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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

Report of the meeting of the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

I. Opening of the meeting

1. The ministerial meeting of the nineteenth ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment was held at the Skylight Hotel, Addis Ababa, on 17 and 18 August 2023, under the theme “Seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa”.
2. The meeting was attended by representatives of member States of the Conference, other States, African regional and subregional organizations, United Nations entities and the secretariats of various environmental conventions, partners and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.
3. The opening of the ministerial meeting was chaired by the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, Alioune Ndoye, Minister of the Environment, Sustainable Development and Ecological Transition of Senegal.

II. Organizational matters

4. The meeting was opened at 9.40 a.m. on Thursday, 17 August 2023 by the President of the Conference. Shereen Zorba, Head of the Science-Policy-Business Interface and Knowledge Networks of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), moderated the meeting.
5. Opening statements were delivered by Fitsum Assefa Adela, Minister of Planning and Development of Ethiopia; Alioune Ndoye, Minister of the Environment, Sustainable Development and Ecological Transition of Senegal, and President of the Conference; Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director of UNEP; and Demeke Mekonnen Hassen, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, the keynote speaker for the opening of the meeting.
6. Further statements were delivered by Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology of the United Arab Emirates and President-designate of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; Antonio Pedro, acting Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa; Musonda Mumba, Secretary-General of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention); Beyene Russom, Dean of the African diplomatic corps, Nairobi; Anthony Nyong, Director of Climate Change and Green Growth of the African Development Bank Group; Rose Mwebaza, Director and Regional Representative of the UNEP Regional Office for Africa; and Ayman Cherkaoui, Regional Facilitator of UNEP Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa.

A. Election of officers

7. The following countries were elected to serve on the Bureau for the period 2023–2025:

<i>Subregion</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Position</i>
East Africa	Ethiopia	President
Central Africa	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Vice-President
North Africa	[TBC]	Vice-President and Rapporteur
Southern Africa	Angola	Vice-President
West Africa	Côte d'Ivoire	Vice-President

8. Given that the member States from North Africa were unable to reach consensus on the nomination of a representative from the subregion, the election of a vice-president and rapporteur from that subregion was deferred on the understanding that Mauritania would continue to serve as Vice-President and Rapporteur pending the nomination of the representative from the subregion.

9. The outgoing President, Mr. Ndoye, invited the incoming President, Ms. Assefa Adela, to take her place on the podium and make her inaugural speech, at which point the presidency of the Conference was officially handed over from Senegal to Ethiopia.

B. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

10. The representatives adopted the agenda for the meeting on the basis of the provisional agenda (AMCEN/19/1):

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Election of officers;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
3. Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group.
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.
5. Africa's participation in the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.
6. Preparations for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme.
7. Ministerial policy dialogues on:
 - (a) Climate finance;
 - (b) Protecting human health and the environment from the adverse effects of plastic pollution in Africa;
 - (c) Critical minerals and their role in energy transitions in Africa.
8. Trust Fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.
9. Consideration of the draft declaration, decisions and key messages of the session.
10. Venue and dates of the twentieth ordinary session.
11. Adoption of the report of the ministerial meeting.
12. Other matters.
13. Closure of the session.

11. The representatives agreed to follow the programme of work set out in annex II to the annotated provisional agenda (AMCEN/19/1/Add.1).

III. Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group

12. The chair of the expert group meeting, Baba Drame, Director of the Environment and Classified Establishments Directorate of the Ministry of the Environment, Sustainable Development and Ecological Transition of Senegal, representing the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, reported on the work and outcomes of the expert group meeting.
13. The representatives took note of the report.

IV. Climate change

A. Preparations for the Africa Climate Summit

14. Soipan Tuya, Cabinet Secretary of the Ministry of the Environment, Climate Change and Forestry of Kenya, reported on preparations for the Africa Climate Summit, to be co-hosted by Kenya and the African Union Commission from 4 to 6 September 2023 in Nairobi.

B. Preparations for the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

15. Ephraim Shitima, chair of the African group of negotiators on climate change, speaking on behalf of Collins Nzovu, Minister of the Green Economy and the Environment of Zambia, gave a summary of the outcomes of the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and reported on preparations for the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 30 November to 12 December 2023.
16. Following both presentations, statements were delivered, in the order of presentation, by the representatives of South Africa, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Congo and the Gambia. A statement was also delivered by a representative of the World Green Economy Organization.

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

17. A statement was delivered by Kwaku Afriyie, Minister of the Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation of Ghana and chair of the African group of negotiators on plastic pollution. He provided an overview of the engagement of Africa and the sessions of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.
18. Further statements were delivered, in the order of presentation, by the representatives of Zambia, the Congo, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Comoros, Eritrea, Mali, the Gambia and Botswana.

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

19. The representatives considered the agenda item on preparations for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, to be held from 26 February to 1 March 2024, at the headquarters of UNEP in Nairobi. Presentations were made by Ulf Björnholm, Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies of UNEP, on the road map towards the Environment Assembly; by Mr. Russom, on the preparations of the African group for engagement at the Environment Assembly; and by Rachid Firadi, Director of Partnership, Communication and Cooperation in the Moroccan Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development, on preparation of the ministerial declaration for the Environment Assembly.
20. Further statements were delivered, in the order of presentation, by the representatives of the United Republic of Tanzania, Malawi and Algeria.

VII. Ministerial policy dialogues

21. During the session, ministerial dialogues were held under the theme of the nineteenth session, “Seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa”. The dialogues were chaired by Paula Coelho, Minister of the Environment of Angola, as Vice-President, on behalf of the President. Three dialogues took place, each chaired by a moderator. For each dialogue, a panel of keynote speakers made statements on the topic of the dialogue, followed by contributions from other speakers.

A. Climate finance

22. The dialogue was moderated by Susan Gardner, Director of the Ecosystems Division of UNEP. The panel of speakers comprised Ms. Coelho; Yasmine Fouad, Minister of the Environment of Egypt; Ms. Tuya; Mr. Ndoye and Barbara Creecy, Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment of South Africa.

23. The panellists each took up issues on the topic of the dialogue. Further statements were delivered, in the order of presentation, by the representatives of Burkina Faso, the Congo, Cabo Verde, Gambia, Zambia, who also spoke on behalf of the African group of negotiators on climate change, and Nigeria. The moderator delivered closing remarks.

B. Protecting human health and the environment from the adverse effects of plastic pollution in Africa

24. The dialogue was moderated by Sheila Aggarwal-Khan, Director of the Industry and Economy Division, UNEP, who introduced the topic. The panel of speakers comprised Leila Benali, Minister of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development of Morocco; and Mr. Afriyie.

25. Further statements were delivered, in the order of presentation, by the representatives of Zimbabwe, Eswatini, Togo, Burkina Faso, Equatorial Guinea, Cabo Verde, the Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Mali and Ethiopia. Ms. Aggarwal-Khan delivered closing remarks.

C. Critical minerals and their role in energy transitions in Africa

26. The dialogue was moderated by Bruno Pozzi, Deputy Director of the Ecosystems Division, UNEP, who introduced the topic. The panel of speakers comprised Mr. Afriyie; Philda Nani Kereng, Minister of the Environment and Tourism of Botswana; and Arlette Soudan-Nonault, Minister of the Environment, Sustainable Development and Ecological Transition of the Congo.

27. Further statements were delivered, in the order of presentation, by the representatives of Zambia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Namibia, Mali, the Sudan and Zimbabwe. Mr. Pozzi delivered closing remarks.

VIII. Trust Fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

28. A representative of the secretariat presented a report on the status of the general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN/19/4). Under the same item, another representative of the secretariat presented a report on the Environment Fund of UNEP.

29. The Conference took note of the two reports.

IX. Consideration of the draft declaration, decisions and key messages of the session

30. The ministers adopted the Addis Ababa declaration on seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa. The declaration is set out in annex I to the present report.

31. The ministers adopted the following decisions: decision 19/1, an omnibus decision on seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa; decision 19/2, on the participation of Africa in the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment; decision 19/3, on preparations by Africa for the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management; decision 19/4, on the

engagement of Africa at the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly; and decision 19/5, on climate change. The decisions are set out in annex II to the present report.

X. Venue and dates of the twentieth ordinary session

32. Following a discussion, the ministers agreed that consultations within the North Africa subregion would continue on the issues of representation of the subregion in the Bureau, the venue and dates of the twentieth ordinary session, with a view to the subregion reaching a decision and reporting back during the consultative meeting of the Conference to be held in the margins of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

XI. Adoption of the report of the ministerial meeting

33. A representative of the secretariat introduced the draft report of the ministerial segment. The ministers agreed to entrust the finalization of the report to the secretariat and adopted the report on that basis.

XII. Other matters

34. The representative of Angola provided a briefing on the International Conference on Chemicals Management and the forthcoming fifth session of the Conference, to be held in Bonn, Germany, from 25 to 29 September 2023.

35. The representative of the Congo provided a briefing on the Three Basins Summit, to be held in Brazzaville from 26 to 28 October 2023.

XIII. Closure of the session

36. The nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment was declared closed at 6.45 p.m. on Friday, 18 August 2023.

