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African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

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Meeting of the expert group

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Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

Consideration of the report of the secretariat

Report of the secretariat for the period 1 July 2010 to 31 August 2012

I. Introduction

1. The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was established in December 1985. Its mandate is to provide advocacy for environmental protection in Africa; to ensure that basic human needs are met adequately and in a sustainable manner; to ensure that social and economic development is realized at all levels; and to ensure that agricultural activities and practices meet the food security needs of the region. AMCEN gives guidance in respect of key political events, regional policies and initiatives related to the environment, including implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and regional agreements. AMCEN holds its ordinary sessions once every two or three years. The UNEP Regional Office for Africa serves as the secretariat for AMCEN.

2. The objective of the Secretariat report is to inform participants in the fourteenth session of AMCEN of the status of implementation of decisions taken by the Conference at its thirteenth session; the status of implementation of the work programme of the Conference during the biennium; and other follow-up activities mandated by the Conference during the reporting period.

3. Activities undertaken during the reporting period from 1 July 2010 to 31 August 2012 focused on the following four main areas:

- (a) Status of implementation of decisions taken by AMCEN at its thirteenth session;
- (b) Status of implementation of the work programme of AMCEN and related activities for the period from 1 July 2010 to 31 August 2012;
- (c) AMCEN-related meetings and conferences.

II. Status of implementation of the decisions taken by AMCEN at its thirteenth session

4. The following nine decisions were adopted by AMCEN at its thirteenth session:

- (a) Implementation of the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;
- (b) Further implementation of the work of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment on climate change in Africa;
- (c) Constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

* AMCEN/14/EGM/3/1

- (d) Status and use of the general trust fund for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;
- (e) Environmental education and technology-supported learning;
- (f) African monitoring of environment for sustainable development;
- (g) Africa Environment Outlook process and the African Environment Information Network;
- (h) African common position on the international regime on access and benefit-sharing;
- (i) Intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Decision 13/1. Implementation of the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

5. The action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was prepared as a response to the call by NEPAD for the development and adoption of an initiative to address Africa's environmental challenges while at the same time combating poverty and promoting socio-economic development. The action plan was prepared through a consultative and participatory process under the leadership of AMCEN.
6. The action plan was organized in clusters of programmatic areas covering the following priority sectors and cross-cutting issues: combating land degradation, drought and desertification; wetlands; invasive species; marine and coastal resources; climate change; cross-border conservation of natural resources; and cross-cutting issues. It relates to Africa's common and shared sustainable development problems and concerns and is a body of collective and individual responsibilities and actions which African countries are to adopt and implement to maintain the integrity of the environment and ensure the sustainable use of their natural resources through partnerships with the international community.
7. The African Union Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (formerly the NEPAD Secretariat) and AMCEN are each implementing various aspects of the action plan of the environment initiative of NEPAD. AMCEN is responsible for the implementation of its work programme and relevant decisions, which are an integral part of the action plan. The implementation of the work programme during the biennium should therefore be considered in that context.
8. Nine years after the adoption of the action plan under the auspices of AMCEN, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), the African Union Commission and AMCEN, with the support of UNEP, have been involved in reviewing its implementation during the reporting period. The aim was to assess the progress made in the implementation of the plan, as well as to address some emerging environmental issues in Africa.
9. NPCA initiated efforts aimed at harmonizing its activities in order to achieve more synergies and complementarities in its approaches and implementation strategies. Consultations were held with the regional economic communities to share information and progress in the implementation of various programmes and activities in Africa. Regional institutions and representatives from other regional networks were involved in these consultations. The consultations resulted in the identification of the need to establish an environmental platform that would help promote sustainable environmental management in the region.
10. The platform will focus on creating a more vibrant global partnership and cooperation to enhance Africa's environmental sustainability. The platform seeks to promote a shift in environmental management in Africa by developing innovative models. Climate-related risks will increasingly be mainstreamed into development, and adaptation actions will be implemented in priority regions and sectors. It intends to benefit from the successes and lessons of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), which has been instrumental in promoting the African agriculture agenda. Synergies between the proposed platform and CAADP will be maximized at all levels.
11. Consultants were hired to review the action plan implementation and a report was produced. The report was further reviewed by colleagues from the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the African Union Commission and UNEP. The document was further strengthened, to incorporate emerging issues on environment, such as the green economy and the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+ 20). The final document from the revision exercise was consequently discussed for validation at a stakeholders consultation meeting will be held on 3 and 4 September 2012 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

12. The report of the action plan for the environment initiative of the NEPAD will be submitted to AMCEN at its fourteenth session for consideration and adoption.

