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Third 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
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Axes of thought for the High-level segment

1. INTRODUCTION

The theme of the Third Session of the 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 (Bamako convention) is "*From Decisions to Action: Working for Africa with a Safe Chemicals and Waste Future".*

In June 2013, African Ministers in charge of Environment gathered in Bamako, Mali and proclaimed their ambition to protect vulnerable groups including children and poor communities from negative impacts resulting from unsafe chemical use and unsound waste disposal. The theme of this meeting provides a formidable opportunity for the Ministers to exchange views, discuss and further explore ways and means to achieve this noble ambition. It is proposed that these discussions be hold in a format of roundtables structured around the two main pillars of the Bamako convention:

1. Preventing unwanted export to Africa of hazardous chemicals and waste from outside the continent.
2. Promoting sound management of waste produced within the continent.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 – Africa as a dumping ground for toxic waste

Developed countries typically have very strict standards with regards to the collection, treatment and disposal of municipal and industrial hazardous wastes. The differences between developed and developing countries in the management of hazardous waste, including legislation, often lead to the "export of waste to countries where environmental laws, occupational safety and health regulations, governance and monitoring are looser". This has also resulted in illegal trafficking of hazardous waste from developed countries to countries in Africa for cheap disposal, often without any treatment.

The Basel Convention and the Bamako Convention were established as a result of concerns raised by developing countries, including African countries, of continual dumping of hazardous wastes in their territories by developed countries. During the negotiations process for the Basel convention

the position of the African countries was in favor of a total ban of transboundary movements of hazardous waste, instead of the mechanism of controlling and monitoring these movements that was finally adopted. The position of African countries was dictated by their feeling that actually they don't have the institutional and technological means needed for an effective control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes. To protect the continent from illegal dumping and traffic of hazardous waste, African countries adopted the Bamako convention in line with Article 11 of the Basel convention which encourages parties to enter bilateral, multilateral and regional agreements on Hazardous Waste to help achieve the objectives of the convention.

2.2 Improving waste governance in Africa

Hazardous waste generated in Africa is also increasing as a result of emerging waste streams such as e-waste, health care risk waste (HCRW) and obsolete agricultural chemicals.

Improper waste management has serious health and environmental consequences. If it persists, it will undermine Africa's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). On the other hand, sound waste management is powerful driver of sustainable development and can help Africa achieve the SDGs.

The African Union has set an ambitious aspiration that by 2023 African cities will recycle at least 50 per cent of the waste they generate. Agenda 2063 – a shared strategic framework for inclusive growth and sustainable development – was developed through a people-driven process and was adopted, in January of 2015, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia by the 24th African Union (AU) Assembly of Heads of State and Government, following 18 months of extensive consultations with all formations of African society .

Agenda 2063 is anchored on the AU vision and is based on the seven aspirations derived from the consultations, namely:

1. A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development;
2. An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance;
3. An Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law;
4. A peaceful and secure Africa;
5. An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics;
6. An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children; and
7. Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner.

Waste management is a cross-cutting issue. It has direct links to many global and regional issues such as public health, climate change, ocean plastic, poverty, food security and sustainable production and consumption.

On food security, conversion of waste – specifically agriculture and other organic waste – to organic fertilizer offers an opportunity to leverage waste management as a driver of environmental sustainability. And by this drive realizing the sustainable development goals (SDGs) – an urgency in this "decade of action". Studies indicate that converting agricultural waste to domestic energy and biofertilizer, would reduce deforestation driven by charcoal & firewood harvesting by 50%. On the socioeconomic front, use of organic fertilizer over mineral fertilizer will save farmers over $300 per ha each year and result in 35 – 100% yield increases. Cumulatively at economy-wide

scale, this agriculture waste to energy and biofertilizer investment pathway will result in national savings from fertilizer importation, charcoal production and open waste dumping.

It is imperative that the waste sector in Africa undergoes a paradigm shift from "waste" to that of "secondary resource" within the vision of a circular global economy. The circular economy emphasizes keeping resources in use for as long as possible through re-use, recycling and recovery of materials. Poor waste management is a lost economic opportunity for African countries to create a circular economy. Africa generates about 125 million tonnes of municipal solid waste per annum with only about 4 per cent diverted from disposal towards recycling.

Waste represents a valuable resource: viable secondary materials can be recovered through recycling, for instance, and waste can be used to produce energy or heat. Few African countries

actively engage in the global resources' recovery business. In addition, the lack of waste management represents a lost opportunity for employment of the poor and increased productivity. Small- and medium-sized waste recycling and recovery companies can not only generate tax returns but also create substantial employment.

When solid waste is not managed well, it results in serious pollution which in turn has serious harmful effects on human health and the environment, as highlighted by the Africa Waste Management Outlook. The Report highlights the many impacts of solid waste on human health, and how these vary depending on "nature of the waste, method of disposal, duration of exposure, population exposed and availability of mitigation intervention"[1].

For example, plastic waste that is improperly disposed of on land may "contribute to the spread of disease by providing standing water for mosquitoes to use as breeding grounds, enabling the spread of diseases such as Zika virus, dengue fever, malaria and chikungunya" [2]. Plastic bags and other plastic consumer goods accumulated in waterways and clogged drains have in instances caused flooding and the killing of many people [3].

Further, exposure to the toxic substances contained in waste electrical and electronic equipment can cause severe health consequences, "particularly to the young men and women who trawl through the piles of waste in dumpsites hoping to find something worth selling[4]". The burning of solid waste contributes greatly to respiratory disorders and other diseases associated with the resulting air pollution.

