

PART III

DECISIONS OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF AMCEN

The Sixth Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recognizing that the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment is the main regional intergovernmental body on matters relating to environment and development;

Aware of the need for new policy and approaches for the implementation of the Conference Programme;

Considering the new policy orientation and recommendation that the AMCEN Programme should focus on activities relating to the ratification and implementation of Conventions of relevance to the African region and assistance to Member States in the formulation and strengthening of national programmes, particularly with regard to capacity-building, environmental legislation, transboundary issues, environmental databases, environmental impact assessment and environmental awareness on Agenda 21 and other environmental issues of concern to Africa;

Further Aware of the importance of the AMCEN Trust Fund as the major means of resource mobilization and noting that since its inception, only two member States have made contributions to the Fund;

Also Recognizing the importance of capacity building, particularly the development and harmonization of relevant environmental legislative frameworks at the national and subregional levels, in the promotion of the new policy orientation of the Conference;

Having Underscored the absence of a consulting mechanism in the field of natural resources management in Africa;

Also Having Recognized the need to develop sub-regional cooperation in order to harmonize policies and strategies for the rational management of the forestry resources of the continent and the necessity of an inventory of African forests, as well as acquiring the skills for their management;

Also Aware of the implementation of conventions to Combat Desertification, Biological Diversity, Climate Change and the Montreal Protocol and the need to develop cooperation among member States for the concerted management of resources;

Further Aware that AMCEN should collaborate fully in all activities of the Commission on Sustainable Development in monitoring progress made in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the other UNCED outcome;

Underscoring the importance of harmonizing actions and procedures to control activities that may have environmental impacts on transboundary ecosystems;

Reaffirming their commitment to make concerted efforts to prevent environmental degradation from continuing in the region, and to achieve sustainable development for the benefit of the present and future generations;

Having Examined the various reports on the activities of the Conference for 1994-1995 and noted with satisfaction the progress made by the Secretariat in the implementation of activities within the limited resources available;

1. Decides in Principle to formalize the institutionalization of the Conference as an Intergovernmental Organization by providing the legislative framework, including a constitution and related rules and regulations.

2. Further decides to continue with the 1994-1995 programme of work into the biennium 1996-1997, including the following additional priorities for the 1996-1997 biennium:

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- I. Sustainable Industrial Production, Consumption and Industrial Development including aspects relating to the Framework Convention on Climate Change covering the following sub-programme areas:
 - (i) Cleaner Production Applications to new and existing industrial facilities;
 - (ii) Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level (APELL);
 - (iii) Environmental Technology Assessment; and
 - (iv) Environmental Impact Assessment and response in the Transport and Tourism sectors including pollution control.
- II. Environmentally Sound Management of all types of wastes, including hazardous and potentially hazardous and toxic chemicals, covering:
 - (i) Sound urban and industrial waste management as well as other aspects of urban environmental degradation;
 - (ii) International trade on hazardous or potentially hazardous chemicals and of toxic chemicals;
 - (iii) Implementation of the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa.

- (v) Taking the inventory and the management of the ozone depleting substances in the Africa region and the strengthening of capacities for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol and activities relating to the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

III. Promote the development of African Common Perspective and Position on the Convention on Biological Diversity in particular in relation to the following issues:

- (i) access to genetic resources;
- (ii) intellectual property rights;
- (iii) national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
- (iv) biotechnology and biosafety access, technical guidelines and capacity building;
- (v) sustainable development and management of forest resources;
- (vi) protection and conservation of endangered habitat and species.

IV. The rational management of African forests

- (i) establishment of mechanisms for subregional cooperation on the rational management of forest resources;
- (ii) strengthen capacities in the management of natural resources, as well as of existing institutions; and
- (iii) establish an expert group to:
 - prepare inventory of existing forests and the evaluation of their management;
 - prepare an African position to be presented to the open ended meeting of experts as decided by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity held in Jakarta, with a view to prepare a Panel on forests.

- (iv) Industrial standards and laws;

V. Support to the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification

- (i) Promotion of the ratification of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
- (ii) Development of the necessary strategies for the implementation of the Annex for Africa and the Urgent Action for Africa; and
- (iii) Within the framework of the Joint AMCEN Secretariat, establishment of a regional coordination unit to promote the implementation of the Convention at the sub-regional and regional levels.

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VI. New and Emerging Issues: Implications for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment of Major International Events

- (i) Participation in activities relating to the environmental impacts within the framework of the United Nations Agenda for Peace and Agenda for Development and UNCED- related programmes of action and platforms; and
- (ii) Support to the assessment of the environmental aspects of the impacts of conflict and resultant and environmental refugees and displaced persons; and
- (iii) Support the campaign aimed at banning the manufacture and use of mines in armed conflicts.

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3. Again decides to focus activities on the following orientations:

- (i) sensitization and organization, within available financial resources, of seminars and workshops on conventions;
- (ii) support to the drawing up of national action plans, country environmental profiles and national Agenda 21;
- (iii) support to the integration of environmental impact assessment in development projects;
- (iv) capacity building, environmental education and public awareness; and
- (v) strengthening subregional cooperation, especially with non-governmental organizations in the area of the environment.

(iv) Industrial standards and laws;

4. Notes with concern the declining funding to the UNEP Environment Fund and appeal to all member States to contribute to the Fund.

5. Calls upon UN agencies, multi-lateral and bi-lateral agencies to continue to support AMCEN.

6. Calls upon the non-governmental organizations to continue their involvement in environment and sustainable development programmes in Africa.

7. Decides to make contributions to the Trust Fund mandatory and appeals to member States to urgently contribute to the AMCEN Trust Fund and also examine the possibility of adopting new measures of raising additional resources in order to facilitate the implementation of the above activities.

8. Expresses special appreciation to the intergovernmental organizations for the support they have been giving to the activities of the Conference.

9. Decides to support the initiative of ECA, in collaboration with OAU, UNEP, ADB, UNDP and other relevant organizations for the preparations and organization of a meeting in 1996/1997 to harmonize Africa's position for the United Nations Special Session of the General Assembly scheduled in 1997 to assess the implementation of the decisions taken at the Earth Summit.

10. Again expresses appreciation to the Executive Director of UNEP, the Executive Secretary of ECA and the Secretary-General of the OAU for their consistent support to AMCEN and further requests them to provide technical and financial support to the Conference and if possible to increase it in the light of the challenges of the programme adopted.

11. Also expresses appreciation to all the agencies of the United Nations system and the Convention Secretariats for their support and urge them to continue to do so.

12. Further expresses appreciation to the Swedish International Development Agency for the support it has been providing to the Conference.

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