



African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Distr.
Limited

UNEP/AMCEN/12/9
12 June 2008

Original: English

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
Twelfth session
Johannesburg, 10–12 June 2008

Report of the ministerial segment held from 10 to 12 June 2008

Introduction

1. The ministerial segment of the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was held in Johannesburg from 10 to 12 June 2008.
2. It was attended by ministers from AMCEN member States and representatives of African regional and subregional organizations, United Nations agencies, secretariats of various environmental conventions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The full list of participants at the twelfth session may be found in document UNEP/AMCEN/EMG/12/INF/6.

I. Opening of the ministerial segment of the twelfth session

A. Opening statements

3. The ministerial segment was officially opened by Mr. André Okombi Salissa, Minister of Tourism and Environment of the Congo and President of AMCEN, at 3.45 p.m. on Tuesday, 10 June 2008.
4. Opening statements were also made by Mr. Marthinus van Schalkwyk, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa, Mr. Babagana Ahmadu, Director of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the Commission of the African Union, and Mr. Achim Steiner, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
5. In his opening statement, Mr. van Schalkwyk outlined the challenges currently facing humanity in terms of the rising world population and the concomitant increase in demands for water, energy and food resources. He called upon Africa to take a leading role in the debates on international environmental governance and to ensure that the continent's concerns and interests were at the forefront of United Nations environmental reform. He suggested, first, that an office of chief scientist should be established within UNEP, to serve as the authoritative voice on the environment; second, that serious and properly resourced efforts should be made to implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building and, third, that UNEP should be requested to lead an audit of the funding for environment-related activities available within the United Nations system.
6. Noting that a road map to the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Copenhagen in 2009, had been adopted at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali in 2007, he said that, as

AMCEN ministers, they should agree on an African road map for climate negotiations to demonstrate that Africa was well prepared and united, given that the continent was particularly vulnerable to climate change as a result of multiple stresses and low adaptive capacity. In conclusion, he called for a more empowering framework that would enable effective capacity-building, technology transfer and financing.

7. In his statement, Mr. Ahmadu thanked the Government and people of South Africa for hosting the meeting and expressed the Commission's gratitude to UNEP for its unwavering support to AMCEN and its invaluable role in shaping the environmental agenda of the African continent. He also conveyed the greetings of Mr. Jean Ping, the new chair of the Commission. Noting the likely integration of AMCEN into the specialized technical committee structure of the African Union, he reiterated the Commission's commitment to working together with UNEP and other partners to ensure the successful implementation of the AMCEN programmes. Relations between the Commission and UNEP had been strengthened by the establishment in Addis Ababa of the UNEP office for liaison with the African Union.

8. He outlined a number of the new programmes being developed by the Commission and its partners, including the Climate for Development in Africa programme (ClimDevAfrica), which would enhance the use of climate information for development in Africa while supporting adaptation to climate change; the African Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) project, which would use satellite-based technology to monitor environmental change to assist policy development; the Great Green Wall for the Sahara initiative, which would help to prevent land degradation in the Sahel and Sahara; and a disaster risk reduction programme. He conveyed the Commission's support for the annual celebration of Africa Environment Day. In conclusion, he highlighted the current rapid rise in global food prices, which had severely affected Africa and required a firm and coordinated global response.

9. In his statement, Mr. Steiner said that, while the world's attention was often turned towards the economic and environmental issues affecting Asia, much less attention was paid to the almost 1 billion people living in Africa. A possible reason, he said, was the difficulty faced in finding a single voice for the many diverse countries in Africa; in that respect, AMCEN had a crucial role. The view of Africa as a region of wide open spaces was no longer valid as its environmental resources came under increasing pressure, with large areas of land degraded and water and food shortages worsening. In the crisis-beset modern world, development choices were being made that were not tilted in favour of the long-term well-being of the people of Africa, but geared more towards achieving short-term economic benefits. Sufficient information was available to challenge that development paradigm and the launch of the atlas on the changing African environment offered a further means of demonstrating the cumulative impacts of those development choices on the continent.

10. Noting the widespread misconception that the environment was marginal to the central development agenda, he urged those present to take every opportunity to challenge that myth, particularly the contradiction that, while environmental resources underpinned economic development strategies, environmental protection was commonly viewed as a constraint to development. In the lead-up to the Copenhagen climate conference in December 2009, it was crucial that Africa articulated a compelling and well-informed agenda on climate change if it was to reap the benefits of such instruments as the Clean Development Mechanism. Biodiversity issues presented a similar challenge, bearing in mind that access and benefit-sharing represented one of the three pillars of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Lastly, he reaffirmed the determination of UNEP to work with and through AMCEN in its efforts to develop a more audible voice in global policy-making.

11. In his opening statement, Mr. Salissa pointed out that the twelfth session of AMCEN was opening against a backdrop of international tension, with various natural phenomena wreaking havoc around the globe. He said that, over the period June 2006–May 2008, AMCEN had been working continuously to confront the threats facing Africa in particular. Thanking the various partner institutions for their support, he cited examples of progress during that period, such as the development of subregional environmental action plans and the publication of *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment*. He expressed concern, however, that there was no lead institution to undertake work on invasive alien species.

12. He said that the objective of the twelfth session of AMCEN was to provide ministers with a framework that would enable them to examine the work already completed in the implementation of the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and thereby improve its execution. He explained that the ministerial segment would provide the opportunity for policy dialogue on climate change and the Bali Action Plan; financing adaptation and environmental programmes and

projects; and international environmental governance and United Nations reform. The conclusions of those discussions would be submitted to the African Union at its forthcoming summit. He set out the challenges facing Africa, including land degradation, loss of biodiversity and deforestation, and said that there was much work to be done, lest the social and biophysical tipping point be reached. In conclusion, he called for environmental education at all levels and said that it was possible to attain Africa's dreams – but that doing so would require significant effort.

B. Launch of the publication *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment*

13. The publication *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment* was launched officially by the President of AMCEN, who urged the assembled ministers to promote the atlas in their countries to help raise awareness of the problems of climate change.

II. Organizational matters

A. Election of officers

14. The following countries were elected to serve on the Bureau of AMCEN for the period 2008–2009:

Subregion	Country	Position
Central Africa	Gabon	Vice-President
Eastern Africa	Eritrea	Vice-President
North Africa	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Vice-President
Southern Africa	South Africa	President
West Africa	Burkina Faso	Rapporteur

15. On assuming the presidency, Mr. van Schalkwyk commended the outgoing members of the Bureau on their work and the outgoing president on his outstanding leadership. He emphasized that AMCEN had a key role to play in harmonizing programmes and initiatives in Africa, especially those related to climate change. Expressing concern about the apparent divide-and-rule policy followed by the developed countries in relation to climate change, he stressed the need for Africa to put in place agreed common positions on climate change, in order to combat such divisive tactics, and pledged the determination of South Africa to strive to attain the objectives of AMCEN.

B. Adoption of the agenda

16. The ministers adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda prepared by the secretariat (UNEP/AMCEN/12/1):

1. Opening of the twelfth session.
2. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Election of officers;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Organization of work.
3. Consideration of the report of the expert group meeting.
4. Ministerial policy dialogue.
5. Consideration of matters related to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment process:
 - (a) Amendments to the constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

- (b) Status of the general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.
6. Country and subregion case studies.
7. Consideration of some matters related to the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.
8. Venue for the thirteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.
9. Adoption of the report of the ministerial segment.
10. Other matters.
11. Closure of the session.

C. Organization of work

17. The President of AMCEN introduced the draft programme of work and the list of documents for the ministerial segment contained in annexes I and II to the annotated provisional agenda (UNEP/AMCEN/12/1/Add.1).

III. Consideration of the report of the Expert Group segment

18. The Chair of the expert group segment, held from 7 to 9 June 2008, presented the report of the segment, contained in document UNEP/AMCEN/EGM/12/3, drawing attention to the salient points in the group's deliberations and introducing the draft declaration and decisions prepared by the experts and submitted for consideration and possible adoption by the ministers. In addition, the experts had reviewed and introduced modifications to the programme of work of AMCEN. The amended programme of work would be circulated in due course by the secretariat.

19. Following a discussion, in which a number of ministers proposed amendments to the text of the decisions and the declaration, the ministers adopted, as orally amended, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment Johannesburg Declaration on the Environment for Sustainable Development, as contained in annex I to the present report, and the decisions, as contained in annex II.

