africa, he suggested that Africa’s approach to climate change include a strong call for adaptation funding, including to combat desertification. Reiterating the UNCCD’s support for AMCEN, he concluded by calling for continued cooperation between UN agencies and African organizations.

Katharina Kummer Peiry, Executive Secretary, Basel Convention, discussed the significance of African input into the Convention negotiations.

She recalled the waste dumping incident in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire in 2006, which renewed international awareness of the international transfer of hazardous waste. She announced the launch of a project in Côte d’Ivoire to build capacity for controlling the importation of hazardous waste and plans to extend the project into other countries. She concluded by welcoming African input into the upcoming Basel Convention COP in Bali.



Katharina Kummer Peiry, Executive Secretary, Basel Convention

Donald Cooper, Executive Secretary, Stockholm Convention and Co-Executive Secretary, Rotterdam Convention, clarified that the two conventions are not agreements to ban the



Donald Cooper, Executive Secretary, Stockholm Convention and Co-Executive Secretary, Rotterdam Convention

use of hazardous chemicals, but mechanisms to ensure: appropriate use; protection of human health and the environment; trade with full knowledge of countries involved; and controlled means of replacing chemicals with alternatives when it is scientifically proven and globally agreed. He further noted the close link between chemicals management and human health, biodiversity and desertification.

On funding, Cooper highlighted that the GEF provided US\$300 million in the current cycle for chemicals management, with Africa being the main beneficiary of additional bilateral funding currently being negotiated. He urged strong African participation during the upcoming COPs of the two conventions, confirming that financial support will be made available for the participation of African Ministers and their delegations.

Marco González, Executive Secretary, Ozone Secretariat, UNEP, congratulated African countries for their active and positive participation in the implementation of the Montreal Protocol. Noting that the Ozone Secretariat is the first MEA convention secretariat based in Africa, he drew attention to African countries’ role in implementing the Montreal Protocol.



Marco González, Executive Secretary, Ozone Secretariat, UNEP

Walter Erdelen, Assistant Director-General, UNESCO, stressed the need for UNESCO and UNEP to strengthen their roles in international environmental governance by building competencies and complementarities. Recalling an AMCEN-11 decision requesting UNESCO to strengthen its technical support,

he mentioned UNESCO's readiness to contribute to: the proposed African high level expert panel on climate change; the environment initiative of NEPAD by strengthening links to UNESCO's network of national geoparks of which 69 sites are located in 13 African states; and education, training and capacity building on biodiversity protection. He also noted that Africa needs visibility at the highest level and offered UNESCO's assistance in strengthening AMCEN's communication strategy.

PRESIDENT'S SUMMARY OF THE MINISTERIAL POLICY DIALOGUE

AMCEN-12 President van Schalkwyk, introduced the President's Summary (UNEP/AMCEN/12/8) on Thursday. Delegates considered the summary's three sections, namely: Africa's Climate Roadmap, from Johannesburg through Africa to Copenhagen; Financing for NEPAD implementation; and Africa's vision for international environmental governance. The summary was adopted with minor amendments.

Final text: On the section "Africa's Climate Roadmap, from Johannesburg through Africa to Copenhagen" the President noted that representatives made a number of points, including:

- Africa must speak with one voice in advancing the continent's interests in negotiations for the climate regime beyond 2012;
- the Bali Action Plan and Bali Roadmap offered Africa the opportunity to build consensus on the complex issues of climate change and sustainable development, to the benefit of the continent;
- there should be an African high level expert panel on climate change, to include senior officials, and African focal points for the UNFCCC, working in collaboration with UNEP, NEPAD and the AUC and mandated to develop a draft common position, including a plan of action for building consensus in the region and supporting a focused and coordinated approach to the climate change negotiations;
- there is a need to establish a work programme with milestones for the development of the common position, with the President of AMCEN mandated to steer the African Roadmap process;
- Algeria offered to host the first meeting of the planned AMCEN high level expert panel, working towards the African ministerial meeting on climate change to be held in Algiers, Algeria, in October 2008 and the adoption of a final common position at the special session of AMCEN to be held in June–July 2009 in the margins of the thirteenth AU Summit;
- the decision of the joint annual meeting of the AU Conference of African Ministers of Economy and Finance and the UN ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, to establish an Africa climate-change policy center at UN ECA;
- adaptation in Africa must be given higher priority in order to balance it with mitigation on the international negotiating agenda. The future regime should emphasize assisting developing countries with adaptation technologies, finance and capacity-building;
- a need to upscale adaptation financing that is new and additional and that does not divert existing official development assistance away from poverty eradication and other development priorities, and must be channeled through the Kyoto Protocol's Adaptation Fund;

- the importance of a coherent financial architecture for climate change, guided by agreed principles and with equitable governance with access to the international climate funds, the simplification of procedures, as well as the removal of conditionalities;
- the importance to the carbon markets, and the CDM in particular;
- a need to rectify the skewed distribution of CDM projects at the international level, and to rationalize financial and investment frameworks and mechanisms;
- the importance of regional preparations for the UNFCCC's Copenhagen COP in 2009 and the importance of regional strategies for implementation;
- the involvement of women and youth in climate strategies at all levels; and
- a proposal that Africa should renew partnerships on an equitable basis with, among others, the Group of Eight, China, India, Japan, South America and the European Union, through concrete projects in Africa to deal with the global problem of climate change at the continental and subregional levels.

