



UN ENVIRONMENT NEWSLETTER

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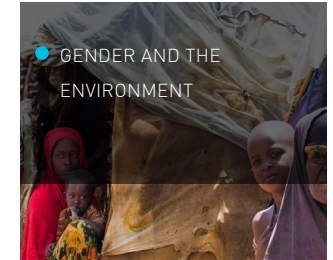
JAN-FEB 2018



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CHEMICALS AND WASTE



BAMAKO CONVENTION: PREVENTING AFRICA FROM BECOMING A DUMPING GROUND FOR TOXIC WASTES

The second Conference of the Parties to the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa (COP-2) took place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire from January 30 to February 1, 2018.

Over 35 countries, experts, private sector, civil society, regional economic bodies participated in the three-day event.

Parties to the Convention adopted a set of decisions. They also adopted, by consensus, a negotiated Ministerial Declaration through which they reaffirmed their commitment to make Africa a pollution-free continent.

The common message from all Parties has been that urgent action should be taken and effective mechanisms should be developed at national and regional levels to effectively implement the Bamako Convention.

While the Parties committed to secure a total ban on imports to Africa and a strict control of transboundary movement of hazardous wastes, they also reaffirmed their engagement to take concrete action for an effective implementation of all adopted decisions, including those of the first conference of the Parties (COP-1).

"The Bamako convention is an important instrument which demonstrates the will of Africans to protect their health and environment. It is an instrument that can help us have a Continent free of all forms of pollution. However, to achieve the objectives of the Convention, we need to double our efforts and continue to create more initiatives", said H.E. Anne Desire Oulotto, Minister of Sanitation, Environment and Sustainable Development of Cote d'Ivoire and President of the COP-2 of the Bamako convention.



"We should give this Convention all the necessary support and resources so that it can play its role in achieving an Africa free of pollution," she added.

Parties also reaffirmed their support for the environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes through effective implementation of the Bamako Convention. They reiterated the need to align the Bamako convention to other global chemicals conventions, especially the Basel Convention.



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BAMAKO CONVENTION: PREVENTING AFRICA FROM BECOMING A DUMPING GROUND FOR TOXIC WASTES

"The commitment by Parties to a Free-Pollution Africa through the strengthening of the Bamako Convention will ultimately reinforce Africa's role and commitment to the global chemical agenda, the Agenda 2063, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals," said Juliette Biao, Director and Regional Representative for Africa, UN Environment.

Synergies and cooperation with other chemicals and wastes related Conventions and Frameworks will foster and promote effective implementation of the Bamako Convention. The Bamako Convention complements the Basel Convention by covering hazardous waste such radioactive substances and special waste generated by shipments, which contain heavy metals.

Such provision provided by Bamako convention, if effectively implemented, would prevent Africa from disasters such the Probo Koala toxic waste dumping in 2006 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.





DISASTERS AND CONFLICT



CLIMATE CHANGE REFUGEES



The decade-old conflict between al-Shabab and their government has driven hundreds of thousands of Somalis out from their homes. But even as the scale of violence-related displacement has dipped in recent years, the impact of food shortages as a result of climate-related shocks – from drought to floods – means the level of disaster-affected displacement has risen steeply over the same period.

One million Somalis were displaced by drought and conflict last year, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). The rains in Somalia have underperformed for four successive seasons and today everyone – from farmers in the previously fertile south to pastoralists herding camel further north – has felt the impact. Smallholder farmers are producing smaller harvests; water points have become scarce; and large numbers of livestock have died in a drought Somalis now refer to as “the leveller” due to its far-reaching effects. Their livelihoods withering away in front of them, many rural Somalis have few options but to migrate to the large towns in the hope of finding new sources of income.

In a recent technical study, the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) noted that 2.7 million Somalis are still in urgent need of emergency assistance. It could have been far worse. Somalia was one of four countries where famine was feared in 2017. Aid was dramatically scaled

up and, as a result, food security has markedly improved, according to the FAO report. However, Mogadishu has seen a surge in internally displaced people (IDPs) escaping the drought and violence in the countryside who now squat in makeshift camps on increasingly valuable private land.

