



UN ENVIRONMENT NEWSLETTER

AFRICA OFFICE

MAY-JUNE 2017





THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT (AMCEN)



SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT (AMCEN)



The Sixteenth Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was held on 12-16 June, 2017 in Libreville, Gabon, under the theme: «Investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa».

A Regional Consultation Meeting (RCM) for African Major Groups and Stakeholders was held prior to the conference and attended by over 125 participants from civil society and Non-Governmental Organizations.

In a set of four decisions, Africa's environment ministers tackled the Continent's major environmental issues including climate change, oceans, pollution, land degradation and drought, illegal trade in wildlife and renewable energy:

Pollution: Environment ministers agreed to improve the management of chemicals and waste, and pledged to boost the control of land, air, freshwater, marine and other forms of pollution.

Circular Economy/ Green Economy/ Blue Economy: Ministers agreed to promote circular economy, green economy, blue economy and industrial symbiosis strategies in their countries. They also committed to upscale and replicate the circular economy and green business development policies and programmes to enable the growth of sustainable entrepreneurship as a key driver of Africa's economic transformation Agenda.

Desertification, land degradation and drought: Governments committed to strengthen sustainable land management, particularly to address land tenure issues, and the empowerment of women and youth.





AFRICA OFFICE
NEWSLETTER

THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT (AMCEN)



SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT (AMCEN)



Wildlife management and wildlife trade: Ministers called for the strengthening of institutions in Africa to effectively address the issues of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife. They called for a comprehensive study on sustainable management of wildlife on the continent, including the status and trends of key species and habitats.

Clean and sustainable energy: Ministers decided to boost the production and use of clean energy, such as wind and solar, to drive the continent's development. They committed to empowering women to improve their access to and engage in clean energy development, and to enhance their entrepreneurial skills and access to finance and markets.

Climate change: African governments regretted the decision of the United States of America - the largest emitter of greenhouse gases - to withdraw from the Paris Agreement on climate change and urged the country to reconsider its decision. African ministers reaffirmed the commitment of

their countries to the historical Paris Agreement and to its implementation. They also committed to ensure parity between mitigation and adaptation, as well as adequate, predictable and sustainable support for African countries - recognizing their special circumstances and needs- to enhance their efforts to combat climate change.

Kigali Amendment to phase out potent greenhouse gases: Ministers agreed to accelerate the ratification process of the Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol.

AMCEN

WED

PARTNERSHIP

POLLUTION

SWITCH
AFRICA GREEN

PEI

NATURAL
RESOURCES

SUSTAINABLE
ENERGY

PUBLICATIONS



WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



The World Environment Day celebrations were held in many countries in Africa Region under this year's theme "Connecting people to nature". The celebrations involved governments, civil society, youth, and private sector. Support was provided by UN Environment, Africa Office and partners.

Due to the role of natural resources in sustainable development and wellbeing of African nations, the engagement to mark the day was at high level involving Head of States, Parliament, Ambassadors and Opinion Leaders.

In some countries such as Ethiopia, DR Congo, Egypt and Niger, the World Environment Day was an opportunity to celebrate success in addressing environmental challenges. The day was also used by other countries such as Tanzania, Niger and Cote d'Ivoire as a platform to inform citizens on environmental issues and encourage them to protect nature.

UN Environment participated in numerous activities including the National World Environment Day Celebrations that took place in Kenya at Egerton University, Nakuru. The event was attended by H.E Judy Wakhungu, Cabinet Secretary for Ministry of Environment, the UN Environment Africa Office Director and other dignitaries.

Youth across Africa were very active in leading on celebrations, starting from Karura Forest, where over 100 school children participated in a day of tree planting, eco-walks, lectures, among other fun activities. In Garissa, 2000 trees were planted in an event spearheaded by Kenya Red Cross

Society. University students joined the celebrations taking part in a Mr. and Ms. Environment pageant, clean-up exercises and an electronic waste management conference. In the coastal area of Kenya, a major clean-up in Mombasa and Malindi collected over 2.2 tonnes of trash, engaging over 400 participants. In Egypt, several events were held including dissemination of 1000 documentaries on protected areas in Egypt to be aired on Egypt Air. The Parliament of Morocco was lit up in green to mark the day.

As a strong signal to end Illegal Wildlife Trade in Angola, Angola's Minister of Environment Her Excellency Maria de Fatima Jardim directed the Director of Biodiversity to set fire to the country's main ivory stockpile.

In South Africa, UN Environment partnered with Miss Earth in a major cleanup of parks and streets in the city of Johannesburg.

Cote D'Ivoire, D.R. Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Niger, Tanzania and Uganda are some of the countries that participated to make this year's World Environment Day memorable. For more on how the World Environment Day was celebrated in Africa and beyond, please visit <http://worldenvironmentday.global>



UN ENVIRONMENT AND ECCAS STRENGTHEN TIES TO BOOST IMPLEMENTATION OF CLIMATE AGREEMENT AND SDGS IN CENTRAL AFRICA



The UN Environment and the Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS) signed a memorandum of understanding on 16 June 2017 on the margins of the 16th AMCEN session in Libreville, Gabon. Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo, Regional Director and Representative for Africa signed

the cooperation agreement on behalf of UN Environment while Hon. Tabu Abdallah Manirakiza, Deputy Secretary General, appended his signature on behalf of ECCAS.