Decision 13/2. Further implementation of the work of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment on climate change in Africa

13. The work of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) on climate change in Africa (known as AMCEN work on climate change in Africa) was initiated as a follow-up to the twelfth session of AMCEN. During this session, ministers made a significant paradigm shift by agreeing to focus mainly on climate change. The AMCEN decision on climate change had two parts: (a) Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012; and (b) a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes.

14. The objectives of AMCEN work on climate change in Africa were to:

(a) Support efforts by AMCEN to implement the continent's process to achieve a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012;

(b) Provide a platform to deliberate and agree on a shared vision and common position for Africa to combat climate change and achieve sustainable development;

(c) Engage with the international community in finding solutions to the challenges posed by climate change;

(d) Develop a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes and its associated subregional climate change programmes.

15. In its decision 13/2, AMCEN called for the further implementation of the work of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment on climate change in Africa. Some of the achievements made in the implementation of AMCEN work on climate change in Africa during the reporting period are provided below:

Completion of the Africa comprehensive climate change programmes

16. The preparation of a comprehensive framework of climate change programmes in Africa and associated frameworks of subregional climate change programmes were completed under the auspices of AMCEN and the regional economic communities. The framework of climate change in Africa takes into consideration the specificities of different regions with the aim of consolidating and improving the implementation of climate change projects and programmes within the continent.

17. The development of the Africa comprehensive framework on climate change programmes constituted a first-ever attempt to provide a coordinated response for the continent hence putting Africa in a position to achieve optimum results in adaptation, mitigation and technology transfer. There is now a critical need to implement the recommendations made in the comprehensive framework of climate change programmes and the associated frameworks of subregional climate change programmes.

Climate for Development in Africa Programme (ClimDev-Africa)

18. As part of the effort to address climate change challenges in Africa, the Climate for Development in Africa Programme (ClimDev-Africa) was created as a joint initiative of the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Commission of the African Union (AUC) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The Programme was endorsed at regional meetings of African heads of State and Government and by Africa's ministers of finance, planning and economic development and AMCEN. Its purpose is to explore actions required in overcoming climate information gaps for analyses leading to adequate policies and decision-making at all levels. The programme is now operational.

AMCEN communication strategy on climate change

19. The second part of AMCEN work on climate change in Africa involved the preparation of a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes and its associated frameworks of subregional climate change programmes. One of the key gaps identified in this process was the lack of readily available data on climate change to provide a deeper understanding of the climate change facts and projections of its impact on different sectors. Where data was available it was not packaged to best inform decision makers and negotiators. Therefore, it was agreed that a communication strategy that would provide sustained, reliable and accessible information to the different actors involved in and affected by the impacts of climate change should be prepared.

20. It was underscored that information alone was ineffective without the support of a tool and mechanism for capacity-building and skills development. The communication strategy was therefore to serve as an essential tool for AMCEN in supporting countries and ensuring regional attention and efforts and in mobilizing policy and political and financial support as well as enhancing public/civil engagement for the comprehensive response to climate change in Africa. A consultative meeting on the AMCEN communication strategy on climate change was organized by the AMCEN secretariat at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi from 23 to 26 August 2010 in order to finalize the document.

21. The communication strategy will provide a platform and methodologies for enhancing access, development, sharing and utilization of climate change resources, including data, relevant policy and technical documents and available tools, so that the need for an effective global response and understanding and capacities of the African countries in responding to climate change are well informed and enhanced. It is expected to fulfil a dual role of raising awareness of the necessity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and of providing information on the trends and impacts associated with our daily choices and action at all levels.

22. Concerted efforts should now be made to implement the AMCEN communication strategy on climate change to bring greater awareness and provide information to communities to enable them make informed and responsible choices.

Second Inter-ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa

23. In November 2010, UNEP and the World Health Organization (WHO) organized the Second Inter-ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa in Luanda, where African ministers of health and environment agreed to give special attention to the management of the adverse effects of climate change on health. It was highlighted at the meeting that through the experience gained in the implementation of the Libreville Declaration on health and environment, in particular through the creation of the Health and Environment Strategic Alliance (HESA), synergies could be found to support adaptation actions aimed at reducing vulnerability and building resilience in the health sector in developing countries, in particular in countries in Africa, given that adaptation is an urgent and immediate need for those countries.

24. The ministers adopted a Joint Statement on Climate Change and Health in which the countries agreed to implement an essential public health package to enhance climate change resilience of the health sector.

Framework for public health adaptation to climate change in the African region

25. As a follow up to the Second Inter-ministerial Conference on Health and Environment, UNEP, WHO and other partners developed the framework for public adaptation to climate change. The overall objective of the framework is to guide the formulation of country-specific action plans that will form the health component of national climate change adaptation plans aimed at minimizing the adverse public health effects of climate change.

