

**REPORT OF THE FIRST CONSULTATIVE MEETING FOR THE  
AFRICAN MINISTERIAL SUMMIT ON BIODIVERSITY**

**1 July 2018, Montreal, Canada**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Egypt will host and convene the African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity on 13 November 2018, in conjunction with the 2018 United Nations Biodiversity Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh. The meeting will be held in collaboration with the Commission of the African Union (AUC) and with support from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) Secretariat and UN Environment.
2. This summit is being organised in follow up to the sixteenth session of the AMCEN held in Libreville, Gabon from 15 to 16 June 2017, which endorsed and supported the proposal of Egypt to host a high-level event on African biodiversity in the margins of the 2018 United Nations Biodiversity Conference.
3. The first Consultative Meeting for the Ministerial Summit was held in the margins of SBSTTA 22, on 1 July 2018, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
4. At the request of the Government of Egypt, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity had issued notification 2018-055 on 11 June 2018 inviting country delegates from the African region registered for the twenty-second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 22) to participate in these initial consultations.
5. The agenda of the first consultative meeting for the Summit is presented in Annex I and the list of participants in Annex II.
6. The consultative meeting benefited from the discussions at the workshop on the findings of the regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services for Africa and the thematic assessment of land degradation and restoration of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services held on 30 June 2018.

**ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

7. Mr. Hamdallah Zedan of the Government of Egypt welcomed the participants to the First Consultative Meeting on the African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity. In his opening remarks, he explained the process that led to Egypt hosting the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 14). He recalled that the last time the African region hosted a COP was in 2000 at the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi. Therefore, it is very timely that COP 14 will be convened once again on the African continent from 17 to 29 November 2018 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. Prior to COP 14, Egypt will also host a High-Level Segment from 14-15 November. He informed the participants that the Ministerial Summit will be held on 13 November. He encouraged the participants to express their views freely during the consultative meeting. He indicated that at the end of the meeting, he would distribute for informal consideration a 'non-paper' containing draft elements of what might come about in the Sharm El Sheikh Declaration.
8. Ms. Mahlet Teshome Kebede of the African Union Commission (AUC) welcomed the participants on behalf of the Chairperson of the AUC. She highlighted the decision of the African Union (AU) Assembly on the need to incorporate biodiversity among its priorities and noted that the AU Policy Organs endorsed the decision of the AMCEN which called for a coordinated approach in implementation of the CBD and its Protocols. At the regional level, instruments such as the African Model Law, the African Strategy on Biosafety and the AU Guidelines on access and benefit sharing and the African Strategy on Combatting

Illegal Exploitation and Illegal trade in Wild Fauna and Flora all address issues of coordination. It is evident that the issues addressed by the CBD and its Protocols are critical for the African region including for using resources efficiently. Ms. Teshome Kebede described a Continental Coordination Committee operational since 2017 on matters of the CBD which supports the AU Member States. She reaffirmed the commitment of AUC to support the Government of Egypt in its preparations for the COP and COP-MOPs. She thanked the Secretariats of the CBD and UN Environment for their support and the AU/NEPAD as an implementing arm of the AU for the technical preparations. In conclusion, she paid tribute to the African Group of negotiators for their continued commitment to ensure that Africa is prepared and united in its negotiations and implementation of the decisions and outcomes of meetings of the CBD and its Protocols. She highlighted that Africa will play a central role in the implementation of the outcomes of the 2018 UN Biodiversity Conference, including the preparation of the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

