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African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

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Item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Consideration of matters related to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment process: status of the general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Status of the general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Note by the secretariat

Background

A. General background information

1. The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was established in December 1985, following a conference of African ministers of environment held in Cairo. 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.
2. AMCEN led the development of the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), is guiding the implementation of the environment initiative, including its work programme, and is currently implementing measures to combat climate change in Africa.
3. The action plan consists of six thematic areas and cross-cutting issues prioritized by African experts and policymakers. The programme areas include efforts to combat land degradation, drought and desertification; conservation of Africa's wetlands; prevention, control and management of invasive alien species; conservation and sustainable use of marine, coastal and freshwater resources; efforts to combat climate change in Africa; and transboundary conservation or management of natural resources.
4. The cross-cutting issues include health and environment; transfer of environmentally sound technologies; assessment of and early warning on natural disasters; and the environment directory of NEPAD.

* UNEP/AMCEN/13/1.

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B. Achievements and challenges

1. Achievements

5. AMCEN has been instrumental in advancing the environmental agenda in Africa in several areas. These include:

- (a) Undertaking work on climate change in Africa (see document UNEP/AMCEN/13/4);
- (b) Leading the process for the development and implementation of the action plan for the environment initiative of NEPAD;
- (c) Prompting and encouraging the preparation of a comprehensive regional report on the state of Africa's environment (the Africa Environment Outlook process) as a tool for monitoring sustainable development in Africa and a framework for environmental reporting at the national and subregional levels;
- (d) Highlighting environmental issues at all levels of society, including their linkages with poverty reduction, human and animal health, trade, water conservation, forestry management and river basin management, among others;
- (e) Providing a forum to exchange views and build consensus on issues of common concern to policymakers at the national, subregional, regional and global levels;
- (f) Providing a conduit for the articulation of Africa's concerns on the environment to other regions and to the global community;
- (g) Providing a legitimate voice for Africa on environmental matters;
- (h) Building a network of environment ministers in Africa;
- (i) Producing publications to assist in disseminating environmental information in Africa.

6. AMCEN has continued to give guidance in respect of key political events related to the environment, including the development of multilateral environmental agreements. It has paid particular attention to the implementation of environmental conventions agreed upon since the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit). The recent focus has been on the implementation of work on climate change in Africa.

2. Challenges

7. AMCEN continues to face challenges in many areas, including:

- (a) Securing sustainable financing for the implementation of its activities;
- (b) Harmonizing regional and global environmental issues so that they receive equal attention at the national and subregional levels;
- (c) Translating global environmental concerns into practical, feasible and achievable programmes of action at the national, subregional and regional levels;
- (d) Positioning AMCEN within the framework of new and emerging issues at the regional and global levels, for example, in the context of the African Union and NEPAD.

8. The publication on the history of AMCEN from 1985 to 2005¹ gives an objective account of achievements and challenges. It takes in three periods marked by significant shifts in the political context in which AMCEN was operating and shows that there has been continuity in performance. Since AMCEN was established, the measures that it has adopted in seeking solutions to environmental concerns in Africa have always involved participation and consultation.

3. Resource mobilization

9. Pursuant to decision 4 of AMCEN at its twelfth session, on the status and use of the general trust fund, the secretariat has made every effort to mobilize resources and forge partnerships to implement the decisions of the twelfth session and the work programme for the biennium 2009–2010. Those efforts have enabled work on climate change to be undertaken effectively. Denmark has been the main sponsor of the initiative, supported by, among others, the African Development Bank, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (with funds provided by Norway), the Mo Ibrahim

1 Available from <http://www.unep.org/roa/Amcen/docs/publications/AMCENHistory.pdf>.

Foundation (through the World Bank), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (with funds provided by the British Department for International Development), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Wide Fund for Nature.

10. The implementation of many AMCEN activities regarding its decisions and work programme has been undertaken by UNEP in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the United Nations Office for Project Services and the World Health Organization.

11. Other stakeholders involved in the process include the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, in addition to the African Union Commission, the NEPAD secretariat, the regional economic communities and a number of other institutions and organizations, such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, the Sahara and Sahel Observatory and the secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention).

II. Trust fund

A. General information on the trust fund

12. The general trust fund for AMCEN was established in accordance with article 28 of the AMCEN Constitution. The main objectives of the fund are:

(a) To strengthen cooperation between African Governments in economic, technical and scientific activities for the purpose of halting and reversing the degradation of the African environment and to pave the way for sustainable development in the future;

(b) To provide financial support, wholly or partially, for the functioning of the organs of AMCEN and the implementation of its activities.