The environment is the foundation for peace and stability in Somalia, and underpins livelihood plans and strategies. With respect to the socio-economic development, the environmental goods and services need to be appreciated (economically, socially, and politically) for the true values they provide to society (family, local, national, international).

In response to this, UN Environment is conducting a desk study to assess the status of environment.

This desk study will assess how the conflict directly and indirectly damaged the environment and the natural resource base. At the same time, it will also help the Government, development partners, the private sector, civil society and the Somali public in identifying how the natural resources can contribute to sustainable economic development and peacebuilding while avoiding new social and environmental risks from poor resource governance and insufficient safeguards.



ENERGY



GAINING MOMENTUM IN ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE, AFFORDABLE, CLEAN ENERGY



The African Women Energy Entrepreneurs Framework (AWEEF), launched at the Third UN Environment Assembly, has already attained over 100 Individual members; over 20 Corporate members and 10 Executive members. The objective of AWEEF is to enable African women to play a role as agents of change, decision makers, and main stakeholders across the energy value chain.

The Initiative recognizes women as change agents in the shift to renewable energy through strengthening gender-responsive policies, improving access to finance and markets as well as capacity enhancement of women entrepreneurs in the energy sectors.

In collaboration with the United Nations University Gender Equality Studies and Training Programme (UNU-GEST), AWEEF is offering scholarships to women entrepreneurs in Africa each year. The scholarship programme focuses on the structures and mechanisms necessary to promote gender equality and advance women's empowerment. The 2019 Post-Graduate Diploma Programme in International Gender Studies in Iceland will run from the 8th of January until the 24th of May 2019 in Reykjavik, Iceland.

AWEEF works closely with Renewable Energy Resources for Africa (RES4Africa) and Kenya Power Limited to train women in energy and provide them with necessary skills in the energy sector. These organizations have established a Micro-grid Academy (MGA) that aims at strengthening the expertise of young African technicians, engineers and managers in sustainable energy solutions.

Poverty-Environment Initiative Africa (PEI) has partnered with the government of Rwanda to train 110 female street vendors on how to set up co-operatives that can access funds from the government's National Environment and Climate Change Fund (FONERWA). The women will be able to use the funds to produce alternative packaging that is environmentally-friendly and safe substitutes for thin plastic bags that they can sell to customers.

In 2008, Rwanda became one of the first African countries to put in place a complete ban on thin plastic bags as part of its Vision 2020 plan for sustainability. Plastic bags that were used in Rwanda had been made from non-biodegradable materials. These would end up scattered throughout





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the country's agricultural land and were preventing water penetration into the soil, and as a result lowering agricultural productivity. Once disposed, the plastic bags were often burned, releasing toxic fumes into the air.

According to the Rwanda Environment Management Authority, after the ban on thin plastic bags, Rwanda became an extraordinarily clean country. Tourism is increasing which is good for the country's economy. The ban on plastic bags has also spurred community-based associations comprised of mainly women and youth cooperatives to produce bags made from locally available environmental friendly materials.

Many countries in Africa are learning from Rwanda and adopting the initiative to ban plastic bags. In late 2011, Poverty-Environment Initiative facilitated south-south cooperation between Malawi, Rwanda and Mozambique, where Government representatives from Malawi learned from the experience of PEI in Rwanda. During this event, the government of Rwanda shared its experiences on banning plastic bags and the introduction of sustainable substitutes created by women's community organizations.



The use and poor waste management of non-biodegradable plastic bags is a major concern not only across the African continent but also around the globe. The plastic bag menace has been experienced in all forms of ecosystems including land, river, lakes, and oceans. Several African countries have taken the initiative to ban the use and production of thin plastic bags as a means to control plastic pollution and maintaining a clean environment.

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HARNESSING THE ENERGY OF MEN, WOMEN AND YOUTH IN ENVIRONMENTAL REHABILITATION



The name “Dadaab” is usually associated to refugees – and the need for shelter, food and health services. However, the link between environmental degradation and its effects on men, women and youth living in the adverse conditions is often overlooked.