On financing for NEPAD implementation, the President noted that representatives made a number of points, including:

- partnerships between the public and private sectors should be enhanced and strengthened;
- a suite of funding mechanisms, investment structures and policy tools would be required to overcome barriers associated with the different types of technology and different stages of technology development;
- a need to take full advantage of the NEPAD capital flows initiative and domestic resource mobilization and the AfDB to provide additional environmental finance;
- a call for the AfDB formally to clarify its position on the long-standing request by AMCEN and the AU for the establishment of the African Environment Facility; and
- the importance of the GEF, and the need for it to undertake a serious review of its co-financing principles, and to use vulnerability criteria in the allocation of resources based on countries' needs and priorities.

On Africa's vision for international environmental governance, the President noted that representatives called for a number of actions, including:

- engaging in the global discussion on international environmental governance and the challenge of the ongoing proliferation of agreements and conventions;
- establishing a think tank as a working group to guide Africa's positioning and input on international environment governance;
- reviewing its institutional and governance structures and discussing the measures to be taken to enhance and strengthen AMCEN, to structure the agenda of meetings to focus on strategic political issues, and to encourage participation at the highest level;
- playing a key role in taking Africa's environmental agenda to the international community;
- stronger involvement of ministries of finance and of foreign affairs, and engagement with ambassadors in Nairobi and New York;
- reviewing environmental financing and, in particular, the role of the GEF;
- transforming UNEP into a central player at the intergovernmental level; and

- enhancing the role of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in providing policy advice and guidance; establishing UNEP as an authoritative voice on the environment by strengthening scientific knowledge and assessment capacity; bridging the gap from science to policy implementation; renewing the focus on capacity-building for implementation; securing predictable, adequate and stable financial resources; intensifying awareness-raising and environmental education, in cooperation with regional structures and national governments, with a view to creating bottom-up community-driven environmental agendas; and conferring fresh mandates to ensure coordination and cooperation at the MEA and inter-agency levels.

CONSIDERATION OF THE AMCEN JOHANNESBURG DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND DECISIONS

Representatives met on Thursday in plenary to consider the draft AMCEN Johannesburg Declaration on the Environment for Sustainable Development (UNEP/AMCEN/12/3 Annex 1) and draft decisions forwarded from the experts segment of AMCEN-12.

AMCEN JOHANNESBURG DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

On the draft AMCEN Johannesburg Declaration, the Gambia proposed the insertion of three new paragraphs to underline the severity of the climate change challenge. Mauritania, supported by Nigeria, called for reference to the work of the African Network of Environmental Journalists. The AfDB stated that because the African Environment Facility has not yet been established, the declaration should call for AfDB to host the facility. The declaration was adopted with these amendments.

Final text: The AMCEN Johannesburg Declaration on the Environment for Sustainable Development contains 47 operational paragraphs setting out commitments to scale up national, subregional and regional programmes in the framework of the Environment Initiative of the NEPAD Action Plan. In the AMCEN Johannesburg Declaration, African ministers of the environment resolve to:

- forge cooperative links with the relevant structures of the AU and other relevant African ministerial bodies with a view to harmonizing institutional arrangements, policies and programmes;
- strengthen their relationship with UN agencies, particularly UNEP and other relevant international institutions and bodies;
- support capacity-building in the area of technology-supported learning to enhance the delivery of environmental education, training and awareness-raising;
- mainstream gender issues into national and subregional environmental programmes and initiate programmes aimed at promoting gender-sensitive capacity-building in relation to the environment;
- participate effectively in upcoming negotiations on key MEAs, particularly those related to biodiversity, climate change, chemicals, land degradation and drought and desertification;
- participate fully and effectively in the various capacity-building and enhancement activities for the implementation of MEAs, including the Bali Strategic Plan and the European Commission programme on capacity-building related to implementation of MEAs in ACP countries;

