

Gaborone Declaration on climate change and Africa's development

We, African ministers of the environment,

Having met in Gaborone on 17 and 18 October 2013 at the fifth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

I

Climate change negotiations towards 2015

Welcoming the decision of the Assembly of the African Union at its twentieth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa in January 2013, on the coordination of the Committee of the African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change and Africa's preparation for COP 19/CMP 9 (Assembly/AU/Dec. 457 (XX)), by which the Assembly endorsed the country that would host the Presidency of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment to also serve as Coordinator of the Committee at the summit level so as to enhance linkages between the processes of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the Committee.

Recalling the decisions of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its fourteenth session, held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 12 to 14 September 2012, 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 thereto,

Noting the outcomes of 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 held in Doha from 27 November to 7 December 2012,

Aware of the forthcoming nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol scheduled to take place in Warsaw from 11 to 22 November 2013,

Recognizing the urgency of achieving all the outcomes to be considered at the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, *Stressing* Africa's vulnerability to the effects of climate change, in particular the adverse effects on ecosystems, food security, social and economic development in Africa; and noting the urgent need for Africa to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and further noting the need for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere by all countries,

Emphasizing that climate change represents an urgent and irreversible threat to human societies and the planet, that the window of opportunity to avoid dangerous climate change is closing, and that there is a growing risk of runaway climate change and catastrophic impacts, particularly for Africa,

Recognizing that a global goal of limiting average global warming to 2 degrees Celsius risks warming of over 3 degrees Celsius on the continent of Africa and represents extremely dangerous interference with the climate system and a threat to ecosystems, food security and sustainable development,

Concerned that inadequate mitigation ambition by developed countries will allow them to consume an excessive share of the global emissions budget for 2020, resulting in increased warming, limited atmospheric space for developing countries, and rising costs of adaptation and mitigation in developing countries, particularly in Africa, owing to its levels of vulnerability and development,

Concerned also that there was insufficient transparency and slow disbursement of the financial resources pledged by developed countries as "fast start" financing for the period 2010 to 2012, and that the bulk of funds disbursed were neither "new" nor "additional" and that there is no agreed level of financing for 2013 up to 2020,

Noting the urgency of scaling up climate finance in the pre-2020 period with the aim of providing by 2020 the agreed \$ 100 billion per year,

Concerned that inadequate ambition on mitigation and finance reflect a broader tendency by some parties to fundamentally reorder the balance of rights and obligations in the international climate change regime to embody weaker obligations for developed countries and stronger obligations for developing countries, and to weaken the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities,

Calling on all parties to fulfill their commitments and to work together to preserve and strengthen the international architecture to address climate change through multilateral cooperation based on sound science, equity and the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto,

Aware of the impacts of the rising sea levels especially on small island States and coastal areas of Africa as a result of climate change,

Expressing appreciation for the work of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change in providing political direction to the promotion of Africa's interests in the climate change negotiations,

Expressing also appreciation for the efforts of the African group of negotiators in the development of the updated African common position on strengthening the international climate change regime through full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto,

Emphasizing the importance of a successful outcome of the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Warsaw from 11 to 22 November 2013 for all the States and the people of Africa,

Recognizing the need to address adaptation planning in the broader context of sustainable development planning and acknowledging that national adaptation planning can enable all African countries to assess their vulnerabilities, to mainstream climate change risks and to address adaptation and loss and damage,

Recognizing also the First Africa Food Security and Adaptation Conference held in Nairobi on 20 and 21 August 2013, which provided the platform for continental dialogue on food security and climate change adaptation through harnessing ecosystem-based approaches in Africa,

Recalling the conference held in Nairobi on 5 and 6 February 2013 on adaptation knowledge platforms, at which the participating representatives from regional adaptation knowledge networks and platforms adopted the Africa Adaptation Knowledge Network as the continental network for coordinating climate change adaptation knowledge,

Hereby declare our resolve:

1. To reaffirm the African common position on climate change as the basis for negotiations by African States on strengthening the international climate change regime through full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto;
2. To agree that the key messages¹ on climate change negotiations for the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol should guide and inform discussions by the African group;
3. To affirm that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto constitute the fundamental global legal instrument on climate change, and that the climate change negotiations in Warsaw under the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action should be in conformity with the principles of the Convention and lay a solid foundation for the completion of negotiations at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Paris in 2015;
4. To call for outcomes of the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

¹ Decision SS.V/1 on climate change, annex.

serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol that are based on science, equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, reflecting the latest scientific, technical, economic and social information, as these outcomes will significantly influence efforts to secure sustainable development for Africa;

5. To reaffirm that a long-term global goal must include ambitious short-term, medium-term and long-term mitigation commitments by Annex I parties reflecting their historical responsibilities and an equitable and appropriate contribution to the global effort, as well as the provision of adequate means of implementation, including finance, technology and capacity-building, to enable Africa to address its adaptation needs in particular;

6. To encourage Annex I parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that are not undertaking commitments under the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol to undertake commitments under the Convention that are comparable in magnitude and effort to those undertaken under the Protocol and that are measurable, reportable and verifiable through an agreed set of common accounting rules and a compliance framework;

7. To call on developed country parties to urgently scale up support for the implementation of adaptation measures and national adaptation plans, particularly through the Cancun Adaptation Framework and the Nairobi Work Programme, and to support and expedite work to understand, reduce and compensate for loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including its impacts on agriculture;

8. To agree that the national adaptation plan process should not be prescriptive, but should rather facilitate country-owned, country-driven action, that the formulation of national adaptation plans should build on and complement existing adaptation planning, and that financial and technical support should be provided to African countries to enable the development of the national adaptation plans;

9. To adopt the Africa Adaptation Gap Technical Report and its findings and urge member states to use this report in decision-making and in updating the African common position on climate change.

10. To request the United Nations Environment Programme to prepare the Africa adaptation gap report on a yearly basis and present the same report findings to the meetings of the Africa Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

11. To recognize and support the Africa Adaptation Knowledge Network as the continental network for coordinating, facilitating, harnessing and strengthening the exchange of information and knowledge for climate change adaptation;

12. To note of the conclusions and the recommendations of the First Africa Food Security and Adaptation Conference, held in Nairobi on 20 and 21 August 2013 under the theme “Harnessing ecosystems-based approaches for building resilient food systems and adapting to climate change in Africa”;

13. To urge the Green Climate Fund Board, in its capacity as an operating entity of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to allocate increased funding for climate change adaptation in Africa once the Fund becomes operational.

14. To call upon developed country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to provide new and additional resources to the climate funds under the Convention, in particular the Green Climate Fund, as well as the Least Developed Countries Fund, the Special Climate Change Fund and the Adaptation Fund, which are currently the only financial means to fund adaptation activities under the Convention;

15. To call upon all relevant institutions, including the African Development Bank and other regional development banks and partners, to assist African countries in accessing funding available through the Green Climate Fund and other global climate funds, and further enhancing their capacity for direct access;

16. To reaffirm that agriculture must be treated under adaptation because of its status as a means of livelihood and the backbone of the African economy, and that agriculture is a priority for Africa and should be treated as a matter of survival, and to recommend that a comprehensive work programme covering finance, technology transfer and capacity-building to support sustainable agricultural production

in developing countries be established under the Cancun Adaptation Framework, with support from developed countries;

17. To call for the work to enhance ambition under the Durban Platform to adequately address the need to limit the increase of global average temperature to well below 2.0 degrees Celsius, and to emphasize in this context the urgent need to reflect ambitious commitments under the Bali Road Map in order for Annex I parties to reduce their emissions by at least 40 per cent by 2017 as an equitable and appropriate contribution to achieving the objective of the Convention;

18. To further reaffirm that the Convention is the multilateral platform for climate change action and that, as such, additional actions under the ambition work stream of the Durban Platform require agreed transparency, accounting and recognition provisions, and to enhance action by developing countries through a clear process to scale up the means of implementation, finance, technology and capacity support;

19. To call for efforts under the Durban Platform to enhance ambition leading to the development of a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention by 2015 to enter into force by 2020 to reflect all the principles and the provisions of the Convention, including equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in order to limit the increase of global average temperature to well below 2.0 degrees Celsius while ensuring equitable access to sustainable development and the sharing of atmospheric space and resources taking into account cumulative historical responsibility and the use of such resources by Annex I parties;

20. To urge all African countries to participate actively in the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;

II

In relation to the work of African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

A. Africa regional flagship programmes

Recalling paragraph 15 of the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council decision 27/2 on the implementation of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, in which the Council stressed the importance of regional ministerial environment forums for which the United Nations Environment Programme serves as secretariat, and invited these forums to contribute, as appropriate, to the work of the governing body of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Recalling also decision 14/1 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its fourteenth session, held in Arusha from 12 to 14 September 2012, at which it was agreed to develop and implement key African regional flagship programmes for Africa as a means to ensure the effective implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development,