Established in 1991/1992, the Dadaab refugee camp occupies 30 square kilometers and hosts 248,719 refugees and over 150,000 members of the host community. Over the years rangeland degradation has emerged as one of the most visible environmental challenges afflicting the refugee complex.

Harvesting of green materials for shelter and residential security fence construction is a major threat to the environment within and outside the camps. Twenty years ago, shelter materials were readily available within a radius of 0-5 kilometers but presently, refugees travel between 40 and 70 kilometers for the same items. This has resulted in destruction of over 3,000 ha of land in and around Dadaab refugee camp complex. Solid waste is also a problem with over 300 tons of solid waste generated on a daily basis.

The population in the refugee camp is greatly affected by this situation, which calls for urgent action. Livelihood options are key within this ecosystem that ultimately help in returning the land back to its vigour.

Degraded lands can be rehabilitated through establishment of green belts, maintenance of tree nurseries that will provide seedlings and maintenance of boreholes that will provide water for rehabilitation. All these interventions can engage the different stakeholder groupings gainfully: Men, Women, and Youth.

Men in this this camp can be engaged in tree planting and borehole maintenance thus providing livelihood opportunities.

With a large population of unemployed youth, their energy can be channeled into earning a livelihood through generation of cooking energy from garbage, generating income from tree nurseries, water bottling enterprises by harnessing water, all aimed at engaging their time gainfully.



HARNESSING THE ENERGY OF MEN, WOMEN AND YOUTH IN ENVIRONMENTAL REHABILITATION



Energy needs are key in the camp with women being the most in need due to their gender roles. Searching for firewood also exposes them to tuggery and gender-based violence. Women can be engaged gainfully through economic based livelihood options and easing the burden of accessing cooking energy through the community cooker.

On 19th February 2018, a joint team comprising representatives from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UN Environment visited the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya. The mission purpose was to hold discussions with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and relevant stakeholders in order to assess the environmental impacts in the Dadaab refugee region, and to agree on a common strategy for its environmental rehabilitation.

UN Environment and UN High Commissioner for Refugees have already developed a joint proposal for the environmental rehabilitation of the Dadaab refugee region. The restoration of this fragile ecosystem by harnessing the energy from men, women and youth already affected and providing economic livelihood options being the ultimate goal.

Within Leliefontein in Namaqualand, an area covering 192,000ha, CSA has signed up 173 biodiversity stewards who provide support services to beef producers and cooperatives. In addition, there has been concerted effort in capacity building through training for two cooperatives with a membership of 100 farmers resulting in improved quality stock.

To add value to the red meat supply chains for the communal farmers, CSA has facilitated a maiden auction which took place in November 2017 where buyers came together to purchase livestock. This will get rid of the middle-men, resulting in the farmers getting better value for their livestock.

With the implementation of this project, farmers in areas that are linked to long-term water security, inhabited by poor and vulnerable groups and threatened by climate change are set to maximize the potential of their farming activities while also conserving the environment.

UN ENVIRONMENT TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN RESTORING LAKE CHAD



Lake Chad was once the largest lake in the world. A combination of climate change, drought, and inefficient resource usage has led to a 90 percent decrease in Lake Chad's size (from 26,000 km² in 1963 to less than 1,500 km² now).

The Lake Chad Basin, shared by the riparian states of Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon, supports a number of lake-based economic activities, providing a lifeline to nearly 30 million people in these four countries, in activities such as agriculture, pastoralism, forest regeneration, fish breeding and production, and limited tourism.

In the Lake Chad Basin region, about 80 per cent of the population depends on natural resources for their livelihoods. Therefore, these resources play a major role in the preservation of peace and social security. Environmentally, the basin supports biodiversity of global significance, with numerous bird species relying on the lake for sustenance during periods of migration. The countries of the Lake Chad Region are among the most vulnerable to future climate fluctuation. They also face substantial population growth (at an average of 3 per cent per year), leading to a severe and continuing degradation of natural resources, thus increasing poverty and food

insecurity. Demographic projections in the Sahel (which most countries of the Lake Chad Basin Region are part of) agree on a population of 100 million people by 2025, half of whom will live in cities.

