



AMCEN

AU

Distr.: Limited  
8 June 2017

English and French only

### *African Ministerial Conference on the Environment*

#### **African Ministerial Conference on the Environment**

##### **Sixteenth session**

Ministerial segment

Libreville, 15 and 16 June 2017

## **Draft Decision 2: 2017 Omnibus Decision on Environment in Africa\***

*We, the African Ministers of Environment,*

*Having met in Libreville from 15 to 16 June 2017 at the sixteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,*

*Recalling the outcomes of the fifteenth and the sixth sessions of the Conference, held in Cairo from 2 to 6 March 2015 and from 18 to 19 April 2016 respectively,*

*Welcoming the resolutions made at the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme which took place in Nairobi, 23 to 27 May 2016;*

*Noting agenda 2063 “The Africa We Want”, and the first ten year implementation plan, 2014–2023, adopted at the 24<sup>th</sup> African Union Assembly<sup>1</sup> 23-24 January of 2015, Addis Ababa,*

*Recalling resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly adopting 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals,*

*Determined to strengthen our resolve to better manage our environment for the benefit of the present and future generations,*

### **Part 1: Governance Mechanisms for Ocean Ecosystem-based Management in Africa**

*Noting that the world including the Africa region is facing serious degradation and unsustainable use of the marine and coastal ecosystems thereby negatively impacting on the functioning of ecosystems and affecting livelihoods of coastal communities,*

*Acknowledging that the sustained contribution of oceans to national economies depends on the use of effective governance frameworks and integrated ocean/ecosystem based management approaches.*

*Acknowledging that weak governance infrastructure and sustainable management institutional frameworks has contributed to degradation and depletion of the marine and coastal ecosystems; maritime safety and insecurity, illegal and unregulated and unreported fishing thereby affecting national economies,*

*Recalling the Cairo Declaration made at the fifteenth session of the Conference on “Managing Africa’s Natural Capital for Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication” in where member states agreed to develop an ocean governance strategy in Africa and reiterated support for the regional seas programmes as regional platforms for the implementation of the Africa Integrated Marine Strategy 2050 and Agenda 2063 on ecosystem-based management approaches for marine resources in the exclusive economic zones and adjacent waters,*

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

<sup>1</sup> Assembly/AU/Dec.1(XXVI)

*Welcoming* the African Union Charter on Maritime Security, Safety and Development adopted in Lomé in October 2016,

*Welcoming* the outcomes of the United Nations Oceans Conference: Our oceans, our future: partnering for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 held in New York from 5 to 9 June 2017,

*Decide,*

1. To agree to support the regional seas programmes associated with the oceans and seas adjacent to Africa, that is, Nairobi Convention, Abidjan Convention, Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention, Regional Organisation of the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden as the main platforms for ecosystem-based ocean governance frameworks in Africa.

2. To agree to strengthen national and regional institutions in the use of adaptive governance and management approaches and to put in place appropriate ocean policies and legislation to guide the use of area based planning tools such as marine spatial planning and marine protected areas in the management of marine and coastal resources within their economic exclusive zones and adjacent waters.

3. To request the United Nations Environment Programme and the secretariats of the regional seas conventions and action plans to enter into cooperative agreements with the regional fisheries bodies to enhance application of ecosystem-based approaches in ocean governance in Africa and to support coastal states to integrate innovation and value addition approaches in all ocean based economic sectors such as fisheries, coastal tourism, aquaculture, maritime transport, off-shore oil and gas, renewable energy and sea-bed mining, using best available practices to enhance blue economy that provides for more inclusive employment and meets the production and consumption needs of the coastal states and communities.

4. To request the United Nations Environment Programme and other partners to support coastal states in the development of integrated ocean management policies including capacity development for marine spatial planning, and application of area based management, integrated solid waste management and marine litter and support internalization of environmental values in business practices within the exclusive economic zones and adjacent waters using ecosystem based management approaches.

5. To agree to continue fostering regional cooperation for the management of common, trans-boundary or shared marine resources including through information sharing, communication, collaboration, cooperation, capacity-building and coordination among and within states.