13. There has, however, been limited success in implementing those objectives, largely because of the continued failure of many member States to pay their contributions. The rather slow mobilization of financial resources from member States and other partners has continued to be the major constraint in ensuring the effective implementation of the programme of work, including meeting the administrative costs of running the secretariat. UNEP has therefore had to provide resources and/or facilitate their mobilization to be able to implement the objectives of AMCEN.

14. At its eighth session, held in Abuja on 5 and 6 April 2000, AMCEN adopted a series of proposals for policy and institutional change. By its decision 5, it resolved to restructure its institutional arrangements and adopt a scale of contributions to the trust fund for member States. By that same decision, it urged its members to increase their current contributions to the trust fund to a total of \$3 million by December 2001 on the basis of the new system of contributions agreed on at that session. An amount of \$32 million would be realized from the African Governments themselves over a five-year period, with a possibility of additional amounts accruing from donor countries and agencies.

15. The overall contributions to the trust fund from its inception in 1996 to March 2003 amounted to \$1,852,186. Unpaid contributions for that same period totalled \$2,580,515. The current status of countries' contributions to the general trust fund is shown in annex I to the present document. Many African countries have made no contribution to the trust fund since its inception.

16. It should also be recalled that, of the \$3,597,000 which it was planned to raise from member States over the biennium 2000–2001, only \$457,366, or 12.7 per cent of the target, was actually paid. In decision 8 of its ninth session, held in Kampala on 4 and 5 July 2002, AMCEN therefore made another urgent appeal to member States to fulfil the pledges and commitments that had been made in Abuja, in order to allow it to implement more meaningful activities.

17. The contributions received from member States in 2008–2009 amounted to \$189,077. The interest generated by the general trust fund over the same period was \$165,659. The status of the financial resources of the trust fund can be seen in annexes I–III to the present document.

18. Contributions made by member States from 1996 to 2007 can be found in annex IV to the present document.

B. Use of funds

19. By decision 4 of its twelfth session, AMCEN resolved:

- (a) To urge Governments to make every effort to pay their outstanding contributions to the general trust fund;
- (b) To urge those Governments that had not contributed to the general trust fund to endeavour to contribute to the fund to enable AMCEN to scale up its activities;
- (c) To request the secretariat to work with Governments that had not fulfilled their commitments to pay their contributions to the trust funds (arrears of four years and above) on an arrangement to fulfil such commitments;
- (d) To use the interest generated by the general trust fund and to request the secretariat to make proposals on its use for approval by the Bureau prior to implementation;
- (e) To agree that the general trust fund should continue to be managed by UNEP as long as the secretariat remained with that organization;
- (f) To request the secretariat to continue reporting on the status and use of the general trust fund at AMCEN meetings;
- (g) To extend its appreciation to UNEP and to urge its Executive Director to continue to provide support to AMCEN.

20. As stated above, the support provided by UNEP and other partners has enabled AMCEN to carry out its work to combat climate change in Africa and its work programme. This has been crucial in view of the financial constraints that it faces. There is, however, an increasing and urgent need for all member States to make contributions to the general trust fund.

III. Proposed use of the trust fund

21. Pursuant to decision 4 of the twelfth session, the secretariat prepared a modest budget for the use of part of the interest earned on the general trust fund to cover the use of AMCEN funds. Financial support from donors and partners has rendered it unnecessary to draw funds from the general trust fund to cover many activities undertaken to date. The Executive Director of UNEP has also continued to make resources available to cover the secretariat's administrative costs and some activities.

22. UNEP has in the past been successful in mobilizing funds for AMCEN sessions. The Nordic countries, particularly Denmark and Sweden in recent years, have been particularly supportive. It is increasingly evident that AMCEN needs to look ahead and tackle the issue of funding its sessions, which include regular and special sessions and Bureau meetings. The success of such meetings in the past notwithstanding, there remains room for improvement.

23. Since the interest earned on the trust fund is relatively small, the balance of the trust fund may, in the future, have to be used for both the sponsoring of meetings and adding value to sessions. A fixed percentage of the principal may be used for some key activities or as leverage funds for resource mobilization.

24. It is recommended that part of the trust fund balance should be used to fund Bureau meetings. With regard to AMCEN regular sessions, it should be noted that, even on occasions when development partners do provide funds for such meetings, AMCEN would nonetheless have to consider using some of the trust fund balance to add value to those meetings.