Annex I

Addis Ababa declaration on seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa

We, African ministers for the environment,

Having met in Addis Ababa on 17 and 18 August 2023 at the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Committed to continuing to take environmental and climate action to unlock inclusive wealth creation that safeguards the socioeconomic well-being of the people in Africa,

Aware that the increased loss of biodiversity and threatened species will undermine our efforts to protect biodiversity, and of the need to take urgent action to preserve ecosystem services vital to human well-being, including crop pollination, water purification, food security, clean air, flood protection and carbon sequestration,

Acknowledging the warning from the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, that the African region has lost 65 per cent of its productive land over the last 70 years, whereas the population has grown at least sixfold over the same period,

Appreciating the work of the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and regional economic communities, among others, in the development of continental and regional strategies and programmes on the sustainable blue economy as a significant contributor to continental transformation and growth,

Recalling paragraph (i) (ii) of the annex to decision 18/3 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment on biodiversity, wildlife and desertification, in which the Conference noted that land degradation, desertification and drought were priorities in Africa, and recognizing that the environment plays a strategic and critical role in providing practical, affordable and innovative solutions to bridge gaps in the socioeconomic development of Africa,

Recognizing that the Congo Basin, the largest ecological respiratory organ of our planet and of great importance in terms of carbon storage, plays a crucial role in global climate regulation and the provision of ecosystem services for the benefit of the people,

Taking note of resolution 4/16 of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, in which the Assembly recognized that peatlands contain a high proportion of global organic soil carbon, making them one of the world's largest carbon stores, contributing to the mitigation of global climate change,

Considering the benefits and value of the Congo Basin peatlands, which sequester more than 31 billion tonnes of carbon and provide vital ecosystem functions and services that reduce the magnitude and mitigate the impact of floods and droughts, preserve biodiversity and provide food and water supplies,

Guided by the outcomes of previous sessions of the Conference in its 38 years of existence,

Guided also by the decisions of the Assembly of the African Union on African policy on environment, climate change and development matters,

Acknowledging the contribution to African development of the various global outcomes on the environment and sustainable development,

Noting with appreciation the progress made and aware of the constraints faced in implementing the decisions of the Conference,

Recalling the outcomes of the resumed eighteenth ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the commitment to provide policy direction and momentum in the implementation of the African Green Stimulus Programme and the African Union Green Recovery Action Plan, as important complementary initiatives for achieving Agenda 2063 of the African Union¹ and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,²

¹ Africa Union Commission, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want* (Addis Ababa, 2015).

² General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015.

Determined to strengthen our efforts and actions to strengthen implementation of our decisions as a contribution to the achievement of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals,

Hereby declare our resolve:

1. To commit ourselves to continuing to address and find solutions to environmental challenges that the African continent faces and to take advantage of the opportunities available to advance national and regional sustainable development agendas;
2. To commit ourselves to continuing to strengthen the role of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment as the principal forum for advancing collective national and regional environmental policies and actions and to take concrete action to implement our decisions;
3. To reiterate our commitment to collaborating with the United Nations Environment Programme as a viable and catalytic tool fostering multilateral cooperation in tackling environmental challenges;
4. To reaffirm our commitment to supporting the work of the African Forum of Environment Protection Agencies and, in this regard, to endorse its blueprint, which establishes a common operational framework for the Forum;
5. To welcome resolution 2023/6 of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to strengthen collaboration with the African Ministerial Conference on Environment and call on the United Nations Environment Programme and the Economic Commission for Africa to facilitate targeted work and joint meetings of the two ministerial bodies on key environment and development priorities for Africa, including strengthening engagement with legislative organs and institutions to advocate financing for sustainable development, climate action, mobilizing green finance, carbon credits, the circular economy, the blue economy, marine protection and biodiversity conservation, critical minerals, natural capital, addressing negative impacts and reducing environmental risks;
6. To endeavour to institute national and regional strategies to minimize environmental impacts in the extraction and processing of critical mineral resources so as to minimize environmental impacts and contribute to the global goals of mitigating climate change, protecting ecosystems and promoting sustainable development;
7. To call upon member States to consider prioritizing environmental policies that lower environmental degradation risks and to assess the environmental impacts and trade-offs in the mining, processing and refinement of critical minerals as the world transitions to clean energy;
8. To commit ourselves to taking appropriate measures to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework³ through updating or revising national biodiversity strategies and action plans or national targets, and through joint advocacy efforts to ensure that the biodiversity finance gap of \$700 billion per year is closed in full, and that international financial flows to developing countries are increased to at least \$20 billion per year by 2025 and ultimately increased to at least \$100 billion per year;
9. To recall decision 18/3 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment on biodiversity, wildlife and desertification, which established the African group of negotiators on wildlife, and to request the African Union Commission to submit the terms of reference for that group for consideration at the twentieth session of the Conference;
10. To urge member States to ratify, at the earliest feasible date, the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction;⁴
11. To stress the urgent need to implement the *Africa Blue Economy Strategy*⁵ and to request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and other United Nations agencies and regional economic communities to support member States in developing and strengthening implementation of national strategies towards exploiting sustainable, resilient and equitable blue economy potential;

³ Decision 14/4 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, annex.

⁴ A/CONF.232/2023/4.

⁵ African Union–Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources, *Africa Blue Economy Strategy* (Nairobi, 2019).

12. To highlight the importance of implementing the pledge to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use;⁶ and, recalling that African adherents to the pledge are committed to seeking transparency through the development of a Glasgow Declaration accountability framework as a means of driving global progress and promoting greater equity between forest protection standards, to call for resources to be mobilized for its implementation;

13. To recall decision 18/3 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, to appreciate the work of the African group of negotiators and to support the African position on the establishment of a legally binding instrument to address drought during the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, to be held in Riyadh from 2 to 13 December 2024;

14. To call upon the United Nations Environment Programme, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Development Agency, the African Union Commission and other partners, together with member States, to fast-track the implementation of the African Green Stimulus Programme and enhance synergies between the Programme and the African Union Green Recovery Action Plan;

15. To encourage international financial institutions, in particular regional institutions, to support the implementation of the African Green Stimulus Programme and to take it into consideration in their future programming;

16. To take note of the progress made in the implementation of the Africa Environment Partnership Platform and to call on the African Union Development Agency, the secretariat of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and partner institutions to work collectively towards a successful third session of the Africa Environment Partnership Platform;

17. To ensure that ministers of the environment and ministers of finance and economic planning counterparts take action together to fast-track resource mobilization for effective implementation of the Great Green Wall Initiative;

18. To commit ourselves to a common African position so as to advance African priorities and interests in the negotiations of the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework and at the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management;

19. To endorse the establishment of the African group of negotiators on chemicals and waste management, taking into consideration the dimensions of gender and youth;

20. To express our appreciation to the African group of negotiators on plastic pollution for effectively representing Africa at the first and second sessions of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, held from 28 November to 2 December 2022 in Punta del Este, Uruguay, and from 29 May to 2 June 2023 in Paris, respectively;

21. To reaffirm our commitment to actively participating in the sessions of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, so as to advance African interests and priorities;

22. To express our appreciation to the African group in Nairobi for its work in all negotiations during the intersessional period and during the sessions of the United Nations Environment Assembly, as guided by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

23. To reaffirm our commitment to ensuring an effective multilateral approach for addressing climate change through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement,⁷ and reiterate our commitment to their implementation in line with the principles and provisions of the Convention, while emphasizing equitable access to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty;

24. To urge the African group to continue working with the parties and the presidency of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention

⁶ Available at <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20230401054904/https://ukcop26.org/glasgow-leaders-declaration-on-forests-and-land-use/>.

⁷ Decision 1/CP.21 of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, annex.

on Climate Change to reach further decisions that recognize the special needs and circumstances of Africa;

25. To intensify regional and international collaboration to promote a multi-stakeholder approach to the conservation and sustainable management of peatlands in the Congo Basin, in line with the 2018 Brazzaville Declaration, adopted at the third meeting of the partners of the Global Peatlands Initiative;⁸

26. To stress the importance of operationalizing the global goal on adaptation at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of Parties, including adopting decisions on global adaptation targets and indicators to facilitate adaptation action and increase the ability of parties to adapt to adverse impacts of climate change;

27. To urge developed-country parties to enhance their delivery of provisions of climate finance, to demonstrate progress in increasing scale and enhancing access to affordable resources and to deliver on their climate finance commitments, including financing for adaptation, taking into account the conclusion of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that Africa would only require \$86 billion annually for adaptation by 2030;

28. To highlight the importance of establishing the mechanisms needed to ensure that Africa receives its fair share of provisions of support and flows of investments that are reflective of African needs and resources and deliver on African just transition pathways;

29. To emphasize the first global stocktake as one of the key outcomes of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of Parties, offering a critical opportunity for the world to course-correct and address gaps across all elements of climate action, including adaptation, loss and damage, mitigation and response measures, and means of implementation and support, with a particular emphasis on equity and the best available science; while reiterating that the outcome of the global stocktake reflects the special development circumstances of Africa and provides the policy space necessary for Africa to achieve sustainable development and a just transition to low-emission and climate-resilient development;