9. Mr. David Cooper, on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the CBD, Dr. Cristiana Pasça Palmer, welcomed participants to the meeting. He explained that COP 14 and the associated meetings to be held in November in Sharm El-Sheikh, collectively referred to as the “2018 UN Biodiversity Conference”, will address several topics under the Convention and Protocols, including mainstreaming of biodiversity within and across sectors, digital sequence information on genetic resources and others. The theme of the conference is “Investing in Biodiversity for People and the Planet”. He noted that the Conference provides an opportunity to show commitment for accelerated action towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, while looking ahead to the 2050 Vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, and deciding the post-2020 biodiversity framework. He also noted that important decisions will be taken in Sharm El-Sheikh on the way forward. He highlighted that the African Ministerial Summit as the first event in the series of events of the UN Conference on Biodiversity would provide an opportunity to set the scene for the entire suite of meetings and for adopting a coordinated approach to the challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change, and land degradation. He noted that Africa has already shown leadership in this regard; it was in response to requests from the African Group that the short term plan on ecosystem restoration was developed and adopted by COP 13. He expressed the hope that we would build on this momentum and make good use of the assessments provided by Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) on biodiversity and ecosystem services in the African region and on land degradation and restoration. He reiterated, along with the African Union and UN Environment, the CBD Secretariat’s support to Egypt for the Ministerial Summit.

10. Mr. Levis Kavagi, on behalf of the Executive Director of UN Environment and the Regional Director for Africa, expressed gratitude to the Secretariat of the CBD for the support provided for this meeting, and commended the Government of Egypt in its effort towards implementing the AMCEN decision to convene and host the Summit. He reiterated the support of UN Environment to the process as the Secretariat for the AMCEN and its offer to further provide technical and financial support to facilitate the preparatory process. He called for consideration of not only the outcomes related to the theme of the Ministerial Summit but also the priorities for Africa in general. He highlighted that UN Environment will provide updates on preparations for the special session of AMCEN which will take place in Nairobi from 17 to 20 September 2018, and on how the AMCEN as the technical arm of the African Union on the environment would feed into the Ministerial Summit and the African Union process. UN Environment would be happy to collaborate with the AU on this process, noting previous collaboration on other issues and initiatives before, including on the Africa strategy on combatting illegal exploitation and illegal trade of wild fauna and flora. He thanked the participants for attending the meeting and encouraged them to share their views freely.

## **ITEM 2. OVERVIEW OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL SUMMIT**

11. Mr. Zedan provided an overview of the African Ministerial Summit including the background, rationale, objectives and theme. He reviewed the concept note for the Summit that was previously sent to

the participants via email, and which includes an outline of the preparatory process and the technical workshop. He noted that the objectives of the Summit are:

- a) To provide policy and strategic guidance on African biodiversity priorities for inclusion in future work programmes of the convention and its protocols.
- b) To contribute to enhanced implementation of Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and promotion of synergies among the Rio conventions.
- c) To provide opportunity to contribute to post-2020 biodiversity strategy, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the African Union 2063 Agenda.

12. Regarding the expected outcomes, Mr. Zedan noted the Ministerial Summit could adopt a Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration for Increased Resilience or a Pan-African Commitment to Ecosystem Restoration.

13. Mr. Zedan noted that in addition to the Ministers of Environment and Ministers responsible for other relevant sectors, representatives from the other Rio Conventions, heads of different UN agencies, heads of different financial institutions and agencies as well as some representatives of NGOs, local and indigenous communities and the private sector will also be invited to attend as observers. He added that the Government of Egypt is also consulting on a possible global initiative on linking biodiversity and climate change and the use of nature-based approaches.

### **ITEMS 3. DISCUSSION ON THE KEY ELEMENTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE SUMMIT**

14. Mr. Zedan opened the floor for comments from the participants.

15. The participants commended the Government of Egypt for the preparations undertaken to date for the African Ministerial Summit and the 2018 United Nations Biodiversity Conference in general.

#### *A. Participation*

16. With regards to participation in the African Ministerial Summit and the High-Level Segment, it was reported that letters of invitation were dispatched by the Government of Egypt to all African Ministers responsible for the environment via diplomatic channels. The ministers of environment were requested to also invite their ministerial colleagues responsible for relevant sectors (including energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing and health). However, funding will be provided for only one minister per country.

