

*African Ministerial Conference on the Environment***African Ministerial Conference on the Environment****Sixteenth session**

Ministerial segment

Libreville, 15 and 16 June 2017

**Report of the ministerial segment****I. Introduction**

1. The ministerial segment of the sixteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was held at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Libreville on 15 and 16 June 2017.
2. It was attended by the representatives of States members of AMCEN, African regional and subregional organizations, United Nations agencies and the secretariats of various environmental conventions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.
3. The opening of the segment was chaired by the President of AMCEN, Mr. Khaled Fahmy, Minister for the Environment of Egypt.

**II. Opening of the ministerial segment**

4. The segment began at 9.50 a.m. on Thursday, 15 June 2017, with opening remarks delivered by Mr. Fahmy; Mr. Erik Solheim, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); Ms. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission; and Mr. Emmanuel Issoze-Ngondet, Prime Minister of Gabon, who officially opened the segment.
5. At the second meeting of the ministerial segment, on the afternoon of 15 June 2017, further statements were delivered by Ms. Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; Ms. Cyriaque Sendashonga, Global Director, Programme and Policy Unit, International Union for Conservation of Nature; Mr. Anthony Nyong, Director for Climate Change and Green Growth, African Development Bank; Mr. Klaus Rudischhauser, Deputy Director-General for Development Cooperation, European Union; and, on behalf of civil society, Ms. Tracy Sonny, Botswana Climate Change Network and Pan African Climate Justice Alliance.

**III. Organizational matters****A. Election of officers**

6. At the first meeting of the ministerial segment, on the morning of 15 June 2017, the following countries were elected to serve on the Bureau for the period 2017–2018:

<b>Subregion</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Position</b>
Central Africa	Gabon	President
Eastern Africa	Ethiopia	Vice-President
North Africa	Morocco	Vice-President
Southern Africa	South Africa	Vice-President and Rapporteur
West Africa	Côte d'Ivoire	Vice-President

7. Also at the first meeting, Ms. Estelle Ondo, Minister for Forest Economy, Fisheries and Environment of Gabon, assumed the presidency of AMCEN.

8. Ms. Ondo presented Mr. Fahmy with a gift in recognition of his leadership of AMCEN over the previous two years.

## **B. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work**

9. The Conference adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda (AMCEN/16/1):

1. Opening of the ministerial segment.
2. Organizational matters:
  - (a) Election of officers;
  - (b) Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
3. Consideration of the report of the expert segment.
4. Ministerial policy dialogue:
  - (a) Investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa;
  - (b) Towards a pollution-free planet: Africa's engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
  - (c) Africa's contribution to combating climate change.
5. Matters related to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment:
  - (a) Trust Fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;
  - (b) Specialized technical committees of the African Union and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.
6. Consideration of the draft declaration and the draft decisions and key messages.
7. Venue and date of the seventeenth meeting.
8. Adoption of the report of the ministerial segment.
9. Other matters.
10. Closure of the session.

10. The Conference agreed to follow the programme of work set out in annex II to the annotations to the provisional agenda (AMCEN/16/1/Add.1).

## **IV. Consideration of the report of the expert segment**

11. At the second meeting of the ministerial segment, the Chair of the expert segment of the sixteenth session of AMCEN, Ms. Yasmine Fouad, Assistant Minister for Sustainable Development and External Affairs, Ministry of the Environment of Egypt, reported on the work and outcomes of the expert segment. The Conference took note of the report.

## **V. Ministerial policy dialogue**

12. Also at the second meeting of the ministerial segment, the President introduced the ministerial policy dialogue on the themes of investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa; towards a pollution-free planet: Africa's engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly; and Africa's contribution to combating climate change.

### **A. Investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa**

13. Mr. Richard Munang, Regional Climate Change Coordinator, UNEP, Africa Office, gave a presentation on the theme. Comments were made by the representatives of Ethiopia and South Africa.

**B. Towards a pollution-free planet: Africa's engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly**

14. A presentation on the theme was delivered by Ms. Ligia Noronha, Director of the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, UNEP, while Mr. Kelebert Nkomani, Ambassador of Zimbabwe to Kenya and Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps in Nairobi, reported on the preparations for the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

**C. Africa's contribution to combating climate change**

15. Presentations on the theme were delivered by Mr. Munang; Mr. Seyni Nafo, Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on climate change; and Mr. Seth Osafo, Legal Adviser to the African Group of Negotiators.

