



AMCEN



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African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Nineteenth session

Ministerial meeting

Addis Ababa, 17 and 18 August 2023

Item 2 (b) of the provisional agenda*

Organizational matters: adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Annotated provisional agenda**

I. Introduction

1. The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) holds its ordinary sessions once every two or three years. An offer by the Government of Ethiopia to host the nineteenth ordinary session was accepted by the Conference at its resumed eighteenth session, held in Dakar, Senegal, from 12 to 16 September 2022.
2. Pursuant to the above, the nineteenth session will be held from 14 to 18 August 2023 at the Ethiopian Skylight Hotel in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The ministerial meeting will be held on 17 and 18 August 2023.
3. The Bureau of the Conference considered and adopted a provisional agenda for the ministerial meeting of the nineteenth session, which is set out in document AMCEN/19/1.
4. The secretariat has distributed an information note on the nineteenth session (document AMCEN/19/INF/1). A list of the documents prepared for the session is provided in annex I to the present document and the programme of work is set out in annex II.

II. Objectives and overview of the nineteenth session

5. The recent policy direction of the Conference is that a large focus of its work should support implementation. Hence, the focus of the nineteenth session 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.
6. The session will therefore be held under the theme: “*Seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa*”. The theme envisages scaling up of existing initiatives, taking advantage of new opportunities as well as enhancing collaboration and strengthening the role of those institutions that support implementation of regional and global outcomes.
7. 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 and other multilateral processes related to combating climate change, desertification, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution, among others,

* AMCEN/19/1.

** The present document is being issued without formal editing.

and ensure that the region is not only able to address the challenges in these areas but also seizes emerging opportunities for sustainable development of the continent.

8. The nineteenth ordinary session 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; 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.

9. The session will also aim to further strengthen the work of the Conference 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 (Trust Fund of the Conference), and review of proposals to strengthen its rules of procedure, as was decided by the resumed eighteenth ordinary session, among other matters.

10. The expert group will bring to the attention of ministers a number of matters for their consideration. Ministers will be invited to exchange views on those matters in order to reach agreement thereon.

11. Finally, ministers are expected to adopt a declaration, decisions and key messages reflecting their discussions under the various agenda items.

III. Items of the provisional agenda

Item 1

Opening of the ministerial meeting

12. The President of the Conference, the Minister for Environment, Sustainable Development and Ecological Transition of Senegal, will preside over the official opening ceremony and will introduce opening speakers, including the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the African Union Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment.

13. The President will invite a dignitary from Ethiopia to officially open the ministerial session. Thereafter, other speakers will be given the opportunity to make brief remarks.

14. A detailed programme for the opening session will be developed in consultation with the host country and circulated prior to the opening of the ministerial meeting.

Item 2

Organizational matters

(a) Election of officers

15. The outgoing President will present the outcome of the subregional consultations on filling vacant seats on the Bureau in the manner prescribed by the constitution of the Conference and will make his final remarks as President.

16. The outgoing President will invite the new President to assume her place on the podium and make her inaugural speech, after which the official handover of the presidency of the Conference from Senegal to Ethiopia will take place.

(b) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

17. The President will introduce the provisional agenda, document AMCEN/19/1.

18. The President will introduce the draft programme of work as set out in annex II to the present document and draw attention to the list of documents for the ministerial segment, set out in annex I.

Item 3**Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group**

19. The Chair of the expert group will present the report of the meeting of the expert group, which will include a summary of the proceedings and the recommendations developed. Ministers will take note of the report and consider the draft declaration, decisions and key messages under the appropriate agenda item.

Item 4**Climate Change****(a) Africa Climate Summit**

20. The Africa Climate Summit co-hosted by Kenya and the African Union Commission will take place from 4 to 6 September 2023 in Nairobi.

21. The summit will bring together leaders from Africa and beyond: development partners, intergovernmental organisations, private sector, academia, civil society organisations, women and youth to design and catalyse actions and solutions for climate change in Africa by providing a platform to deliberate on the nexus between climate change, Africa's development reality, and the need to push for increased investment in climate action globally, and specifically in Africa.

22. The summit aims to consolidate Africa's voice and craft a sustainable green growth blueprint for the continent. The outcome of the summit will be the "African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action", guiding Africa's climate agenda and preparations for the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

23. The Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry of Kenya will make a short presentation on the summit.

(b) Preparations for the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

24. The twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will take place from 30 November to 12 December 2023 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. It will be a milestone moment when the world will take stock of its progress on the Paris Agreement.

25. The first Global Stocktake will provide a comprehensive assessment of progress since the adoption of the Paris Agreement. This will help align efforts on climate action, including measures that need to be put in place to bridge the gaps in progress.

26. The Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on climate change will give an overview, analysis and progress report on the climate change negotiations and preparations to date, highlighting the negotiation matters of interest to Africa, and will present a set of key messages for consideration by the ministers in the preparations for the Africa Climate Summit and the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties.