- request the UNCCD secretariat, UNEP, other UN specialized agencies and the AfDB to support continuing regional coordination efforts to implement AMCEN's action programmes at all levels, including the development of initiatives such as the GGWSS, and extending such programmes to similar subregions of North-East Africa and Southern Africa;
- support the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region and the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region as frameworks for implementation of the marine and coastal component of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD;
- adopt integrated management approaches to freshwater resources and to develop regional and national policies and management measures to mitigate the impact of human activities on freshwater resources;
- mainstream climate change adaptation measures into national and, where appropriate, regional development plans, policies and strategies with a view to ensuring adequate adaptation to climate change in such areas as water resources, food and energy security and management of coastal and marine resources;
- request the UN agencies, Bretton Woods institutions, AfDB and other development partners to support African countries in taking measures to build economic and ecosystem resilience against climatic variability and change and to implement effectively the Bali Action Plan;
- support the bid by South Africa to host UNFCCC COP 17 and the COP/MOP 7 of the Kyoto Protocol in 2011;
- encourage African countries to establish regional mechanisms and initiatives to prevent, control and manage IAS infestation in Africa;
- call upon the AU and UNEP to support African negotiators in the negotiation of a new international regime on access and benefit-sharing;
- renew their commitment to the endorsement of the AEO process as a monitoring and reporting tool for sustainable environmental management and a framework for national, subregional and regional integrated environmental assessment and reporting;
- advocate the sustainable use of chemicals and to commit themselves to the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes in pursuit of the goals and objectives of SAICM and the chemicals-related conventions;
- call upon those countries that have not yet ratified the chemical-related conventions, namely, the Basel Convention, the Rotterdam Convention, the Bamako Convention, and the Stockholm Convention, to do so and to urge African development partners to assist and support African countries in the implementation of such conventions;
- accelerate the ratification of the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources to permit the entry into force of the convention and secure a fully comprehensive and representative network of protected areas and other natural resources in Africa,
- call upon the AUC, and all stakeholders to work together to ensure the development and implementation of an African ecolabelling mechanism based on African experiences and lessons;

- follow up on the conclusions and recommendations of the fifth African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production;
- take necessary action to ensure that the AMCEN general trust fund is replenished during the intersessional period;
- request the President of the AfDB to host the African Environment Facility at the Bank and to report back to AMCEN-13 to be held in 2010; and
- call upon the GEF to continue to give high priority to African countries and to allocate financial resources based on the needs and priorities of countries and not merely on *ex-ante* allocation systems such as the Resource Allocation Framework and to request the GEF to improve its procedures and to revise its co-financing policy to give African countries easier access to its financial resources.

DECISION 1: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE OF NEPAD:

The decision on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD was adopted without amendment.

Final text: The decision on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD:

- requests the AUC to provide high level political support to the successful implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, and to strengthen its environment section and those of the relevant technical units of the RECs in this regard;
- urges development partners to assist in providing required resources, including financial, for the implementation of subregional environmental action plans by RECs and at the national level;
- requests UNEP to provide technical support to RECs in the implementation of the subregional action plans for the environment initiative of NEPAD;
- urges countries to implement the projects of the Action Plan in conformity with the spirit of NEPAD;
- requests the UN ECA to enhance its facilitation of UN agency consultations, coordination and cooperation in respect of the thematic cluster concerned with the environment, population and urbanization, together with sub-clusters concerned with water, energy, biotechnology, biosafety and post-conflict environmental reconstruction and other relevant sub-clusters;
- requests development partners to provide support to UNEP for the reactivation of the Partnership for the Development of Environmental Law and Institutions in Africa (successor to UNEP/ENDP/Dutch joint project on Environmental law and institutions in Africa, whose vision was to enhance sound and sustainable environmental management practice in Africa through the development and implementation of environmental laws);
- requests UNEP to benefit from the experiences within African countries in the field of environmental law institutions;
- agrees to maintain effective communication between AMCEN and the relevant organs of the AU, including the secretariat of NEPAD and RECs; and
- agrees to enhance the ratification and implementation of the revised Algiers Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and other relevant conventions for the effective management of natural resources.

DECISION 2: CLIMATE CHANGE: The decision on climate change was adopted with minor amendments.

Final text: The decision on climate change is divided into two parts. The first part concerns Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012, and the second part aims to establish a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes. The decision contains two annexes. The first is an indicative list of Africa's climate change decisions, and the second is an indicative conceptual outline of a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, which addresses adaptation, mitigation and supporting and enabling measures.

