



AMCEN



AU



Distr.: General
23 June 2023

Original: English
English and French only

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Nineteenth session

Addis Ababa, 14 -18 August 2023

Information note on the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

“Seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa”

Introduction

1. The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was created in 1985 to promote regional cooperation between African Governments in addressing environmental challenges confronting the region. The work of AMCEN has contributed significantly to the heightened policy responses of African Governments and the international community to Africa’s environment and sustainable development opportunities and challenges.
2. Over the years, AMCEN has demonstrated strong leadership in advancing African causes and interests in environment and sustainable development matters. AMCEN through its meetings provides guidance with regard to key regional policies and initiatives related to the environment and sustainable development. Pursuant to paragraph 1 of article 9 of its Constitution, AMCEN holds its ordinary sessions once every two or three years.
3. In view of this, and in response to the kind offer by the Government of Ethiopia at the resumed eighteenth session held in Dakar from 12 to 16 September 2022, the nineteenth ordinary session of AMCEN will be held from 14 to 18 August 2023 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The session will consist of a meeting of the expert group from 14 to 16 August, and a ministerial segment, on 17 and 18 August 2023.
4. The focus of the nineteenth ordinary session of AMCEN is to strengthen collaboration among the various institutions and enhance implementation of regional and global environmental frameworks in order to address the environmental challenges facing the continent. This entails building on existing initiatives, including strengthening the role of those institutions that support implementation of regional and global outcomes. The recent policy direction of AMCEN is that a large focus of its work should support implementation.
5. The session will provide a platform for strengthening Africa’s collective engagement in the global environmental agenda, including in the various conference of the parties of environmental agreements, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and other multilateral processes related to combating climate change, desertification, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution, among others, and ensure that the region is not only able to address the challenges in these areas but also seizes emerging opportunities for a sustainable development of the continent. The session will therefore be held under the theme: *“Seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa”*.
6. The nineteenth ordinary session of AMCEN will be an opportunity for ministers to provide policy guidance for upcoming key environmental events, including the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Africa Climate Summit; the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme; Africa’s participation in the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution (INC process); Africa’s preparations for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United

Nations Convention to Combat Desertification; preparations for the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, and how Africa will respond to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

7. The session will also aim to further strengthen the work of AMCEN in its contribution to the region's environment and sustainable development agenda. This includes addressing emerging environmental issues, enhancing collaborative efforts with partners and stakeholders, beefing up its financial base (AMCEN Trust Fund), and review of proposals to strengthen its rules of procedure, as was decided by the resumed eighteenth ordinary session, among other matters.

8. Finally, the Conference will adopt a declaration, decisions and a set of key messages reflecting the discussions during the session.

Associated meetings

9. The following associated meetings will be held:

- (a) 12-13 August 2023: Pre-AMCEN major groups and stakeholders (civil society) meeting.
- (b) 16 August 2023: Working dinner focusing on green jobs.
- (c) 17 August 2023: A science policy business forum

Side events

10. A number of side events will be held during the session. Details of these events will be published as soon as they become available.

Venue

11. The nineteenth ordinary session of AMCEN will be held at the Ethiopian Skylight Hotel in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, www.ethiopianskylighthotel.com

Services to delegates

12. Skylight Hotel is a new ultramodern 5-star hotel conveniently located only five minutes from Bole International Airport with stylish refurbished and culturally decorated International Conference and meeting halls.

13. The hotel features the largest ballroom in Addis Ababa with eight fully equipped meeting rooms with the latest audio-visual equipment and modern décor.

Registration

14. All participants will be required to pre-register prior to the conference and on arrival at the Skylight Hotel, from Sunday, 13 August 2023, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

15. Badges will be issued to participants upon registration. For identification, security reasons, and to access the meeting rooms, participants are reminded that they should wear their badges at all times during the meeting.

Documents

16. The main pre-session documents for the meeting will be dispatched to AMCEN national focal points in advance of the meeting. The documents will also be available on the AMCEN website: <https://www.unep.org/events/unep-event/nineteenth-ordinary-session-african-ministerial-conference-environment-amcen>.

Greening the nineteenth ordinary session of AMCEN

17. *Paper Smart meeting*: AMCEN is the main regional environmental decision-making body in Africa and therefore intends to lead by example in all its activities and interventions, by reducing its carbon footprint. Ideally, the nineteenth ordinary session of AMCEN will endeavour to service delegates with the varied methods of accessing documentation including all unrestricted, official documents and statements, while making efficient use of its resources by avoiding waste.

18. The information and documentation will be made available in digital platforms and formats. In addition to the distribution of information and background documents on the AMCEN website, in-session documents and statements will be shared by email.

19. Efforts will be made to ensure that the meeting is a plastic free meeting. Therefore, meeting badges, water bottles, refreshments, *inter alia*, will be provided with plastic free material.