The correlation between poverty and environmental degradation is particularly strong in the Lake Chad Basin, as desertification has been accelerated by drought, deforestation, and unsustainable agricultural practices.

Additionally, the relationship between climate change, migration and conflict remains complex. Competition for access to and control of these resources remains a real challenge, which is at the root of the recurrent conflicts that threaten social peace and hold back development. The drying lake is causing tensions among communities around the lake - for instance, there are repeated conflicts among nationals of different countries over control of the remaining water.

All solutions to restore Lake Chad should be considered. The Federal Government of Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), organized the International Conference on Lake Chad, 26 – 28 February 2018. The theme of the conference was «Saving



UN ENVIRONMENT TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN RESTORING LAKE CHAD



the Lake Chad to revitalize the Basin's ecosystem for sustainable livelihood, security and development».

The existence of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), represents a significant opportunity for interventions in the basin. This body has the key support and mandate of the riparian governments. It is the only institution that enjoys the acceptance of all countries involved with this ecosystem and therefore constitutes a critical component of success for any initiatives involving the basin.

UN Environment could leverage on the capacity and target to deliver its mandate through the LCBC. Anchoring UN Environment interventions and activities within the established structure of the LCBC will facilitate an expedited and least-costly (in-terms of time and structure) launch and establishment of UN Environment's input. UN Environment can catalyse and coordinate a UN-wide environmental response. In this context UN Environment could bring to bear the combined funding access of UN agencies such as UNDP, and FAO in implementing the LCBC plan. Furthermore, UN Environment's key role would be providing technical assistance to other agencies and actors at the design stage of

their projects to ensure they are both sustainable from an environmental point of view as well as conflict sensitive in terms of impacting resource-dependent livelihoods.

Additionally, substantive technical engagement according to UN Environment's comparative advantage would require intensive and concerted resource mobilization building on UN Environment's role as an accredited entity to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and as the Implementing Agency of the Global Environment Fund (GEF). The main focus would be to provide technical assistance on the environment and natural resource dimensions of resilience, crisis prevention, recovery and peacebuilding.

IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS THROUGH SMALL BUSINESSES: LEATHER DEALERS ACCESS BENEFITS



The Kisumu Leather Dealers Association (KILDA) was born in mid-2017. The Association was previously called Jua Kali Association whose members were cobblers repairing shoes in temporary shelters along road sides. After undergoing transformation training supported by the Switch Africa Green Project, the Association reviewed and rebranded itself to KILDA. It has a membership of 30 Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) specializing in production of shoes, belts, leather drums, balls and fish leather. Since its inception, the Association has employed 8 individuals; 6 are engaged in marketing of wares for the association and 2 are involved in administrative work. The Association operates in an almost similar fashion to a Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization (SACCO) where members pay a membership fee of KES 1,000. Over 20 per cent of the profits generated from sales are shared and 80 per cent is saved up to facilitate the operations of KILDA.

KILDA currently has an outlet in Kisumu town where they showcase and sell their wares. Each member is expected to bring into the outlet at least 5 items per person per week depending on what they produce – i.e. balls, shoes, belts or sandals. Average profit per month per member is about KES 4,000. However, with support from Switch Africa Green Project, the

Association has been exposed to training on cluster transformation where the need to come together as a cluster was emphasized upon. Cluster approach has proved to be beneficial to Leather MSMEs because they have a higher bargaining power when buying raw materials. Leather MSMEs through a cluster approach are linked to tanneries where they source materials in bulk – hence improving their bargaining power, this way they save on production costs and increase their incomes. Some MSMEs have successfully ploughed back what they have saved and increase their production capacity as well selling their footwear beyond the local Kenyan market.