IV. Ministerial policy dialogue: President's summary

A. Introduction

20. The policy dialogues were introduced by Ms. Juliette Biao-Koudenoukpo, Minister for the Environment of Benin, Ms. Halima Tayo Alao, Minister of Environment, Housing and Urban Development of Nigeria, and Mr. Momodou Cham, Minister of State of Forestry and the Environment

21. of the Gambia. In the introductions to the policy dialogues, the respective chairs expressed condolences to the Governments and people of Kenya and the Sudan on tragic aviation accidents in those countries the previous day, sentiments which were echoed by ministers in their statements during the dialogue.

22. In their dialogue, ministers debated issues grouped under the following three headings: "Africa's Climate Roadmap: from Johannesburg through Africa to Copenhagen", "Financing NEPAD implementation" and "Africa's vision for international environmental governance".

B. Dialogue

1. Africa's Climate Roadmap: from Johannesburg through Africa to Copenhagen

23. In their statements, many representatives underscored the importance of the decision and outcomes of the United Nations Climate Change Conference¹ held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007, in particular the agreement on the Bali Action Plan, which set 2009 as the end date for negotiations on strengthening the climate regime beyond 2012. Representatives also noted that Africa had a shared vision on adaptation and mitigation, using a sustainable development policies and measures approach, supported and enabled by finance, technology and capacity-building. It was agreed that Africa must speak with one voice in advancing the continent's interests in negotiations for the climate regime beyond 2012.

24. Given that intensive negotiations were needed to achieve an outcome by the end of 2009, representatives stressed the need for Africa to identify the key political messages to inform the global debate and negotiating process, in terms both of the commitments that it sought from the international community, and also of the actions that African countries would take themselves. The Bali Action Plan offered Africa the opportunity to build consensus on the complex issues of climate change and sustainable development, to the benefit of the continent. Many representatives stressed the importance for an African consensus on ways of enhancing implementation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol beyond Copenhagen, on the basis of the established principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

25. For the development of an African common position as part of the African Roadmap to Copenhagen, representatives proposed an African high-level expert panel on climate change, to include senior officials, and African focal points for the Framework Convention on Climate Change, working in collaboration with UNEP, NEPAD and the Commission of the African Union and mandated to develop a draft common position, including a plan of action for building consensus in the region and supporting a focused and coordinated approach to the climate change negotiations. It was noted that, at its twelfth session, AMCEN had decided to establish a work programme with milestones for the development of the common position, with the President of AMCEN mandated to steer the African Roadmap process.

26. Representatives also welcomed Algeria's offer to host the first meeting of the planned AMCEN high-level expert panel, working towards the African ministerial meeting on climate change to be held in Algiers in October 2008 and the adoption of a final common position at the special session of AMCEN to be held in June–July 2009 in the margins of the thirteenth African Union Summit. In addition, they welcomed the decision of the joint annual meeting of the African Union Conference of African Ministers of Economy and Finance and the Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), to establish an Africa climate-change policy centre at ECA, and highlighted its role in supporting the development of an African consensus. Other representatives suggested that UNEP, the Commission of the African Union and the secretariat of NEPAD were well placed to assist in that regard.

27. Among the specific suggestions made in the policy dialogue, representatives outlined the following elements for the process of developing a common position:

(a) Africa agreed to put forward a shared vision based on scientific evidence and broad political consensus. That shared vision would have several key elements: the future climate-change regime should accommodate the priorities for Africa of sustainable development, poverty reduction and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals; increased support should be provided under the regime for capacity-building, financing and technology development and transfer for adaptation and mitigation in Africa; and the stabilization of emissions in the atmosphere;

(b) With regard to the need to keep global atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases at a manageable level, Africa should seek agreement on a future global emissions reduction regime with targets for all developed countries to reduce their emissions, by 2020, towards the upper end of the 25-40 per cent range for emissions reductions below 1990 levels, and, by 2050, by between 80 and 95 per cent below those levels, to achieve the concentration of 450 ppm of carbon dioxide equivalent in the atmosphere. With developed countries taking the lead in that regard, developing countries would be

¹ The United Nations Climate Change summit in Bali, Indonesia, consisted of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol.

able to deviate substantially from “business-as-usual” baseline emissions, enabled and supported by finance, technology and capacity-building from developed countries, in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner;

(c) Adaptation in Africa must be given higher priority in order to balance it with mitigation on the international negotiating agenda. The future regime should emphasize assisting developing countries with adaptation technologies, finance and capacity-building. The adoption and further development of Africa’s indigenous knowledge relating to sustainable development and natural resource management were critical for successful adaptation programmes in Africa;

(d) Significantly upscaled adaptation financing, that was new and additional and that did not divert existing overseas development assistance away from poverty eradication and other development priorities, must be channeled through the Kyoto Protocol’s Adaptation Fund. Representatives expressed concern that some existing climate funds were largely mitigation-oriented and stressed that Africa must ensure that funds were to be made available for concrete adaptation projects;

(e) The importance of a coherent financial architecture for climate change, guided by agreed principles and with equitable governance, was stressed. Regarding access to the international climate funds, representatives called for the simplification of procedures and the removal of conditionalities. They also underscored the importance of climate-friendly investment flows and stressed that Africa must use the opportunity created by the current negotiating processes to act immediately and create enabling conditions for the rapid transition of African countries away from carbon-intensive development towards a low carbon economy and society. Africa must position itself to build international competitiveness within the emerging low-carbon global economy and must work to structure the climate change regime in a way that enabled it to build its own competitive advantages and to reach economic development and sustainable development goals while decarbonizing growth;

(f) Representatives attached importance to the carbon markets, and the Clean Development Mechanism in particular. Engagement by all developed countries in ambitious multilateral, legally binding, absolute emission reductions was critical in securing the carbon market. It was noted that carbon markets could provide some incentives for available commercial technologies but their financing must be supplemented by private sector financial flows and massively scaled-up public investment;

(g) It was noted that there was a need to rectify the skewed distribution of Clean Development Mechanism projects at the international level, and to rationalize financial and investment frameworks and mechanisms. Representatives stressed the need to negotiate improvements to the Clean Development Mechanism rules to enable Africans to take advantage of funds from the carbon market to support sustainable development and the transfer of climate-friendly technologies to Africa. Many representatives supported efforts by African countries to increase the share of Clean Development Mechanism projects in Africa, while several highlighted the need for institutional capacity-building and awareness-raising and for the private sector to become more actively involved in carbon trading;

(h) National growth and poverty reduction aspirations remained key imperatives and could be supported through increased investment and incentives for technological innovations, including incentives to support home-grown technology. Representatives also called for direct access to funds and for the creation of mechanisms for the development, transfer and uptake of mitigation and adaptation technologies;

(i) Representatives emphasized the importance of regional preparations for the Copenhagen meeting in 2009 and stressed that regional strategies for implementation were also important. Representatives also called for the involvement of women and young people in climate strategies at all levels, particularly in the areas of education and awareness-raising and capacity-building. Others highlighted the need to include the private sector and civil-society organizations in order to ensure an effective African response to climate change;

(j) On international cooperation and solidarity, representatives proposed that Africa should renew partnerships on an equitable basis with, among others, the Group of Eight, China, India, Japan, South America and the European Union, through concrete projects in Africa to deal with the global problem of climate change at the continental and subregional levels.

2. Financing for NEPAD implementation

28. On the issue of gaining access to financing mechanisms, representatives stressed the need to simplify the various mechanisms for the expeditious allocation of funds once country and regionally driven needs had been identified. New reforms and simplification of procedure, including the reduction of conditionalities, must be adopted as a matter of urgency as most developing countries lacked access

to adequate sources of funding. Partnerships between the public and private sectors should be enhanced and strengthened. Capacity-building and the development of technology were also identified as priorities.

29. Regarding the financing of environment programmes, there was a need to refocus the discussion on how Africa could ensure the sustainable use and management of its rich environmental resources. The environment should take centre stage in economic and development activities, in order to ensure true sustainable development where all three pillars – economic, social and environmental – were placed on an equal and integrated footing.

30. Representatives said that a suite of funding mechanisms, investment structures and policy tools would be required to overcome barriers associated with the various types of technology and stages of technology development. For the wider deployment for existing technology, the price gap must be closed. For retrofitting, refurbishment and rehabilitation projects, the challenge was to overcome the overcapitalization risk. Venture capital would be required for bringing near-commercial technologies to the market, whereas public-private investment would be required for technology research and development of a longer term nature. There was a call for African countries also to source funds from outside the convention process. In addition, Africa should insist on an effective and equitable carbon price.