17. The participants noted that many other sectoral ministries are implicated in ecosystem restoration. They underlined the need for the ministers of environment to encourage the ministers responsible for those other ministries to attend the African Ministerial Summit and the High-Level Segment. They requested, and the Government of Egypt agreed, to have copies of the letters sent to the ministers of environment forwarded to the CBD focal points to facilitate timely follow-up and coordination at the national level.

18. The participants noted that environment ministries and the national focal points in some countries have encountered challenges in mobilizing interest and support from other sectoral ministries and departments. They underlined the need for a strategy to ensure participation of ministers from all the 54 African countries in the Ministerial Summit and the High-Level Segment. It was noted that the national focal points have a key role to play in this regard. Mr. Zedan indicated that Egypt and AU Commission will work together, with the support of SCBD and UN Environment, to ensure broad country representation in the Ministerial Summit and the High-Level Segment.

19. The name of the meeting has been changed from “African Biodiversity Summit” to “African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity”. This change followed an observation by some participants that the

term “Summit” is normally used for events attended by Heads of State or Government and the clarification by Mr. Zedan that only Ministers are expected to attend.

#### *B. Theme and expected outcomes*

20. The participants expressed support for the proposed theme for the Ministerial Summit: “Land and ecosystem degradation and restoration: Priorities for increased resilience in Africa”. One participant proposed to add the following text before the word resilience “investments in biodiversity and”, so the new theme would read: “*Land and ecosystem degradation and restoration: Priorities for increased investments in biodiversity and resilience in Africa*”.

21. The participants noted the strong linkages between ecosystem restoration and issues addressed under the three Rio Conventions (biodiversity conservation, climate change and desertification) and observed that the Summit could provide an opportunity to promote synergies among the three conventions and motivate their respective national focal points to work in a more integrated manner.

22. The participants also noted that one of the key drivers of ecosystem degradation is poverty. Therefore, it is important to develop a plan and mobilize financing to address this driver as part of the ecosystem restoration efforts. They cited the recent reduction in the total GEF-7 replenishment by almost US\$ 365 million and the reduction in the programming allocations for biodiversity, as well as the increase in the required co-financing ratio from 6:1 to 7:1, as an important reason to include the mobilization of financial resources for ecosystem restoration in the outcomes of the Summit. The strategy should not rely on donor funding alone.

23. Furthermore, the participants recommended the inclusion of actions relating to capacity-building, technology transfer, biodiversity economics, and access and benefit sharing in the Action Agenda to be adopted by the Summit.

#### *C. Communication of the key messages*

24. The participants underlined the need to package and communicate the main Summit messages to the ministers in ways they would easily understand and be able to make commitments. The Summit should also provide an opportunity to increase awareness, visibility and profile of biodiversity and highlight its linkages with other sectors. It was also suggested that the summit be organized in such a way that the ministers will not simply make statements but will be fully engaged in the discussions.

#### *D. Outcomes of the Summit*

25. Mr. Zedan invited participants to express their views regarding the outcomes of the African Ministerial Summit and the nature of the final document to be adopted, whether an Action Agenda or a Declaration. He clarified that the Summit’s outcome will be different from the High-Level Segment outcome document – the Sharm El Sheikh Declaration.

26. Participants suggested that the Summit’s outcome should find a middle ground between a declaration outlining political commitments and an action agenda describing concrete actions and the process to turn the political commitments into a reality on the ground. They underlined the need for national level discussions to feed into the process. The Summit could come out with a revolutionary Action Programme for Ecosystem Restoration in Africa that is based on national level consultations and biodiversity assessments conducted at local and sub-national levels. A call could be made for conducting national assessments and funding mobilised from development partners to support those assessments and consultations. It was also suggested that governments could be invited to make national commitments for ecosystem restoration as part the pan-African effort.