26. In its decision SS.IV/1 on climate change, adopted at its fourth special session, AMCEN requested the African Union Commission, UNEP, WHO and other development partners to support the implementation of the framework for public health adaptation to climate change in the African region adopted by the WHO Regional Committee for Africa at its sixty-first session through an appropriate mechanism.

Africa's common negotiating position on climate change

27. Several consultative meetings of the African group of negotiators have been held since the thirteenth session of AMCEN, including in Johannesburg in March 2011, in Cape Town in May 2011 and in Durban in August 2011, culminating in the fourth special session. The meetings were held with the view to updating Africa's common negotiating position on climate change. The AMCEN secretariat provided policy and legal advice to the African negotiators and Government officials at all these and other global climate change meetings. It also provided fact sheets, policy and technical briefs to African negotiators and senior Government officials.

28. The updated African common position on climate change was endorsed by AMCEN at its fourth special session as the basis for negotiations by African States on strengthening the international climate change regime through the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol.

29. It was also agreed that the African common position will be continuously backed by new findings, including the best available scientific, economic and technical information, and, in this regard, institutions, African centres of excellence, the African Union Commission, the African

Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Climate Policy Centre and other development partners, including the World Bank, were invited to support the elaboration of the research agenda in support of the African common position. Additional consultative meetings have therefore been held in 2012 in this regard.

30. The support provided to the African negotiators by AMCEN is expected to continue until the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Doha from 26 November to 7 December 2012.

Decision 13/3. Constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

31. In its decision 13/3, AMCEN noted that the evolution of other relevant initiatives under the African Union referred to in the decision had been completed through further intergovernmental consultations within the African Union. In this regard, the Conference requested the AMCEN secretariat, in consultation with the AMCEN Bureau, to continue the revision of the Constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, taking into account the institutional evolution of the African Union, and report to the Conference at its fourteenth session.

32. During the twenty-fourth meeting of the AMCEN Bureau, held in Nairobi on 20 February 2011, the Bureau agreed to constitute a working group to review the AMCEN constitution and related issues, including the institutional evolution of the African Union, and to present clear recommendations for consideration by the Bureau. The working group comprised representatives of the African Union Commission, Mali (as President of AMCEN), the United Republic of Tanzania (as Rapporteur) the AMCEN Bureau, UNEP and the AMCEN Secretariat. A meeting of the working group on the revision of the Constitution of AMCEN was held on 25 and 26 August 2011 at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi.

33. It will be recalled that in February 2009, the Assembly of the African Union made a decision to reconfigure the specialized technical committees (STCs) from 7 to 14. Environment issues, where AMCEN falls, are an integral part of the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment. The Assembly requested the Commission to prepare detailed activities of the STCs with a view to avoiding overlap and ensure coherence and harmony with the portfolios of the Commission.

34. In its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.365(XVII), adopted at the seventeenth Ordinary Session of the African Union, held in Malabo on 30 June and 1 July 2011, the Union took note of the report of the Commission on the Implementation of Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.227(XII) on the Specialized Technical Committees (STCs), adopted in Addis Ababa in February 2009. In principle, it adopted the proposed detailed activities of the 14 STCs, including for the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment. With regard to the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment, the Commission, in its recommendation, proposed to establish subcommittees on agriculture, rural development, water and environment with a view to addressing the diverse and broad competencies incorporated within that STC. The Assembly requested the Commission to operationalize the STCs from January 2013 and decided that thereafter the Sectoral Ministerial Conferences should be abolished.

35. In the light of the Malabo decision on STCs, the working group agreed that it would not be proper to embark on the revision of the AMCEN constitution before the STCs became operational and the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment found its proper place with regard to how it would carry on its work. However, it would be more appropriate for AMCEN to review and make recommendations on how it would engage with the African Union, especially with the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment, in the context of the new structure. The working group recommended that a position paper with such recommendations be prepared for consideration by the fourteenth session of AMCEN. It is worth noting that that paper is available as document: AMCEN/14/5.

Decision 13/4. Status and use of the general trust fund for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

36. Pursuant to decision 13/4 on the status and use of the general trust fund, the secretariat prepared a budget proposal for the use of the remainder of the principal of the AMCEN Trust Fund not be invested, for approval by the Bureau. The budget consisted of the interest generated by the general trust fund and the remainder of the principal that is not invested to carry out Conference activities covers the costs of Bureau meetings and meets the costs of regular sessions of the Conference.

37. Currently both voluntary contributions and the interest rate are in decline, rendering the situation unsustainable in the future. Unpaid pledges amounting to \$2.1 million have had to be written off contributions to the trust fund continue to be irregular and low.

38. The AMCEN Secretariat has made every effort to mobilize resources for the trust fund. Letters asking for contributions to the trust fund were sent out to countries and follow-up was undertaken. However, contributions received from member States in 2010-2011 amounted to \$254,136. The interest generated by the general trust fund over the same period was \$76,477. The total income for this period was \$330,620.