31. Representatives stressed the need to take full advantage of the NEPAD capital flows initiative and urged the African Development Bank to provide additional environmental finance.

32. Representatives further stressed the need to increase domestic resource mobilization. Resource mobilization efforts often fell short for a number of reasons. For example, accessibility of many of the global funding mechanisms continued to be a problem, and funding for NEPAD programmes might not necessarily be a priority for Governments faced with competing demands for finance. One approach would be to consider integrating environmental priorities into national planning processes to attract support from national budgetary allocations. Other representatives said that financing for adaptation must be additional to the existing commitment of developed countries to provide 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product to development assistance.

33. There was a strong call for the African Development Bank to clarify formally its position on the long-standing request by AMCEN and the African Union for the establishment of the African Environment Facility.

34. Representatives recognized the important role of GEF but encouraged it to undertake a serious review of its co-financing principles, and to use vulnerability criteria in the allocation of resources based on countries' needs and priorities.

35. Representatives noted the World Bank's proposals on new climate investment funds.

36. Representatives recognized that, as African ministers, they must plan in an integrated way, identify their needs and priorities for support, and not leave planning and prioritization to donors.

3. Africa's vision for international environmental governance

37. Noting the challenge posed by the proliferation of agreements and conventions which demanded ever-increasing resources and capacity to ensure their effective implementation, representatives stressed the need to engage the African Union and, through that body, to build capacity to ensure the national operationalization of multilateral and regional environmental conventions and agreements, in particular the Convention for the Protection, Management, and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region, the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West, Central and Southern African Region, the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa. The full implementation of UNEP Governing Council decision SS.VII/1 on international environmental governance – often referred to as the “Cartagena package” – was stressed.

38. Representatives stressed the need for AMCEN to participate in the global discussion on international environmental governance and to bring an African vision to the negotiation process. Other representatives expressed the need to establish a think tank as a working group to guide Africa's positioning in and input on international environment governance. The AMCEN President and Bureau were urged to consider establishing a process to prepare a consolidated African position on that subject

and to convene preparatory processes to ensure the enhanced participation of African negotiators in international meetings on international environmental governance.

39. Representatives expressed the need to examine the strategic role of AMCEN in regional governance and its cooperation with the growing intergovernmental machinery in Africa, such as the African Ministers' Council on Water, the Forum of Energy Ministers in Africa and the structures of the African Union.

40. Many representatives asked whether AMCEN should review its institutional and governance structures and discussed the measures to be taken to enhance and strengthen AMCEN, to structure the agenda of meetings to focus on strategic political issues, related to the environment in particular, and to encourage participation at the highest level.

41. There was a strong sense that AMCEN should play a key role in taking Africa's environmental agenda to the international community, and, through the structures of the African Union, act as Africa's environmental conscience and voice. The proposal was supplemented by the suggestion for AMCEN also to tackle issues of national environmental governance and work towards greater harmonization of environmental policies and programmes.

42. Representatives called for a review of the role of African ministers of environment and their contribution to the sustainability agenda. They underscored the need to bring the global debate on environmental issues to the forefront of the developmental debate and to ensure that environment concerns were at the heart of political and economic decision-making at the national and global levels. Representatives highlighted the need to make the notion of sustainability central to ministries of environment and to use those notions as the basis for a future role for UNEP in that field. It was emphasized that form must follow function.

43. Representatives highlighted the need for stronger involvement of ministries of finance and of foreign affairs to support the AMCEN programme at the national level. They also highlighted the need to engage with ambassadors in Nairobi and New York.

44. Representatives called for a review of environmental financing and, in particular, the role of GEF.

45. Many representatives supported the idea of transforming UNEP into a central, rather than marginal, player at the intergovernmental level. They also called for the effective mobilization and use of resources (finance, technology, knowledge and capacity) for actual implementation of environmentally sustainable development interventions.

46. In relation to enhancing the leadership role of UNEP within the United Nations system, representatives suggested a number of innovative measures, such as:

- (a) Enhancing the role of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in providing policy advice and guidance;
- (b) Establishing UNEP as authoritative voice on the environment by strengthening scientific knowledge and assessment capacity;
- (c) Bridging the gap from science to policy implementation;
- (d) Renewing the focus on capacity-building for implementation;
- (e) Securing predictable, adequate and stable financial resources;
- (f) Intensifying awareness-raising and environmental education, in cooperation with regional structures and national Governments, with a view to creating bottom-up community-driven environmental agendas;
- (g) Conferring fresh mandates to ensure coordination and cooperation at the multilateral environmental agreements and inter-agency levels.

47. Representatives concluded that AMCEN provided Africa with the opportunity to drive the global agenda and not to be its victims.

V. Consideration of matters related to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment process

A. Amendments to the constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

48. The ministers adopted the decision on the constitution of AMCEN which had been forwarded to them by the expert group for their consideration. The text of the decision may be found in annex II to the present report.

B. Status of the general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

49. The ministers adopted the decision on the status and use of the general trust fund for AMCEN which had been forwarded to them by the expert group for their consideration. The text of the decision may be found in annex II to the present report.

VI. Country and subregion case studies

50. On behalf of his fellow ministers, the Minister of Environment of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had been requested to present the development of subregional environmental action plans for the NEPAD environment initiative in five subregions of Africa, and of national action plans within those regions. Thanking UNEP for the support that it had provided for that process, he recalled the importance attached by AMCEN, at its tenth session, to capacity-building in the implementation of the action plan and the need for subregional action plans as a part of that endeavour. At the same session, AMCEN had requested UNEP to provide capacity-building support to regional economic communities for the preparation of subregional action plans and he outlined steps taken to that end. Since 2004, NEPAD had also been working closely with UNEP and GEF on finalizing the GEF-led medium-sized project for a capacity-building programme for the development of subregional action plans. In addition, with financial assistance from Norway, the UNEP Regional Office for Africa had provided assistance to five pilot countries for the development of NEPAD national action plans, which would be presented by representatives of those countries at the current session.

VII. Consideration of some matters related to the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

51. Owing to the inability of the Chair of the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development to attend the twelfth session, it was decided to defer consideration of the item.

VIII. Venue for the thirteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

52. The representative of the group of West African countries informed the ministers that, following consultations between West African States, the Government of Mali had offered to host the thirteenth session of AMCEN.

53. The Conference confirmed by acclamation the selection of Mali as the host country for the thirteenth session of AMCEN.

IX. Adoption of the report of the ministerial segment

54. On the morning of Thursday, 12 June 2008, the ministers adopted the report of the ministerial segment on the basis of the draft report which had been circulated in the meeting, on the understanding that finalization of the report would be entrusted to the secretariat, working in conjunction with the Rapporteur.

X. Other matters

A. Statements by representatives of international organizations and multilateral environmental agreements

1. Statement by the representative of the World Meteorological Organization

55. Mr. Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), outlined the organization's history, before setting out the climate changes predicted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its fourth report. He stressed that the poorest countries would be the most affected by such changes, since they had limited capabilities to adapt to a swiftly changing environment. The effects would be felt particularly in Africa. He reiterated the commitment of WMO to the efforts of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and said that, in 2009, WMO would hold a conference on climate prediction for decision-making. In conclusion, he highlighted the role of ClimDevAfrica and assured the delegates that WMO would continue to support the implementation of the action plan for the environment initiative of NEPAD.

2. Statement by the representative of the World Bank

56. In his statement, Mr. Dirk Reinermann, World Bank acting Country Director for Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland, said that economic growth rates in Africa continued to increase and could reach 6.3 per cent by 2008. Strong economic growth, however, was exacerbating environmental pressures, and African countries were facing tremendous challenges in balancing their development needs with environmental sustainability. Sub-Saharan Africa remained the only region not on track to attain the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. As the leading financier of sustainable development in Africa, the World Bank, in 2007, had committed \$5.7 billion in concessional resources from the International Development Association to sub-Saharan Africa, and those resources were set to increase further following the most recent replenishment. Other Bank financial instruments available to assist African countries included traditional loans and newer instruments such as carbon finance, for which the Bank managed a number of trust funds. In 2007, the Bank had invested over \$212 million in environment and natural resource management projects in Africa, and, in May 2008, in Potsdam, Germany, an initiative had been launched to establish climate investment funds to assist developing countries to pursue cleaner development paths and protect themselves from the impacts of climate change. In conclusion, he said that the World Bank Group remained committed to helping client countries to promote sustainable use of natural resources and sound environmental management.