6. To request the United Nations Environment Programme and other partners, working with the Africa Union Commission, to continue supporting member states in the ongoing global negotiations on marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction and the development of an effective ocean governance strategy as well as on the roles of existing regional bodies in accordance with the previsions decision of this Conference in the matter.

## **Part 2: Managing Pollution in Africa**

*Acknowledging* that the Africa region is facing increasing levels of land, air, freshwater and marine pollution which is affecting the environment, socio-economic development, health and well-being of the people,

*Noting* that strong and effective policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks and adequate infrastructure are essential for sound management and control of all forms of pollution,

*Aware* of the need to reduce or reverse costs associated with air, land, and water pollution impacts on human and environmental health so as redirecting such savings towards sustainable social economic development,

*Decide,*

1. To commit ourselves to improve the management of chemicals, wastes, and the control of land, air (outdoor and indoor), freshwater, marine and other forms of pollution through strengthening of knowledge management, policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks as well as compliance and enforcement.

2. To commit to integrate pollution management aspects into our national development agendas, internalize pollution costs and create awareness at sub-national and local levels, the business and local communities on the environmental, health and socio-economic negative impacts of pollution.
3. To agree to support development of programmes that invest in management of land and ecosystems including water catchments so as to prevent pollution and maintain the health of water sources such as mountains, landscapes, wetlands, ground water, rivers and lakes to enable availability of quality water in a sustainable manner for all uses.
4. To agree to invest in development of innovative sound technologies and financing mechanisms that prevent, reduce and manage marine, land, air, indoor and outdoor pollution.
5. To formulate and implement regional and national strategies aimed to reduce, control and manage pollution resulting from waste, energy, transport, service, industry and urban sources while creating value addition in production and consumption.
6. To request the African Union Commission, with the support of United Nations Environment Programme, World Health Organisation, United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, African Development Bank and other partners, to hold a high level inter-ministerial forum relevant key ministries, industry, private sector and civil society to raise political awareness and develop common strategies for a future pollution free Africa.

### **Part 3: Land Degradation and Desertification**

*Aware* that drought, land degradation and desertification, especially in the context of climate change, require regional approaches and programmes where member states need to work together through the facilitation of regional economic communities and development partners,

*Welcoming* United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 2/13 on sustainable management of natural capital for sustainable development and poverty eradication and United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 2/24 on combating desertification, land degradation and drought and promoting sustainable pastoralism and rangelands,

*Welcoming* Windhoek Declaration for Enhancing Resilience to Drought in Africa made at the High-Level Meeting of the first African Drought Conference in Windhoek, 15 - 19 August 2016 which calls for operationalization of the Strategic Framework for Drought Risk Management and Enhancing Resilience in Africa,

*Decide,*

1. To urge member states to implement the Strategic Framework for Drought Risk Management and Enhancing Resilience in Africa so as to ensure a drought resilient and prepared Africa.
2. To agree to harmonise and strengthening land policies including land tenure and rights including women's rights and youth emancipation.
3. To agree to develop a common understanding and speak with one voice during the 13th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification especially on regional issues including the need to develop a protocol on enhancing drought resilience, the proposed land degradation neutrality fund, among others.
4. To agree to develop, with the support of Green Climate Fund and other partners, regional programmes and regional funding mechanisms such as the establishment of a carbon fund for the Great Green Wall Initiative of the Sahel-Sahara, regional and national land degradation monitoring, data standards, information sharing.

### **Part 4: Environment Resilience and Peacebuilding**

*Aware* that Agenda 2063 recognises that mismanagement of natural resources is a security factor and therefore can cause conflicts but when well managed the resources secure our resilience,

*Acknowledging* that environmental security in Africa involves securing natural capital, such as land, soil, water, forests, biodiversity, minerals, energy and other factors that are prime components of a nation's foundation underpinning our livelihoods and hence stability,

*Concerned* that natural resources have financed or contributed to causing conflicts and insecurity and that one in five people live in conflict or fragile states in Africa,

*Aware* that climate change coupled with increasing population growth has led to competition over natural resources thereby causing environmental degradation, affecting water and food security, increasing the risk of conflict, migration and displacement of our people,

*Determined* to break the conflict cycle and to increase our resilience by addressing the causes and drivers of environmental insecurity when designing and implementing actions on the governance of our natural resource in Africa,