30. To stress the importance of launching the loss and damage fund at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of Parties through the provision of new and additional financial resources by developed-country parties and the identification of new sources of funding, and to request the transitional committee of the loss and damage fund to be guided by the previous decisions of the Conference of the Parties while defining institutional arrangements, governance and eligibility for the fund;

31. To urge Parties to adopt a decision to facilitate equitable and just transition pathways to low-emission and climate-resilient development in line with article 2 of the Paris Agreement and to adopt a decision on a framework for financing the transitions of all African countries;

32. To congratulate Kenya and the African Union Commission on the upcoming inaugural Africa Climate Summit, which will take place in Nairobi from 4 to 6 September 2023, to take note of the report on its state of preparedness as presented by Kenya, and to encourage all member States to work with the African Union Commission and Kenya to ensure successful outcomes of the Summit;

33. To take note of the ongoing initiatives to reform the multilateral financial system and support the need for Africa to access its fair share of financial resources through a pathway to a new global financial deal, and take into account the special needs and circumstances of Africa;

34. To welcome the initiative of the Congo to organize in Brazzaville the Summit of the Three Basins on the biodiversity, ecosystems and tropical forests of the Amazon, Congo and Borneo-Mekong-South-East Asia basins, in order to constitute, through the union of the three basins, a global alliance on biodiversity, ecosystems and tropical forests, structuring the three ecosystems of global importance that make up 80 per cent of the world's tropical forests and ensuring the vital role they play in regulating the balance of global carbon and for life on earth. The three basins are expected to capture 80 per cent of the financial mobilization announced at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;

35. To reaffirm our commitment to and support for the Climate for Development in Africa initiative, as mandated by the African Union in 2007 and endorsed by the African Ministerial

⁸ Available at

<https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25329/Brazzaville%20D%20c3%a9claration%20FR%20and%20EN.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

Conference on the Environment in 2008, and to welcome the second phase of this initiative to be launched by the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank at the Africa Climate Summit in September 2023, and to call on the Climate for Development in Africa initiative to scale up support for operationalization of the *African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2032)*;⁹

36. To acknowledge with appreciation that the Green Climate Fund has invested \$4.9 billion across 92 projects in Africa, with half going to adaptation, and to urge developed-country parties to provide enhanced climate finance for climate action in the light of the projected needs of developing countries reaching up to \$6 trillion for the pre-2030 period; and to call on developed-country parties to contribute new financial resources, representing progress and the highest possible ambition;

37. To call upon the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa to work with the United Nations Environment Programme, the Economic Commission for Africa and other partners in implementing the decisions of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment on climate action in cities and at the subnational level, including to build up the climate resilience of the urban poor;

38. To urge the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment secretariat to expedite the process of the review of the rules of procedure of the Conference and to report on progress at the twentieth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

39. To call upon the United Nations Environment Assembly at its sixth session to consider adopting a resolution on fostering national action to address environmental challenges through increased cooperation and convergence of action between the United Nations Environment Programme and multilateral environmental agreements to promote cooperation and coherence in, and contributions to, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

40. To request civil society and the private sector in Africa to continue playing a more active role in the sustainable development and protection of the environment of the continent as part of the work of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

We also:

41. Commit ourselves to engaging with the relevant national authorities to ensure sustainable financial contributions from member States to the trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the Environment Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme;

42. Urge member States to support the United Nations Environment Programme through more stable, adequate and predictable core contributions to the trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the Environment Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme, with due consideration given to the voluntary indicative scale of contributions;

43. Stress the need for the United Nations Environment Programme to diversify its donor base;

44. Extend our appreciation to the United Nations Environment Programme and urge its Executive Director to continue to provide support to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

45. Thank Senegal for its presidency of the Conference during the period 2021–2023 and welcome the presidency of Ethiopia for the period 2023–2025;

46. Express our profound appreciation to the African Union Commission, the African Union Development Agency, the African Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Africa and other development partners and institutions for their continued support for the work of the Conference;

47. Mandate the President of the Conference to submit the report of the nineteenth session of the Conference, including the present Addis Ababa declaration on seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa and the annexes thereto, to the African Union Commission for further action by the policy organs of the African Union;

⁹ African Union, *African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2032)* (Nairobi, 2022).

Annex II

Decisions of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its nineteenth session

Decision 19/1: Omnibus decision on seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa

We, African ministers of the environment,

Having met in Addis Ababa on 17 and 18 August 2023 at the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recalling the outcomes of the resumed eighteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment held in Dakar on 15 and 16 September 2022,

Recalling also the outcomes of the seventeenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment held in Durban from 11 to 15 November 2019,

Recognizing the crucial need to take action for environmental sustainability and prosperity in Africa in order to find common solutions to environmental challenges,

Recognizing also the need for member States to develop sustainable and inclusive national development strategies and policies which place environmental protection at the heart of their undertakings,

Underscoring the importance of an enabling international environment for the achievement of African sustainable development imperatives, including the removal of unilateral coercive measures and unfair trade measures directed against the global South, the honouring of commitments by developed countries and the transformation of the global financial architecture and reform of multilateral development banks and international financial institutions to make them fit-for-purpose in supporting sustainable development,

Determined to advance an action-oriented approach that addresses implementation gaps and opportunities in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ its Sustainable Development Goals, and Agenda 2063 of the African Union,²

(a)

The African Forum of Environment Protection Agencies

Recognizing the critical role played by environmental protection agencies, that is, government authorities, institutions or entities entrusted with environmental management, protection, enforcement and compliance in enhancing, protecting and promoting the environment,

Recalling decision 18/1 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, which established the African Forum of Environment Protection Agencies, which brings together heads of environmental protection agencies,

Recognizing that effective implementation of environmental programmes, policies and resolutions adopted at the national, regional and global levels is essential to achieving long-term sustainable development in Africa,

Determined to support the work of the African Forum of Environment Protection Agencies in their critical role of enhancing, protecting and managing the environment,

Decide:

1. To call for the active participation of all relevant stakeholders in the work of the African Forum of Environment Protection Agencies;

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015.

² Africa Union Commission, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want* (Addis Ababa, 2015).

2. To call on African member States to strengthen environmental protection agencies, in strong collaboration with relevant stakeholders;
3. To encourage member States to develop sustainable and inclusive national development strategies and policies which place environmental protection at the heart of their undertakings;
4. To endorse the blueprint that establishes a common operational framework for the African Forum of Environment Protection Agencies to, among other things, enable sharing of knowledge and experiences, enhance the science-policy interface and address technical and operational challenges;
5. To request the United Nations Environment Programme, other United Nations agencies, the African Union Commission and development partners to support and strengthen the capacity of environmental protection agencies in Africa in their efforts in implementing environmental outcomes arising from global and regional forums;
6. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and other partners to support the development and operationalization of the digital platform for the African Forum of Environment Protection Agencies to enhance the science-policy interface in addressing environmental challenges in Africa;
7. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to host the secretariat of the African Forum of Environment Protection Agencies on a temporary basis under the auspices of the secretariat of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

(b)

Environmental aspects of critical minerals in Africa in the clean energy transition

Recognizing that critical, green, or strategic minerals play a crucial role in enabling the transition to a clean and sustainable energy system,

Noting that Africa is home to considerable reserves of the world's critical mineral resources, many of which are crucial for renewable energy and low-carbon technologies needed to meet the global demand,

Aware that the Africa region is a major producer of several critical minerals and rare earth elements that are needed in the transition to clean energy in the world market,

Aware also that the extraction, processing and use of critical minerals involve significant environmental and social impacts, such as degradation of ecosystems, pollution and conflicts with local communities, but also offer opportunities for lowering emissions, increasing socioeconomic growth and enhancing the climate and economic resilience of countries,

Recognizing that these critical resources and other minerals, which are the cultural and natural heritage of sovereign African countries, are key to the realization of African sustainable development imperatives and shall be utilized for the benefit of our people in accordance with the right to development of African countries, without policy prescriptions by external actors;

Recognizing also that the critical mineral wealth of Africa presents an opportunity for the continent to enhance environmental sustainability while promoting a just transition to clean and renewable energy and respecting the right of each country to its own sustainable development pathways, and also recognizing the need for a more equitable international order,

Taking note of resolution 4/19 of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme on mineral resource governance, resolution 5/12 on environmental aspects of minerals and metals management, and the United Nations framework on a just transition for critical energy transition minerals as essential elements of policy guidance for the energy transition,

Determined to pursue the development and safeguarding of the critical mineral resources of Africa to achieve African sustainable development imperatives by implementing a range of strategic measures while actively promoting sustainable practices within the mining sector;

Decide:

1. To encourage member States to assess the environmental impacts of critical resource extraction, processing and use, especially in fragile environments, through project-level environmental impact assessments and sector-level strategic environmental assessments;