57. Following the presentation, the President expressed appreciation for the way in which the World Bank had dealt with the concerns of AMCEN at the tenth special session of the UNEP Governing Council, held in Monaco in February 2008.

3. Statement by the representative of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

58. Mr. Mohamadou Mansour N'Diaye, chef de cabinet, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, set out the events of the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, which had taken place in Madrid in September 2007. He said that many significant decisions had been taken in that forum, including the adoption of a strategic framework to reinforce the implementation of the Convention. He welcomed the possibility of contributing, in conjunction with UNEP and the Commission of the African Union, to a road map regarding Africa's obligations under the Convention. That road map would seek to implement a global partnership to combat desertification and land degradation, in addition to mitigating the effects of drought, reducing poverty and instilling lasting respect for the environment. He called for cooperation between AMCEN and the Convention in respect of land degradation, a process exacerbated by climate change. He urged Africa to produce a joint approach to the issue so that the continent's development needs were not marginalized.

4. Statement by the representative of the Basel Convention

59. In her statement, Ms. Katharina Kummer Peiry, Executive Secretary of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, noted that a strong African voice had been one of the main drivers behind the creation of the Basel Convention 20 years

previously. Since that time the issue of hazardous wastes had slipped lower on the international agenda, but the events of 2006 in Côte d'Ivoire had indicated that the issue was far from resolved. The inclusion in the outcomes of the current meeting of a draft decision on chemicals and hazardous waste management was encouraging. The secretariat of the Basel Convention, in cooperation with the UNEP Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch, was implementing a project to build capacity for hazardous waste management in Côte d'Ivoire and it was hoped to attract funding for a follow-up project that would replicate the initiative in other African countries. She called on environment ministers to make their voices heard among donors and the international community in general, including at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention in Bali, Indonesia, in June 2008, which would emphasize the importance of waste management for human health and livelihood. Noting that the Ban Amendment to the Convention had been ratified by only a small number of African countries, she said that a high-level discussion in Bali would take up that issue. Lastly, she expressed the hope that African countries would contribute strongly to the process of reviewing the Basel Convention that was to be launched at the Conference of the Parties.

5. Statement by the representative of the Stockholm and Rotterdam conventions

60. Mr. Donald Cooper, Executive Secretary of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and Co-Executive Secretary of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, delivered a statement. He said that, in today's integrated world, the linkages of chemicals management with human health, biodiversity and desertification should receive due attention. He said that the Stockholm Convention had been given a quick start owing to the involvement of GEF, which had provided funding to 136 countries to prepare their national implementation plans. It was important for countries to submit those plans to release further GEF funding. In conclusion, he highlighted some of the significant activities taking place under the Stockholm Convention, including establishment of a network for global monitoring of persistent organic pollutants, with monitoring activities initiated in 16 African countries. It was expected that further chemicals would be added to the 12 presently covered by the Convention at the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Geneva in May 2009.

61. Turning to the Rotterdam Convention, he said that the quick start to its existence had been facilitated by a high level of global political will to provide oversight of trade in chemicals. The Convention had assisted developing and transitional countries to build capacity and regulate more effectively the import of specific chemicals. The success of the technical assistance programme had enabled the Convention to move into a new phase whereby it was actively used by Parties to facilitate the type of chemicals trade they wished. A new focus area would be a programme to tackle the sound management of industrial chemicals, which would complement the current agricultural chemicals management programmes. Lastly, he urged representatives and ministers to attend the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Rome in October 2008, which would feature a ministerial segment focusing on the theme "Sound chemicals management: relieving the burden of public health".

6. Statement by the representative of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer

62. Mr. Marco González, Executive Secretary of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, commended the work of the national ozone programmes and ozone units, setting out their achievements with the help of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, such as technology transfer, new partnerships and the establishment of regional networks of ozone officers and customs officers. He stressed that Africa as a continent had been a leader in the Protocol, noting that the siting of the secretariat in Kenya marked the first and only time that a secretariat for a major multilateral environmental agency had been hosted in an African country and in the developing world. He commended African States on their implementation of and compliance with the Protocol, noting their strong commitment and their willingness to play a significant role in global environmental protection. He said that much work remained to ensure the full implementation of the Protocol, but stressed that they were moving in the right direction. Paying tribute to the African States, he pledged the steadfast support of UNEP and the Ozone Secretariat in helping them to attain their goals.

7. Statement by the representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

63. In his statement, Mr. Walter Erdelen, Assistant Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), highlighted activities undertaken by UNESCO of relevance to AMCEN. Noting the longstanding and fruitful cooperation between the two organizations, he highlighted the importance of enhancing synergies between UNESCO and AMCEN in the context of cross-cutting issues. In addition to the many physical stresses to which they were subject, he said, the capacity of many African countries to adapt to climate change was weak; he called for increased assistance to enable them to adopt appropriate adaptation measures in striving for sustainable development. Stressing that UNESCO stood ready to support the Conference in its efforts, he reiterated the appeal made by many representatives that Africa needed to speak with one voice through AMCEN.

B. Other matters raised during the ministerial segment

64. One representative suggested, in the context of adaptation projects to be funded in African countries, possible cooperation with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to improve weather information for rural women, given the problems caused to farming communities by disruptions to traditional rainfall patterns caused by the effects of climate change.

65. Several representatives pointed to the need to produce a manual for negotiators, with a view to preparing them to engage effectively in climate-change negotiations. The representative of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) said that WWF was willing to work with the secretariats of AMCEN and NEPAD in training negotiators.

XI. Closure of the session

66. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the President declared the ministerial segment and the session closed at 12.50 p.m. on Thursday, 12 June 2008.

Annex I

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment Johannesburg Declaration on the Environment for Sustainable Development

We, African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 10 to 12 June 2008 at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Reinforcing the role of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in providing political guidance and leadership for environmental management and advocacy in Africa,

Noting the close linkages between the success of policies and actions for the protection of the environment and the success of national programmes to combat poverty and promote equitable human development,

Recalling the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, African Union summits and related African meetings, in which the special challenges facing Africa have been identified and commitments made to support Africa in achieving sustainable development,

Concerned by the increasing number of environmental challenges facing Africa and the continent's vulnerability to global climate change, the increasing need for capacity-building and technology transfer and the inadequate financial and technical resources to meet these challenges,

Concerned also by the fact that Africa is the most vulnerable region with the least capacity to adapt to climate change and that, while Africa contributes the least, it suffers most from the impacts,

Concerned further by the impact on women of environmental degradation and recognizing the importance of mainstreaming gender in all environmental policies, strategies and related programmes,

Noting progress made so far in implementing the action plan of the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development as presented at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Noting also the progress made so far by African countries in the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the chemicals conventions,

Acknowledging the need for African countries to comply with and enforce their international environmental obligations and commitments under multilateral environmental agreements through effective regional and national implementation,

Noting with appreciation the support provided by the United Nations Environment Programme, the Global Environment Facility and other partners to the regional economic commissions to enable them to prepare their subregional environmental action plans, as presented at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recalling further that, at its seventeenth session, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development is focusing on the thematic cluster of agriculture, rural development, land and drought and desertification, particularly in Africa,

Recognizing the efforts and progress made so far regarding environmental assessment in Africa and in increasing the awareness and capacity of African professionals in environmental assessment and management in support of the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development,

Recognizing with appreciation the important role that the private sector and the civil society play in sustainable development,

Recalling the special effort needed by African countries to attain the Millennium Development Goals and the 2010 targets for reducing biodiversity loss,

Recalling the commitments made at the two partners' conferences on the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development held in Algiers, in December 2003, and in Dakar, in March 2005,

Hereby declare our resolve:

1. To continue implementing fully the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the subregional environmental action plans;
2. To urge the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to strengthen efforts to forge cooperative links with the relevant structures of the African Union and other relevant African ministerial bodies with a view to harmonizing institutional arrangements, policies and programmes;
3. To urge the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to strengthen the relationship with United Nations agencies, particularly the United Nations Environment Programme and other relevant international institutions and bodies, through constant liaison with the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the secretariats of relevant international institutions on issues related to the environment;
4. To urge Africa's development partners to support the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, the Commission of the African Union, the secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the regional economic communities in implementing their environmental action plans;
5. To call upon Governments to support capacity-building in the area of technology-supported learning to enhance the delivery of environmental education, training and awareness-raising;
6. To call upon African countries and development partners to mainstream gender issues into national and subregional environmental programmes and to initiate programmes aimed at promoting gender-sensitive capacity-building in relation to the environment;
7. To call upon African countries to participate effectively in upcoming negotiations on key multilateral environmental agreements, particularly those related to biodiversity, climate change, chemicals, land degradation and drought and desertification;
8. To call upon African countries to participate fully and effectively in the various capacity-building and enhancement activities for the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, including the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building and the European Commission programme on capacity-building related to implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries;
9. To call upon the Global Environment Facility and the TerrAfrica initiative to continue to support efforts being made by African countries to promote sustainable land management in the context of their national poverty eradication strategies, and their efforts to disseminate the good lessons learnt to other countries for greater continental impact;
10. To urge the secretariats of the Rio conventions to ensure that synergies between climate change and efforts to combat land degradation, desertification and biodiversity loss are optimized to take advantage of gains made through these actions, particularly in Africa;
11. To call upon the African group of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, working with the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Commission of the African Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and other relevant intergovernmental institutions, to develop a common African position on the comprehensive international climate-change regime beyond 2012, and further to call upon Governments of Africa to support the process actively;
12. To commit ourselves to creating a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, bringing together existing and new intergovernmental decisions, initiatives and programmes in a consolidated manner, to meet the pressing challenges of adaptation and mitigation and to meet the urgent needs for capacity-building, finance and technology in this region;
13. To invite the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, with the assistance of the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the United Nations Environment Programme, to develop a road map for the implementation of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

14. To request the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Environment Programme, other United Nations specialized agencies and the African Development Bank to support the continuing regional coordination efforts to implement the action programmes at all levels, including the development of initiatives such as the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel, extending such programmes to similar subregions of North-East Africa and Southern Africa;

15. To request the Commission of the African Union to take a leadership role in spearheading the development and implementation of biosafety strategies and policies and institutionalizing biosafety in its programmes;

16. To call upon Governments to enhance support for the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region and the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region as frameworks for implementation of the marine and coastal component of the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;

17. To call upon Governments to adopt integrated management approaches to freshwater resources and to develop regional and national policies and management measures to mitigate the impact of human activities on freshwater resources;

18. To mainstream climate change adaptation measures into national and, where appropriate, regional development plans, policies and strategies with a view to ensuring adequate adaptation to climate change in such areas as water resources, food and energy security and management of coastal and marine resources;

19. To request the United Nations agencies, Bretton Woods institutions, African Development Bank and other development partners to support African countries in taking measures to build economic and ecosystem resilience against climatic variability and change and to implement effectively the Bali Action Plan adopted at the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

20. To call for the modification of the Clean Development Mechanism to enhance its contribution to sustainable development efforts on the continent and to provide increased support for the introduction of climate change mitigation measures and technologies in African countries;

21. To request the African Union to consider convening an African leaders' summit on climate change to be held back-to-back with the summit of the African Union to be held in 2009;

22. To support the bid by South Africa to host the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2011;

23. To ensure that climate change adaptation imperatives are aligned more closely across regions and countries and to foster regional and international cooperation to develop appropriate adaptation financing mechanisms;

24. To support the transboundary conservation of natural resources, to share best practices and lessons learnt in Africa and to request international support to ensure the continued success and survival of transboundary conservation efforts;

25. To encourage African countries to establish regional mechanisms and initiatives to prevent, control and manage invasive alien species infestation in Africa;

26. To call upon the African Union and the United Nations Environment Programme to support African negotiators in the negotiation of a new international regime on access and benefit-sharing;

27. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to continue with the preparation and production of the publication *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment*;

28. To renew our commitment to the endorsement of the Africa Environment Outlook process as a monitoring and reporting tool for sustainable environmental management and a framework for national, subregional and regional integrated environmental assessment and reporting, noting with appreciation the implementation of the Africa Environment Information Network at the national,

subregional and regional levels to strengthen access to reliable environmental data and information in Africa;

29. To renew our commitment to the continued promotion of capacity-building and strengthening of environmental assessment systems in line with the recommendations made at the workshop of African experts on effectiveness of environmental assessment systems and to urge development partners to support the implementation of those recommendations;

30. To urge the International Conference on Chemicals Management, at its second session, to give priority to the establishment of a sustainable financing mechanism for the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;

31. To call on the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, development partners and regional economic communities to give priority to the needs of African countries in the effective implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;

32. To advocate the sustainable use of chemicals and to commit ourselves to the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes in pursuit of the goals and objectives of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the chemicals-related conventions;

33. To call upon African Governments to develop and implement appropriate policy and institutional frameworks for sustainable solid-waste management;

34. To call upon those countries that have not yet ratified the chemical-related conventions, namely, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, to do so and to urge African development partners to assist and support African countries in the implementation of such conventions;

35. To call upon Governments to accelerate the ratification of the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources to permit the entry into force of the convention and secure a fully comprehensive and representative network of protected areas and other natural resources in Africa,

36. To call upon the Commission of the African Union, Governments and all stakeholders to work together to ensure the development and implementation of an African ecolabelling mechanism based on African experiences and lessons;

37. To request the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to follow up on the conclusions and recommendations of the fifth African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production;

38. To encourage African countries to celebrate Africa Environment Day to raise awareness of the environmental challenges facing the continent;

39. To support the African Network of Environmental Journalists in its efforts to raise the awareness of African decision makers regarding major environmental issues and the challenges arising therefrom and to encourage the network to continue its activities, in particular the involvement of the African press in efforts to further the environmental cause;

40. To urge Governments to take necessary action to ensure that the general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment is replenished during the intersessional period;

41. To urge the Global Environment Facility to allocate new and additional resources through the persistent organic pollutants focal area and any additional mechanism that might be created to support the implementation of the chemicals-related conventions and to develop the capacities needed to achieve sound chemicals management;

42. To invite donor countries to provide bilateral and multilateral aid funding to facilitate the effective implementation of national obligations under the chemicals-related instruments, including the Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel conventions;

43. To request the President of the African Development Bank to clarify its position on the request by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the African Union to host the African Environment Facility at the Bank;

44. To call upon the Global Environment Facility to continue to give high priority to African countries and to allocate financial resources based on the needs and priorities of countries and not merely on ex-ante allocation systems such as the resource allocation framework and to request the Facility to improve its procedures and to revise its co-financing policy to give African countries easier access to its financial resources;

45. To urge all donors to the Global Environment Facility trust fund to contribute to a substantially higher and robust fifth replenishment;

46. To commit ourselves to the issues highlighted at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and to give effect to the decisions adopted at that session;

47. To mandate the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to submit the report of the twelfth session of the Conference, including the Johannesburg Declaration and its other annexes, to the Executive Council of the African Union;

48. To mandate the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to submit the President's summary of the ministerial policy dialogue to the Group of Eight at its summit meeting, to be held in Hokkaido, Japan, in July 2008, to the United Nations General Assembly at its special high-level meeting on Africa's development needs, scheduled to be held in New York in September 2008, and for consideration at the meetings in the Monterrey process on financing for development.

49. To pay tribute to the President and people of South Africa for the warm welcome and the hospitality extended to participants, the excellent facilities made available and their generous support to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its twelfth session, which contributed greatly to its success.

Annex II

Decisions adopted by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its twelfth session

Decision 1: Implementation of the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

We, African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 10 to 12 June 2008, at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Decide:

- (a) To request the Commission of the African Union:
 - (i) To provide high-level political support to the successful implementation of the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;
 - (ii) To strengthen its environment section and those of the relevant technical units of the regional economic communities to enable them to carry out their responsibilities of the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;
- (b) To urge development partners to assist in providing required resources for the implementation of subregional environmental action plans by the regional economic communities;
- (c) To call on development partners to provide financial support for the implementation of the projects and programmes of the action plan at the subregional and national levels;
- (d) To request the United Nations Environment Programme to provide technical support to the regional economic communities in the implementation of the subregional action plans for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;
- (e) To urge countries to implement the projects of the action plan in conformity with the spirit of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;
- (f) To request the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to enhance its facilitation of United Nations agency consultations, coordination and cooperation in respect of the thematic cluster concerned with the environment, population and urbanization, together with sub-clusters concerned with water, energy, biotechnology, biosafety and post-conflict environmental reconstruction and other relevant sub-clusters;
- (g) To request development partners to provide support to the United Nations Environment Programme for the reactivation of the Partnership for the Development of Environmental Law and Institutions in Africa;
- (h) To request the United Nations Environment Programme to benefit from the experiences within African countries in the field of environmental law institutions;
- (i) To maintain effective communication between the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the relevant organs of the African Union, including the secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the regional economic commissions;

(j) To enhance the ratification and implementation of the revised Algiers Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and other relevant conventions for the effective management of natural resources.