*Decide,*

1. To agree to develop a charter on natural resources governance for Africa, with the support of the African Union Commission and United Nations Environment Programme, to enable member states to have common understanding and commitments to better govern and cooperate among ourselves on our natural capital and resources.
2. To agree to increase community awareness and participation so as to strengthen the roles of our people in natural resource governance.
3. To commit ourselves to address the root causes of environmental degradation in all its forms, such as drought, land and soil degradation, pollution, as these factors are the key drivers of displacement, migration, conflicts and reduction of resilience.
4. To agree to increase transparency and access to information on political, social and environmental impacts of drivers of conflicts including on resource use, resource development, trade, reporting illegal and unregulated exploitation.
5. To agree to set up or strengthen platforms including at regional economic communities for sharing knowledge and fostering collaboration on transboundary aspects of natural resources especially on those resources that cross borders, such as, water, minerals, forests, biodiversity, energy so as to avoid conflicts, combat illicit trade in natural resources or their products and increase resilience.
6. To agree to invest in national and regional environmental risk mitigation and mediation efforts to identify common interests, prevent conflicts and stop escalation of disputes.
7. To agree to increase efforts to combat environmental crimes and strengthen law enforcement in our countries.
8. To call upon all member states of the United Nations Environment Assembly to consider adopting, during its third session, a universally applicable resolution to draw global attention on the importance of environmental resilience and peacebuilding.

## **Part 5: Wildlife Management**

*Aware* that despite sustained investments, wildlife populations and their habitats in Africa continues to decline,

*Recognizing* the need to conduct a wildlife inquiry covering scientific, economic, social and governance aspects with the aim of sustaining investments in, and enabling an integrated approach to wildlife management in the context of enhancing natural capital of Africa.

*Decide,*

1. To request the United Nations Environment Programme, in collaboration with other partners, to conduct a comprehensive study on the key issues surrounding sustainable investments in wildlife management covering status and trends of wildlife and habitats including drivers of wildlife and habitat loss, policy interventions, resource allocation, governance and legal frameworks, effectiveness of actors including governments, civil society and the private sector, costs, benefits and incentives.

2. To agree to continue, with the support of partners, with the African Elephant range states dialogues so as to strengthen common understanding on management, trade and other issues of interest to Africa states.

## **Part 6: Sustainable Renewable Energy**

*Aware* that renewable energy is enabler and a pathway to address social, environmental and economic challenges by providing equal energy access and efficiency for productive use and electrification,

*Aware also* that African countries continue to face critical challenges on access to modern energy services especially in rural areas, poor energy infrastructure, low purchasing power, low investments in production and transmission, and over-dependence on biomass to meet energy needs,

*Acknowledging* that African countries have limited ability to upscale renewable energy development because of incoherent policies, weak institutional frameworks, low information and technical capacity, low financing and investment, among others,

*Welcoming* the energy resources atlas that was prepared with the support of the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa, Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa of the African Development Bank and United Nations Environment Programme,

*Decide,*

1. To agree to upscale development and use of clean renewable energy that will drive sustainable harnessing and value addition of Africa's natural capital.
  2. To agree to hold joint meetings of African ministers for environment and energy to provide policy and strategic guidance on innovative environment and investment solutions to accelerate development of clean energies.
  3. To agree to use integrated approaches of (i) decentralisation or off-grid electrification; (ii) decarbonisation or focus on low carbon emission, (iii) de-risking investment or developing risk mitigation facilities to attract investments, and (iv) democratisation energy services or energy access to all.
  4. To agree to develop or strengthen national and regional harmonized policy frameworks for accelerating sustainable production and consumption of biomass, for purposes of reducing land degradation, indoor pollution, and increasing efficiency.
  5. To agree to develop business models for enhancing access to finance to enable investment in clean energy, rural electricity transmission, women and youth energy entrepreneurship.
  6. To agree to enhance our capacity and skills for developing applicable technologies and innovations to economically and socially use our clean energy resources.
  7. To agree to promote energy efficiency in buildings and industrial processes through development of guidelines and regulations on sustainable buildings and cities, awareness creation, technical support and innovative programmes, promotion of energy efficiency in large scale as well as in small and medium enterprises.
-