39. A report on contributions to the General Trust Fund of AMCEN and use has been prepared by the secretariat (AMCEN/14/EGM/5).

Decision 13/5. Environmental education and technology-supported learning

40. Overall, a considerable amount of progress has been made in the four-year period since the twelfth session of AMCEN with regard to environmental education and technology-supported learning. A number of strategic partnerships have been established and a capacity-building programme focusing on training in the area of technology supported learning has been partially implemented. A pilot application on mobile learning was implemented in Kenya and won two international awards. Lack of funding is now the major impediment towards continuing the capacity building programme.

41. A detailed report summarizing progress made to date on the implementation of decision 12/6, which was adopted at the twelfth session of AMCEN and supplemented by decision 13/5, can be found in document AMCEN/14/INF/2.

Decision 13/6. African monitoring of environment for sustainable development

42. The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment adopted decision 13/6 on African Monitoring of Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD), urging member States to integrate AMESD products and services into their planning and development processes. The regional implementation centres of the African Monitoring of Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) programme were instructed to articulate the AMCEN decision and disseminate information to users of AMESD products and services and for Governments to integrate these products and services into their development planning processes. The respective regional economic communities were urged to facilitate this among their member States. It was appreciated that policymakers would need training on how to integrate and also be exposed to the various options to integration.

43. The regional implementation centres showcased their products and services in the African Pavilion at the seventeenth Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the seventh Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Durban in November 2011. Under the coordination of AMESD headquarters, representatives from the regional implementation centres of AGRHYMET from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region, the Intergovernment Authority on Development (IGAD) Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC) from the IGAD region and the Commission Internationale du Bassin Congo-Oubangui-Sangha (CICOS) from the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) region exhibited their services and formed informal alliances with continental and global environmental initiatives. As part of the added value to measuring the impacts of climate change, AMESD products and services aims to provide updated environmental data to African policy makers to support decision-making for sustainable development in the continent.

44. The African Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development and IGAD held a successful midterm workshop in Nairobi from 15 to 17 February 2012. The main objective of the workshop was to provide a forum for exchange of experiences in the development, integration and validation of products and services of AMESD and IGAD. In the IGAD region, AMESD action focuses on the assessment and monitoring of land degradation and natural habitats for sustainable land management. ICPAC serves as the regional implementation centre and works closely with its lead partner, the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD).

45. A policy workshop on the theme "Showcase the use of AMESD services for policymaking" was held in May 2012 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa on 22 and 23 May 2012. The specific objective of the conference was to sensitize policymakers on the utilization and integration of AMESD regional products and services and general environmental Earth observation information into the development process of AU member States. It was attended by around 50 representatives of each of the African regional economic communities - CEMAC, ECOWAS, IGAD, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) - and AMESD regional implementation centres, as well as by environmental policymakers from AU

member States. In addition, about 60 local and international organizations, universities and others attended the conference. The workshop concluded by urging African policymakers to promote an active, informed and sustainable participation in global environment surveillance initiatives.

46. The African Monitoring of Environment for Sustainable Development programme will come to an end in June 2013. A new programme – Monitoring of Environment and Security in Africa (MESA) will bridge AMESD with the follow-up Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) and Africa Initiative. The implementation of MESA will start in 2013 and run until 2018. MESA, likewise, will build on the results of AMESD to address the needs for improved management of natural resources and environmental security towards sustainable development in Africa, at the continental, regional and national levels, including all sub-Saharan African countries.

Decision 13/7. Africa Environment Outlook process and the Africa Environment Information Network

47. The AMCEN secretariat is working with the United Nations Environment Programme Division of Early Warning and Assessment and the Regional Office for Africa to develop modalities for communicating, tracking and reporting on implementation of the outcomes of the Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) process by AMCEN.

48. There are ongoing activities to achieve this through the strengthening of the Africa Environment Information Network (AfricaEIN). Understanding that mainstreaming of AEO findings into national processes is best achieved through country-led processes, the first meeting of national focal points of AfricaEIN is planned for October 2012. In addition, capacity-building for the preparation of state of the environment and outlook reports, atlases of our changing environment, national environment summaries and/or Climate change and environment outlook reports have been provided to the following countries: Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Malawi, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania (Dar Es Salaam).

49. The United Nations Environment Programme, working in collaboration with CA, WHO, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations, has supported the preparation of the third Africa Environment Outlook Report. The report's underlying theme is "Health and environment interlinkages". The summary for policymakers (French and English) will be launched at the fourteenth session of AMCEN. Civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations were invited and participated in the preparation of the report through the provision of content, case studies and data, and as peer reviewers. They also supported the preparation of the report through resource mobilization.