Through networking during various SAG fora, the Association established links with the Kenya Industrial Estates (KIE) where they have been able to acquire loans amounting to about KES 400,000. To qualify for the loan the group members underwent an intensive two weeks training on financial management. Most MSMEs have used the loan to expand their businesses. More so, every member now has a machine to facilitate their operations. To ensure that the loans received are utilized for business operations, the Association has acquired a group medical cover from the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) for its members and their families. The Association



IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS THROUGH SMALL BUSINESSES: LEATHER DEALERS ACCESS BENEFITS

holds various awareness sessions on growing sustainable businesses where they invite mentors to come talk to them on aspects such as finance, quality footwear production, marketing among others.

KILDA works closely with the County Government of Kisumu, which besides attending SAG sponsored trainings, have also enabled them access the retail space in which they showcase their items. The County Government also sends officers to conduct visits to the workshops of MSMEs to get feedback on how the County could further enable them achieve growth.



ETHIOPIA: STRENGTHENING UN ENVIRONMENT PRESENCE IN THE COUNTRY

A Country Cooperation Framework (CCF) between UN Environment and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change (MEFCC) of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia was signed on February 26, 2018.

The Framework will significantly contribute to strengthening and coordinating joint actions between UN Environment and the Government of Ethiopia. It will also create linkages and synergies with the national development programmes and UN Environment's support to Ethiopia, minimizing transaction costs while maximizing results and impacts.

Areas of cooperation include building resilience to climate change, especially in water sector ; greening and restoring the landscape, and beating pollution. The partnership is expected to cover other areas such as urbanization and environmental diplomacy.

Ethiopia's progress in some of the above-mentioned areas was demonstrated when a UN Environment team visited a community-based landscape restoration project site in Abrha Atsbha Kebele, in Tigray Region.

The Tigray government mobilized the local communities to volunteer in a project aimed at building terraces, irrigation system, and stonewalls on mountains and hillsides. As a result, overall well-being of the community has improved with rising groundwater levels and reduced soil erosion. The practice is expected to inspire other regions and countries to build resilience to changing climate and restore degraded land to productivity. In view of these remarkable achievements, Tigray's policy was recognized with the Future Policy Gold Award 2017, awarded by the World Future Council in partnership with the UNCCD.



UN Environment is committed to continue strengthening and expanding partnerships with governments and other actors to achieve sustainable development.



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IN THE NEWS



GEOTHERMAL ENERGY GROWS IN KENYA

HELL'S GATE NATIONAL PARK, Kenya – Verdant hills stretch into the distance at Hell's Gate National Park, where zebras, buffalos, antelopes, baboons and other wildlife roam an idyllic landscape of forests, gorges and grassy volcanoes near the shores of Lake Naivasha.

RECYCLING E-WASTE CAN HELP CREATE JOBS AND REDUCE POVERTY IN AFRICA

The "trash is cash" slogan is currently being used so that waste is viewed through a new and innovative lens.

CLEAN MOBILITY WEEK TO ADDRESS AFRICA'S INCREASING VEHICULAR POLLUTION

Strategies to promote the import of cleaner, more fuel efficient vehicles while developing a roadmap for clean mobility on the continent are expected to be devised as stakeholders gather from Monday, March 12 to Friday, March 16, 2018 for the Africa Clean Mobility Week.

WHY PEATLANDS SHOULD BE PROTECTED, BY SOLHEIM

The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), Erik Solheim, has described peatlands as the one of the most unique and interesting ecosystems on the planet.

E-WASTE IN AFRICA

Modern life is filled with televisions, mobile phones, and other electronics. Technology advances so quickly that many of these items become obsolete just a few years after production. So, they get replaced, and the old ones get discarded. More often than not this waste does not go specialized waste facilities but rather to parts of Sub-Saharan Africa are being used as a dumping ground.



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UPCOMING EVENTS



11-13
April

10th Africa Carbon Forum will take place at the UN Environment Headquarters, [Gigiri](#)

17-18
April

29th. AMCEN Bureau, [Rabat Morocco](#)

14-15
May

Climate Smart Agriculture Summit, [Nairobi Kenya](#).
To present work on cost of gender gap in agricultural productivity (PEI)



FEEDBACK



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