27. The above agenda item will be followed by a brief launch of the Africa Environment Outlook for Business report.

Item 5**Africa's participation in the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment**

28. The United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme through resolution 5/14 on "End plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument" called for international action by developing an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment. The resolution requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to convene an intergovernmental negotiating committee.

29. The first session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, took place in Uruguay from 28 November to 2 December 2022.

30. The second session took place from 29 May to 2 June 2023 in Paris, France. The second session concluded with a mandate for the Chair of the intergovernmental negotiating committee, with the support of the Secretariat, to prepare a zero draft of the agreement ahead of the next session which will be held from 13 to 17 November 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya.

31. The Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on plastic pollution will provide an overview of Africa's engagement and outcomes of the two sessions of the intergovernmental negotiating committee and then give an analysis and update on Africa's common priorities, and the next steps in the preparations for the third session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee, including the need for an African common position.

Item 6

Preparations for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

32. The sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme will be held from 26 February to 1 March 2024, at the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi, Kenya

33. The theme of the sixth session of the Assembly is "Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution".

34. A representative from the Governance Affairs Office of UNEP will make a presentation on the roadmap towards the sixth session of the Environment Assembly.

35. A brief presentation will be made by the Dean of the Africa Diplomatic Corps based in Nairobi on the preparations by the Africa Group for its engagement at the sixth session of the Environment Assembly.

Item 7

Ministerial policy dialogues

(a) Climate Finance

36. A low carbon, climate resilient pathway offers the African continent the opportunity to address climate change while ensuring sustainable development, improvement in livelihoods, energy security, and job creation. Bringing it to fruition will take significant financial resources from public and private actors, at scale and with speed.

37. Climate finance is critical to addressing climate change because large-scale investments are required to significantly reduce emissions, notably in sectors that emit large quantities of greenhouse gases. Climate finance is equally important for adaptation, for which significant financial resources will be similarly required to allow societies and economies to adapt to the adverse effects and reduce the impacts of climate change. However, current levels of climate finance are way below what is required to implement the continent's commitments.

38. To tap these resources effectively and efficiently, African countries need to ensure that enabling institutional and financial mechanisms are in place. The fiscal and economic environment, despite their constraints, should provide a platform for enabling the deployment of capital towards the achievement of climate mitigation and adaptation objectives.

39. The dialogue will examine climate financing in the context of Africa, including innovative strategies in emerging areas that can be applied towards effectively bridging the financing gap.

(b) Protecting human health and the environment from the adverse effects of plastic pollution in Africa

40. Plastic pollution as has been reiterated is a pressing global challenge. The widespread polluting effects of plastic production, use and disposal in the air, land and water, and the associated impacts on the health of humans and ecosystems is a subject of global debate.

41. The toxic chemical additives and pollutants found in plastics threaten human health on a global scale. Scientifically proven health effects include causing cancer or changing hormone activity (known as endocrine disruption), which can lead to reproductive, growth, and cognitive impairment. Many of the toxic chemical additives have several other known health impacts, persist in the environment, and

bioaccumulate in exposed organisms. Research also reveal that microplastics can harm human health, and act as vessels for pathogens, increasing the spread of diseases.

42. The ministerial dialogue will explore the integrated, unifying approach to optimizing the health of people, animals, and ecosystems through effective plastics life cycle management. The session will delve into policy interventions and measures that can move the African region towards the quest for combating plastic pollution and protecting human health and the environment.

(c) Critical minerals and their role in energy transitions in Africa

43. Critical minerals, also known as strategic minerals or rare earth elements, are essential raw materials used in various industries, including renewable energy technologies. They play a crucial role in enabling the transition to a cleaner and more sustainable energy systems.

44. Africa is already a major producer of several critical minerals, including cobalt, copper, lithium, and rare earth elements. The growth of the clean energy sector in Africa is expected to drive demand for critical minerals which presents a major opportunity for Africa.

45. Critical minerals can be viewed as development issues that have the potential to leapfrog Africa's development. By leveraging these resources effectively, African nations can accelerate their economic growth, promote job creation, and enhance industrialization while ensuring the well-being of people and the environment.

46. This ministerial dialogue will deliberate on key strategies and approaches that Africa can apply towards unlocking the full potential of its critical mineral resources for a just energy transition and in driving socio-economically inclusive, environmentally sustainable growth that enhances the realization of multiple sustainable development goals.

Item 8

Trust Fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

47. The general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment was established to provide financial support, for the functioning of the organs of the Conference and the implementation of its activities and to ensure a sustainable financial base for the Conference.

48. The Conference has, on several occasions, underlined the importance of all member States making their contributions in line with the decisions of the Conference. At the resumed eighteenth session of the Conference held in Dakar in 2022, member states committed to make every effort to pay their contributions to the general trust fund and other multilateral environmental agreements. Despite this commitment, not much improvement was recorded during the reporting period.

49. A representative of the secretariat will report on the status of the general trust fund. The ministers are expected to make a critical assessment and provide further guidance on how to ensure that member States meet their obligations.