50. The United Nations Environment Programme has developed and is implementing a plan to strengthen the Africa Environment Information Network. This includes strengthening of national networks, building their capacity to increase their relevance to national and regional processes, working with African centre of excellence (or Topic Centres), aligning monitoring and assessment products to national reporting and development needs and improving the capacity of countries to collect, analyse, package and communicate environmental information

Decision 13/8. African common position on the international regime on access and benefit-sharing

51. The tenth conference of parties to of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing in October 2010. The President of AMCEN played a critical role in Nagoya to arrive at outcomes that took into account Africa priorities and concerns. Through the Global Environment Fund (GEF)-funded project "Capacity-building for the early entry into force of the Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing", which is led by the CBD Secretariat, in collaboration with UNEP, support is being extended to African countries.

52. Furthermore, with contributions from Japan and other donors, GEF established the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund (NPIF), which is designed to support countries looking to build enabling activities to ratify the Protocol. However, thus far African countries have expressed disappointment at not being able to access the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund. During the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing, held in July 2012, African delegates stated that Africa had been largely left out by the GEF.

53. At its second meeting, the Intergovernmental Committee recommended that GEF expedite the procedures for gaining access to funds from NPIF. Expedited procedures will ensure that African countries access the financing through NPIF in the process of ratifying the Protocol

Decision 13/9. Intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services

54. The first session of the plenary meeting to determine modalities and institutional arrangements for an inter-governmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services (IPBES), held in Nairobi in October 2011, established the platform.

55. The second session of the plenary, held in Panama City in April 2012, decided on the physical location of the IPBES Secretariat. Germany won the bid to host the Secretariat in Bonn.

56. The intersessional process towards the first IPBES meeting, anticipated to be held in early 2013, is currently under way. The intersessional process will support preparations for the first plenary meeting of IPBES, in addition to underpinning the development of its programme of work.

III. Implementation of the work programme of AMCEN undertaken over the period 1 July 2010 to 31 August 2012

57. In previous bienniums, the work programme of AMCEN has been taken as an integral part of the action plan for the NEPAD environment initiative. A number of activities were thus undertaken in this context during this reporting period.

Land degradation and desertification

58. The Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) was initiated as a model to help in the fight against desertification, ensure ecosystem restoration and development of arid and semi-arid zones. The creation in June 2010 of the Great Green Wall (GGW) Pan African Agency and the recommendations of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in June 2010 provided an enabling environment for the development of a global partnership in support of the initiative.

59. In order to strengthen its support to the initiative, the United Nations Environment Programme identified areas in which it could assist. A study on the comparative advantage of the Programme in the GGW was developed by the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring centre on the basis of an analysis of ongoing and past programming, lessons learned and current flagship programmes. The study also provided an overview of ongoing programming in the GGW countries undertaken by other agencies, including the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the African Development Bank.

60. The study demonstrates that whereas the other agencies focus their work on developing national-level support programmes and providing financial resources for large-scale investments in land and water management, there are shortfalls in the development or integration of science and assessment from design through the implementation phases. GGW has been developed as a set of national initiatives without overall integration and consideration of the GGW portfolio that – while being technically sound – does not take full advantage of recent innovations in ecosystems management, monitoring and science-based decision-making tools.

61. Three rapid evaluations were commissioned in collaboration with three specialized centres. The thematic study on ecosystem services and drivers for change in the GGW context was carried out by the Centre de Suivi Ecologique (CSE) in Senegal; the topic on transboundary natural resource management and governance in GGW countries was conducted by the Comité Inter-Etats pour la Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel (CILSS), whereas the socio-economic situation and capacity to adapt to climate change was undertaken by Environment and Development Action in the third world (ENDA). These evaluations highlighted key thematic trends and challenges in the region and provided specific recommendations for engagement.

Conservation and sustainable use of marine, coastal and freshwater resources

62. Through the implementation of the work programmes for the Nairobi and Abidjan conventions, a number of instruments aimed at enhancing the capacities of the contracting parties to sustainably manage the coastal and marine environment have been developed. The instruments include:

(a) Strategic action programme for the protection of coastal and marine environment for the Western Indian Ocean from land-based sources and activities;

(b) Amended Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment for the Western Indian Ocean (Amended Nairobi Convention);

(c) Protocol for the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-Based Sources and Activities;

(d) Draft Protocol to the Abidjan Convention Concerning Cooperation in the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment from Land Based Sources and Activities.

63. It is noteworthy that the Abidjan Convention has now been fully revitalized and that its secretariat was relocated from Nairobi to Abidjan in 2010.