**VI. Matters related to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment**

**A. Trust Fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment**

16. Mr. Stephen Ndeti, Financial Management Officer, UNEP, Africa Office, presented a report on the general trust fund of AMCEN (AMCEN/16/4). The Conference took note of the report.

**B. Specialized technical committees of the African Union and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment**

17. At the third meeting of the ministerial segment, on the morning of 16 June 2017, the representative of the secretariat provided an update on the subject of the sub-item and comments were made by the representative of Egypt.

**VII. Consideration of the draft declaration and the draft decisions and key messages**

18. The ministers considered the draft declaration, draft decisions and key messages submitted by the expert group. The ministers adopted the following decisions, as orally amended: decision 16/1, on investing in innovative environmental solutions for accelerating implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa; decision 16/2, an omnibus decision on environment in Africa, containing parts on governance mechanisms for ocean-ecosystem-based management in Africa; managing pollution in Africa; desertification, land degradation and drought; wildlife: management and illegal trade; hosting of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Egypt; and sustainable renewable energy; decision 16/3, on Africa's engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP; and decision 16/4, on climate change. The decisions are set out in annex II to the present report.

19. The ministers also adopted the Libreville Declaration on Investing in Innovative Environmental Solutions, as orally amended, which is set out in annex I to the present report.

**VIII. Venue and date of the seventeenth session**

20. At the fifth meeting of the ministerial segment, on the evening of 16 June, it was agreed that the seventeenth session of AMCEN would be held in a country in Southern Africa, at a date to be decided by the Bureau, in conjunction with the secretariat and in consultation with member States.

**IX. Adoption of the report of the ministerial segment**

21. The report of the ministerial segment, as orally amended, was adopted.

**X. Other matters**

**A. Presentation of the *Atlas of Africa Energy Resources***

22. At the end of the second meeting of the ministerial segment, an event took place to celebrate the launch of the *Atlas of Africa Energy Resources*, produced by the African Development Bank, the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa, the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa and UNEP, during which Mr. Nyong presented a copy to the President of AMCEN.

**B. Invited statements**

23. At the third meeting of the segment, brief statements were delivered by Ms. Naoko Ishii, Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility, on the priority focus for the Facility in the coming years; Mr. Almoustapha Garba, Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development of the Niger, on the newly established Climate Commission for the Sahel Region; and Ms. Rosalie Matondo, Minister for Forest Economy, Sustainable Development and the Environment of the Congo, on the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin.

**XI. Closure of the session**

24. The President declared the sixteenth session of AMCEN closed at 9.15 p.m. on Friday, 16 June 2017.

## Annex I

### Libreville Declaration on Investing in Innovative Environmental Solutions

*We, African ministers of the environment,*

*Having met* in Libreville on 15 and 16 June 2017 at the sixteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

*Recalling* the outcomes of the fifteenth session and the sixth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held in Cairo from 2 to 6 March 2015 and from 16 to 19 April 2016, respectively,

*Welcoming* the outcomes, including the key messages, of the third session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, held in Addis Ababa from 17 to 19 May 2017 in preparation for the 2017 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development,

*Recognizing* that achieving long-term sustainable development in Africa will depend on capacity-building of human capital and sustainable management of our countries' natural capital and requires investing in and promoting innovative environmental solutions,

*Aware* of the need to place issues related to ocean, marine and coastal environments, including the benefits, threats and opportunities, on Africa's regional agenda,

*Acknowledging* the efforts made to implement the African Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa, and to enhance support from partners,

*Welcoming* the Windhoek Declaration for Enhancing Resilience to Drought in Africa, adopted at the high-level meeting of the first African Drought Conference, held in Windhoek from 15 to 19 August 2016,

*Recognizing* the critical role of women entrepreneurs as agents of change in empowering families, communities and nations to increase the use of sustainable energy in Africa,

*Aware* that environmental pollution is an increasing problem in Africa and that the major forms of pollution in Africa include indoor and outdoor air pollution, water pollution, land pollution and chemical and hazardous waste pollution affecting both urban and rural areas, and also aware that there can be no sustainable development without commitments and actions to manage pollution while respecting national policy space for sustained and inclusive socioeconomic development,