27. The Summit outcomes could also be translated into a decision to be adopted by the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government as a contribution to the AU Agenda 2063 for the socio-economic transformation of the continent and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

#### **ITEM 4. KEY MESSAGES OF THE IPBES LAND DEGRADATION AND RESTORATION ASSESSMENT, AND THE AFRICAN REGIONAL ASSESSMENT**

28. Dr. Luthando Dziba, Co-Chair of the IPBES Africa Regional Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, made a presentation on the key messages from the assessment which could be taken into account in the preparations for and outcomes of the African Ministerial Summit. He noted that the IPBES global land degradation assessment could also be used to inform the key messages and outcomes of the African Ministerial Summit. Some of the key messages from the assessment he highlighted include the following:

(a) Africa's extraordinary rich and diverse ecosystems and its wealth of indigenous knowledge comprise strategic assets underpinning the socio-economic development and human wellbeing in the region. However, the true value of nature's contributions is still underappreciated in decision-making processes.

(b) Africa's biodiversity is under enormous pressure. Direct pressures include unregulated land use change and conversion of forests, rangelands, wetlands and other natural areas for food production and urban development.

(c) The drivers of biodiversity loss (including rapid population growth, rapid and unplanned urbanization, infrastructure and industrial development, pollution and waste and the demand for services, including water, food and energy supply) are projected to increase in all plausible futures.

(d) Some 20 per cent of Africa's land surface (6.6 million km<sup>2</sup>) is estimated to be degraded because of soil erosion, salinization, pollution and loss of vegetation or soil fertility.

(e) Africa is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Since the 1970s, droughts have been more frequent and more severe, thereby driving land degradation and biodiversity loss. By 2100, climate change could result in the loss of more than half of African bird and mammal species, a 20-30% decline in the productivity of Africa's lakes and significant loss of African plant species.

29. Dr. Dziba noted various options Africa has to respond to these challenges. He noted that measures taken to protect biodiversity by African Governments, such as expansion of protected areas, control of invasive alien species, restoration of ecosystems and control of invasive alien species, have already contributed to the recovery of some threatened species.

30. He highlighted that identification and selection of feasible options needs to be facilitated by considering a range of plausible futures using scenarios and by providing an enabling environment for long-term planning. Concerted effort is needed to build the capacity of African researchers, policymakers and institutions to understand, carry out and make beneficial use of scenario analyses for intervention planning and informed decision-making. There is also a need for capacity building on the use of scenarios in decision-making.

31. Participants highlighted the need to extract from the IPBES Africa assessment and from the global assessment on land degradation, the key messages that could be presented in language suitable for high-level policy makers and decision makers. These messages should include clear scenarios, informative figures, clear costing, and linkages to development. Mr. Dziba will prepare such a short summary of policy options with examples.

32. Participants noted that it would be very strategic for the key messages to focus on local sustainability and on ecosystem services that are being lost and how biodiversity (or nature) is used as a solution. They also highlighted that the African Ministerial Summit and the IPBES assessment would provide impetus to improve monitoring in order to know where progress is being made and where there are gaps in implementation.

## **ITEM 5. ROAD MAP TO THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL SUMMIT AND INPUTS FROM RELEVANT EVENTS**

33. Mr. Zedan outlined a draft road map comprising various events and consultations that will take place leading up to the summit to prepare for the African Ministerial Summit or provide valuable input to inform the African Ministerial Summit. These so far include the following:

- 28-29 August 2018, Nairobi – A consultative meeting linked with the Global Landscapes Forum.
- 17-20 September 2018, Nairobi – A special session of AMCEN is scheduled to be held on the African Ministerial Summit and the UNEA. Permanent representatives have been informed.
- 3-5 October 2018, Addis Ababa – Pan-African workshop on Access and Benefit-Sharing.
- (tbd) – A technical workshop where African experts will examine the trends in land and ecosystem degradation and restoration and propose actions for adoption by the African Ministerial Summit.

34. The participants were requested to send the contacts of African experts on land degradation and ecosystem restoration to the CBD Secretariat who could be invited to participate in the technical workshop.

35. A draft outcome document for the African Ministerial Summit will be prepared based on the above consultations and meetings.

