

Annex VI

DRAFT DECISIONS SUBMITTED TO THE MINISTERIAL SESSION BY THE EXPERT GROUP

Decision 1Institutionalization of AMCEN

The seventh 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 a legal framework for institutionalizing the Conference to facilitate the effective implementation of its programme,

Considering the new policy orientation and recommendations adopted at its fifth session in November 1993 that called for ANCEN programme to 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;

Taking into account the absence of a consulting mechanism in the field of environment and sustainable development,

Decides:

1. To establish ANCEN as a constitutional intergovernmental body on environment and development which shall be governed by rules and procedures approved by member States (Gabon, Nigeria and South Africa a reserved their position on this decision);

2. To call upon all member States which have not yet submitted their comments on the constitution, rules of procedure and contribution quotas to the AMCEN Trust Fund to do so for consideration during the eighth session.

Decision 2Adequate and predictable funding in support of AMCEN activities

The seventh session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Aware of the importance of the AMCEN Trust Fund as the major mechanism for mobilization of resources and noting that since its inception only a few member States have made contributions to the Fund,

Considering that AMCEN cannot function effectively without a proper budget,

Further aware of the financial and technical support that the United Nations Environment Programme continues to provide to the Conference,
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Decides:

1. To contribute to the AMCEN Trust Fund in line with the approved proposal on the assessed contribution quotas to the Fund (Nigeria and South Africa expressed a reservation on this decision);
2. That the Trust Fund will be managed by UNEP prior to the functioning of an established secretariat and its operational mechanism;
3. To note with appreciation the contributions so far made by some member States;
4. To call on all member States to fulfil their commitment to the AMCEN budget in accordance with the approved assessed contribution quotas;
5. To express appreciation to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for the support to AMCEN;
6. To urge the Executive Director of United Nations Environment Programme to continue providing support to the Conference;
7. That other contributions could be received for the Trust Fund for as long as the conditions governing such contributions are not contradictory to the interest of AMCEN;
8. To call on other organizations, donor countries and the private sector to contribute to the Trust Fund.

Decision 3

Protection of the environment and sustainable agriculture

The seventh session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recognizing the close inter-linkage between agriculture and environment and the impact of environmental degradation on food production,

Aware of the importance of agriculture and the need to increase agricultural production in Africa,

Also aware of the large number of the population depending on agriculture for their livelihoods,

Further aware of the need to improve the standard of living of the majority of the population,

Considering that it is necessary to practice environmentally-friendly farming so that the natural resources could continue to support agriculture,

Also aware of the rich genetic resources which Africa possesses,

Decides:

1. To call on member States to ensure the integration of agriculture, population and environmental considerations in the planning, development and implementation of national action plans;

2. To call on AMCEN member States to participate fully in the negotiations on the BioSafety Protocol and the International Undertaking on Giant Genetic Resources.

Decision 4

Ratification of International Environmental Conventions and Protocols

The seventh session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Considering the importance, at national and international levels, of various International Conventions, namely the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of hazardous Wastes within Africa, the Basel Convention on the Control of transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Convention on Biological Diversity; the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in

) Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, Convention in International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

Noting that many African countries have ratified some of these conventions and protocols,

Bearing in mind that considerable environmental benefits could be derived from and as a result of the compliance with the terms of these Conventions,

Urging member States that have not ratified these conventions to do so, while bearing in mind their various national interests,

Decides:

1. That ANCEN secretariat should continue to build consensus, raise awareness and encourage common positions on the implications of these conventions and protocols and also ensure their implementation;

2. That AMCEN secretariat should urge the Convention secretariats to continue assisting countries that have ratified the conventions and protocols towards the implementation of the provisions of the respective conventions and protocols.

Decision 5

Research and capacity-building

The seventh session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

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

Taking into account that African countries have limited resources to develop their institutional and human resources,

Noting that many African countries are aware of the need to improve the capacity of their institutions and experts,

Decides:

1. To urge African Governments to continue to strengthen their institutions and programmes in the field of capacity-building.

Decision 6

Programme Priorities

The seventh session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Having examined the report on the activities of the Conference for the past biennium and noted with satisfaction the progress made by the secretariat in the implementation of activities within the very limited resources available,

Having established the Ecosystem Committees as subsidiary bodies of AMCEN,

Recognizing the important role that these committees could play in promoting the development and management of the environment,

Decides~

1. To continue with the 1996-1997 work programme into the biennium 1998/99 including the following additional priority for 1998-1999: Freshwater resources management within the framework of the "fair share" water strategy and other initiatives.
2. To encourage the vice-presidents of the Ecosystem Committees to coordinate closely with national, sub-regional and regional institution and initiatives and submit to the eighth meeting of ANCEN draft programmes of actions applicable to twenty-first century.