50. A representative of the secretariat will make a short presentation on the Environment Fund for the United Nations Environment Programme.

Item 9

Consideration of the draft declaration, decisions and key messages

51. The President of the Conference will introduce the draft declaration, decisions and key messages during a closed session open only to African member States and regional institutions.

52. A representative of the secretariat will take ministers through the draft declaration, decisions and key messages for their consideration, input and subsequent adoption.

Item 10

Venue and dates of the twentieth ordinary session

53. The twentieth session of the Conference is to be hosted by a member State from North Africa. To ensure optimal planning, it is proposed that the date and venue of the twentieth session be agreed upon in the form of a decision. In the absence of any offers to host the session, the President will propose that the twentieth session be hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi, the seat of the secretariat.

Item 11

Adoption of the report of the ministerial meeting

54. A representative of the secretariat will introduce the draft report of the ministerial meeting for adoption by the Conference, on the understanding that the secretariat will finalize the report after the meeting.

Item 12

Other matters

55. Other key matters of interest not included in the agenda will be discussed. It is proposed that any Government that introduces any other matter should provide the secretariat with a copy of a background document for circulation during the session.

Item 13

Closure of the meeting

56. The President will bring the session to a formal close after the customary exchange of courtesies.

Annex I

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Document</i>
Working documents	
AMCEN/19/EGM/1	Provisional agenda for the expert group segment
AMCEN/19/EGM/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda for the expert group segment
AMCEN/19/1	Provisional agenda for the ministerial segment
AMCEN/19/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda for the ministerial segment
AMCEN/19/EGM/2	Report of the secretariat for the period 2022–2023
AMCEN/19/EGM/3	African Forum of the Environment Protection Agencies
AMCEN/19/EGM/4	Critical minerals and their role in energy transitions in Africa
AMCEN/19/2	Africa's participation in the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment
AMCEN/19/3	Preparations for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme
AMCEN/19/EGM/5	Preparations for the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management
AMCEN/19/EGM/6	Implications for Africa of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Fostering sustainable soil governance in Africa
AMCEN/19/4	Status of the general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
Information documents	
AMCEN/19/INF/1	Information note for participants in the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCEN/19/INF/2	AMCEN Bureaux 1985 - 2023
Reference documents	
AMCEN/18(II)/15	Report of the ministerial segment of the resumed eighteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
SAICM/ICCM.4/15	Report of the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management
AMCEN/18(II)/5	Collaboration between the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and African Ministers of Finance and Economic Planning
AMCEN/18(II)/6	Phasing out of open burning of waste in Africa
AMCEN/18(II)/12	Outcomes of the fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNEP/PP/INC.1/14	Report of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, on the work of its first session
CBD/COP/DEC/15/4	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework African Union Commission Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2022–2032 Rules of procedure of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment Constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment Report of Africa Regional Consultation on the Inter-governmental Negotiating Committee Process, May 2023, Accra, Ghana

Annex II

Programme of work for the ministerial meeting on 17 and 18 August 2023

Thursday, 17 August 2023

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Item 1
8.45 a.m.–10.00 a.m.	Opening of the meeting
10.00 a.m.–10.45 a.m.	Other invited speakers
10.45 a.m.–11.00 a.m.	Item 2 Organizational matters: (a) Election of officers (b) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
11.00 a.m.–11.15 a.m.	Item 3 Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group
11.15 a.m.–12.30 p.m.	Item 4 Climate change: (a) Preparations for the Africa Climate Summit (b) Preparations for the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
12.30 p.m.–1.00 p.m.	Launch of the Africa Environment Outlook for Business report
1.00 p.m.–3.00 p.m.	Lunch break (Africa Science-policy-business Forum)
3.00 p.m.–4.15 p.m.	Item 5 Africa's participation in the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment
4.15 p.m.–5.30 p.m.	Item 6 Preparations for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme
6.00 p.m.	Official reception by the Government of Ethiopia at the Science Museum

Friday, 18 August 2023

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
7.00 a.m.–9.00 a.m.	Ministerial roundtable breakfast on reducing methane for sustainable development
9.15 a.m.–10.30 a.m.	Item 7 Ministerial policy dialogues (a) Climate finance
10.30 a.m.–11.45 a.m.	(b) Protecting human health and the environment from the adverse effects of plastic pollution in Africa
11.45 a.m.–1.00 p.m.	(c) Critical minerals and their role in energy transitions in Africa
1.00 p.m.–3.00 p.m.	Lunch break
3.00 p.m.–3.30 p.m.	Item 8 Trust Fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment Environment Fund for the United Nations Environment Programme
3.30 p.m.–5.00 p.m.	Item 9 Consideration of the draft declaration, decisions and key messages of the session
5.00 p.m.–5.15 p.m.	Item 10

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Venue and date of the nineteenth session
5.15 p.m.–5.30 p.m.	Item 11 Adoption of the report of the ministerial segment
5.30 p.m.- 5.45 p.m.	Item 12 Other matters
5.45 p.m.	Item 13 Closure of the meeting