Another way in which waste and the associated substances can impact on human health is through entering into the food chain, and this include plastic waste. Some waste for example "contains toxic chemicals (e.g. heavy metals) and persistent organic pollutants (POPs), which are persistent in the environment, can travel long distances, and are likely to accumulate in fauna and flora and in the food chain"[5].

[1] Africa Waste Management Outlook.
[2] Africa Waste Management Outlook, in turn referencing Moss et al. 2017.
[3] Africa Waste Management Outlook.
[4] From Africa Waste Management Outlook, in turn referencing the following (Osibanjo and Nnorom 2007
[5] Africa Waste Management Outlook.

3. AXES OF THOUGHT

Ministers and high-level representative to consider following ideas for possible use during their discussions. A list of possible questions is attached in Annex 1:

A. Opportunities for developing appropriate technologies and promoting social and technological innovations

- Greater investment in research, development and innovation needs to be made at regional and national levels so as to support evidence-based decision making and policy-development.
- Some excellent social and technological innovations have emerged in the waste sector in Africa.
- Waste services and infrastructure should be carefully chosen in terms of their sustainability.
- Open burning is a major source of black carbon, one of the short-lived climate pollutants, a group of pollutants that have a particularly high impact on climate change. Eliminating uncontrolled dumping and open burning of waste in Africa and diverting organic waste away from landfill towards alternative waste treatment technologies such as composting and anaerobic digestion, have the potential to create significant positive benefits for Africa, including reduced GHG emissions.

B. Opportunities for enhancing waste good governance and finance, strengthened policies, monitoring and enforcement capacities

- Non-domestication of international agreements is making Africa an easy target for illegal dumping of hazardous waste from outside of the continent
- Good governance is crucial for creating an enabling environment for sustainable materials management.
- There is a need to create sufficient capacity (financial, institutional, technological and infrastructural) to drive environmentally sound waste management
- Including informal actors in the waste management system is an opportunity for improved livelihoods and income generation for often disadvantaged groups.
- Reuse of end-of-life goods is already widespread across Africa, but often driven informally, with opportunity to scale up.
- Recycling technologies are already being implemented for wastes such as plastic, paper, glass, metal, oil, e-waste and organic waste, but could be significantly scaled up through the development and strengthening of local and regional end-use markets.
- The waste management sector is perceived as a high-risk investment in Africa. Strengthening institutions and regulatory frameworks is paramount in reducing perceived sector risk.

- Sustainable waste management solutions require reliable, quantitative economic and scientific data for project finance. Much more work needs to be done in African countries to gather such data.
- There is a huge need for investment finance in the waste sector. However, raising investor confidence is a challenge, particularly in low income countries.
- More tailored, gender-specific schemes need to be applied to diverse geographical and socioeconomic conditions, in particular to avoid the marginalization of women.
- Integrating the informal sector into waste financing project models is key to achieving long term economic sustainability.
- Salient issues include conflicts between private versus public financing, and the accountability of public sector actors.

C. Opportunities for strengthened implementation through partnerships

- Public-private partnerships can provide a solution to building robust waste collection services and infrastructure for tackling Africa's waste problems.
- Collaboration with developed countries is important to accelerate appropriate technology and knowledge transfer, guided by the needs of Africa, not technology vendors.
- Civil society, business, industry and investment can play an important role in operationalizing government policies for meaningful impact on the ground.
- It is important to continue or engage in existing partnerships, as well as to identify and establish new partnerships and networks with relevant and interested partners.
- The full and effective implementation of the Bamako Convention would effectively address many of the underlying causes of global pollution addressed by UNEP, including issues like marine litter, among others. It will also contribute to the health-related aspects of the work of UNEP.

Annex 1. Possible questions for discussion

I. Roundtable 1: Protecting Africa from unwanted export of hazardous chemicals and waste

1. What key urgent measures (technical, legal, educational, institutional, economic, etc.) are to be taken at the national and regional level to ensure an effective implementation of the Bamako Convention in order to prevent Africa to become a dumping ground for toxic wastes?

2. What policies, monitoring and enforcement capacities are needed for an effective control of the transboundary movement of waste into Africa to address the threat of transnational organized crime?

3. How the gaps and loopholes in control regimes and actual control capacities can be addressed to prevent illegal waste import and dumping activities with the associated threats to human health and environmental integrity?

4. What type of regional collaboration is needed for enhancing national enforcement efforts aimed at effective mapping, investigation and prosecution of criminals involved in illegal waste activities?

5. What preventive mechanisms should be put in place to avoid collusion of international crime organizations with local players?

II. Roundtable 2: Promoting sound management of waste and harnessing the opportunities of "waste as resource"

1. What administrative, legal, organizational, infrastructural, institutional and financial policies are to be put in place to cope with the rapidly increasing waste generation in Africa?

2. Which prompt action to take to overcome barriers to effective management and minimization of waste in Africa through increased knowledge on waste scenarios to prevent harm to health and environment?

3. How can Africa seize the opportunities available to achieve its sustainable development ambitions through new and existing types partnerships promoting sound management of chemicals and waste?

4. What are the policies and strategies to put in place to guaranty to all citizen access to adequate waste collection services and environmental sound management of waste, and to eliminate uncontrolled dumping and open burning of waste?

5. What enabling environment countries need to create to attract private investors into the waste sector, and to improve and integrate the informal sector?