Hotel reservations, airport transfers and transport for delegates

20. Participants are kindly requested to make their own hotel bookings as soon as possible. A list of recommended hotels, with negotiated special rates and contact details will be made available on the AMCEN website: <https://www.unep.org/events/unep-event/nineteenth-ordinary-session-african-ministerial-conference-environment-amcen>.

21. The Government of Ethiopia will provide transport between Bole international airport to the recommended hotels and to the meeting venue. A time schedule will be made available. Please note that there will be no transport to the meeting venue for participants who opt to stay outside the recommended hotels.

22. With regard to logistical arrangements, participants should send information on flights, dates of arrival and departure and the name of the hotel where they intend to stay to Ms. Julie Kaibe, e-mail: julie.kaibe@un.org; with copies to unenvironment-amcen@un.org; Ethiopia Environmental Protection Authority, email: ethiopiaamcen19@gmail.com.

General information on Ethiopia

23. Ethiopia, officially the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, is a landlocked country located in the Horn of Africa. It shares borders with Eritrea to the north, Djibouti to the northeast, Somalia to the east and northeast, Kenya to the south, South Sudan to the west, and Sudan to the northwest. Ethiopia has a total area of 1,100,000 square kilometres (420,000 square miles). As of 2022, it is home to around 113.5 million people, making it the thirteenth most populous country in the world, the second most populous in Africa after Nigeria.

24. Within Ethiopia is a vast highland complex of mountains and dissected plateaus divided by the Great Rift Valley, which runs generally southwest to northeast and is surrounded by lowlands, steppes, or semi-desert. There is a great diversity of terrain with wide variations in climate, soils, natural vegetation and settlement patterns. It is also the home to many UNESCO World heritage sites.

25. The predominant climate type is tropical monsoon, with wide topographic-induced variation. The Ethiopian Highlands cover most of the country and have a climate which is generally considerably cooler than other regions at similar proximity to the Equator. Most of the country's major cities are located at elevations of around 2,000–2,500 m (6,562–8,202 ft) above sea level, including historic capitals such as Gondar and Axum.

26. The modern capital, Addis Ababa, is situated on the foothills of Mount Entoto at an elevation of around 2,400 metres (7,900 ft). With temperatures fairly uniform year-round, the seasons in Addis Ababa are largely defined by rainfall: a dry season from October to February, a light rainy season from March to May, and a heavy rainy season from June to September. The average annual temperature in Addis Ababa is 16 °C (60.8 °F), with daily maximum temperatures averaging 20–25 °C (68.0–77.0 °F) throughout the year, and overnight lows averaging 5–10 °C (41.0–50.0 °F).

Visas

27. Visitors to Ethiopia must obtain a visa from one of the Ethiopian diplomatic missions unless they come from one of the visa exempt countries or countries whose citizens are eligible to apply for an electronic visa or visa on arrival. Holders of diplomatic or service passports of any country other than Pakistan and Somalia do not require a visa for up to 3 months.

28. However, the Ethiopian government has made the process of obtaining an Ethiopia visa smoother and easier with the introduction of the Ethiopia eVisa and the Visa on arrival. Apply for Ethiopian eVISA Online | Ethiopian E Visa Official Website.

Health

29. Proof of vaccination against yellow fever is required for travellers aged 9 months or over arriving from countries with the risk of yellow fever transmission, and for travellers having transited for more than 12 hours through an airport of a country with the risk of yellow fever transmission.

30. It is prohibited for any person who know they are infected with coronavirus to enter the country. Any persons showing Covid-19 symptoms have the duty to appropriately wear a face mask, get self-tested or test at a health facility and follow and implement the general Covid-19 preventive measures if they test positive. Any Covid-19 positive persons shall isolate themselves either at home or at a health facility according to the severity of the illness until declared recovered by a health professional.

31. Participants are advised to take adequate travel and health insurance before leaving their respective countries. The Government of Ethiopia or any of its partners organizing the conference will not be held liable for any incidents that may arise due to a lack of adequate travel and health insurance.

32. Nevertheless, an on-site emergency medical service consisting of a medical facility and a fully staffed ambulance will be extended to all participants and support staff on the days of the AMCEN meeting. Hospitalization at either a state or private healthcare facility will be on the account of the patient.

Time zone

33. The time zone for Ethiopia is Eastern Africa Time (GMT/UTC + 3 hours)

Contacts and further information

34. For further information on the nineteenth ordinary session of AMCEN, please do not hesitate to contact the AMCEN secretariat, e-mail: unenvironment-amcen@un.org, with a copy to julie.kaibe@un.org and david.ombisi@un.org and in Ethiopia, Getahun Garedeu, e-mail: getahungaredew@gmail.com; Abas Mohammed Ali, e-mail: abas.mohammed5@gmail.com; and Girma Gemechu, e-mail: girma.nahall@gmail.com, with a copy to ethiopiaamcen19@gmail.com.
