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African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
Tenth special session
Abidjan, 3–6 September 2024

Decision SS.X/2: Omnibus decision on advancing Africa's common positions at conferences of parties and meetings*

We, African ministers for the environment,

Having met in Abidjan on 5 and 6 of September 2024 at the tenth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Welcoming and appreciating the participation of the ministers and their representatives at the tenth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recalling the outcomes of the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment held in Addis Ababa on 17 and 18 August 2023,

Aware of the forthcoming sixteenth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification that will take place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 2 to 13 December 2024,

Aware also of the forthcoming twenty-ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that will take place in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 11 to 22 November 2024,

Aware also of the forthcoming sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity that will take place in Cali, Colombia, from 21 October to 1 November 2024,

Aware of the forthcoming fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment that will take place in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 25 November to 1 December 2024,

Recalling the decision Assembly/AU/XXX (XXXV) of the thirty-seven Ordinary Session of Assembly of the African Union held in February 2024 on the report of the Committee of Heads of States and Government on Climate Change,

Acknowledging the work of the African Group of negotiators on biodiversity, as mandated by the African Ministerial Conference on Environment, in leading the region in the negotiations of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and in the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,

Acknowledging the efforts of the African Group of Negotiators on plastic pollution in articulating Africa's priorities in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee process to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment,

* The present document, including the annexes thereto, is being issued without formal editing.

Determined to continue having a unified voice and common African positions to address common challenges and priorities in the upcoming Conferences of the Parties and the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee process,

Decide:

1. To commend the African Group of Negotiators on Plastic Pollution in articulating Africans priorities during the third and fourth sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment that were held 13 to 17 November 2023 in Nairobi, and 23 to 29 April 2024 in Ottawa, respectively;
2. To urge member States to prepare and actively participate in the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment to take place in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 25 November to 1 December 2024, so as to advance Africa's common positions, interests and priorities, taking into account the interests of all African states;
3. To urge the African Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity to continue advancing Africa's common positions, interests and priorities in the forthcoming sixteenth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Meeting of Parties to the Cartagena Protocol and to the Nagoya Protocol that will take place in Cali, Colombia, from 21 October to 1 November 2024 and as well as in relevant intersessional processes;
4. To request the African Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity to advance, in the global negotiations, synergies between biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem restoration to build resilience against climate change, drought and desertification, promote sustainable land management practices and land degradation neutrality;
5. To urge member States to revise and update their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, its goals and targets and urge member states that have not yet done so, to expedite the revision and submission of their national targets in the standardized format by the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and further develop national indicators taking into consideration the African Union Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan;
6. To mandate the African Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity to continue developing common positions that reiterate Africa's interests on the priority issues of digital sequence information on genetic resources, resource mobilization and financing mechanisms, the global review, mainstreaming of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans priorities within and across sectors, biodiversity and climate change, marine and coastal biodiversity, and addressing the needs for capacity building and development and technology transfer in support of the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and to further ensure that these priorities are taken into consideration in the negotiations at sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and in the Meetings of Parties to the Protocols;
7. To mandate the African Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity to reiterate in the global negotiations Africa's position on the establishment of the dedicated Global Biodiversity Fund under the authority and guidance of, and accountable to, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its sixteenth meeting, informed by the criteria enshrined in Articles 20 paragraph 2 of the Convention, to meet the level of ambition in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
8. To call upon the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to establish a robust legally binding international framework that ensures fair and equitable sharing of monetary benefits arising from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources including the operationalization of the Global Multilateral Benefit Sharing Fund, and to define clear processes for the sharing of non-monetary benefits;
9. To request the African Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity to convene a briefing session for African Ministers at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to enable the Ministers to provide concerted guidance and direction on the proposed common positions to the experts, and more involvement of African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and African Union Commission in these briefing sessions in subsequent Conference of the Parties and for this purpose encourage the ministers to attend the meeting a day before in preparation for the High Level Ministerial Segment of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

10. To request the African Union Commission, Africa Union Development Agency-NEPAD, African Development Bank, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Development Programme, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, civil society organisations, the private sector, and other partners to support African countries in mobilising domestic and international resources as well as innovative or other sources of financing to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
11. To endorse the outcomes of the African Regional Consultations of the African Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity that was held virtually on 29 August 2024 and the key messages in annex I of this decision;
12. To take note of the outcomes of the twelfth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa that was held in Abidjan 30 August to 02 September 2024 and renew support for the Climate for Development in Africa initiative;
13. To urge the African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change to continue advancing Africa's common position, interests and priorities in the forthcoming twenty-ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that will take place in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 11 to 22 November 2024;
14. To urge Member States and Regional Economic Communities to domesticate the African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan at national and sub-regional levels to accelerate climate action, and to promote the Africa Adaptation Acceleration Programme as a reflection of the continent's commitment to effective climate action ahead of the twenty ninth Conference of the Parties for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Annex I

African position to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

We, African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire from the 5 and 6 of September 2024, during the 10th Special session of the African Ministers of Environment, with a focus on raising ambition for accelerating action on drought resilience and combating land degradation and desertification,