64. UNEP assisted Government officials in understanding the analytical approach and framework for mainstreaming coastal and marine resource issues into national development frameworks. As a result, Seychelles, Mauritius and Kenya initiated the mainstreaming processes by identifying elements of existing planning and institutional systems that provide building blocks for such processes. UNEP capacity-building efforts further enabled the Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania to undertake pilot projects as well as to increase their understanding on how the pollution of the marine and coastal environment from land-based sources and activities can be practically addressed, using innovative and locally appropriate technology methods such as constructed wetlands for wastewater treatment and joint management of project by Government agencies and civil society organizations, as well as multi-agency involvement and, more important, the engagement of the private sector,

65. In 2010, UNEP provided support in the area of assessment of fresh water resources through the production of the *Atlas of Africa's Water Resources: Challenges and Opportunities*. The publication makes a major contribution to the state of knowledge about water in Africa by bringing together information about water issues in each country and summarizing the state of their progress towards the Millennium Development Goal water targets, synthesizing water issues by looking at them from the perspective of challenges and opportunities and providing distinctive profiles of trans-boundary water basins and country. The publication was launched during Africa Water Week in Addis Ababa, on 25 November 2010. The *Africa Water Atlas* uses hundreds of "before" and "after" shots, detailed new maps and satellite images from African countries to show the problems facing Africa's water supplies, such as the drying of Lake Chad and the erosion of the Nile Delta, as well as new, successful methods of conserving water. Some of the most arresting images in the Atlas include green clouds of eroded soil and agricultural run-off in Uganda, pollution from oil spills in Nigeria and a 3 km segment of the Nile Delta that has been lost to erosion.

66. Using South-South cooperation as a tool for capacity-building and technology transfer, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Kenya, Libya, Morocco, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, are being assisted, with the support of the Ministry of Science and Technology of China, in building their capacity and improving their resilience to cope with water stress in adaptation to climate change. Through this activity, the capacity of technical staff from the four countries bordering Lake Tanganyika was enhanced in the area of monitoring water quality of the lake.

Combating climate change in Africa

67. At its twelfth session, held in Johannesburg in June 2008, AMCEN made a landmark decision on climate change, namely, (a) to support Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012; and (b) the development and implementation of a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes. In view of this, among others, Africa has been able to work on a climate road map based on the continent's shared vision on adaptation and mitigation. The common African position has been updated continuously resulting in better coherence in policy positions taken by African ministers of environment and experts, in particular during the global climate change negotiations. An increasing number of countries are also incorporating climate change analysis into planning and decision-making. Details on climate change activities have been highlighted elsewhere in the present report.

Transboundary conservation or management of natural resources

68. Efforts were directed at assisting the Governments of Angola, the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in establishing a transboundary dialogue on the management of the Congo Basin. The work was aimed at establishing a regional biosphere reserve to implement ecosystem restoration measures in the Mayombe Forest – home to large populations of gorillas and chimpanzees – which has now virtually disappeared from the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An implementation mechanism was set up which included a ministerial tripartite committee, a regional technical committee and three national technical committees. The Governments of Angola, the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo signed a tripartite declaration to establish a transboundary dialogue on the management of the Mayombe forest.

69. As a result of UNEP intervention, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo embarked on developing national environmental framework laws to take into consideration regional/cross-border forests and wildlife conservation issues as well as the conservation of high-value forest landscapes. In addition, the capacity of two countries (Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire) was further enhanced to develop and implement local development plans targeting the engagement in decision-making of rural communities in conservation and wildlife monitoring, taking into account, among others, the rights and traditional practices of indigenous peoples. These initiatives have increased communities' understanding of the importance of sustainability of forest use, and enhanced the national capacity for wildlife monitoring and forest conservation decision-making.

70. Support was provided for the holding of a special Pan-African High Level Ministerial Conference on biodiversity and poverty alleviation in Libreville from 12 to 17 September 2010 as a follow up to the thirteenth AMCEN session, which resulted in the Libreville Declaration and an African Common position for the tenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The conference initiated discussions that led to the adoption of concrete actions for valuing biodiversity, ecosystem services and renewable natural resources as factors contributing to economic growth, job creation, investment and poverty alleviation.

Cross-cutting issues

71. The cross-cutting issues covered in the present report include health and environment; environmental education; and sustainable consumption and production.

Health and environment

72. Since the adoption in 2008 of the Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment in Africa, approximately half of African countries have embarked on implementation of the Declaration, which represents today the umbrella framework upon which African countries and their development partners address coherently, environmental determinants of human health and ecosystems integrity. The momentum created in Libreville in 2008 catalysed an unprecedented intersectoral dialogue, to the extent that at their second Conference, held in Luanda from 23 to 26 November 2010, ministers agreed on the Luanda Commitment, Arrangements for the Health and Environment Strategic Alliance and the African Ministers of Health and Environment Joint Statement on Climate Change and Health.