The section on Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012:

- requests UNEP, in collaboration with the AUC, the Secretariat of NEPAD, UN ECA, AfDB and other relevant intergovernmental institutions, to organize a series of preparatory meetings for Africa's climate change negotiators and to provide the negotiators with substantive technical and policy analysis support to strengthen their preparations for UNFCCC COP 14 and 15, and COP/MOP 4 and 5 of the Kyoto Protocol;
- urges African countries to participate actively in international climate change negotiations, in particular, the Accra and Poznan meetings in August and December 2008, respectively;
- recommends that the AU, at its thirteenth summit in June and July 2009, considers, with a view to its final adoption, a common African position on the comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012, which is to be finalized in December 2009; and
- mandates the President and Bureau of AMCEN to initiate discussions with the Chair of the AUC regarding the necessary procedures for Africa's climate change negotiators to prepare a common African position for adoption at a special session of AMCEN, and to submit that common African position for consideration at the AU Summit in June and July 2009.

The section on developing a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes:

- creates, in view of the need for synergies in implementation, a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, bringing together existing and new intergovernmental decisions and initiatives and programmes in a consolidated manner, to be implemented at the regional, subregional, national and local levels;
- adopts and develops further a conceptual outline, as set out in Annex II to the decision, to serve as the basis for identifying and filling gaps in the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes;
- establishes under the direction of the President and Bureau of AMCEN, an *ad hoc* working group to assist the President and the Bureau in the implementation of the decision;
- submits for adoption the consolidated comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes to a special session of AMCEN on the margins of the AU Summit in June and July 2009, and to request the AMCEN Secretariat to support the Bureau in organizing that special session;

- calls upon African governments, international organizations and RECs to expedite the implementation of existing programmes and initiatives on climate change in Africa at all levels and to strengthen and mobilize the capacities of existing relevant facilities and institutions in Africa to meet the region's pressing climate change challenges;
- mandates the AMCEN President to present the progress in the development of the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes at the joint annual meeting of the AU Conference of African Ministers of Economy and Finance and the Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the UN ECA, to take place in March and April 2009, to ensure adequate financing of the programmes and activities under the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes;
- calls upon Africa's development partners to support, with financial and technical assistance through multilateral North-South and South-South cooperation, the implementation of the agreed decisions on climate change in Africa and to request multilateral financial institutions and other relevant donors to support the implementation of the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes;
- invites multilateral financial institutions and other development partners to take into account the special needs of Africa in the decision making processes under international financing schemes, including, among others, adaptation funds, World Bank climate funds, AfDB funds and UN initiatives, and to streamline their procedures to improve access to finance;
- supports the process of developing the ClimDevAfrica programme and to request the AUC, UN ECA and the AfDB to accelerate the finalization of the programme document and the dissemination of this information to ensure the participation of AMCEN in ClimDevAfrica;
- endorses the decision of the AMCEN Bureau in December 2007 on the African panel on climate change and to request the Bureau to work further with the NEPAD Secretariat and the AUC, in consultation with the AMCOST Bureau, UNEP and the WMO in defining the modalities of establishing an African high level panel on climate change; and
- welcomes and supports the establishment of the Africa Climate Policy Centre at UN ECA, emphasizing its role in supporting the integration of climate change into economic development and planning processes in Africa, and to call upon UNEP, the WMO and other relevant institutions to play an active role in this initiative.

DECISION 3: AMCEN'S CONSTITUTION: The decision on AMCEN's constitution, was adopted without amendment.

Final text: The decision defers the process of revising AMCEN's constitution pending the complete establishment of the institutional structures of the AU and to report to AMCEN-13 any progress made in this regard.

DECISION 4: STATUS AND USE OF THE GENERAL TRUST FUND FOR AMCEN: The decision on the status and use of the general trust fund for AMCEN was adopted without amendment.

Final text: The decision:

- urges governments to make every effort to pay their outstanding contributions to AMCEN's general trust fund;

- urges those governments that have not contributed to AMCEN's general trust fund to endeavor to contribute to the fund to enable the Conference to scale up its activities;
- requests the AMCEN Secretariat to work with governments that have not fulfilled their commitments to pay their contributions to the trust funds (arrears of four years and above) on an arrangement to fulfil such commitments;
- agrees to use the interest generated by the general trust fund and to request the Secretariat to make proposals on its use for approval by the Bureau prior to implementation;
- agrees that the general trust fund will continue to be managed by UNEP as long as the AMCEN Secretariat remains with that organization;
- requests the Secretariat to continue reporting on the status and use of the general trust fund at AMCEN meetings; and
- extends its appreciation to UNEP and urges its Executive Director to continue to support AMCEN.

DECISION 5: CHEMICALS AND HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT: The decision on chemicals and hazardous waste management was adopted without amendment.