2. To support the development, led by the African Development Bank, of the African critical minerals strategy on the use of critical minerals in low-carbon energy generation and their distribution and use in mobility or electric vehicles, and to call for incorporation of environmental sustainability aspects in the strategy;
3. To request the member States, with the support of the African Union Commission, United Nations Environment Programme, other United Nations agencies and development partners, to develop regional and national collaborative and cooperative policies that integrate sectoral opportunities, including in the environment sector, to benefit from the values of critical minerals for the sustainable development of Africa;
4. To urge member States to strengthen environmental legislation, regulation, institutions, policies and harmonized environmental and social standards so as to minimize the impacts of exploration, extraction and processing of minerals and closure of mines on the environment, on air, land and water sources, on biodiversity and on local communities;
5. To urge member States to forge strong collaborations and synergies with the ministries responsible for the environment, mines and energy, ministries of finance and economic planning and ministries of trade and industry, through a whole of government and society approach, in order to ensure that environmental safeguards are adhered to throughout the value chain for mining critical minerals that are key to the energy transition;
6. To urge member States to give priority to local processing of critical minerals and strengthen regional and subregional cooperation in the context of technical and human capacity-building;
7. To call upon the improvement of the regional and national investment climate, allowing for the emergence of critical mineral and energy transition sectors;
8. To urge member States to enhance collaboration to promote the sustainable extraction, processing and use of critical and strategic minerals, and to explore ways of creating better representation and collaboration of the sellers of critical minerals in Africa and other developing-country regions;
9. To welcome the initiative taken by the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia to produce electric batteries and the economic opportunity created by processing the minerals in the two countries, and to encourage further development of products higher in the value chain in the continent through industrial collaborations;
10. To encourage member States to develop appropriate responses to global changes and measures by other countries and regions that affect the demand, price and bargaining power of member States in the global economy, including through improved regional cooperation, to develop industrial capabilities and policies, intraregional trade and strengthened African voices in global economic decision-making forums;
11. To urge member States and the private sector to invest in innovation, research and technological development in the critical minerals subsectors of electric vehicles, clean electricity, technology and their various applications;
12. To request the United Nations Environment Programme to support African countries on technical assistance in the areas of tailings management, artisanal mining and the rehabilitation of mining sites, the comprehensive assessment of instruments applicable to the management of metals and minerals, the creation of a global sand observatory, scientific research and the establishment of a peer review mechanism;
13. To call upon member States to advance a multilateral approach that promotes circularity across value chains and optimizes recovery and recycling, while enhancing ecosystem restoration, pollution reduction and control in critical mineral resource extraction and processing, so as to minimize environmental impacts and contribute to global goals of mitigating climate change, protecting ecosystems and promoting sustainable development;

(c)

Implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in Africa

Recalling decision EX.CL/Dec.741(XXII) of the twenty-second session of the African Union Executive Council, which established the African group of negotiators on biodiversity to articulate

African perspectives, priorities and common positions during all negotiations of the open-ended working group of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and welcoming the progressive work achieved by the group,

Recalling also paragraph 17 of decision 17/1 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, in which the Conference endorsed the establishment of a core group to facilitate coordination of the African group of negotiators in developing a common regional position to strengthen the voice of Africa and the mandate for the African group of negotiators on biodiversity,

Recognizing that the African group of negotiators on biodiversity, as mandated by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, successfully led the region in negotiations and in engagement with other parties on the development of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,³

Acknowledging that most priorities that were advanced by Africa were successfully included in the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to be achieved by 2030,

Recognizing that the Global Environment Facility was requested to establish, as soon as possible, a special trust fund to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, complementing other existing support,

Welcoming the African Union Commission-led high-level conference on the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, held in Addis Ababa from 30 May to 2 June 2023,

Determined to make concerted efforts to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework as a contribution to conserving the biodiversity of Africa,

Decide:

1. To appreciate the work of the African group of negotiators on biodiversity, which successfully advanced African interests and priorities in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
2. To urge member States and subregions to take appropriate measures to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework through the revision or updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and monitoring frameworks, including national targets as appropriate, and apply a whole of government and whole of society approach;
3. To request the African group of negotiators on biodiversity to continue engaging in the intersessional work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and to develop common positions on the issues under discussion, such as resource mobilization, development of indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the implementation and capacity-building plans of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and digital sequencing information on genetic resources, with a view to developing consensus among African countries;
4. To note that the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its fifteenth session established a mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer among parties to support the implementation of the Convention and its protocols and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The mechanism will comprise a network of regional and subregional support centres, to be coordinated by a global coordination entity;
5. To encourage member States to support their entities and organizations that wish to host a regional or subregional support centre to support implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
6. To encourage member States to ratify the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction;⁴
7. To request the African informal biodiversity support partners, comprising the African Union Commission, African Union Development Agency, African Development Bank, United Nations Environment Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, African Wildlife Foundation, World Wide Fund for Nature and International Union for the Conservation of Nature to

³ Decision 14/4 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, annex.

⁴ A/CONF.232/2023/4.

continue providing technical and financial support to the African group of negotiators on biodiversity during the intersessional meetings and sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;

8. To request the African Union Development Agency to continue to support the implementation plan and capacity-building action plan of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress;

9. To request the African Union Commission, African Development Bank, United Nations Environment Programme, Economic Commission for Africa, United Nations Development Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and other partners, civil society organizations and the private sector to support African countries in mobilizing domestic and international resources to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;

10. To request the African Union Commission, African Union Development Agency, United Nations Environment Programme and other development partners to support African countries in strengthening regional data and information capacity on biodiversity, including on undertaking digital sequencing of genetic resources, access to information for research and development, value addition, and innovations that support the sustainable use of biodiversity resources;

11. To encourage representation of African experts in the development of Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessments and to encourage member State experts to ensure adequate representation of data from the African region in Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services assessments.

(d)

Provisional agenda, dates and venue of the twentieth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Recalling the first ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, at which the Conference decided to institutionalize the Conference and agreed to meet once every two years,

Recalling also decision 2/1 of the Conference, in which the Conference decided that future sessions of the Conference could be held outside Nairobi if an appropriate offer was made by an African Government,

Recognizing the importance of continued action in seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges and the important role the Conference plays in delivering the environmental dimensions of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda⁵ in the region,

Emphasizing that strengthening implementation of decisions of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment requires deliberate steps and action,

Taking note of the Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment as constituted through the rules of procedure,

Noting that Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia were elected to the Bureau,

Decide:

1. To request the member States of the North Africa subregion to continue consultations regarding the representation of the subregion in the Bureau and hosting arrangements for the twentieth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and report back to the consultation meeting of the Conference that will be held in the margins of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, in December 2023;

2. To hold the twentieth ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment on dates to be determined by the Bureau in consultation with the host country;

⁵ General Assembly resolution 69/113 of 27 July 2015, annex.

3. To request the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, to decide on the format and agenda of the twentieth ordinary session;
4. To invite other member States to make offers in the event that the country that has offered to do so finds itself unable to host the twentieth session.

Decision 19/2: The participation of Africa in in the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment

We, African ministers of the environment,

Having met in Addis Ababa, on 17 and 18 August 2023, at the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Welcoming resolution 5/14 of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, in which the Assembly mandated the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment,

Recalling decision 18/2 of the eighteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held in Dakar on 15 and 16 September 2022, in which member States were urged to prepare and actively participate in the processes of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, so as to advance the interests of Africa in the negotiations,

Recalling also the ninth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held online on 15 and 17 February 2022, at which the Conference noted that Africa must work towards the adoption of a new global approach to the problem of plastic pollution, in accordance with the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and in the light of national circumstances,

Affirming the urgent need to strengthen global coordination, cooperation and governance to take immediate action towards ending plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, and to avoid harm from plastic pollution to human health and ecosystems and the activities dependent on them,

Cognizant of the right of African countries to development, and gaps between developing and developed countries in terms of historical responsibility with regard to legacy pollution, scientific knowledge, capacity, technological advances, and technical and financial support in the fight against plastic pollution,

Expressing appreciation of decision 18/2 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its resumed eighteenth session, held in Dakar on 15 and 16 September 2022, in which the African group of negotiators on plastic pollution was established,

Acknowledging the efforts made by the African group of negotiators on plastic pollution to articulate African priorities at the regional meetings held in Naivasha, Kenya, from 7 to 10 November 2022 and in Accra from 16 to 18 May 2023, with a view to strengthening the continent's position and concretizing its negotiation strategy for the first and second sessions of the intergovernmental negotiating committee, held from 28 November to 2 December 2022 in Punta del Este, Uruguay, and from 29 May to 2 June 2023 in Paris, respectively,

Welcoming the Just Transition Initiative for an effective global instrument to end plastic pollution, led by Kenya and South Africa, and designed to incorporate issues of justice, equity and inclusivity for the effective implementation of the future instrument,

Determined to have a unified voice and a common African position in the process led by the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment,

Decide:

1. To urge member States to scale up measures to address plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, that address the full life cycle approach of plastics, as well as the development of national action plans, while ensuring a just and inclusive transition;
2. Also to urge member States to promote regional and international cooperative measures to reduce and eventually eliminate the impacts of plastic pollution on health, socioeconomic development and the environment, taking into consideration national capacities and priorities;
3. Further to urge member States to carry out reforms that lead to legislative, policy and regulatory actions that protect health and the environment, while ensuring coherence and coordination with existing regional and international instruments;

