

**KEY MESSAGES FROM THE AFRICA MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS' DURING THE  
OPENING OF THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON  
THE ENVIRONMENT**

**10th November 2019 | Durban, South Africa**

Thank you Madam for giving me the floor,

Excellencies, Members of the High Table, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,

My fellow Africa Major Groups and Stakeholders,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen, Sawubona... Good Morning.

It's an honour to stand in front of you and read this statement of key messages on behalf of the African Major Groups and Stakeholders,

My name is Fazal Issa from Sokoine Memorial Foundation – a member of Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance; and I read this statement as the Regional Facilitator for Africa Major Groups and Stakeholders.

Honourable Ministers,

Having met for the two days prior to the start of this 17th Session of the AMCEN; we put forward to you the following;

We, the Africa Major Groups and Stakeholders,

*Express our concerns* about the lack of adequate implementation of previous declarations and decisions of the AMCEN and stress the need for accelerated implementation with adequate resourcing and synergies;

*Emphasize* officially recognizing the role of Africa Major Groups and Stakeholders – in contributing to the AMCEN process and implementation of the subsequent decisions; there has been a number of incidences that have limited our full participation in some working groups during the expert segment in the last three days; and we *recommend* that the Regional Consultative Meeting should be institutionalized as part of the AMCEN;

Honourable Ministers, we also share the following on the main themes of the AMCEN:

**On Promoting a Circular Economy in Africa**

As a net importer of plastic and waste; we *urge* our African governments to commit to a global policy framework on plastic and plastic pollution to address life cycle impacts

including eliminating single-use plastics production and marine litter, control of plastic waste trade, and prevention of false solutions including a ban on waste incineration. We recommend the enforcement of 'polluter pays' principle to finance circular economy solutions, as well as incentivizing sustainable business practices and design of consumer goods.

Moreover, industrial agriculture and monoculture production systems are input-heavy and have multiple detrimental environmental impacts. Thus, we *call upon* our African governments to recommit to agro-ecological solutions which are regenerative by nature.

**On Climate Change, Honourable Ministers,**

We *stress* that the whole African continent is experiencing adverse impacts of climate change as it has been witnessed in the recent events of unprecedented extreme weather. The upcoming UN Climate Change Conference in Madrid provide a platform for our African countries to compel the developed countries to use the obligation of reviewing the NDCs in 2020 to ambitiously enhance their mitigation commitments to reach the temperature goal as the current NDCs are taking the globe to over 3°C pathway.

NDCs reviews should also be conducted by our African governments, with multi-stakeholders approach, aligned with sector-specific and regional development plans. The outcome should reflect the communities' realities and importantly countries' capacities – this should nevertheless compromise the ambition level. The NDCs should be costed, attract climate finance, and – within our context of implementation – accompanied by a accountability, monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress, assess impacts and package learning for future climate planning and interventions.

**On Promoting Biodiversity Economy and Natural Capital Accounting in Africa**

We *call upon* our Africa government to stand for an ambitious post-2020 framework that is underpinned by transformative change to address biodiversity loss, make best use of local and indigenous knowledge, have predictable financing and transparent reporting and monitoring. There is a need to apply the precautionary principle when applying Natural Capital Accounting as not everything can be valued, especially considering intrinsic, and cultural or spiritual worth.

**On Advancing Blue/Ocean Economy in Africa**

We *stress* that strategies for the ocean should emphasize on inclusive, equitable and ecologically sustainable approaches to use the ocean resources and safeguard against commercialization of natural resources, which can lead to exploitation of ocean and

coastal resources to the detriment of local livelihoods and food security, the coastal and ocean ecosystems and African economies at large. It should also ensure adequate investment in local communities to enhance their capacity to secure their livelihoods in a socially and ecologically sound manner.

*Honourable Ministers and Distinguished Delegates,*

*African Major Groups and Stakeholders are ready to contribute to the process and implementation of AMCEN decisions. We therefore urge you to make best use of our expertise.*

Africa is our home and we all have the responsibility to take care of it, **Together.**

**Shukran...**