Final text: In the decision, AMCEN:

- prioritizes sound chemical management in regional, subregional and national environmental planning, sustainable development and poverty reduction strategies;
- agrees to provide high level political support to the development and implementation of the national implementation plans for SAICM and chemicals-related conventions;
- agrees to develop effective chemicals management infrastructures, using the assistance mechanisms available under the SAICM Quick Start Programme and chemicals-related MEAs;
- calls upon governments to promote at the national level an integrated approach to the implementation of the chemicals-related MEAs as a set of tools to assist countries in taking a holistic or life cycle approach to the sound management of chemicals;
- invites subregional economic communities and RECs to cooperate with convention secretariats and the SAICM Secretariat for successful regional delivery;
- invites donor countries, the GEF and other donors to support the work of national civil-society organizations in raising awareness of populations of the effects of chemicals;
- invites the GEF and other donors to make new and additional resources available for expanding the chemical management portfolio of GEF beyond persistent organic pollutants;
- invites countries that have not done so to ratify the conventions and to nominate Strategic Approach national focal points;
- requests the GEF Chief Executive Officer, with the support of the UNEP Executive Director, to make funds available to support least developed countries in reaching the capacity necessary to initiate implementation of the Stockholm Convention and other chemical management instruments and programmes;
- invites donor countries to provide bilateral and multilateral aid funding to facilitate the effective implementation of national obligations and commitments under the chemical-related instruments including the Basel Convention, the Rotterdam Convention, the Stockholm Convention, the Bamako Convention and SAICM;

- invites the GEF and other donors to support the work of regional centers as centers of excellence for regional capacity-building and technology transfer;
- requests the AMCEN Secretariat, in conjunction with the conventions secretariats and the secretariat of SAICM to review periodically the progress of integration of sound chemical management into national planning strategies and programmes and implementation of the conventions and SAICM in African countries and to report back to the Conference;
- invites the International Conference on Chemicals Management to consider at its second session the adoption of a sustainable financial mechanism for SAICM in attaining the 2020 chemicals safety goals;
- urges African governments and other stakeholders to promote synergies among the various initiatives for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste;
- requests the UNEP Executive Director to facilitate the promotion of regional and subregional cooperation and exchange of experiences and to make use of regional centers to define projects of regional scope;
- invites African governments to participate in the African Stockpiles Programme and to recognize it as the continental programme for the safe disposal of obsolete pesticides;
- invites the UNEP Executive Director to support countries' efforts to participate effectively in international meetings and activities relating to the sound management of chemicals;
- invites countries to report jointly on the progress of implementation of the present decision; and
- invites the AMCEN President to transmit the present decision to the joint conference of Health and Environment Ministers in Africa and to the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its second session, for their consideration and further action.

DECISION 6: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY-SUPPORTED LEARNING: The decision on environmental education and technology-supported learning was adopted without amendment.

Final text: The decision:

- encourages governments, through their principal environmental authority, to facilitate inter-ministerial cooperation to assess existing environmental education strategies, develop a strategic approach to mainstreaming environmental education across all relevant governmental institutions, and develop an action plan for technology-supported learning in conjunction with the Human Resources, Science and Technology Department of the AU (including e-learning) in follow-up to the strategic approach;
- requests the UNEP Executive Director to provide strategic guidance and technical advisory services on the implementation of the above-mentioned activities and multilateral development partners to provide financial and technical assistance to build the capacities of African countries in this respect;
- requests UNEP and UNESCO and other partners concerned to strengthen their cooperation within the framework of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in order to provide their technical support and expertise to African countries to implement effectively and develop e-learning on environmental education for sustainable development;

- requests UNEP to identify partnerships involving international organizations, the donor community, the private sector and centers of excellence that will support the implementation of a pilot set of action plans;
- requests governments undertaking the pilot action plans to provide an interim report to AMCEN-13 and a final report to AMCEN-14 on the status of their implementation;
- requests UNEP and UNESCO to enhance greater stakeholder involvement including NGOs, scientific organizations, nature clubs and local communities in the e-learning programme and in dissemination and exchange of information; and
- invites countries to establish an African environmental e-learning network to share expertise, best practices and content and to identify a coordinating hub.

DRAFT DECISION 7: AFRICA ENVIRONMENT DAY:

The decision on Africa Environment Day was adopted without amendment.

Final text: The decision:

- states that every year one country should be requested, on a regional rotation basis, to host the continental celebration of Africa Environment Day; and
- requests the AUC and its cooperation partners to work with the hosting state to make adequate preparations for the occasion.

DECISION 8: AFRICA ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK PROCESS AND THE AFRICA ENVIRONMENT INFORMATION NETWORK:

The decision on the AEO process and the AEIN was adopted without amendment.