4. To urge member States to involve civil society in their important role of awareness-raising, capacity-building and providing technical assistance;
5. Also to urge member States to promote actions that will stimulate private sector investments in circular economy approaches along the plastics value chain, so as to contribute to combating plastic pollution, while ensuring a just transition for those affected by the economic transformation;
6. To encourage coherent and coordinated actions by all stakeholders in the prevention and reduction of plastic pollution;
7. To urge member States and encourage other stakeholders to invest in research, innovation and sharing of knowledge of technological developments in the production of alternatives to plastics;
8. Also to urge member States to prepare and actively participate in the regional consultations and the forthcoming sessions of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, so as to advance the interests and priorities of Africa;
9. To request the African group of negotiators on plastic pollution to finalize the operational coordination modalities of the group and to continue strengthening the African common position in the intergovernmental negotiation process, while taking into account the key policy messages attached to the present decision;
10. Also to request the African group of negotiators on plastic pollution to ensure the inclusion of commitments to the provision to African countries by developed countries of adequate and predictable finance and environmentally sound technology transfer;
11. To support the position of Africa of hosting the secretariat of the proposed international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, at the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi and to request other member States to support this position;
12. To request the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the regional economic communities and other partners to support the African group of negotiators on plastic pollution in the intergovernmental negotiation process by providing technical and financial support;
13. To request United Nations entities and their secretariats and other conventions relating to the marine environment, in particular the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region and the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region, to mobilize all their partners in order to set up an African alliance in the fight against plastic pollution, for the sharing of expertise, practical solutions, mobilization of partners, and educational and awareness-raising measures to combat plastic pollution;
14. To mandate the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to submit and convey this decision to the African Union structures.

Appendix to decision 19/2

African key policy messages on the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment

Objectives of the future instrument

1. We call for the development of an ambitious international legally binding instrument that seeks to end plastic pollution in all environments, brings plastic production and consumption to sustainable levels and achieves a safe circular economy protective of human health, the climate system and biodiversity throughout the life cycle of plastics.

A. Scope

2. The scope of the future instrument should clearly reflect the provisions of resolution 5/14 of the United Nations Environment Assembly, to end plastic pollution across the full life cycle of all plastics and address its effects on human health and the environment, including in the marine environment.

3. We call for a global instrument that eliminates the most harmful and high-risk plastic categories, including problematic polymers, chemicals of concern, products and applications, and brings overall plastic production to sustainable levels.

4. We support sustainable production and consumption and the environmentally sound management of plastic waste, which also addresses existing plastic pollution.

B. Principles

5. We support the application of the Rio Principles, including the polluter pays and precautionary principles and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and emphasize the importance of operationalizing those principles throughout the provisions of the instrument.

6. In addition, the instrument should promote the human right to health and to a clean and healthy environment for current and future generations.

C. Core obligations and control measures

7. We recognize that ending plastic pollution will require a comprehensive life cycle approach, from polymer production and product design to waste prevention and management.

8. We reaffirm our commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 12 and commit ourselves to supporting measures for the sustainable production and consumption of primary plastic polymers and eliminating specific problematic polymers, chemicals, products and applications of concern.

9. We reaffirm our commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 3 and commit ourselves to promoting sustainable product design by eliminating problematic polymers, chemicals, products and applications of concern in accordance with sustainability criteria and standards to be agreed upon.

10. We call for measures for full transparency and information disclosure along the entire plastic value chain.

11. We call for the environmentally sound management of plastic waste, in line with the waste hierarchy, by prioritizing prevention and reuse before recycling, recovery and disposal.

12. We call for appropriate and environmentally sound technology transfer.

13. We call for extended producer responsibility schemes to support prevention, reuse and waste management.

14. We call for a just transition to facilitate the participation of workers under informal and cooperative settings, including waste pickers.

D. Means of implementation

15. We call for new, predictable, additional, sustainable and adequate financing for the implementation of the instrument, including mandatory contributions from the chemical and petrochemical industry, including the dominant international producers, towards the prevention and remediation of the resulting pollution, leakage and legacy pollution.
16. We stress the need to ensure adequate means of implementation for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to meet their obligations and commitments under the new instrument, via a dedicated and accessible multilateral fund established for that purpose that covers enabling activities and incremental costs of compliance, with provisions to ensure the environmentally sound management of waste, technology transfer, development and deployment, and also technical assistance and capacity-building throughout the full life cycle.
17. We commit ourselves to an adaptive framework with mechanisms to strengthen commitments and control measures over time, including harnessing synergies within existing multilateral environmental agreements.

E. Other measures

18. We advocate the development of a harmonized system for monitoring and reporting progress, covering each stage of the life cycle of plastics, to inform policies and priorities and facilitate the assessment of the implementation and effectiveness of the instrument.
19. We call for a dedicated scientific, technical and socioeconomic assessment body, operating under the authority of the parties. The scientific body should ensure the meaningful participation of developing-country experts.
20. We call for the hosting of the final Diplomatic Conference of the Plenipotentiaries at a venue on the African continent.

Decision 19/3: Preparations by Africa for the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management

We, African ministers of the environment,

Having met in Addis Ababa on 17 and 18 August 2023 at the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recalling the outcomes of the resumed eighteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held in Dakar on 15 and 16 September 2022,

Welcoming the quadripartite alliance of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the World Organization for Animal Health and the United Nations Environment Programme, to implement the One Health approach to foster cooperation across major sectors and tackle human, animal and ecosystem health challenges,

Welcoming also the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which, among other things, under target 7 provides for the reduction of pollution risks and the negative impact of pollution from all sources, by 2030, to levels that are not harmful to biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, considering cumulative effects, including reducing excess nutrients lost to the environment by at least half, including through more efficient nutrient cycling and use; and the reduction of the overall risk from pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals by at least half, including through integrated pest management, based on science, taking into account food security and livelihoods; and preventing, reducing and working towards eliminating plastic pollution,

Welcoming further resolution WHA76.17 on the impact of chemicals, waste and pollution on human health adopted at the seventy-sixth World Health Assembly,

Recognizing that chemicals and waste pollution are a threat to the health of the population of Africa and economic development, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services,

Acknowledging that sound management of chemicals and waste is crucial for the protection of the environment, ecosystems and human health, promoting achievement of sustainable development goals and Agenda 2063 of the African Union,¹

Recognizing the right of African countries to development and the gaps between developing and developed countries in terms of historic responsibility with regards to legacy pollution, and the importance of scientific knowledge, capacity, technological advancement, and technical and financial support in the sound management of chemicals and waste,

Recognizing also the multi-stakeholder and multisectoral nature of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework,

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation to ensure the necessary means of implementation, including financial and technical support, technology transfer and capacity-building in the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework,

Commending initiatives taken by member States in mainstreaming the sound management of chemicals and waste in their national development plans and strategies,

Recognizing the specificity of African island States that suffer in an extreme way from the impact of the various current environmental crises, including climate change, loss of biodiversity, and chemical and plastic pollution,

Determined to have a unified African voice and adopt a common position in the negotiation of the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework as well as other chemical and waste-related multilateral environmental agreements,

Acknowledging that the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management in 2015 marked a significant milestone by initiating action for the future strategy and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020,

Acknowledging also that the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management in 2015 adopted a resolution on highly hazardous pesticides,

Acknowledging further that the African regional consultation on the beyond 2020 process at the resumed fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and sound

¹ Africa Union Commission, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want* (Addis Ababa, 2015).

management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 in Nairobi presented a conference room paper requesting the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fifth session to issue a resolution on the establishment of a global alliance on highly hazardous pesticides,

Acknowledging that the African regional consultation at the resumed fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 held in Nairobi presented a conference room paper requesting the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fifth session to issue a resolution on the development of an international code of conduct on chemicals and waste management,

Affirming the urgent need for a strong and ambitious beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework based on the independent impact evaluation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management,

Determined to adopt a strong, political high-level declaration in Bonn, Germany, at the fifth session of the International Conference for Chemicals Management and an ambitious new framework instrument for chemicals and waste, and for the Conference to consider African priorities accordingly.

Decide:

1. To endorse the African position and vision on the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework as presented in the annex to the present decision;
2. To urge member States to support the development of an international code of conduct on chemicals and waste management under the auspices of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, with support from and engagement with governments, the private sector and civil society;
3. Also to urge member States to support the establishment of a global alliance on highly hazardous pesticides under the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework instrument to mobilize and coordinate global action by the range of stakeholders to achieve a global phase-out of the said pesticides and the adoption of sustainable alternatives;
4. Further to urge member States to support the establishment of a fund based on a globally coordinated tax of 0.05 per cent on the sale of base chemicals produced by major chemical producers from developed countries as a means to operationalize industry involvement of the integrated approach to finance the sound management of chemicals and waste under the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework;
5. To call for a dedicated global financial mechanism for the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework and for such a mechanism to be aligned with the priorities of African countries, that is, to include provisions for adequate, predictable finance, capacity-building and technical assistance;
6. To establish the African group of negotiators on chemicals and waste management, with a view to coordinating African interests in the beyond 2020 framework;
7. To mandate the African group of negotiators on chemicals and waste management to develop a coordination mechanism and operational modalities, strengthen the capacity of negotiators and regularly update the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment on key African common positions and understanding in the negotiation process;
8. To urge member States to actively participate in the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management to review the progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and to make recommendations for the future of chemical safety and waste management;
9. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and other partners to support the African group of negotiators on chemicals management in their work of articulating a common position for Africa on chemicals and waste management;
10. To call for a more inclusive and participatory process of member States and stakeholders in the development of the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework;
11. To encourage the private sector and civil society in Africa to actively participate and engage in chemicals and waste management.