Decision 2: Climate change

I. Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012

We, the African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 10 to 12 June 2008, at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Noting that the thirteenth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the third Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007 mandated the negotiation, by 2009, of an international climate change agreement for the full and comprehensive implementation of the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol beyond 2012,

Further noting that progress on negotiations on the new agreement will be reviewed at the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Poznan, Poland, in December 2008, with a view to completing these negotiations by the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties, to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in December 2009,

Stressing Africa's vulnerability to the effects of climate change and noting the urgent need for all countries to take further actions, including more stringent and binding emissions reductions by all developed countries, and underscoring the importance of a successful outcome of these negotiations and the essential need for Africa to participate actively and strategically in the negotiations to ensure that its needs, interests and requirements are met,

Decide:

(a) To request the United Nations Environment Programme, in collaboration with the Commission of the African Union, the secretariat of its New Partnership for Africa's Development, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and other relevant intergovernmental institutions, to organize a series of preparatory meetings for Africa's climate change negotiators and to provide the negotiators with substantive technical and policy analysis support to strengthen their preparations for the fourteenth and fifteenth sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the fourth and fifth sessions of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

(b) To urge African countries to participate actively in international climate change negotiations, in particular, the Accra and Poznan meetings in August and December 2008, respectively;

(c) To recommend that the African Union, at its thirteenth summit in June and July 2009, consider, with a view to its final adoption, a common African position on the comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012, which is to be finalized in December 2009;

(d) To mandate the President and Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to initiate discussions with the Chair of the Commission of the African Union regarding the necessary procedures for Africa's climate change negotiators to prepare a common African position for adoption at a special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, and to submit that common African position for consideration at the summit of the African Union in June and July 2009, with a view to its adoption.

II. Comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes

We, African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 10 to 12 June 2008, at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Expressing concern regarding the scientific conclusions contained in the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, particularly as they relate to the social, economic and environmental impacts of climate change in Africa and noting that, while Africa has contributed the least to the increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, it is the most vulnerable continent to the impacts of climate change and has the least capacity to adapt,

Recognizing the need to integrate Africa's existing climate change initiatives and programmes under a consolidated framework to ensure coordination and coherence in the implementation and review of climate change initiatives and sustainable development plans in Africa at all levels,

Welcoming the recent decisions by the African Union and related African intergovernmental bodies establishing initiatives to meet the challenge of climate change, as outlined in annex I to the present decision,

Recognizing that, since progress in responding to the challenge of climate change in Africa is far from sufficient, it is essential to develop further and supplement these initiatives through a comprehensive framework of programmes to meet the challenges of climate change in Africa,

Recognizing the adoption by the African Union of the Tunis Declaration and action plan and the decision to determine the rationale and modalities for establishing an African panel on climate change, and in particular the Declaration on Climate Change and Development in Africa,² in which the heads of State and Government requested the Commission of the African Union to consult the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment with a view to establishing the necessary mechanisms to follow up on the implementation of the Declaration,

Decide:

(a) To create, in view of the need for synergies in implementation, a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, bringing together existing and new intergovernmental decisions and initiatives and programmes in a consolidated manner, to be implemented at the regional, subregional, national and local levels;

(b) To adopt and develop further a conceptual outline, as set out in annex II to the present decision, to serve as the basis for identifying and filling gaps in the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes;

(c) To establish, under the direction of the President and Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, an ad hoc working group to assist the President and the Bureau in the implementation of the present decision. The working group may invite contributions from relevant organizations as required;

(d) To submit for adoption the consolidated comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes to a special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in the margins of the summit of the African Union in June and July 2009, and to request the secretariat of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to support the Bureau in organizing that special session;

2 Assembly/AU/Decl.4 (VIII).

(e) To call upon African Governments, international organizations and regional economic communities to expedite the implementation of existing programmes and initiatives on climate change in Africa at all levels and to strengthen and mobilize the capacities of existing relevant facilities and institutions in Africa to meet the pressing climate change challenges in this region;

(f) To mandate the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to present the progress in the development of the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes at the joint annual meeting of the African Union Conference of African Ministers of Economy and Finance and the Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, to take place in March and April 2009, to ensure adequate financing of the programmes and activities under the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes;

(g) To call upon Africa's development partners to support, with financial and technical assistance through multilateral North-South and South-South cooperation, the implementation of the agreed decisions on climate change in Africa and to request multilateral financial institutions and other relevant donors to support the implementation of the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes;

(h) To invite multilateral financial institutions and other development partners to take into account the special needs of Africa in the decision-making processes under international financing schemes, including, among others, adaptation funds, World Bank climate funds, African Development Bank funds and United Nations initiatives, and to streamline their procedures to improve access to finance;

(i) To support the process of developing the Climate Information for Development in Africa programme (ClimDevAfrica) and to request the Commission of the African Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank to accelerate the finalization of the programme document and the dissemination of this information to ensure the participation of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in the Climate for Development in Africa programme;

(j) To endorse the decision of Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in December 2007 on the African panel on climate change and to request the Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to work further with the secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the Commission of the African Union, in consultation with the Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Meteorological Organization in defining the modalities of establishing an African panel on climate change;

(k) To welcome and support the establishment of the Africa Climate Policy Centre at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, emphasizing its role in supporting the integration of climate change into economic development and planning processes in Africa, and to call upon the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and other relevant institutions to play an active role in this initiative.

Annex I

Indicative list of Africa's climate change decisions

Decision on Climate Change and Development (Assembly/AU/Dec.134 (VIII)), adopted at the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union

Declaration on Climate Change and Development in Africa (Assembly/AU/Decl.4 (VIII)), adopted at the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union

Jinja Declaration adopted by the African Ministers' Council on Water at the African Ministerial Roundtable on Climate Change

Tunis Declaration and Action Plan adopted at the International Conference on International Solidarity for the Protection of Africa and the Mediterranean Region from Climate Change

Decision CP 5/3 on assessment and monitoring activities adopted at the fifth session of the Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region

Joint Declaration of the Abidjan Convention and Nairobi Convention

Joint Africa-European Union Strategy and Action Plan on Energy and Environment, including the Africa-European Union Partnership on Climate Change, adopted at the second Africa-Europe Summit

Decision on climate change and the continental shelf (Assembly/AU/Dec.179 (X)) adopted by the tenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union

Decision on the outcomes of the third ordinary session of the [African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology](#) (EX.CL/Dec.387 (XII)) adopted at the twelfth ordinary session of the Executive Council of the African Union

Resolution L.2 on climate change and development in Africa adopted by the First Joint African Union-ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 26–29 March 2008; the resolution expressed appreciation to the African Union, ECA and the African Development Bank for the Climate Information for Development in Africa programme and welcomed and endorsed the establishment of the Africa Climate Policy Centre by ECA

Decision on disaster risk reduction (EX.CL/Dec.250 (VIII)), adopted at the eighth ordinary session of the Executive Council of the African Union

Annex II

Indicative conceptual outline of a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes

The discussions of the expert segment of the twelfth session of African Ministerial Conference on the Environment resulted in the development of an indicative conceptual outline of a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes to be implemented at all levels.

Africa's priorities are to implement climate change programmes in such a way as to achieve sustainable development, in particular to alleviate poverty and attain the Millennium Development Goals, with emphasis on the most vulnerable groups, such as women and children.

Given that Africa is the most vulnerable region with the least adaptive capacity, adaptation is the most immediate priority.

There is a need, however, for global mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions as a primary mechanism to prevent long-term climate change impacts on this region. In addition, effective implementation of mitigation measures offers opportunities for Africa to increase its economic competitiveness along a sustainable path of low-carbon development.

The following indicative outline covers the two implementation areas of adaptation and mitigation supported and enabled by finance, capacity-building and technology.

The successful implementation of the adaptation and mitigation areas of work will require the full participation of all stakeholders, including the full involvement and empowerment of, and partnership with, civil society.