73. Countries are establishing multisectoral and multidisciplinary task teams, which are the new driving force for health and environment intersectoral action at the country level. They have provided opportunities to experts from different horizons to effectively engage in a technical and scientific dialogue and to reach consensus on the status and importance of environmental risk factors that impact on health development as well as on ecosystems preservation. Two pan-African programmes are being established as a result of the Libreville Declaration: the Pan-African Programme for Public Health Adaptation to Climate Change and the African Programme to Reduce Risks Posed by Chemicals to Human Health and Ecosystems.

74. The implementation of the Libreville Declaration has started to yield clear results at the policy, programmatic and institutional levels. The Libreville Declaration has brought a new and dynamic impetus for intersectoral coordinated actions, as it is now being seen in a number of countries. It has created new possibilities for a more rapid and effective response to national and continental environmental threats. It is currently resulting in a new spirit of cooperation and alignment between the health and environment sectors. The situation analysis and needs assessments undertaken as part of the process of implementation has led to the first-ever continental report on the status of environmental determinants and management systems for human health and ecosystems integrity in Africa. In addition, the third Environment Outlook Report focuses on health and environment interlinkages.

75. The implementation of the Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment has led to unprecedented dialogue on health and environment matters both at policy and technical levels, and the identification of gaps in knowledge on health and environment linkages within the countries. It has also led to country ownership of the process, as well as a clear and joint process of identification and validation of national priorities.

Environmental education

76. UNEP continues to support the strengthening of partnerships and South-South and North-South cooperation in implementing the environmental education strategy through a number of activities: the environmental education universities' networks, Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in African Universities (MESA) and the Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability (GUPES). More than 80 universities across Africa participate in the activities of MESA, where there is a move towards having subregional focal points in each of the five

subregions. In June 2012, a memorandum of understanding was signed between UNEP and the Association of Africa Universities, which is based in Accra.

77. In the context of environmental education and training, there is a need to consolidate MESA activities and ensure global linkages. The focus of activities around the three pillars of education, training and networking will ensure linkages with UNEP activities. The mobilization of resources is vital to sustain the MESA network, whereby the development of focused products such as graduate curriculum sourcebooks on climate change adaptation and REDD+ can be explored. There is an opportunity for South-South partnerships with China, through the joint UNEP-Tongji Institute of Environment for Sustainable Development, as well as capacity-building opportunities. In the context of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-14, new and innovative programmes mainstreaming sustainability issues can be developed, starting with the formulation of an African Action Plan on Environmental Education and Training.

Sustainable consumption and production

78. In 2005, AMCEN approved the African 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production to facilitate the active participation of Africa as a region in the Marrakech Process, which was initiated as a follow-up to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The implementation of the African 10 Year Framework Programme has been closely coordinated with the secretariat of AMCEN and other regional and national partners through the support of the Government of Germany under the Marrakech Taskforce on Cooperation with Africa. Various activities have been undertaken under the framework programme, such as the development and implementation of local and national on sustainable consumption and production programmes, the development of an African eco-labelling mechanism and the organization of the African round tables on sustainable consumption and production.

79. To date, several projects and programmes, such as demand-side management of energy use and of water use in Uganda and Zambia, have been implemented under the framework programme; a water savings initiative of African beverage industries in Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe; a project on sustainable buildings policies in Burkina Faso and Kenya; integrated solid waste management projects in Egypt, Mozambique and Zimbabwe; toolkits for the application of resource efficiency in small and medium-sized enterprises in Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda; and the development of an African eco-labelling mechanism.

80. At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, countries adopted a decision on the establishment of a global Ten Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production as part of a global pact on sustainable consumption and production. The global Framework of Programmes is expected to enhance international cooperation to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production in both developed and developing countries. In the light of the adoption of the global Ten Year Framework of Programmes, there is a need to review the African 10-Year Framework of Programmes- and to expand sustainable consumption and production activities in Africa through partnerships with key regional institutions such as the African Roundtable on sustainable consumption and production, AU, NEPAD, AfDB and United Nations agencies.

Environmental conventions

81. The EC ACP MEAs Programme, funded by the European Union (EU), is aimed at addressing capacity needs in the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. UNEP is coordinating and facilitating the Programme. The African Union Commission, in Addis Ababa, is hosting the African Hub of the Programme. The Hub focuses on strengthening and enhancing the capacities of the 48 African countries, the regional economic communities and related institutions. Subregional workshops have been held to review existing capacity needs and prioritize those needs.

IV. Outcomes and outputs of some key activities undertaken

A. Fourth special session of AMCEN on climate change

82. The fourth special session of AMCEN was held in Bamako 12 to 16 September 2011 with the aim of consolidating Africa's common position on climate change in preparation of the seventeenth Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, held in Durban, South Africa.