Reaffirming our commitment to implementing the regional flagship programmes as decided at the fourteenth² session as clustered by the meeting of experts held in Dar es Salaam from 10 to 12 June 2013 in the following five clusters: green economy, sustainable consumption and production, integrated environmental assessment, energy, sustainable land management and related cross-cutting areas,

Aware of decision Assembly/AU/Dec/416-449(XIX) of the Assembly of the African Union at its nineteenth ordinary session, at which it declared the year 2014 as the African year of agriculture, food security and nutrition,

Recognizing the need to ensure that the development and implementation of the regional flagship programmes are owned and led by member States and that the flagship programmes are to be implemented under the overall framework of the African Union New Partnership for Africa's Development Environmental Action Plan towards harmonized and collective action in the management of the environment and natural resources,

² insert the clusters and their programmes

Acknowledging the fact that a sound environment is the foundation of sustainable development, particularly in the areas of agricultural productivity, poverty eradication, wealth creation in the context of climate change, variability and disaster risk reduction,

Recognizing that the successful implementation of the regional flagship programmes will be one of the means of effecting the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Africa and that such programmes have the capacity to transform Africa into a green economy continent founded on principles of resource efficient systems that support poverty eradication, food security and the creation of jobs,

Noting with concern that inadequate investment in sustainable management of the environment and natural resources has a wider impact on economic development, the environment portfolio, poverty eradication and food security,

Concerned about the increasing threat posed by the illegal trade in wildlife, and forest, fisheries and marine resources and their products, which is a major challenge to conservation, environmental protection and sustainable development in Africa,

Aware of the many initiatives and actions being undertaken in Africa, Asia and globally to halt the increasing poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products including the African Elephant Action Plan of 2010,

Welcoming the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa held in Bamako from 24 to 26 June 2013,

Welcoming the recommendations of the “Regional Conference on African Mountain Ecosystems as Impacted by Climate Change: Post Rio+20 Actions” supported by the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization held in Nairobi on 9 and 10 September 2013,

Welcoming the outcomes of the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Seas regional preparatory meeting for the 2014 Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States held in Seychelles from 17 to 19 July 2013 that identified new challenges and possible solutions for the sustainable development of small island developing States and their transition to a blue economy,

Welcoming the signing of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, in Japan in October 2013, which will be instrumental in protecting human health and the environment,

Acknowledging the importance of the work of the African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production on resource efficiency and the continuing work of the Africa Eco-labelling Mechanism,

Hereby declare our resolve:

1. To establish a steering committee within the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency to guide the overall coherent development and implementation of the regional flagship programmes which shall be composed of one representative from the African Union Commission, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development Planning and Coordinating Agency, the African Development Bank, and the secretariat and the Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment; To agree to integrate the regional flagship programmes within the Environment Action Plan of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development so as to create synergies and coherence within the Africa regional environment agenda;

2. To request the secretariat in consultation with the members of the steering committee to undertake a detailed assessment of existing programmes and other initiatives, which shall determine the nature and subregional locations of partnerships and resource needs, with a view to ensuring that the regional flagship programmes build on and promote coherence and synergy on existing work, prevent duplication and place a special premium on value addition, and to present progress thereon to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its fifteenth session;

3. To reaffirm the importance of mainstreaming and upscaling environmental considerations into national development planning, budgeting processes and national strategic frameworks;