Final text: The decision:

- requests the UNEP Executive Director to continue to mobilize financial resources to build the capacity of African countries in integrated assessment and reporting, including environmental data and information management;
- requests the UNEP Executive Director to continue to support the production of the third AEO report as requested by AMCEN-11;
- calls upon governments to take advantage of earth observation technologies, such as remote sensing, supported by UNEP to undertake regular national integrated environmental assessments to strengthen the strategic positioning of the national environmental agencies and departments in national development planning processes such as the poverty reduction strategies and UN development assistance frameworks;
- urges the AMCEN Secretariat to increasingly involve the scientific community, NGOs and the private sector in integrated environmental assessment and reporting and related capacity-building activities;
- requests the UNEP Executive Director to continue to support the production of the publication *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment* on a regular basis and to assist countries to develop national atlases; and
- requests the UNEP Executive Director to liaise with secretariats of relevant conventions and other international organizations to mobilize resources for the AEO, AEIN and the *Africa Atlas* processes.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MINISTERIAL SEGMENT

Ministers adopted the draft report of the ministerial segment (UNEP/AMCEN/12/L.1) without amendment.

VENUE OF AMCEN-13 AND NEXT MEETING OF THE BUREAU

Mali offered to host AMCEN-13, and Gabon offered to host the next meeting of the Bureau, which representatives accepted.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

President van Schalkwyk concluded the meeting, noting his assurance that the international community would be able to engage with prepared and assertive African delegations at future international negotiations. He thanked delegates for attending, and acknowledged contributions and support from UNEP, the AMCEN Secretariat and others. He closed the meeting at 12:46 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF AMCEN-12

AMCEN-12 convened in Johannesburg against the backdrop of escalating fuel prices, global food security concerns and the IPCC's irrefutable assertion of Africa's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and limited adaptive capacity. The conference theme was "Enhancing the implementation of the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development" and the meeting aimed to provide a platform for African environment ministers to review progress made and enhance implementation. With climate change on the agenda, many representatives looked forward to AMCEN articulating how this pressing issue would be addressed from an African perspective. Others hoped that the outstanding matter of establishing AMCEN as a specialized technical committee of the AU would be resolved. This analysis will focus on climate change and international environment governance in the context of AMCEN's future role in setting a renewed environmental agenda for Africa.

CHANGING THE NEGOTIATING CLIMATE

Climate change discussions during AMCEN-12 highlighted the urgency for Africa to articulate a common, coherent position during the ongoing international climate change negotiations for a regime beyond 2012. The expert segment, tasked with drafting decisions on a range of matters, divided into three working groups, one of which was devoted to climate change. This issue also carried over into the ministerial segment, which debated "Africa's climate Roadmap; from Johannesburg through Africa to Copenhagen" and financing NEPAD implementation. AMCEN-12 adopted a climate change decision comprising of two parts. The first section concerns Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position leading up to UNFCCC COP 15 in Copenhagen. This was hailed by many as "ground breaking" by signaling an intention to become a more proactive authoritative voice by bringing about an African consensus on this issue. The adoption of a "common African position" recalls language used by the OAU before the Rio Summit and underscores the suggestion that African negotiators require better organization and coordination as opposed to capacity building for negotiating. Such a strategy is required to enable the continent's priorities and concerns to shape the regime, and for financial benefits from mitigation activities under the Kyoto Protocol, particularly under the CDM, to begin to accrue to the continent.

The President and AMCEN Bureau are also mandated to initiate discussions with the AUC Chair for the necessary procedures for African negotiators to prepare a common African

position for adoption at a special session of AMCEN, and to submit that common position for consideration at the AU Summit in 2009, with a view to its adoption. Representatives proposed an African high-level expert panel on climate change, intended to feed into the African ministerial meeting on climate change to be held in Algiers, Algeria, in October 2008. Algeria offered to host that experts meeting and it has been scheduled for October 2008.

The second section of the decision relates to the development of a comprehensive framework of African climate change related programmes and includes two annexes: the first is an indicative list of Africa's climate change decisions and the second is an indicative conceptual outline of a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes. It represents a response to repeated calls for consolidating work being undertaken on adaptation and mitigation by multiple agencies at various levels, drawing them under AMCEN's auspices to ensure programmatic coherence. It also provides the opportunity to identify and address gaps within existing programmes. The establishment of an *ad hoc* working group to implement this decision is also envisaged.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE WILDERNESS

A framework for addressing environmental issues such as climate change cannot be divorced from broader considerations of international environmental governance. Ministerial discussions on Africa's vision for international environmental governance, emphasized the pressures placed on Africa from the proliferation of international agreements, often characterized by overlapping mandates and implementation. The debate also highlighted the need for AMCEN to engage in the global discussion on this issue, but begs the question of whether AMCEN has the appropriate institutional and governance structure required to bring to bear an African revision of the process. Indeed, AMCEN's own governance structure remains unclear. Consideration of AMCEN's constitution was once again deferred to the next AMCEN session, pending the outcome of the AU restructuring process. Moreover, the establishment of AMCEN as a specialized technical committee (STC) under the AU has not been finalized, pending the need to further clarify the relationship between UNEP, which is the current host of the AMCEN Secretariat, and the AUC. These outstanding matters will have to be resolved expediently if AMCEN is not to fall foul of the same criticisms regarding governance that it has levied against the global system.