Acknowledging the value of Africa's rich biodiversity and ecosystems and the critical opportunity this offers in contributing to the sustainable development of the continent and the well-being of the people,

Recalling the Addis Ababa Declaration of the African Ministers in AMCEN 19 on seizing opportunities and enhancing collaboration to address environmental challenges in Africa and the commitment in Resolution 8 to implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,

Recalling further, paragraph 2 section c of the Annex to Decision 19/1 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to take appropriate measures to implement the KMGBF 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 is closed in full and international financial flows to developing countries are increased,

Recalling also, para 3, 4 and 5 section c of the Annex to Decision 19/1 of AMCEN mandating the AGN to engage in intersessional work of the CBD and to develop Africa's common position in clearly defined priority areas for Africa,

Recalling Decision 17/ 2/ 3 of AMCEN endorsing the establishment of a core group to facilitate coordination of the Africa Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity in developing a common regional position to strengthen Africa voice and mandate the African Group of Negotiators on biodiversity established,

Recalling AMCEN 17 and 18 decisions which emphasised the importance of means of implementation as an integral part of the GBF and stress the need for adequate provision of financial resources, access to technology and capacity enhancement, including the establishment of a dedicated biodiversity fund to support effective implementation of the GBF,

Recalling paragraph 4 and 5 of Section C of AMCEN: Omnibus decision 19/1 which noted that the establishment of 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,

Welcoming the adoption of the Africa Union Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan – to support the implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework by the 37th Ordinary Session of the AU Summit held in February 2024 and take note of the draft Resource Mobilisation and Financing plan for the NBSAPs,

Welcoming the nomination of five African organisation (i.e. Central African Forest Commission (Cameroon), Ecological Monitoring Centre (Senegal), Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (Kenya), Sahara and Sahel Observatory (Tunisia) and the South African National Biodiversity Institute (South Africa) to host subregional technical and scientific cooperation support centres, as part of the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism established by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its fifteenth meeting,

Emphasizing the importance of conducting a global review on collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework including the means of implementation to determine the effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, relevance and coherence of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework towards achieving the vision 2050 and its goals,

Reminding member states of the importance of Global analysis of information in national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including national targets to assess the contribution towards the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,

Taking note and welcoming the coordination effort of the AGN in preparing the Africa common positions and ensuring the consideration of Africa's voice and priorities in the negotiations of the intersessional work of the CBD notably the Adhoc Open-Ended Working Group on Digital Sequencing of Information, Meetings of the Advisory Committee on Resource Mobilisation and Meetings of the Adhoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the KMGBF, and further taking note of the participation of the African Group in the SBSTTA-26 and SBI-4 Negotiations that was held in May 2024 in Nairobi Kenya, with key draft recommendations for submission to COP 16, and the relevant outcomes for the implementation of the KM GBF on the continent,

Welcoming the convening of the 16th Conference of Parties to the Convention of Biological Diversity alongside the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP 11 CP), and the 5th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (COP-MOP5 NP) to be hosted by the Government of Colombia in Cali from the 21st of October -01 November 2024 and the 5th Subsidiary Body on Implementation to be held on the 16-18th October in Colombia,

Key messages

Updating and revising National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plans (NBSAPs)

1. Recognize that less than 50% of African member states have revised/updated their NBSAPs or National Targets on Biodiversity in alignment with the GBF and made submissions within the defined timeline to the CBD while the majority of member states are yet to finalize this process;
2. Urge the member states to expedite the revisions and submissions of their National Targets before COP 16, for parties that have not yet done so, and to finalize the revision/updating their NBSAPs for parties that have so far only developed National Targets;
3. Note that the finalized KMGBF indicators provide a framework to guide the monitoring of implementation of the KMGBF and call on parties to develop post COP 16, their national indicators to ensure monitoring and assessing performance on NBSAPs and reporting;
4. Call on member states to develop national Finance Plans in order to determine the funding required for priority projects of the NBSAPs and to support adequate and timely mobilization of international and domestic, public and private financial resources for the effective implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;
5. Call on member states to ensure the inclusion of key sectors in the planning and monitoring of NBSAPs as a key entry point for mainstreaming the defined national biodiversity priorities within and across sectors and in implementation of the KMGBF;
6. Take note of the African Union Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (ABSAP) endorsed by the 37th AU Summit in 2023 as a high policy continental commitment to the implementation of the KMGBF and endorse the on-going efforts to develop an AU Resource Mobilization Strategy and support mechanisms for the implementation of the ABSAP;
7. Take note of the Central Africa- COMIFAC, 2024. Guideline for the implementation of the KMGBF and relevant decisions of COP 15 CBD, within the COMIFAC landscape and encourage other regional organisations to strengthen regional approaches and effective coordination in implementation of the KMGBF;
8. Urge member states and regional organisations to align with the guidance of the ABSAP and to engage local authorities and non-state actors in the planning, implementation, monitoring and reviewing of their NBSAPs or regional strategies to ensure an effective whole of society engagement in the implementation of the KMGBF;