25. AMCEN should also give serious consideration to using a fixed part of its general trust fund to cover its substantive activities.

IV. Criteria for contributions to the general trust fund

26. UNEP is currently managing the general trust fund. In practical terms, countries' contributions to the fund are provided on the basis of pledges that they make. Countries are invoiced by the United Nations Office at Nairobi after making a pledge. As a rule, the United Nations Office at Nairobi cannot invoice a country that has not made a pledge. This is clearly a limiting factor, since some countries do not make the necessary budgetary provisions to enable them to pay their contributions to the fund in line with the commitments agreed upon by AMCEN at its eighth session.

27. The introduction of an indicative scale of contributions was once proposed as a means of overcoming this difficulty. Among others, the following principles were used in a pilot study in 2003 to develop such an indicative scale:

(a) Common but differentiated responsibilities and fair burden-sharing. While all payments to the fund would remain voluntary, all member States should be encouraged to contribute either on the basis of the proposed indicative scale of contributions or on an alternative basis identified by a member State;

(b) Minimum indicative rate of 0.001 per cent of the approved budget;

(c) Maximum indicative rate of 22 per cent, with a maximum indicative rate of 16 per cent during the pilot phase;

(d) Any member State in a position to do so should be encouraged to increase its level of contributions above the level in the proposed indicative scale of contributions and thereby improve the fund's financial situation;

(d) The United Nations scale of assessments for 2003 should serve as guidance.

28. An alternative and preferred model for payments into the general trust fund is to determine the minimum financial base needed to earn sufficient interest to finance an agreed budget that would enable AMCEN to remain operational. The estimated contribution to be made by each member State is a minimum of \$10,000 per year. Member States with the ability to pay more should, of course, be encouraged to do so.

29. It is envisaged that this procedure will ensure that the burden of payment is shared equally by all member States, since all are developing countries. For that reason the base level of payment is made sufficiently low to encourage all member States to contribute. Those with greater financial resources should, however, also be encouraged to make higher payments, as stated earlier.

Annex I

Contributions by member States (in United State dollars)

<i>Countries/organizations</i>	General trust fund for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment							<i>Unpaid pledges for 2009 and prior years</i>
	<i>Unpaid pledges as at 1 January 2008</i>	<i>Adjustments to prior years' pledges and receipts</i>	<i>Pledges for 2008–2009</i>	<i>Revaluations</i>	<i>Net pledges</i>	<i>Collections for future years</i>	<i>Collections in 2008–2009 and prior years</i>	
Algeria	200 000	(200 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Benin	50 000	(50 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Botswana	-	-	50 000	-	50 000	-	50 000	-
Burkina Faso	46 618	(46 618)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Burundi	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cameroon	100 000	(100 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cape Verde	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chad	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Comoros	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Congo	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Côte d'Ivoire	100 000	(100 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Democratic Republic of the Congo	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Djibouti	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equatorial Guinea	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eritrea	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ethiopia	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gabon	100 000	(100 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ghana	60 000	(60 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Guinea-Bissau	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kenya	50 000	-	-	-	-	-	50 000	-
Lesotho	-	-	12 500	-	12 500	-	12 500	-
Liberia	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	200 000	(200 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Malawi	50 000	(50 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mauritania	72 000	(72 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mauritius	-	-	35 464	-	35 464	-	35 464	-

General trust fund for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment								
<i>Countries/organizations</i>	<i>Unpaid pledges as at 1 January 2008</i>	<i>Adjustments to prior years' pledges and receipts</i>	<i>Pledges for 2008–2009</i>	<i>Revaluations</i>	<i>Net pledges</i>	<i>Collections for future years</i>	<i>Collections in 2008–2009 and prior years</i>	<i>Unpaid pledges for 2009 and prior years</i>
Morocco	200 000	(200 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mozambique	-	-	12 500	-	12 500	-	12 500	-
Namibia	89 852	(100 000)	-	-	-	-	(10 148)	-
Niger	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rwanda	-	-	48 613	-	48 613	-	48 613	-
Sao Tome and Principe	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seychelles	100 000	(100 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sierra Leone	22 599	(22 599)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sudan	25 000	(25 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Togo	50 000	(50 000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tunisia	70 339	(70 339)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uganda	50 000	-	30 000	-	30 000	-	80 000	-
United Republic of Tanzania	27 737	(27 737)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Zambia	27 242	(27 242)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Zimbabwe	96 989	(96 989)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2 138 376	(2 048 524)	189 077	-	189 077	-	278 929	-