Adaptation

Three broad areas of work were identified:

- (a) Disaster reduction and risk management: including early warning, preparedness, emergency response and post-disaster recovery;
- (b) Sectoral planning and implementation: adaptation in key sectors including water, agriculture, coastal zones, health, infrastructure, biodiversity and ecosystems, forests, energy, urban management and tourism, taking into account the cross-sectoral implications;
- (c) Building economic and social resilience through the diversification of economies to reduce dependence on climate-sensitive sectors, including through the use of indigenous knowledge and practices and the strengthening of community organizations.

Steps for effectively implementing work in the above three areas include:

- (a) Understanding climate and climate change processes, vulnerability and risks, including, but not limited to, through monitoring and observation systems;
- (b) Understanding the economics of adaptation;
- (c) Understanding the social and cultural dimensions of adaptation;
- (d) Policy setting and planning, including climate-proofing of future development;
- (e) Piloting and demonstrating;
- (e) Full-scale implementation.

Mitigation

In order to implement sustainable development policies and mitigation measures in Africa, with special emphasis on the development of indigenous and local communities, women and children in Africa, the following key areas of mitigation work were identified:

- (a) **Energy sector:** Including scaling up investment to provide access to affordable cleaner energy, especially for rural communities; development of appropriate alternative energy sources; policies and measures to increase energy efficiency; precautionary approach to the development of biofuels for mitigation and energy security;
- (b) **Reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD):** Including the development of market-based mechanisms to reward or provide incentives for forest conservation or the avoidance of deforestation and sustainable forest management practices;
- (c) **Land-use, land-use change and forestry:** As the primary source of emissions in Africa, this represents one of the key areas for mitigation work in the continent, which includes best practices to enhance carbon sequestration and reduced emissions;
- (d) **Using and maximizing opportunities from the international carbon market:** Africa to call for binding ambitious targets for developed countries to secure the price of carbon. Key areas of work for Africa include reforming the rules of market mechanisms such as the Clean Development Mechanism to increase accessibility by African countries, the full implementation of the Nairobi Framework and building capacity in Africa to gain access to the available financial mechanisms (the Clean Development Mechanism, Global Environment Facility, the World Bank and the African Development Bank, among others).

Supporting and enabling measures

Three categories of supporting and enabling measures have been identified to support Africa's efforts to adapt to and mitigate climate change. These should form an integrated package of support tailored to each climate change intervention.

1. Capacity-building

- To enable human resource development through focused training, mentoring and learning-by-doing approaches, among other measures
- To empower relevant institutions at various levels
- To enhance observation, research and knowledge management
- To strengthen communication, education and awareness-raising at all levels, especially at the local and community levels
- To strengthen and use the regional networks of information and knowledge-sharing
- To develop tools, methods and technologies and support their application
- To encourage and strengthen participatory and integrated approaches in planning and decision-making, including the meaningful participation of civil society
- To share experiences, information and best practices of African countries
- To assess, strengthen and mobilize the capacities of existing relevant facilities and institutions in Africa

2. Finance

Scaling up sources of financing, including:

- National or domestic investment
- Multilateral funding: grant, loan and concessional
- Bilateral investment and donor funding
- Insurance and other risk management instruments
- Private sector instruments
- Market-based instruments, e.g., carbon finance

Improving access to financing through:

- Rationalizing the ever-growing number of funds (including eliminating duplications and harmonizing the governance of these funds, among other things to reduce conditionalities to disbursement of the funds)
- Streamlining bureaucratic procedures
- Reducing transaction costs

The need:

- For equity in the allocation of funds based on need and, including the use of vulnerability criteria in resource allocation decision-making
- To develop effective systems to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of funds mobilized for climate change
- For funding to be new, additional to existing development funds and reliable in the long-term

3. Technology development and transfer

The development and transfer of technology are critical to the achievement of both adaptation and mitigation programmes in Africa. Key areas of work in the field of technology include:

- Enhancing technology development and transfer, including hard technologies (e.g., drip irrigation, water harvesting, drought-resistant crop varieties, renewable energy technologies, building technologies, etc.) and soft technologies (e.g., knowledge, systems, procedures, best practices)
- Addressing technology transfer barriers, including rules of trade tariffs, intellectual property right-barriers and technical trade barriers (standards, ecolabelling)

- Enhancing and supporting the research and development capacity in African countries to foster the development and local manufacture of cleaner mitigation and adaptation technologies
- Enhancing technology cooperation between African countries and others, particularly the Africa-European Union joint strategy, Africa-China, Africa-India, Africa-South America and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development cooperation programme with Japan, including through encouraging member States to develop specific programme proposals and submit proposals for consideration

Decision 3: Constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

We, African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 10 to 12 June 2008, at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Aware of the mandate conferred upon the Conference by ministers at the eighth session of the Conference, held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 3 to 6 April 2000, as contained in paragraph 31 of the ministerial report of the session,

Also aware of the mandate conferred upon the Conference by ministers at the ninth session of the Conference, held in Kampala, Uganda, on 4 and 5 July 2002, as contained in decision 4 of the ninth session,

Mindful of the request made to the secretariat by ministers at the tenth session of the Conference, held in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 29 and 30 June 2004, as contained in decision 3 of the tenth session,

Mindful also of the request made to the secretariat by ministers at the eleventh session of the Conference, held in Brazzaville, Congo, on 25 and 26 May 2006, as contained in decision 3 of the eleventh session,

Noting that the process of further intergovernmental consultations continues to be under way, thus necessitating the close monitoring of the evolution of other initiatives under the African Union,

Decide:

- To note with appreciation the efforts of the secretariat of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to facilitate the completion of the document on the revised Constitution;
- To note also the potential implications that the evolving structures of the African Union have on the Conference;
- To request the secretariat to defer the process of revising the Constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment pending the complete establishment of the institutional structures of the African Union and to report to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its thirteenth session on any progress made in this regard.

Decision 4: Status and use of the general trust fund for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

We, African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 10 to 12 June 2008, at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recalling the Conference's decisions on financial resources adopted at its special session in Nairobi on 16 October 2001 and at the eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh sessions,

Taking cognizance of the fact that enhanced secretariat functions and the implementation of its programmes, in particular the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, will require additional human and financial resources,

Expressing appreciation to those Governments that have contributed to the Conference's general trust fund and, in the same regard, also expressing appreciation to the development partners for their support,

Expressing appreciation for the financial and technical support that the United Nations Environment Programme provides to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recognizing the need for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to finance its core activities,

Decide:

(a) To urge Governments to make every effort to pay their outstanding contributions to the general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

(b) To urge those Governments that have not contributed to the general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to endeavour to contribute to the fund to enable the Conference to scale up its activities;

(c) To request the secretariat of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to work with Governments that have not fulfilled their commitments to pay their contributions to the trust funds (arrears of four years and above) on an arrangement to fulfil such commitments;

(d) To use the interest generated by the general trust fund and to request the secretariat to make proposals on its use for approval by the Bureau prior to implementation;

(e) To agree that the general trust fund continues to be managed by the United Nations Environment Programme as long as the secretariat of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment remains with that organization;

(f) To request the secretariat to continue reporting on the status and use of the general trust fund at meetings of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

(g) To extend its appreciation to the United Nations Environment Programme and to urge its Executive Director to continue to provide support to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.

Decision 5: Chemicals and hazardous waste management

We, African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 10 to 12 June 2008, at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recognizing the direct adverse effects of chemicals on public health and the environment, including loss of productivity and income owing to ill health,

Recalling the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in which countries agreed on a common objective to "achieve by 2020 that chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment",

Noting that the chemical-related conventions are key to the successful attainment of the objectives of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management,

Noting the initial capacity-building activities for implementing the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management through the Quick Start Programme,

Noting also the active engagement and involvement of African countries in the implementation of the Strategic Approach through the nomination of national focal points, the development of an African regional plan of action and submission of project funding requests under the Quick Start Programme and other related activities,

Recalling the importance of the regional centres under the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants for capacity-building and technology transfer,

Recognizing that financial and technical support is essential to developing countries to deliver their commitments under existing policies and instruments for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste,

Noting the existence of a financial mechanism for the Stockholm Convention but not for the Basel Convention or for the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade,

Decide:

- (a) To prioritize sound chemical management in regional, subregional and national environmental planning, sustainable development and poverty reduction strategies;
- (b) To provide high-level political support to the development and implementation of the national implementation plans for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and chemicals-related conventions;
- (c) To develop effective chemicals management infrastructures, using the assistance mechanisms available under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management Quick Start Programme and chemicals-related multilateral environmental agreements;
- (d) To call upon Governments to promote at the national level an integrated approach to the implementation of these three conventions as a set of tools to assist countries in taking a holistic or life cycle approach to the sound management of chemicals by:
 - (i) Preventing unwanted trade in hazardous chemicals that cannot be managed safely at the national level;
 - (ii) Access to information on banned or severely restricted chemicals;
 - (iii) Promoting coordination and links with public health structures;
 - (iv) Identifying persistent organic pollutants and other toxic and hazardous chemicals in use or as wastes for sound management;
 - (v) Calling upon Governments to promote at the national level the establishment of an institutional framework and strengthening of national capacity within an integrated programme for the sound management of chemicals and the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;
- (e) To invite subregional and regional economic communities and regional economic integration organizations to cooperate with convention secretariats and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management secretariat for successful regional delivery;
- (f) To invite donor countries, the Global Environment Facility and other donors to support the work of national civil-society organizations in raising awareness of populations of the effects of chemicals;

(g) To invite the Global Environment Facility and other donors to make available new and additional resources for expanding the chemical management portfolio of the Global Environment Facility beyond persistent organic pollutants;

(h) To invite countries that have not done so to ratify the conventions and to nominate Strategic Approach national focal points;

(i) To request the Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility, with the support of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, to make funds available to support least developed countries in reaching the capacity necessary to initiate implementation of the Stockholm Convention and other chemical management instruments and programmes;

(j) To invite donor countries to provide bilateral and multilateral aid funding to facilitate the effective implementation of national obligations and commitments under the chemical-related instruments including the Basel Convention, the Rotterdam Convention, the Stockholm Convention, the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;

(k) To invite the Global Environment Facility and other donors to support the work of regional centres as centres of excellence for regional capacity-building and technology transfer;

(l) To request the secretariat of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, in conjunction with the conventions secretariats and the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management to review periodically the progress of integration of sound chemical management into national planning strategies and programmes and implementation of the conventions and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management in African countries and to report back to the Conference;

(m) To invite the International Conference on Chemicals Management to consider at its second session the adoption of a sustainable financial mechanism for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management in attaining the 2020 chemicals safety goals;

(n) To urge African Governments and other stakeholders to promote synergies among the various initiatives for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste;

(o) To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to facilitate the promotion of regional and subregional cooperation and exchange of experiences and to make use of regional centres to define projects of regional scope;

(p) To invite African Governments to participate in the African Stockpiles Programme and to recognize it as the continental programme for the safe disposal of obsolete pesticides;

(q) To invite the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to support countries' efforts to participate effectively in international meetings and activities relating to the sound management of chemicals through:

(i) Strengthening their access to scientific and technical information;

(ii) Consolidating and expanding the chemicals information exchange network programme;

(r) To invite countries to report jointly on the progress of implementation of the present decision;

(s) To invite the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to transmit the present decision to the joint conference of Health and Environment Ministers in Africa and to the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its second session, for their consideration and further action.

Decision 6: Environmental education and technology-supported learning

We, African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Johannesburg from 10 to 12 June 2008, at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Welcoming the working paper submitted by the secretariat on opportunities and challenges for environmental institutions and universities in Africa in adopting technology-supported learning,

Welcoming also the commitment by the New Partnership for Africa's Development, towards the enhancement of Africa's human resources through the provision of more and better education and training, especially in information and communications technology and other skills central to a globalizing world,

Noting the commitment made by the African Ministers of Education in 2006 to implement the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in the context of the Second Decade of Education in Africa and, in particular, to support the development of strategies for implementing the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in their respective countries within the framework of the African Union's Second Decade on Education, and to ensure that principles of sustainable development are included in educational development frameworks, programmes and activities at all levels,

Noting also the Geneva Plan of Action and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted at the World Summit on the Information Society, in particular the action line addressing e-learning and e-environment,

Recalling the decision of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its twenty-fourth session in February 2007 to promote and support environmental education programmes as a highly effective tool for building an environmentally sensitive and responsive populace capable of partnering with Governments in achieving established policy goals and targets,

Recalling further the adoption of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its twenty-third session, in February 2005, as an inter-governmentally agreed approach to enhancing the capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition and the implementation plan of the United Nations Environment Programme for the Bali Strategic Plan, presented at the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, held in Dubai in February 2006,

Decide:

(a) To encourage Governments, through their principal environmental authority, to facilitate interministerial cooperation to undertake, among other things, the following key actions in the area of environmental education and technology-supported learning:

- (i) An assessment of existing environmental education strategies, needs and challenges facing Governments in the area of technology-supported learning;
- (ii) The development of a strategic approach to mainstreaming environmental education across all relevant governmental institutions, including the design of programmes suitable for the primary, secondary and tertiary education sectors; and fostering cooperation with the non-formal environmental education sector;

- (iii) The development of an action plan for technology-supported learning in conjunction with the Human Resources, Science and Technology Department of the African Union (including e-learning) in follow-up to the strategic approach;
- (b) To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to provide strategic guidance and technical advisory services on the implementation of the above-mentioned activities and multilateral development partners to provide financial and technical assistance to build the capacities of African countries in this respect;
- (c) To request the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other partners concerned to strengthen their cooperation within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in order to provide their technical support and expertise to African countries to implement effectively and develop e-learning on environmental education for sustainable development;
- (d) To constitute a small group of members of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to undertake, on a trial basis, the development of 1–2 year pilot action plans for technology-supported learning;
- (e) To request the United Nations Environment Programme to identify partnerships involving international organizations, the donor community, the private sector and centres of excellence that will support the implementation of the pilot set of action plans;
- (f) To request Governments undertaking the pilot action plans to provide an interim report to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its thirteenth session and a final report to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its fourteenth session on the status of their implementation;
- (g) To request the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to enhance greater stakeholder involvement including non-governmental organizations, scientific organizations, nature clubs and local communities in the e-learning programme and in dissemination and exchange of information;
- (h) To invite countries to establish an African environmental e-learning network to share expertise, best practices and content and to identify a coordinating hub.

Decision 7: Africa Environment Day

We, African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 10 to 12 June 2008, at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Taking note of the report on the activities of the Commission of the African Union,

Recalling the decision by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity calling upon all member States to celebrate Africa Environment Day on March 3,³

Commending the efforts by the Commission of the African Union to galvanize member States to implement the decision,

Renewing the commitment of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to promoting environmental awareness at all levels of the continent,

Decide:

- (a) To agree that every year one country should be requested, on a regional rotation basis, to host the continental celebration of Africa Environment Day;

3 Decision CM/Dec.686 (LXXVI).

(b) To request the Commission of the African Union and its cooperation partners to work with the hosting State to make adequate preparations for the occasion.

Decision 8: Africa Environment Outlook process and the Africa Environment Information Network

We, African Ministers of Environment,

Having met in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 10 to 12 June 2008, at the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Noting with appreciation the production of the publication *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment* within the framework of the Africa Environment Outlook process and the progress made by the United Nations Environment Programme to prepare the third Africa Environment Outlook report,

Reaffirming our commitment to the Africa Environment Outlook process as a tool for monitoring sustainable development in Africa and a framework for environmental reporting at the national and subregional levels,

Noting with appreciation the implementation of an Africa environment information network and its increasing contribution to building the capacity for the implementation of national development programs, including poverty reduction strategies within the United Nations development assistance frameworks and introducing state of the art technology, such as remote sensing to monitor environmental changes in Africa and to support decision-making,

Welcoming the decision by the United Nations Environment Programme and the support of the development partners to enhance the role of the Africa Environment Information Network and integrated environmental assessment in the United Nations country programming processes,

Decide:

(a) To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to continue to mobilize financial resources to build the capacity of African countries in integrated assessment and reporting, including environmental data and information management;

(b) To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to continue to support the production of the third Africa Environment Outlook report as requested by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its eleventh session;

(c) To call upon Governments to take advantage of earth observation technologies, such as remote sensing, supported by the United Nations Environment Programme to undertake regular national integrated environmental assessments to strengthen the strategic positioning of the national environmental agencies and departments in national development planning processes such as the poverty reduction strategies and United Nations development assistance frameworks.

(d) To urge the secretariat of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment increasingly to involve the scientific community, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in integrated environmental assessment and reporting and the related capacity-building activities;

(e) To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to continue to support the production of the publication *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment* on a regular basis and to assist countries to develop national atlases;

(f) To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to liaise with secretariats of relevant conventions and other international organizations to mobilize resources for the Africa Environment Outlook, Africa Environment Information Network and the atlas processes.