36. The participants suggested involving the following partners in the African Ministerial Summit preparatory process:

- African Development Bank
- World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)
- Secretariat of the Great Green Wall Initiative
- AU – Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
- African Wildlife Fund (AWF)
- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- AFR100 (the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative)
- NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NEPAD Agency).

37. The participants were invited to send to the CBD Secretariat names of other potential partners that could be invited to the Summit.

## **ITEM 6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

38. A question was raised if there were plans to arrange for regional consultation meetings prior to the African Ministerial Summit and the High-Level Segment. It was reported that this will be coordinated by the AUC. National Focal points of Member States will be informed of the exact dates in due course.

## **ITEM 7: SUMMARY AND CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

39. Erié Tamale of the Secretariat provided a summary of the discussions at this first consultative meeting for the African Ministerial Summit.

40. Mahlet Teshome Kebede of AUC thanked the Government of Egypt, the CBD Secretariat and UN Environment for supporting efforts to coordinate and prepare for the African Ministerial Summit. She reiterated the support of the AUC for the African Ministerial Summit and thanked the participants for their contributions.

41. The meeting was closed at 12:30 p.m.

**Annex I**

**Agenda of the First Preparatory Meeting for the African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity**

1. Opening of the meeting
  - Opening remarks by the Co-Chairs (Egypt and AUC)
  - Welcome remarks by SCBD and UN Environment
2. Overview of the African Ministerial Summit (Presentation by Egypt)
  - Rationale and objectives of the Summit
  - Theme of the Summit and the topics to be discussed
  - Participation (including observers/partners)
3. Discussion on the key elements/messages and possible outcomes of the Summit
  - Members of the African group to brainstorm on the possible key messages and elements of the Summit outcomes
4. Key messages of the IPBES land degradation and restoration assessment, and African Regional Assessment
  - Presentation on key messages of the IPBES assessments and on the outcomes of the discussions at the Workshop on June 30
  - Discussion
5. Road map to the African Ministerial Summit and inputs from relevant events
  - Presentation by Egypt
  - Discussion
6. Any Other Business
7. Summary and closure of the meeting

**Annex II**  
**List of Participants**

	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Family Name</b>	<b>Country/Agency</b>
1.	Kebaabetswe	Keoagile	Botswana
2.	Onkemetse Daniel	Pitso	Botswana
3.	Oageng	Disang	Botswana
4.	Prudence	Galega	Cameroon
5.	Hamdallah	Zedan	Egypt
6.	Mohamed Said	Abdelwarith	Egypt / Ministry of Environment
7.	Mahmoud Fawzy	Soliman	Egypt
8.	Ousainou	Touray	Gambia
9.	Matilde da Conceição	Gomes Lopes	Guinea-Bissau
10.	Dulare	Aboubacar	Guinee-Konakry
11.	Ruth	Kitonyi	Kenya
12.	Mphatso Martha	Kalembe	Malawi
13.	Sy	El Hadj	Mali
14.	Mostafa	Madbouhi	Morocco
15.	Ossama	Abdelkawy	Rwanda
16.	Samuel	Dieme	Senegal
17.	Abdoulaye	Diop	Senegal
18.	Marie-May	Muzungaile	Seychelles
19.	Malta	Qwathekana	South Africa
20.	Barney	Kgope	South Africa
21.	Ntakadzeni	Tshidada	South Africa
22.	Paul Demetry	Jubek	South Sudan
23.	Luthando	Dziba	South Africa
24.	El Khitma	Mohammed	Sudan
25.	N'Po	Tissama Yengnanibo	Togo
26.	Francis	Ogwal	Uganda
27.	Mahlet	Teshome Kebede	AUC
28.	Pierre	du Plessis	AU
29.	Samuel	Timpo	AU NEPAD Agency
30.	Levis	Kavagi	UNEP
31.	Monipher Patience	Musasa	African Wildlife Foundation
32.	Charly	Facheux	African Wildlife Foundation