83. The main outcomes of the special session included:

- (a) The Bamako Declaration on Consolidating the African Common Position on Climate Change and on Preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20);
- (b) A decision on climate change and key messages on climate change negotiations for seventeenth Conference of the Parties and the seventh Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;
- (c) A decision on strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development: the environment pillar and an outcome document for the consultations on international environmental governance held on 12 September 2011, annexed to the decision;
- (d) A decision on the green economy in the context of Africa.

84. The decision on climate change adopted the African common position and key messages presented as the outcome of the African group of negotiators meeting held on 13 and- 14 September 2011 and reconfirmed adaptation as the essential priority for the continent. Ministers stressed the need for immediate and adequate support for the implementation of adaptation measures and actions through the provision of grant-based public resources.

85. The operationalization of the Global Climate Green Fund and, in particular, the Africa Green Fund being designed by the African Development Bank, would be key mechanisms towards meeting this need. These Funds should be designed taking into account African specificities. They called upon developed countries to honour their mitigation commitments to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases for a second and subsequent commitment period at the agreed levels under the Kyoto Protocol. The report of the fourth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment is contained in document AMCEN/SS/1V/3.

86. The outcomes of the fourth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment were presented and endorsed by the African Union Summit held in Addis Ababa in January 2012.

B. Consultative meeting of African ministers of the environment

87. A consultative meeting of African ministers of environment was held on 4 December 2011 in Durban, South Africa. The main objective of the meeting, which was organized by AMCEN, was to enable ministers to finalize preparations for the Durban Conference, building on the outcomes of the fourth special session of AMCEN. The meeting also took into account the latest developments in negotiations at the time.

88. This consultative meeting provided an opportunity for ministers to prepare for the high-level engagement in Durban and review the content of the African common position, as well as the expected outcomes of the Durban Conference. Ministers evaluated the various scenarios of outcomes under each of the two tracks of negotiations – to implement the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol, and to explore possible combinations of outcomes under the two tracks as the “package” that was to be agreed in Durban. The consultative meeting also provided an opportunity for ministers to further refine their strategy for negotiation and for engagement with other important parties and groups.

C. Meeting of the Bureau of AMCEN

89. One meeting of the Bureau of AMCEN was held during the reporting period. The twenty-fourth meeting of the Bureau of AMCEN was held in Nairobi in February 2011. Four of the five Bureau members were represented; Chad was not represented. The meeting considered the following issues:

- (a) Consideration of the report of the twenty-third meeting of the Bureau of AMCEN, held on 15 February 2009;
- (b) Consideration of the African Union decision on the report of the thirteenth session of AMCEN;
- (c) Consideration of decisions taken by AMCEN at its thirteenth Session and action taken;
- (d) Contributions to the General Trust Fund of AMCEN;
- (e) Consideration on the outcomes of the sixteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Cancun, Mexico, and the African group preparation for the seventeenth Conference of the Parties, held in Durban;
- (f) Consideration of the work programme of AMCEN for the biennium 2011-2012.

90. The Bureau observed that during the past few years AMCEN had made key achievements in facilitating support for African countries on the road to the climate change negotiations in Cancun. As a result of this, the region had one voice in Cancun and, indeed, this contributed to good outcomes in Cancun. It was agreed that AMCEN would continue to facilitate this support as countries prepare for the following climate change talks, held in Durban in 2011.

91. The Bureau expressed appreciation for the good relationship between, UNEP, the African Union and AMCEN. UNEP reiterated its commitment to continue its support to African countries and AMCEN. The African Union indicated that it was working on a continental strategy for the environment and that that strategy would be shared with key stakeholders at an opportune time.

Some key documents produced by the AMCEN secretariat during the intersessional period

Guidebook: Addressing Climate Change Challenges in Africa

92. The guidebook aims to translate available climate science and current international climate policies into the tools for practical action in Africa, in the context of sustainable development.

Third Environment Outlook Report (AEO-3)

93. The report focuses on health and environment inter-linkages. The summary for policymakers will be launched at the fourteenth session of AMCEN.

Considerations for the fourteenth session of AMCEN

94. As can be seen from the present report, apart from the implementation of some activities in some programme areas, efforts to scale up the level of activities have generally not been successful, owing to the perennial financial constraints facing AMCEN.

95. It is however expected that the introduction of the proposed regional priority programmes as part of the work programme of AMCEN for the biennium 2013–2014 will offer an opportunity for scaling up AMCEN activities. The regional priority programmes will also offer a good opportunity for resource mobilization and their actual implementation. The successful implementation of activities related to climate change during the past two bienniums is a good pointer in this regard. It is envisaged that some of the main outcomes of the fourteenth session of AMCEN will be a conference with a better focus and that is better able to mobilize the necessary resources to effectively carry out its mandate.

96. The present report is submitted for consideration by AMCEN at its fourteenth session.
