

Africa Regional Major groups and stakeholders messages to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its eleventh special session

PREAMBLE

We, representatives of African Civil Society and Major Groups appreciate UNEP's role in optimizing our participation and consultation on key environmental issues to be addressed by the Member States during the GCSSX1/GMEF:

- *Recognizing* the fact that human-induced environmental change has accelerated over the last three decades and intense loss of biodiversity and ecosystems experienced;
- *Noting with concern* the rampant violation of UN conventions such as the Basel Convention on the control of trans-boundary movement of hazardous wastes and their disposal, Rotterdam Convention on the prior informed consent procedure for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides in international trade and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), and;
- *Recognizing* 'Decision 13' taken at the 3rd special session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) in Nairobi on climate change, that Africa, in the context of environmental justice:
 - be equitably compensated for environmental, social and economic losses;
 - be provided with substantially scaled-up finance, technology and capacity-building for adaptation and risk management in accordance with the obligations of the Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol to the Convention;
- *Noting* 'Decision 8' of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its fifteenth session held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009, agreed to provide new and additional resources, including forestry and investments through international institutions, approaching US\$ 30 billion for the period 2010-2012 with balanced allocations between adaptation and mitigation;

We recommend that:

I. ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

1. Africa be supported to operationalize the Bamako Convention of 1991 and have a fully functional secretariat to enhance the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions;
2. The GC and governance instances to strengthen the Addis Ababa Liaison Office to work closely with African regional bodies such as the AU, AMU, ECOWAS, EAC/COMESA/IGAD, ECCAS and SADC;
3. The GC encourage cooperation with the UN Economic Commission for Africa in order to support the African Union to take control of its environment programme and give direction to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD);
4. The GC and Member states to review the UNEP's structure in order to strengthen its activities within the United Nations Development Framework (UNDAF) and reform its mechanism for working with Civil Society Organizations and change its modalities to constructively engage national CSOs through sub regional offices and/or UN Country Teams;
5. National Governments and UNEP improves awareness on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (and build the capacity of CSOs to hold their governments accountable and work out strategies for follow up on the implementation of the MEAs);
6. At the Global level, the GC and member states encourage UNEP to work closely with African countries to meet the goals and objectives of International Environmental Governance (IEG) and provide access to technology, resources and capacity building based on the principle of common but differentiated ability;
7. The GC encourage UNEP to promote gender considerations in all its activities;
8. The GC take a decision that allow UNEP to allocate a special Fund to support African Civil Society participation in all international conferences to boost decision making and track record on key MEAs implementation;
9. The GC empower UNEP to work out strategies to domesticate MEAs and clearly strengthen the capacity of African CSOs to monitor the implementation of Cartagena protocol;
10. UNEP supports environmental education at grass root level and work our strategies to incorporate it in African school curricula;

II. GREEN ECONOMY

1. The GC to strengthen UNEP to adequately push for African countries competitiveness in business and exports within the Green Economy Initiative (GEI);
2. Clear, precise and attainable strategies be spelt out on how the green jobs will solve Africa's wide spread unemployment, poverty, civil unrest and development in the 21st century.

III. ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

1. UNEP strengthens the generation of knowledge at national, regional and global levels, building on existing scientific networks and incorporating the use of African traditional knowledge;
2. The GC to encourage UNEP to develop programmes that increasingly integrate and utilize an ecosystem management approach for integration into development and planning processes;
3. The GC to ensure imbalances between developing and developed countries are redressed and Africa's policy platform on biology, biodiversity and ecosystem services be established.

IV. CLIMATE CHANGE

1. The GC takes a decision to empower UNEP's support to the key actors in raising the general public's awareness about environmental issues as well as in the implementation of climate policies;
2. The GC support African delegates plus African civil society organizations and provide more training on negotiations texts and contexts during UN climate meetings;
3. Regarding the Copenhagen Accords, we recommend that the GC and member states push for a process leading to a real deal which involves the following three steps:
 - i. Governments take immediate action by making decisions about the Accords toward the creation of mechanisms and international monitoring, reporting and verification guidelines very quickly.
 - ii. GC should push and strengthen UNEP to act for operationalization of the REDD-plus by providing positive incentives through the immediate establishment of a mechanism to enable the mobilization of financial resources from developed countries
 - iii. The member states should take immediate actions to push for the Copenhagen Green Climate Fund to start financing activities related to mitigation, adaptation, capacity building and technology transfer in 2010.

V. DISASTERS AND CONFLICTS

1. UNEP assess and quantify the cost of environmental degradation due to conflicts and spearhead strategies for disaster mitigation and conflict resolution in cases of shared resources;
2. The Member states and GC allow UNEP to work closely with the UN Security Council towards mitigation of civil war unrest and protection of ecosystems.

VI. HARMFUL SUBSTANCES AND HAZARDOUS WASTES

1. Support is extended to African CSOs to participate in and work with their governments on adoption and implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) process;
2. Africa stockpiles programme be reinforced and more funds allocated to cover more African states.

VII. RESOURCE EFFICIENCY - SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION

1. The development of national programmes involving local stakeholders and supported by UNEP that advocate for greener lifestyles;
2. The GC should pay attention to the urgent issue of land grabbing in Africa as a result of development by foreign country investments in form of bio-energy crops versus food crops;
3. More financial resources are provided for efficient, clean and safe industrial production and consumption methods through public policies and private sector practices to avoid or reduce pollution as a result of product life cycles.