*Aware also* that sustainable development cannot be achieved without adequate, predictable and sustainable access to means of implementation, which include capacity-building, technology transfer and development, and financial support, while recalling the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, in particular the principles of common but differentiated responsibility and equity,

*Noting* that green business development in Africa may contribute to increased incomes, job and wealth creation, resource efficiency, increased productivity and improved health and competitiveness, while bringing social benefits and addressing environmental concerns,

*Aware* that young people in Africa are the future decision makers and that their energy, motivation, innovation and creativity are essential assets for achieving sustainable development,

*Welcoming* the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, adopted in Kigali on 15 October 2016 at the Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, which included a commitment to reducing the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons by more than 80 per cent over the next 30 years in order to reduce greenhouse gases,

*Welcoming also* the outcomes of the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, held in Nairobi from 23 to 27 May 2016 under the theme "Delivering on the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development",

*Welcoming further* the outcomes of the 2017 meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous

Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and calling for adequate and additional financial resources, technical assistance and technology transfer to effectively implement the conventions in the region,

*Appreciating* the Global Environment Facility's support for, and partnership with, African countries in meeting their environmental obligations, including with regard to the impact of programmes on combating the illegal wildlife trade, on fostering sustainability and resilience for food security and on sustainable cities,

*Recalling* the need for energy diversification and to reduce the negative impacts linked to the utilization of fossil fuels,

*Welcoming* the information contained in the *Atlas of Africa Energy Resources* and recognizing its role in stimulating decision makers, planners, investors, energy experts, businesses and the public in taking action to achieve sustainable, modern and affordable energy for all in Africa,

*Recognizing* the urgent need to adopt and implement a gender strategy and policy for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in order to address the particular needs of the most vulnerable, including women and children,

*Determined* to implement the Marrakech Action Proclamation for Our Climate and Sustainable Development and the Declaration of the First Africa Action Summit for Continental Co-Emergence, adopted in Marrakech, Morocco, on 16 November 2016,

*Recalling* decision SS.VI/6, on the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the African Union's Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment,

*Determined* to strengthen our efforts in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals and Africa's Agenda 2063,

*Hereby declare our resolve:*

1. To take appropriate measures to promote and invest in innovative policy and non-policy interventions, including replication, and to sustain and improve the productivity of our countries' natural capital in order to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals and Africa's Agenda 2063;
2. To promote the allocation of an adequate percentage of national or subnational revenue accruing from natural capital assets for reinvestment in innovative environmental solutions;
3. To invite the United Nations Environment Programme, other relevant United Nations agencies, development partners and the international community to support African countries in undertaking studies and in developing policies, projects and measures that contribute to innovative environmental solutions, by providing adequate, predictable and sustainable means of implementation, including financial support, technology transfer and capacity-building;
4. To commit to the integration of pollution management aspects into our countries' national development agendas and to create awareness at the subnational and local levels among business and local communities of the negative environmental, health and socioeconomic impacts of pollution;
5. To call upon civil society and the private sector in Africa to commit, individually and collectively, to making Africa a pollution-free continent and to play a more proactive role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
6. To request the African Union Commission, with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the African Development Bank and other partners to hold a high-level interministerial forum relevant to key ministries, industry, the private sector and civil society in order to raise political awareness and develop common strategies for a future pollution-free Africa;
7. To agree to hold joint meetings of African environment and energy ministers with a view to providing policy and strategic guidance on innovative environment and investment solutions to accelerate the development of clean energies;
8. To also agree to promote circular economy, green economy, blue economy and industrial symbiosis strategies in our countries, given that such models provide opportunities to enhance economic and social prosperity while reducing waste and pollution;

9. To further agree to prepare a strategic document, with the support of the African Union Commission, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Economic Commission for Africa and other partners, that supports member States in upscaling and replicating the circular economy and green business development policies and programmes to enable the growth of sustainable entrepreneurship;

10. To request the United Nations Environment Programme, working in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and other partners, to hold in 2018 a high-level interministerial forum on the circular economy to promote green business development as a key driver of Africa's economic transformation agenda;