Appendix to decision 19/3

African regional key policy messages on the development of the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework

African position on strategic objectives, targets, governance, financing and mechanisms to support implementation based on the single consolidated document of the co-chairs of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020

1. On strategic objectives and targets, the African region:
 - (a) Declares its commitment to and interest in participating constructively in the strategic objectives and targets of the beyond 2020 chemicals and waste framework;
 - (b) Supports the development of goals and objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound;
 - (c) Stresses that targets should be action-oriented to reduce harm to human health and the environment in the countries of the region;
 - (d) Stresses that targets addressing emerging policy issues and issues of concern should be cross-cutting and not only limited to strategic objectives (issues of concern). Of particular importance to Africa are the following emerging policy issues and issues of concern: (i) highly hazardous pesticides, (ii) hazardous chemicals in electronics and electrical appliances, (iii) pharmaceutical waste, (iv) lead in paint and (v) chemicals in products;
 - (e) Stresses that specific objectives should have linkages to and be aligned with targets of other frameworks, such as those under the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹ and more importantly Agenda 2063 of the African Union, for synergetic implementation in the African regional context.
2. Africa supports the efforts to raise awareness of gender aspects in the sound management of chemicals and waste, to increase the participation of women's organizations and gender experts in the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, and to ensure that gender equality is an integral part of the implementation of the beyond 2020 framework, including secretariat activities.
3. The African regional priorities on strategic objectives and targets are:
 - (a) The establishment of a global alliance on highly hazardous pesticides to encourage partnerships and actions on highly hazardous pesticides;
 - (b) The development of an international code of conduct on chemicals and waste management through their life cycle;
 - (c) The establishment of poison control and information centres, particularly in relation to an information provision role;
 - (d) The promotion of integrated subregional, regional and national systems to prevent, prepare and respond to chemical accidents and emergencies, with relevant stakeholders taking full responsibility;
 - (e) The promotion of harmonized pesticide registration systems;
 - (f) The promotion of gender mainstreaming embedded in chemicals and waste policies, legislation and activities;
 - (g) The promotion of access to alternatives to dangerous substances through establishment of regional information centres for agroecological alternatives to chemical pesticides;
 - (h) Development and implementation of policies and regulations for the environmentally sound management of wastes at the national and regional levels;

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015.

- (i) Development of capacity to identify, assess, prioritize, manage and remediate contaminated sites;
- (j) Chemical risk assessment through use of best practices at national and regional levels;
- (k) Development and dissemination of national chemical profiles;
- (l) Implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;
- (m) The establishment of national databases and subregional, regional and international databases for sharing information on hazards, risks, training material, research, monitoring, etc.;
- (n) Cross-border surveillance for curbing illegal trafficking of chemicals and waste;
- (o) Mainstreaming of chemicals and waste management into national development plans;
- (p) Establishment of subregional, regional and national analytical laboratory capacity for identification and monitoring of toxic substances;
- (q) Development of capacity to monitor exposure of vulnerable populations (women, children, elderly people and people living with disabilities) to hazardous chemicals for early warning;
- (r) Improved risk communication to all exposed populations and access to a clearing house of information and materials for awareness-raising;
- (s) The establishment of subregional and regional surveillance and enforcement task forces and teams.

4. On financial considerations, the African region:

- (a) Underscores the importance of robust private sector engagement in the chemicals and waste management process, particularly for the financial mechanism at the global level, as a means for sustainable sound management of chemicals and waste. The African region proposes the creation of a road map for private sector participation, involvement and engagement through direct financial and in-kind contributions to the sound management of chemicals and waste. The African region proposes that the private sector set aside funds representing 0.05 per cent of their turnover towards establishing a fund for the sound management of chemicals and waste;
- (b) Encourages continued technology transfer and financial support, expertise sharing and capacity-building, including concrete and time-bound actions on issues of concern and emerging policy issues;
- (c) Is aware that more resources are needed. The sound management of chemicals and wastes requires adequate, predictable and sustainable financial mechanisms internationally and nationally to enable the implementation of activities of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the beyond 2020 chemicals and waste framework;
- (d) Believes that the voluntary nature of the Strategic Approach has to be blended with mandatory support to enable implementation of initiatives of the Strategic Approach and the beyond 2020 framework;
- (e) Calls for predictability and adequacy of financial resources to support enabling activities to be ensured, given the fact that the Quick Start Programme has come to an end;
- (f) Stresses that the issue of means of implementation remains vital for the region in the beyond 2020 instrument, and the African region would like to see further discussion, particularly on the financial mechanism and technical support, as well as the engagement of all stakeholders, especially the chemicals industry, in resourcing the implementation of the beyond 2020 instrument, since the industry is the primary benefactor of the profits borne from chemicals development and sales, and in line with the polluter pays principle as set out in the 1992 Rio Declaration.²

5. African regional priorities on financial considerations are:

- (a) The establishment of global and national cost recovery policies and systems;
- (b) Technology transfer and technical cooperation to developing countries;

² A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I).

- (c) Support for the following measures:
- (i) African Governments to implement cost recovery mechanisms in national legislation to leverage sustainable financial resources for national chemicals management systems;
 - (ii) The private sector, including the chemicals industry, to give priority to partnerships within the context of the integrated approach to financing the sound management of chemicals and waste to help provide financial, technical and in-kind resources for strengthening initiatives and for developing new initiatives with stakeholders for the effective implementation of the Strategic Approach;
 - (iii) The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the World Health Assembly of the World Health Organization to request countries of the African region to take up and expedite action at the national level for the mainstreaming of chemicals into their national development plan strategies, with a gender-sensitive focus;
 - (iv) African Governments to allocate at least 1 per cent of their gross domestic product to chemicals management;
 - (v) African Governments to adopt national or regional instruments to cover the cost of sound chemicals management, including economic instruments to internalize the external costs of chemicals;
 - (vi) The African regional group to look inwards for financial partners and donors, such as the African Development Bank, West African Development Bank, East African Development Bank, endowment funds and others, to fund Strategic Approach projects of the African region;

(d) Establishment of an adequate, predictable, and sustainable financial mechanism to support the implementation of the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework. The evaluation of the Strategic Approach and the Global Chemicals Outlook II³ made it clear that limited availability of resources contributed to limited success;

(e) Realizing the objectives and goals of the new approach would depend on sufficient levels of financing and resources. Its success would therefore require secure and sustainable funding through Governments mainstreaming the new objectives and activities into national development plans with associated budgets; the introduction of appropriate economic instruments based on the polluter pays principle; and donors continuing to deliver on external finance commitments;

(f) Manufacturers of chemicals may need to contribute towards providing the much-needed sustainable financial resources to enable the implementation of Strategic Approach activities based on global extended producer responsibility and polluter pays principles.

6. On governance, the African region:

(a) Has noted that there are inadequate structures to enable Strategic Approach decisions to be taken to the highest level of the United Nations General Assembly, leading to inadequate political will in some of our countries towards implementation of the same. This has further resulted in the allocation of insufficient financial resources towards the sound management of chemicals and waste in our countries;

(b) Considers that continued cooperation among the agencies of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals is central to the sound management of chemicals and wastes;

(c) Recognizes that the multisectoral and multi-stakeholder nature of the Strategic Approach has to be sustained, as well as ensuring the participation of women, gender experts, youth and Indigenous peoples;

(d) Reiterates the request to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Director-General of the World Health Organization to provide human and other

³ United Nations Environment Programme, *Global Chemicals Outlook II: From Legacies to Innovative Solutions – Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (Nairobi, 2019).

resources to fully staff the Strategic Approach secretariat, consistent with the responsibilities outlined in paragraph 29 of the overarching policy strategy of the Strategic Approach;⁴

(e) Calls for greater capacity and increased representation of the health, agriculture, finance and industrial sectors within government, and for national and regional focal points to support efforts to mainstream the sound management of chemicals and waste across government departments. Within non-governmental stakeholders, continued efforts are required to communicate with and reach out to downstream businesses and industries, as well as civil society more broadly, to further support the multisectoral, multi-stakeholder and gender mainstreaming approach;

(f) Is convinced that the success of the beyond 2020 global chemicals and waste framework rests on national Governments having the political will to legislate for the sound management of chemicals and waste, and to ensure that such legislation is fully implemented;

(g) Believes that beyond 2020 the involvement of critical sectors such as health, agriculture and labour in the Strategic Approach process should be enhanced at the regional, national and international levels.