Representatives welcomed UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner's contribution to the Ministerial segment, especially his candid disclosure of challenges, opportunities and AMCEN's role in the environmental governance terrain. Africa, however will be looking to Steiner to translate the UNEP Governing Council Decision 28/8 adopted in February 2007 on Support to Africa in Environmental Management and Protection, which emphasizes that that UNEP must take a leading role in enhancing support for the continent's environment and natural resource management efforts, into tangible action. The new Director of UNEP's Regional Office for Africa is likewise presented with an opportunity to enhance collaboration with and implementation of AMCEN's work programme. UNEP will have to forge a new relationship with AMCEN by facilitating a government-led, as opposed to Secretariat-driven process, which currently translates into activities under AMCEN being

initiated by the Secretariat as opposed to by governments. The revitalization of the Abidjan Convention on Marine and Coastal Environment of West and Central Africa, whose first extraordinary meeting of the contracting parties was convened in parallel to AMCEN-12, points to a positive outcome in terms of building on AMCEN's role as a the keystone of African environmental governance and reiterates the importance of regional agreements to enable AMCEN to implement its mandate.

THE FUTURE LANDSCAPE

AMCEN-12 had a feeling of a coming of age. Its vision for taking control of Africa's climate change agenda, the comprehensive review of implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, in addition to addressing environmental governance are all positive steps that demonstrate its capacity, and build on its credibility. AMCEN's position at the intersection of international policy and regional implementation is a challenging but pivotal role. But as the policy dialogues highlighted, challenges remain. Many of its members are in arrears and some have not yet even made any contributions to AMCEN's trust fund, which leave AMCEN in a difficult position taking into account ongoing environmental challenges, which are placing increasing demands on it to become much more than just a talking shop and to implement environmental priorities. The AfDB has yet to clarify its position on the long standing request by AMCEN and the AU for the establishment of the African Environment Facility. Questions regarding AMCEN's constitution and future transformation into an AU STC must be resolved in order avoid the governance challenges it has identified in others. Expectations are high regarding South Africa's presidency, with many maintaining that AMCEN has the opportunity to project its transformation onto the continent, changing the very dynamic of African policy making. Looking ahead, AMCEN also needs to focus on other issues critical to Africa, such as biosafety and access and benefit sharing, both being negotiated under the CBD and entering critical moments in the negotiations. AMCEN-12 has set itself an ambitious agenda of transforming itself into relevant and indispensable regional environmental governance entity.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GROUNDWATER AND CLIMATE IN AFRICA:

Co-organized by UNESCO, the Directorate of Water Development, Uganda and University College London, from 24-28 June 2008 in Kampala, Uganda, the conference will bring together water and climate scientists from a broad range of sectors. For more information, contact: Richard Taylor, University College London, Conference Co-Chair: r.taylor@geog.ucl.ac.uk, or the Conference Secretariat at e-mail: info@gwclim.org; Internet: <http://www.gwclim.org>

ECOSOC ANNUAL MINISTERIAL REVIEW

SESSION: The next Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) convened by ECOSOC will take place from 2-3 July 2008 at UN headquarters, New York, US. The meeting will assess progress made towards the MDGs and the implementation of the other goals and targets agreed at major UN conferences and summits over the past 15 years. The high-level segment of the AMR will bring together ministers of finance, development

planning and the environment to discuss "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development." For more information: Internet: http://www.un.org/ecosoc/newfunc/Draft_agenda.pdf

ELEVENTH AFRICAN UNION SUMMIT: The eleventh AU Summit will take place in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt from 30 June – 1 July 2008 on the theme "Meeting the Millennium Development Goals on Water and Sanitation." It will be comprised of three elements: the Permanent Representatives Committee (24-25 June); the Executive Council (27-28 June); and the Assembly of the African Union (30 June-1 July). For more information, contact: Rahel Akalewold, Communication and Information Division, AUC; tel: +251-11-551-4555; fax: +251-1-511299; e-mail: rahela@africa-union.org; Internet: <http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Conferences/2008/june/summit/summit.htm>

SECOND AFRICAN REGIONAL MEETING ON

SAICM: This preparatory meeting for the 2nd session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM2) will be held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 14-19 July 2008. For more information, contact: Mr. Daniel Ndiyo, Government Chemist Laboratory Agency; tel: + 255-22-211-3320 /211 3383-4; fax: (+255 22) 211 3320; e-mail: SAICM@chemicals.unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/meeting/afreg/Dar%20es%20Salaam/Default.htm>