11. To welcome the Windhoek Declaration for Enhancing Resilience to Drought in Africa;

12. To call for the active participation of African parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa at the thirteen session of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in China in September 2017, and for those parties to speak with a united voice and support the adoption of a decision to develop a binding protocol on drought risk management in order to enhance resilience;

13. To welcome the offer by the African Union Commission to host the Africa regional coordination unit of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

14. To support the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative as a strategy to strengthen the resilience of rural communities at the fringes of Sahara and the Sahel to the challenges of climate change;

15. To request the United Nations Environment Programme and other partners to support the implementation of programmes on land degradation neutrality;

16. To support the submission to the United Nations General Assembly of a draft resolution on designating 2020 as an international year of rangelands and pastoralists;

17. To encourage member States to participate actively in the third Open-ended Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme, to be held in Nairobi from 29 November to 1 December 2017, and in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, to be held in Nairobi from 4 to 6 December 2017, with the aim of concluding the work of the high-level segment of the session with an outcome document in the form of a political declaration negotiated by Member States and adopted by consensus, which should be concise, focusing primarily on the theme of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, and based on the principles of sustainable development, including common but differentiated responsibilities, and on the need to support African countries in effectively implementing the outcomes of the session;

18. To request the United Nations Environment Programme and other partners to support the implementation, especially in Africa, of United Nations Environment Assembly resolutions 2/13, 2/14 and 2/24, on, respectively, the sustainable management of natural capital for sustainable development and poverty eradication, on illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products and on combating desertification, land degradation and drought and promoting sustainable pastoralism and rangelands, through the provision of adequate financial resources, capacity-building and networking, the development of regional and cross-border programmes, and the provision of technology support;

19. To call for the strengthening of institutions in Africa to effectively address the issues of wildlife poaching and illegal trade in wildlife, and, in this regard, to implement the African Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa at the national, subregional and regional levels;

20. To welcome the proposed programming and policy directions of the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, including programmes aimed at addressing major drivers of environmental degradation;

21. To also welcome the decision to organize the second meeting of the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, to be held in Addis Ababa in October 2017;

22. To agree to take action and create enabling conditions including by formulating enabling national policies to empower youth in Africa, in order to develop environmental innovations and resilience and to create green jobs and wealth;

23. To request the United Nations Environment Programme, in collaboration with other partners, to prepare an environment outlook for youth in Africa to guide the strategic development of youth-responsive actions for sustainable development;
24. To request United Nations agencies to support the integration of the environmental sustainability aspects of youth into the work of the United Nations at the country and regional levels;
25. To commend the member States that have ratified the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and to urge those that have not yet done so to ratify the Amendment as soon as possible so that it may enter into force on 1 January 2019, bearing in mind that universal participation is necessary to ensure the protection of both the ozone layer and the climate;
26. To ratify the Amendment to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and to work with other countries to promote universal ratification;
27. To take the necessary action to effectively implement the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa and the decisions adopted at the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties thereto, and to make the necessary preparations for the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 16 to 18 October 2017;
28. To commend those member States that have ratified the Minamata Convention on Mercury and encourage those that have not yet done so to ratify and implement the Convention;
29. To agree to foster the management of persistent organic pollutants in our countries in accordance with the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and to request the Global Environment Facility to continue supporting that process;
30. To appreciate the support provided by the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa, the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa of the African Development Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme in preparing the *Atlas of Africa Energy Resources*, which will inform strategic decisions with regard to achieving the aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets on energy;
31. To adopt the policy and strategy of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment for gender mainstreaming in the environment sector in Africa in order to guide member States in developing subregional and national action plans on gender and the environment;
32. To note that climate change is a global challenge and that no one should be left behind, as universally affirmed in Paris and Marrakech when the Paris Agreement on climate change entered into force on 4 November 2016 and, finding it regrettable that the United States of America, the largest historical emitter of greenhouse gases and the richest country in the world, has withdrawn from the Paris Agreement, we thus urge it to reconsider its decision;
33. To reaffirm the commitment of African countries to the historic Paris Agreement and to its implementation in line with the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, ensuring parity between mitigation and adaptation, and adequate, predictable and sustainable support for African countries to enhance their efforts to combat climate change;
34. To urge the parties to the Paris Agreement to recognize the special circumstances and

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