Annex II**Status of the financial resources of the trust fund
as at 31 December 2009 (in United States dollars)**

Committable resources	
Fund balance available as at January 2008	5 449 169
Add:	
Contributions received in 2008–2009	189 077
Interest earned in 2008–2009	165 659
Less:	
Pledges written off	(2 048 523)
Expenditures incurred during 2008–2009	(303 668)
Total fund balance as at 31 December 2009	3 451 714

Proposed commitments (in view of the total interest accrued)

Total interest accrued as at 31 December 2009	204 060
Proposed commitments for June 2010–June 2012	204 060
Balance available after commitments	-

Annex III**Trust fund interest computation (in United States dollars)**

Interest income	
2006–2007 income	342 069
2008–2009 income	165 659
Total income	507 728
2008 expenditures	219 352
2009 expenditures	84 316
Total expenditures	303 668
Total balance	204 060

Annex IV

Contributions by member States from 1996 to 2007 (in United States dollars)

Country	Collections between 1996 and 1999	Total govt. agreed pledges for the biennium 2000–2001	Collections in 2000 for the biennium 2000–2001	Collections in 2001 for the biennium 2000–2001	Collections in 2002 for the biennium 2000–2001	Collections in 2003 for the biennium 2000–2001	Collections in 2004 for the biennium 2000–2001	Collections in 2005 for the biennium 2000–2001	Collections in 2006 for 2006 and future years	Collections in 2007 for 2007 and future years
Algeria	—	200 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Angola	—	100 000	—	99 925	75	—	—	—	—	—
Benin	5 000	50 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Botswana	—	100 000	—	—	—	—	—	100 000	—	—
Burkina Faso	10 000	50 000	—	3 382	—	—	—	—	—	—
Burundi	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cameroon	—	100 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cape Verde	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Central African Republic	—	25 000	—	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—
Chad	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Comoros	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Congo	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cote d'Ivoire	—	100 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Democratic Republic of the Congo	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Djibouti	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Egypt	600 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Equatorial Guinea	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Eritrea	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ethiopia	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gabon	—	100 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gambia	—	25 000	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ghana	68 500	100 000	—	—	40 000	—	—	—	—	—
Guinea	—	25 000	—	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—

<i>Country</i>	<i>Collections between 1996 and 1999</i>	<i>Total govt. agreed pledges for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2000 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2001 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2002 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2003 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2004 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2005 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2006 for 2006 and future years</i>	<i>Collections in 2007 for 2007 and future years</i>
Guinea-Bissau	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kenya	—	50 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lesotho	—	25 000	16 122	—	8 878	—	—	12 500	—	12 500
Liberia	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	—	200 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Madagascar	—	25 000	25 615	—	23 800	—	—	—	—	—
Malawi	—	50 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mali	—	50 000	—	—	—	—	83 527	—	—	—
Mauritania	—	72 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mauritius	29 906	117 732	—	16 084	83 916	17 732	17 732	—	17 732	17 732
Morocco	—	200 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mozambique	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	25 000	—	—	12 500
Namibia	—	100 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7 509
Niger	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nigeria	—	200 000	—	—	—	200 000	—	—	—	—
Rwanda	—	50 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	73 613	25 000
Sao Tome and Principe	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Senegal	—	100 000	—	—	—	94 734	5 299	—	—	—
Seychelles	500	100 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sierra Leone	—	25 000	—	2 401	—	—	—	—	—	—
South Africa	5 000	200 000	100 000	100 000	—	—	—	—	200 000	—
Sudan	—	25 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Swaziland	—	25 000	6 000	19 000	—	—	—	—	—	—
Togo	—	50 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tunisia	—	100 000	—	—	10 000	19 662	—	—	—	—
Uganda	—	100 000	—	—	50 000	—	—	—	—	—

<i>Country</i>	<i>Collections between 1996 and 1999</i>	<i>Total govt. agreed pledges for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2000 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2001 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2002 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2003 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2004 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2005 for the biennium 2000–2001</i>	<i>Collections in 2006 for 2006 and future years</i>	<i>Collections in 2007 for 2007 and future years</i>
United Republic of Tanzania	—	50 000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22 263
Zambia	—	50 000	—	—	—	—	—	22 758	—	—
Zimbabwe	26 994	100 000	—	—	3 011	—	—	—	—	—
Total	745 900	3 414 732	172 737	240 793	269 680	332 128	131 558	135 258	291 345	97 504