4. To encourage member States to allocate at least 5 per cent or a significant portion of their national budgets to environment ;
5. To encourage member States and other stakeholders including civil society, major groups, women and youth to promote and raise awareness and support on the implementation of the regional flagships programmes at the national, subregional and regional levels;
6. To institutionalize regular reporting on progress in the development and implementation of the regional flagship programmes to the Assembly of the African Union by the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;
7. To encourage the participation of all key stakeholders, particularly the private sector, civil society organizations, women and youth groups, in the development and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the regional flagship programmes;
8. To request partners to consider regional flagship programmes to be part of their support to Africa.
9. To request member States to continue their engagement in the Post 2015 Development Agenda and the formulation of the sustainable develop goals so as to ensure an effective integration of the three pillars of sustainable development;
10. To request member States and other stakeholders to use the third African Environment Outlook report in support of decision-making for implementation of the Rio outcomes;
11. To welcome the initiative of the Government of Botswana in convening the African Elephant Heads of State Summit in December 2013 to advance the implementation of the elephant action plan adopted by the Convention on Illegal Trade in Endangered Species at their fifteen conference of the parties;
12. To urge member States to strengthen their natural resources governance mechanisms so as to control illegal exploitation, trade in wildlife, and forest, fisheries and marine resources and their products;
13. To request the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and regional economic communities to support and facilitate the mobilization of resources for the operationalization of the Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa;
14. To express support for the Minamata Convention on Mercury and urge member States to ratify the Convention.
15. To encourage member States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the 2010 Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the 2010 Nagoya–Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to ensure their timely entry into force;
16. To agree to strengthen capacity in research and evidence-based knowledge, create awareness, formulate adequate laws, policies and institutions on mountains, including adopting transboundary and regional frameworks on sustainable management of African mountains ecosystems,
17. To request the African Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme and other development partners to support the creation of an African Mountain Centre to promote integrated mountain management at the regional and transboundary levels;
18. To request the United Nations Environment Programme, the African Union Commission, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development and other development partners to give due attention within the context of the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region and the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region to strengthening the governance of oceans and supporting member States to address the impacts of climate change, population growth and urbanization, chemical and hazardous waste management, energy, transboundary pollution and food security for oceans, coasts and small island developing States in Africa;

19. To agree to dedicate a session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to matters relating to oceans and small island developing States;
20. To support the African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production and its initiatives to move towards sustainable consumption and production and contributing to poverty eradication;
21. To support the upscaling of the Eco-mark label to enhance market access for African products;
22. To request partners, and the United Nations Environment Programme as the secretariat, to provide the necessary support through the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns, to ensure that the ten-year framework, adopted at the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, responds to the needs and priorities of African countries;
23. To ensure that related projects and programmes, such as the proposed SWITCH Africa Green project, being developed in partnership with the European Union, complement and generate synergies with the ten-year framework, and contribute effectively to region-wide efforts to shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns;

B. Africa and the United Nations Environment Assembly

Recalling General Assembly resolution 67/251 of 13 March 2013, by which it changed the designation of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme to the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 67/213 of 21 December 2012, by which it decided to strengthen and upgrade the United Nations Environment Programme in the manner set out in subparagraphs (a) to (h) of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/288 of 27 July 2012,

Recalling further paragraph 15 of Governing Council decision 27/2 on the implementation of paragraph 88 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which stressed the importance of regional ministerial environment forums for which the United Nations Environment Programme serves as secretariat, and invited those forums to contribute, as appropriate, to the work of the governing body of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Aware of the need for Africa to take a proactive role to articulate Africa’s environmental priorities in the United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recognizing that the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment is the main regional forum to advance the environment priorities of Africa in the United Nations Environment Assembly,

Hereby declare our resolve:

24. To strengthen coherence and increased engagement between member State diplomatic missions in Addis Ababa, Geneva, Nairobi and New York on sustainable development matters;
25. To mandate the African group of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme, in collaboration with African permanent missions in Addis Ababa, Geneva and New York, to prepare and advance a common strategy for Africa’s engagement with the United Nations Environment Assembly that will be considered by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its fifteenth session;
26. To encourage African countries to accredit representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme so as to ensure the full and active participation of Africa;
27. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to continue supporting the Africa Ministerial Conference on the Environment in the advancement of its responsibilities as the regional ministerial forum;
28. To request the United Nations Environment Programme to strengthen its regional presence by strengthening and establishing subregional offices in all the five subregions of Africa and strengthening its presence and the coordination of programmes at the national level;

29. To encourage African countries to continue paying their contributions and consider increasing their contributions to the Environment Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme and the General Trust Fund for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

30. To support the efforts of the African Union to strengthen their participation in the United Nations and its bodies;

31. To ensure and promote the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, major groups and the private sector, including civil society, especially from developing countries, drawing on the best practices of and models from other institutions and processes with the aim of achieving wider consultations, effective engagement and transparency in the work of the United Nations Environment Assembly, with due regard to its intergovernmental character;

32. To mandate the President to convey the priorities and position of Africa contained in the report of the fifth session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment to all parties including external partners, organizations and multilateral environment agreements with a view to enlist their support and position and report to the next ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

33. To mandate the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to submit the report of the Conference on the work of its fifth special session, including the recommendations contained in the Gaborone Declaration and in the other annexes to the report, to the Executive Council of the African Union;

34. To express our appreciation to the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and other organizations for their support in convening this fifth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

35. To pay tribute to the President, the Government and the people of Botswana for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to participants, the excellent facilities made available and their generous support to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its fifth special session, which contributed greatly to its success.