7. On mechanisms to support implementation, the African region:

(a) Looks forward to an effective science-policy interface framework for sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, through developing efficient multisectoral and transparent action;

(b) Supports the fact that knowledge transfer between other multilateral environmental agreements and the Strategic Approach has to continue, and that the role of the secretariat as a clearing house has to be strengthened;

(c) Further supports that technical guidance by regional bodies such as the regional centres under the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal has to continue and be supported;

(d) Agrees to establish the African group of negotiators on chemicals and waste, operationalized through the oversight role of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

(e) Supports the need for gender mainstreaming in all relevant aspects of Strategic Approach and beyond 2020 work;

(f) Wants to see a strengthened science-policy interface on chemicals and waste management across governance levels;

(g) Is of the view that the private sector needs to own up and do more with regards to the environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste. We therefore suggest that the future framework replacing the Strategic Approach could play an active role in the application of the extended producer responsibility principle to the chemical industry and more transparency on information related to products;

(h) Believes that the generation of scientific local data is needed for informed and relevant subregional, regional and national policy actions. To facilitate addressing the challenge mentioned above, strengthening international cooperation to facilitate the transfer of expertise, technologies and scientific data to implement the Strategic Approach, as well as exchange good practices, is key;

(i) Is of the view that the Strategic Approach needs to find a mechanism of ensuring that once sound scientific evidence has been presented for the nomination of an emerging issue, the emerging issue being nominated is not downplayed or removed from the list, but rather all efforts continue to be made to keep the issue on the list and to take relevant subsequent action to address the challenges posed by the nominated emerging issue;

8. On the high-level declaration, the African region would like the following points to be included in the high-level declaration:

(a) The African region calls for chemicals and waste to be included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and calls upon the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fifth session to consider a clear resolution on the future of the Strategic Approach beyond 2020;

⁴ Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, "Overarching policy strategy". Available at www.saicm.org/Portals/12/Documents/Overarching_Policy_Strategy.pdf.

(b) There is a need to find a clear and transparent mechanism within the Strategic Approach to ensure accountability by all stakeholders, including by the chemical industry, and accountability at the highest political level of each country.

Decision 19/4: Engagement of Africa at the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

We, African ministers of the environment,

Having met in Addis Ababa, on 17 and 18 August 2023, at the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Noting with appreciation the role of the African presidency of the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, represented by Morocco, in leading and advancing the work towards that session,

Recalling the seventeenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held in Durban, South Africa, from 11 to 15 November 2019, and the Durban Declaration on Taking Action for Environmental Sustainability and Prosperity in Africa,¹ which acknowledged the centrality of the Conference in formulating African positions on all matters related to the environment, including at the United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recalling also the first part of the eighteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held online on 16 September 2021, and its key policy messages on the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly,² which noted the crucial role played by the United Nations Environment Programme and its Assembly as the global authority on the environment, in advocating and catalysing actions to protect the environment and natural resources,

Noting the theme of the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, “Effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution”,

Recalling resolution 2/2 of the United Nations Environment Assembly, on the role and functions of the regional forums of ministers of the environment and environmental authorities, to support and to facilitate convening and strengthening of the existing regional forums of ministers of the environment and environmental authorities,

Decide:

1. To urge member States to promote cooperation and coherence in, and contributions to, implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development³ and Agenda 2063 of the African Union,⁴ by strengthening convergence of actions and dialogue on common strategies and sharing of experience of multilateral actions to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution at local, national, regional and global levels;
2. To urge member States to commence, at the earliest possible time, discussions and deliberations on environmental issues of priority to Africa, with a view to presenting them to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its sixth session;
3. To request the African group in Nairobi in preparing for the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, to formulate appropriate draft resolutions and contribute to the draft ministerial declaration to be negotiated at the session, taking into consideration, among other matters, means of implementation and the Rio Principles, including, in particular, the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities;
4. To request the African group in Nairobi to continue discussion on issues of common interest to Africa in the negotiations of the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;
5. To encourage member States to participate actively in the Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its sixth session, to discuss and advance issues of national and common interest to Africa;
6. To encourage coordination, collaboration and linkages between the African groups of negotiators, the African diplomatic corps and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

¹ AMCEN/17/9, annex I.

² AMCEN/18(I)/8, appendix I to annex I.

³ General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015.

⁴ Africa Union Commission, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want* (Addis Ababa, 2015).

in developing key Africa-sponsored resolutions to be presented to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its sixth session;

7. To call upon the United Nations Environment Assembly at the sixth session to strengthen the engagement of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the United Nations Environment Programme and multilateral environmental agreements in promoting cooperation and coherence in, and contributions to, fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

8. To request the African group in Nairobi to support, together with like-minded member States, adoption of a resolution at the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly on fostering national action to address environmental challenges through increased cooperation between the United Nations Environment Assembly, the United Nations Environment Programme and multilateral environmental agreements;

9. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to continue the programme on environmental diplomacy to enhance coherence and strengthen engagement of the African group, through the African Permanent Missions accredited to the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi and the United Nations Environment Programme Liaison Office in Addis Ababa, with the aim of raising the voice of Africa and strengthening the engagement of African diplomats in regional and global environmental negotiations and policies;

10. Also to request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to mobilize resources in support of the implementation of decisions and resolutions adopted by regional environmental ministerial forums, when such support is needed and requested;

11. Further to request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to mobilize technical and financial resources to support regional groups and networks of negotiators on specific issues relating to environmental multilateral agreements;

12. To request the African group in Nairobi to support the adoption of a resolution on strengthening the catalytic role and viability of regional forums of ministers of the environment and environmental authorities and the regional offices of the United Nations Environment Programme in achieving multilateral cooperation in tackling environmental challenges;

13. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to prepare a report on the role and viability of regional environmental forums as catalytic tools for international cooperation in tackling environmental challenges, identifying key partners and stakeholders, and to present said report to the United Nations Environmental Assembly at its next session.

Decision 19/5: Climate change

We, the African Ministers for the Environment,

Having met in Addis Ababa on 17 and 18 August 2023 at the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Expressing appreciation to the Government of Senegal for its achievements as President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in providing political direction and maintaining the unity of Africa in pursuit of its priority interest in combatting climate change at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

Expressing appreciation to Kenya for coordinating the work of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change and for the outstanding achievements in providing political direction and maintaining African unity; and acknowledging the utmost commitment of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change in providing political oversight and guidance in facilitating Africa to be stronger and speaking with one voice in the global climate change negotiations,

Congratulating and expressing appreciation to Egypt for hosting a successful twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and delivering critical decisions to advance climate action and implementation at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties,

Expressing our appreciation to the African Group of Negotiators, led by Zambia, for representing the interests of Africa in the climate change negotiations at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties, and continuing to represent the interests of Africa and to advance the interests of African countries at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, and endorsing the African common position for the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

Taking note of the progress made in development of the governance document for the African group of negotiators, which will enhance the operations of the African group of negotiators, and urging the group to expedite the process with a view to having the governance document adopted at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties in November 2023,

Welcoming the leadership of Kenya in making preparations for and hosting the Africa Climate Summit and the Africa Climate Week and pledging our support for a successful summit that delivers solutions for addressing the compounded global challenges,

Congratulating the United Arab Emirates on the upcoming presidency of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; welcoming Sultan Al Jaber as the President-designate of the session and committing to supporting the United Arab Emirates towards a session of the Conference of the Parties that delivers ambitious and balanced outcomes that reflect the priorities of developing countries, and in particular African countries,

*Stressing the importance of science for effective climate action and the findings of international scientific bodies, including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the World Meteorological Organization regional *Report on the State of the Climate in Africa 2021*,¹ which highlights that the African continent is facing unprecedented pressure owing to various extreme weather events and slow-onset events caused by climate change,*

Welcoming the Working Group II contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,² which emphasizes that climate change impacts and risks are becoming increasingly complex and more difficult to manage and that multiple climate hazards will occur simultaneously, and multiple climatic and non-climatic risks will interact, resulting in compounding overall risk and risks cascading across sectors and regions,

Welcoming and pledging our support for the newly elected Bureau of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including the Chair and Vice-Chair, and affirming our commitment to working with the Panel to address the data and evidence gaps of climate impacts in Africa,

¹ World Meteorological Organization, *State of the Climate in Africa 2021* (Geneva, 2022).

² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2022).