FIRST INTER-MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT IN AFRICA:

Co-organized by the Government of Gabon, the World Health Organization, and UNEP, this meeting will convene from 26-29 August 2008, in Libreville, Gabon. The theme of this meeting is "Health Security through Healthy Environments". It will explore ways to address priorities and linkages to address environmental challenges in Africa. For more information, contact UNEP: tel: +254-20-624292; e-mail: Angele.Luh@unep.org; Internet: <http://www.unep.org/health-env/>

THIRD HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON AID

EFFECTIVENESS: The Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF 3) will convene in Accra, Ghana, on 2 - 4 September 2008. HLF 3 will take stock and review the progress made in implementing the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. For more information, contact: OECD Development Cooperation Directorate; tel: +33 1 45 24 82 00; fax: +33 1 44 30 61 47; e-mail: DAC.Contact@oecd.org; Internet: http://www.oecd.org/document/47/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_39448751_1_1_1_1,00.html

AFRICA CARBON FORUM: The first all-Africa carbon forum will take place in Dakar, Senegal from 3 -5 September 2008. The Forum is a conference, trade fair and capacity-development initiative to boost private sector participation in the CDM in Africa. For more information, contact: David Abbass, Public Information Officer, UNFCCC Clean Development Mechanism, tel: +49 228 815 1511, e-mail: dabbass@unfccc.int; Internet: <http://www.unfccc.int>

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT

(NEPAD): This meeting will convene on 22 September 2008, at UN headquarters in New York. It will be held at the highest possible political level and is expected to result in a political declaration on Africa's development needs. For more information: Internet: <http://www.un.org/ga/62/meetings.shtml>

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON

TRANSBOUNDARY WATERS MANAGEMENT: Taking place in Thessaloniki, Greece, from 15-18 October, 2008, the objectives of this symposium are to: assess the state of the art and the progress recently made in the sustainable management of transboundary waters; review current major international programmes concerned with the assessment and management of transboundary water resources; and promote interdisciplinary approaches for integrated transboundary water resources management. For more information, contact: the Conference Secretariat; tel: +30-2310-252-103; fax: +30-2310-252-104; e-mail: info@toplinetravel.gr; Internet: <http://www.unesco.org/water/pdf/twm4.pdf>

FOURTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION: PIC-COP 4 will be held from 27-31 October 2008 in Rome. For more information, contact: Rotterdam Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8296; fax: +41-22-917-8082; email: pic@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.pic.int>

TENTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE RAMSAR CONVENTION: RAMSAR COP 10 will take place from 28 October to 4 November 2008 in Changwon, Republic of Korea. The theme of COP 10 is "Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People." For more information, contact: Ramsar Secretariat; tel: +41-22-999-0170; fax: +41-22-999-0169; e-mail: ramsar@ramsar.org; Internet: http://www.ramsar.org/index_cop10_e.htm

UNCCD CRIC 7 AND CST 9: The UNCCD Committee on the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) and Committee on Science and Technology (CST) are scheduled to meet from 3-14 November 2008, in Istanbul, Turkey. For more information, contact: UNCCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.int; Internet: <http://www.unccd.int>

FOURTEENTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNFCCC AND FOURTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE KYOTO PROTOCOL: UNFCCC COP 14 and Kyoto Protocol COP/MOP 4 are scheduled to take place from 1-12 December 2008 in Poznan, Poland. These meetings will coincide with the 29th meetings of the UNFCCC's subsidiary bodies. For more information, contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; Internet: http://unfccc.int/meetings/unfccc_calendar/items/2655.php?year=2008



On Wednesday night, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa, opened the launch of *Environment and Development Decision Making in Africa 2006-2008* written by Richard Sherman, IISD African Regional Coverage, Programme Manager.

13TH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT (AMCEN-13):

Held every two years, the next ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN-13) will take place in Bamako, Mali, in 2010. For more information, contact: AMCEN Secretariat, tel: +254-207-624-289; fax: +254-207-624-287; e-mail: amcensec@unep.org; Internet: <http://www.unep.org/roa/Amcen/>

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEO	Africa Environment Outlook
AfDB	African Development Bank
AMCOST	African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CBD	Convention for Biological Diversity
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
ClimDev Africa	Climate for Development in Africa
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
DBSA	Development Bank of South Africa
EC	European Commission
EGM	Expert Group Meeting
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GGWSS	Great Green Wall for the Sahel and the Sahara
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
ROA	Regional Office for Africa
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SIP	Strategic Investment Programme
SREAPS	Subregional Environmental Action Plans
STC	Specialized Technical Committee (AU)
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UN ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WG	Working Group
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development