Resource mobilization and financing biodiversity

9. Welcome the 8th GEF Replenishment that has supported African countries in the updating and revision of their NBSAPs and also the establishment of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund and the programming of its first tranche of funds disbursement;

10. Express great concerns on the critical and significant gap that persists in financing of biodiversity and the inadequacy in the efforts to meet up with the commitments to substantially increase biodiversity finances;
11. Take note of the engagement of Africa's representatives in the intersessional work that has been carried out by the Advisory Committee for Resource Mobilisation in support of implementation of the KMGBF and also recognize with appreciation that the First Meeting of this Committee was in Africa and hosted by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo;
12. Stress the need for a Global Biodiversity Fund to be established as a dedicated financial mechanism under the COP as envisaged under the agreement for the Convention, and call for an Adhoc OEWG to be established with the mandate to discuss as an intersessional work, the process and mechanisms for the operationalisation of this dedicated Global Biodiversity Fund;

Digital sequence information (DSI)

13. Recognize the sovereign rights of countries over their genetic resources, and the need for these rights to be respected and upheld in all international frameworks and practices;
14. Note with great concerns the non-consensus outcomes with a wide range of outstanding issues from the intersessional work of the Ad Hoc Open Ended Working Group on Benefit-sharing from the Use of Digital Sequencing of Information;
15. Emphasize the need to establish a robust legally binding international framework including the operationalization of a global multilateral benefit-sharing fund as a viable approach to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of monetary benefits arising from the use of DSI and also comply with the third objectives of the Convention, and further emphasize the need of defining clear processes for the sharing of non-monetary benefits, including technology transfer, knowledge sharing, capacity building, and access to research outcomes, considering that these non-monetary benefits are vital for building the capacity of African countries to conserve and sustainably use their biodiversity;
16. Call for a transparent and inclusive governance structure to be designed for the benefit-sharing mechanism that will be established under this framework, and clear guidelines to be defined for the monitoring and reporting on the DSI use, as well as the management and disbursement of funds;
17. Recognize the significant shortcomings in existing public databases and data-sharing practices, particularly in relation to accountability, transparency, and inclusive governance, that do not align with international instruments on access and benefit-sharing, which limits the fair and equitable benefit distribution from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources, and thus emphasize the need for concrete steps towards effective data governance, including the establishment of a DSI database to be managed by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), ensuring the sovereign rights of countries over their genetic resources are fully respected;

Capacity-building, scientific cooperation and technology transfer for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

18. Acknowledge the critical role of technology transfer in enabling African countries to achieve their biodiversity goals and national commitments under the KMGBF to halt and reverse biodiversity loss;
19. Concerned with the disparities in technological capacity between developed and developing countries, which hinder the full and effective implementation of biodiversity-related initiatives, and thus stress the importance of South-South cooperation, as well as collaboration with developed countries, in the transfer of appropriate and effective technologies;
20. Recognize the establishment of a dedicated global entity mechanism under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and to support that the CBD Secretariat host the Global coordination entity, supported by an international organisation as a critical need to facilitate the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries, ensuring that these technologies are appropriate, affordable, and adaptable to local conditions;
21. Urge developed countries and relevant international organizations to fulfil their commitments to technology transfer, as stipulated under the CBD and other relevant multilateral agreements, by providing financial resources, technical assistance, and capacity-building support to African countries;

22. Emphasize the importance of technology transfer in the areas of biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, monitoring, and reporting, particularly in the implementation of digital tools and systems for data collection, analysis, and decision-making;
23. Advocate for the integration of technology transfer within the broader framework of capacity building and development, ensuring that African countries have the necessary skills, knowledge, and infrastructure to effectively utilize transferred technologies;
24. Encourage partnerships between African countries, research institutions, the private sector, and international organizations to foster innovation and the development of indigenous technologies that are tailored to the specific needs and challenges of the region;
25. Reaffirm the need for continuous monitoring and assessment of technology transfer initiatives to ensure they are effectively contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, as well as to the overall goals of the KMGBF;
26. Recalling paragraph 4 & 5 of Section C of AMCEN Omnibus decision 19/1 which noted that the establishment of a mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer among parties in support the implementation of the Convention and its protocols and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and encouraged member States to support their entities and organizations that wish to host a regional or subregional support centre;
27. Support the selection of the five Regional Support Centres in Africa to provide technical assistance to countries in implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), thereby enhancing regional capacity to achieve biodiversity targets and commitments;

Participation in the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

28. Call on the Ministers of African States to participate in the High-Level Ministerial Segment of CBD COP 16;
29. Request the African Group of negotiators to convene a briefing session for African Ministers at COP16 in order to provide concerted guidance and direction on the proposed common positions by the experts and for this purpose to arrive the High-Level Ministerial Segment of COP 16 in time for the briefing meetings;
30. Urge members states to support the participation of African national experts in COP16 to strengthen the technical input into the work of the AGN in developing Africa's common position and negotiation.