Recognizing the important role of forests in Africa, in particular the Congo Basin rainforest, in regulating global climate change,

Affirming our commitment to implement the Paris Agreement³ and enhance the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by taking ambitious and balanced action on mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation, based on scientific recommendations and in line with the agreed principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities, through just transition pathways,

Recalling decision Assembly/AU/853 (XXXVI) of the thirty-sixth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in February 2023, on the report of the Committee of Heads of States and Government on Climate Change,

Decide:

1. To welcome the decisions of the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the fourth Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement, which advanced the implementation of the Paris Agreement, including decisions that recognize the special needs of the African continent, and urges the African group to continue to work with parties and the incoming presidency of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to reach further decisions that recognize the special needs and circumstances of Africa;
2. To stress the need for the urgent delivery of climate finance commitments at scale by developed-country parties under the Convention and the Paris Agreement, as well as the need for grant-based resources for African countries, particularly for implementing adaptation action;
3. To call for the swift operationalization of the global goal on adaptation, by urging parties to work on delivering substantive outcomes at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties in line with the conclusion of the Glasgow-Sharm-el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation;
4. To stress the importance of the global goal on adaptation reaching decisions on adaptation targets and indicators to facilitate adaptation action and increase the ability of parties to adapt to adverse impacts of climate change;
5. To encourage African States to cooperate in the development of regional climate risk assessments, frameworks, plans, programmes and indicators to build resilience to transboundary and cascading climate risks;
6. To stress the need for developed-country Parties to honour their recent Glasgow commitments to double their adaptation finance from its current very low level and to demonstrate a further progression of effort to support African and other developing countries in the context of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change findings on the urgency of action, especially in developing countries, and in particular in Africa, taking into consideration the fact that Africa requires up to \$86 billion annually for adaptation by 2030;
7. To emphasize that the first global stocktake is a central part of the Paris Agreement and, as one of the key outcomes of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, offers a critical opportunity for the world to course-correct and address the gaps across all elements of climate action that include adaptation, loss and damage, mitigation and response measures, and means of implementation and support, with a particular emphasis on equity and the best available science;
8. To emphasize that the outcome of the first global stocktake should reflect a fair, just and balanced view of political messages on climate action and support that addresses gaps in the implementation of and the ambition required in nationally determined contributions and international cooperation to achieve the global goals of the Paris Agreement, recognizing the need for proportionate responses in each area;
9. To reiterate that Africa supports a global stocktake outcome that takes into consideration the special development circumstances of Africa and provides the policy space necessary for Africa to achieve sustainable development and a just transition to low-emission and resilient development;
10. To reaffirm the importance of accelerating mitigation action by parties to limit the increase in global temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and striving to limit the

³ Decision 1/CP.21 of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, annex.

temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, based on the principle of equity and reflecting on common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities;

11. To recall that all African countries have submitted ambitious targets under their nationally determined contributions and aim to implement their mitigation efforts;

12. To welcome the launch of the mitigation work programme, aimed at scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation, and to call for the work programme to focus on the necessary enabling elements, including the climate finance and technology transfer required, particularly by African countries, for the implementation of the nationally determined contribution commitments announced by parties;

13. To urge developed-country parties and other parties to take ambitious mitigation action towards achieving the temperature goal of the Paris Agreement and to caution against the promotion of carbon removal technologies in lieu of mitigation efforts, considering the limited information and understanding of the risks associated with such technologies;

14. To call for a global governance mechanism on risk mitigation and the use of technological solutions for emission removals and to urge the consideration of the varying levels of technological advancement between countries during the development and deployment of such technologies;

15. To express concerns with the promotion of technologies, particularly solar radiation management, and to call for a global governance mechanism for non-use of solar radiation management;

16. To welcome decision 2/CP.27 of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that established the funding arrangements for responding to loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including a focus on addressing loss and damage; and to stress the need to launch the loss and damage fund at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties through the provision of new and additional finance resources from developed-country parties and the identification of new sources;

17. To urge the transitional committee of the loss and damage fund to be guided by the previous decisions of the Conference of the Parties, while defining institutional arrangements, governance and eligibility for the fund;

18. To recognize the limited financial resources for responding to losses and damages associated with the adverse impacts of climate change, despite projections indicating that Africa alone needs up to \$289 billion in a 2°C scenario, and to underscore that all developing countries that are parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement are eligible for the fund and the new funding arrangements;

19. To call on the African States to further assess and identify their resource needs for addressing loss and damage and to integrate loss and damage associated with climate change into their national climate plans;

20. To call for deliberations on the new collective quantified finance goal to reach a milestone decision at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, for its successful conclusion by the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties, and to reiterate the need to advance deliberations in line with the obligations of developed-country parties under the Convention and its Paris Agreement;

21. To reiterate that the new finance goal should reflect progression over previous efforts and be based on the needs of developing countries, reaching up to \$6 trillion for the pre-2030 period and focusing on the needs to meet the cost of adaptation and mitigation costs in line with any proposed targets and scenarios;

22. To stress our call to developed-country parties to allocate new provisions of financial resources, representing progression and the highest possible ambition for the replenishment of the Green Climate Fund this year in line with the programming capacity of the fund and its existing and potential pipeline;

23. To express our concerns that pledges made to the Adaptation Fund have yet to be fulfilled, therefore significantly impacting the programming capacity of the Fund to support concrete adaptation actions in developing countries, particularly through the Fund's direct access modality, and to express high expectations for new pledges for the Adaptation Fund to reflect progression in delivering adaptation finance;

24. To welcome the launch of the Sharm el-Sheikh dialogue on article 2, paragraph 1 (c), of the Paris Agreement, emphasizing the call for the dialogue to be guided by article 2 and article 9 obligations in defining its scope, which includes public and grant resources from developed-country parties to facilitate the transition to make financial flows consistent with the Paris Agreement goals, while taking into account the needs and priorities of developing countries, and to call on parties to consider the complementarity of this dialogue with the work programme on just transition pathways, as well as the risks of such unphased alignment on investments, indebtedness and its impacts on the economy;

25. To stress developing countries' needs to promote sustainable development and poverty eradication in the context of global financial architecture reform, and to call for the reform to be accompanied by a climate-focused review of multilateral development banks and international financial institutions to meet the enormous challenges of mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage, and delivery instruments that contribute to debt restructuring and debt relief, including debt for climate swap;

26. To welcome the launch of the just transition pathways work programme, which recognizes the multiple forms and stages of just transition pathways and calls for a decision at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties that promotes pathways to low emissions and climate-resilient development in line with article 2 of the Paris Agreement, as well as a framework for financing the transitions of all African countries, while recognizing that the continent is endowed with resources and strategic minerals that can fuel the just transition of African countries, and emphasizing the need for a continental cooperative mechanism to enhance and protect the climate mitigation, environmental protection and economic development interests of African countries and collective action that augments the bargaining power of Africa in the global economy;

27. To highlight the importance of ensuring value addition to African natural resources, in particular strategic minerals, and to urge the United Nations and relevant organizations to provide support and recommendations to enhance the economic and social benefits for Africa of its extractive industries and strategic minerals;

28. To stress the need to avoid unplanned and abrupt divestment from fossil fuels, which will threaten the development of Africa, and to underline the need for a just transition financing framework to ensure that the shift in Africa from fossil fuel use to renewable energy is measured, avoids negative consequences on workers, communities and national economies, and enhances the development of Africa;

29. To note with concern the adverse impacts of response measures on African countries and to assert that Africa will not bear the costs of nor assume the responsibilities of other regions for climate actions, such as through unfair and discriminatory carbon border taxes;

30. To express grave concern regarding the proposal for introducing trade barriers, such as unilateral carbon border adjustments, that are discriminatory and against the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and to emphasize that measures taken to combat climate change, including unilateral measures, should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade, in particular on African exports;

31. To underline the importance of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, especially those in Africa, in reducing emissions and adapting to climate change impacts, and to call for adequate and predictable support for the implementation of all activities;

32. To collectively take responsibility for preserving and protecting these forests through all relevant decisions and actions within the framework of the climate change process in order to recover their role for the planet, and to call for additional support from developed-country Parties to preserve and protect our forests;

33. To emphasize that agriculture and food security are key priorities for African countries and are adversely affected by climate change and to call for means of implementation (finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building) for the implementation of adaptation measures in the agricultural sector;

34. To stress the importance of the connectivity of oceans, the cryosphere, lands and forests, and the role of oceans in climate change adaptation and mitigation, and to recall paragraphs 82 and 83 of decision 1/CP.27 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, on the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan;

35. To request the African group of negotiators to develop a strategy on how to approach the future ocean and climate change dialogues to ensure that the needs and interests of African countries are integrated;

36. To urge parties to prioritize implementation of ocean-based climate actions in their nationally determined contributions and long-term strategies; including restoration and protection of blue carbon ecosystems and the blue economy;

37. To reaffirm our support to promoting gender equality and responsiveness in the development and implementation of climate policies by advocating for enhanced participation of women in the negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and of their representation in bodies established pursuant to the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement;

38. To highlight the importance of ensuring strengthened participation of youth in the design and implementation of climate actions, as appropriate, and to emphasize the value of youth perspectives;

39. To welcome the efforts of the Africa Adaptation Initiative to promote and support the African adaptation agenda, including on concrete action and implementation, and request the Initiative to continue its support to Africa and the African group of negotiators;

40. To reiterate the invitation set out in decision 1.CP/27 to consider further actions to reduce by 2030 non-carbon dioxide greenhouse gas emissions, including of methane, while noting the different initiatives in this regard, including those on climate and clean air;

41. To note that cities and local governments are highly concerned by the adverse impacts of climate change and that, as a result, cities and local governments should be part of the implementation of adaptation action and resilience measures;

42. To acknowledge with appreciation the work of the Africa Agriculture Adaptation Initiative, the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative and the African climate commissions (the Congo Basin Climate Commission, the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region and the African Island States Climate Commission) in coordinating the implementation of the African response to climate change, and the leadership shown in expediting the operationalization and scaling-up of these initiatives.