The signing of this memorandum of understanding is an important step towards strengthening partnership between UN Environment and Regional Economic Communities. On 30 October 2007, the Member States mandated the Economic Community for Central African States to coordinate all sub-regional activities in the field of environment and natural resources management in Central Africa.

This memorandum therefore provides not only a framework for a coordinated and more effective cooperation in addressing key environmental and sustainable development concerns in Central Africa, but also a great opportunity for UN Environment to expand its outreach, engagement and strategic presence in the Central African region.

“Through this partnership with ECCAS, we look forward to working synergistically to strengthen the capacity of member States to meet their environmental commitments; to contribute to environmental

awareness and to facilitate the adoption of innovative approaches and solutions to sustainable development challenges, as a contribution to the transformation of the Central African region towards Africa’s renaissance,” said Juliette Biao.

The collaboration will lay emphasis on policy development, technical assistance, training and capacity building, and joint resource mobilization for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the related Sustainable Development Objectives as well as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Key areas include sustainable management of ecosystems and natural resources; climate action to help Central African countries in the realization of their voluntary national determined contributions (NDCs); operationalization of Sustainable Development Goals and integration of sustainable development principles into sectoral development strategies, and programs; transition to a Green Economy; integrated water resources management and other components relating to the economics of ecosystems and biodiversity including marine ecosystems, natural disaster and risk management and the promotion of corporate social and environmental responsibility.



UN ENVIRONMENT AND CÔTE D'IVOIRE SIGN COOPERATION AGREEMENT FOR ROBUST ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA



Director for Africa Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo and the Minister of Sanitation, Environment and Sustainable Development of Côte d'Ivoire, Anne Désirée Ouloto in the presence of the High Commissioner of Côte d'Ivoire, H.E. Mr. Philippe Mangou.

The overall objective of this framework agreement is to provide an appropriate basis for coordinated and decisive actions to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of UN Environment operations in Côte d'Ivoire, in the context of the United Nations 2017-2020 Common Programming Framework. The cooperation is in line with the priorities of the National Development Plan for 2016-2020, the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union.

The 16th regular session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment ushered a new era in the cooperation between UN Environment and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire with the signing of a Country Cooperation Framework that would enhance the effectiveness of UN Environment support to the country.

The cooperation agreement was signed in Libreville on 16th June 2017 at the Embassy of Côte d'Ivoire to Gabon by UN Environment Regional

The signing of this cooperation framework is an important breakthrough after several months of work between the two parties. The cooperation paves the way for a more effective partnership with Côte d'Ivoire in ensuring that the country's developments prospects integrate a strong environmental dimension in government plans to attain the emergence status by 2020.

In signing this agreement, UN Environment and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire undertake to combine their efforts to promote cooperation and mutual assistance in the fields of environmental governance, promotion of consumption and sustainable production, efficiency in the use of resources, energy efficiency, combating climate change through implementation of the Paris Agreement, transition to a Green Economy; Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, protection of biodiversity, pollution control, clean-up of the Ebrie Lagoon, chemicals (including POPs and mercury) and waste management, promotion of sustainable cities, coastal erosion control and environmental assessments.

For the implementation of this Country Cooperation Framework, UN Environment intends to deploy its internal expertise and complement it by developing partnerships with the UN system, development partners, development banks and the private sector through public-private partnership in relevant areas in order to facilitate the strengthening of cooperation and the mobilization of financial resources under the leadership of Côte d'Ivoire.



GOVERNMENT CALLS ON STAKEHOLDERS TO CHAMPION THE PLASTIC BAGS BAN IN KENYA

Kenya's Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, with support from UN Environment, convened a Stakeholders Engagement Forum on Plastic Carrier Bags Ban on 21st June 2017 at the United Nations Office in Nairobi. The Forum was organised following the decision by the Government of Kenya to ban the manufacture, sale, export and importation of plastic carrier bags in the country.

The Stakeholders Forum brought together actors such as manufacturers, importers, workers unions, administrators, policy-makers at national and county government levels, academia, regulators, Member States who have implemented similar bans, and development cooperation partners.

H.E. Prof. Judi Wakhungu called on stakeholders to champion the implementation of the plastic ban in the country. Speaking at the forum, the Cabinet Secretary reiterated her government's commitment to implement the ban in order to protect Kenya's environment and its natural resources. She noted that the ban of plastic bags in Kenya had awakened a healthy debate on solid waste management.

In his remarks, Ibrahim Thiaw, the UN Environment Deputy Executive Director said that every year the world produces over 300 million tonnes of

plastic. He added that a huge amount of it - up to 13 million tonnes a year of it - ends up in the sea.

According to UN Environment's report, three quarters of marine litter is now comprised of plastics. Plastics are found floating in all the world's oceans and seas, even in remote areas far from human contact. They act as a carrier for persistent bio-accumulative and toxic substances; provide habitats for microbial communities; act as a potential vector for disease; and provide a means to transport invasive alien species across the ocean. Representatives from Rwanda and Uganda shared their experiences in banning plastic. In Rwanda, a cabinet directive to ban the use of plastic was passed in 2004. Following the directive, Rwanda developed the Law No 57/2008 prohibiting the manufacturing, usage, importation and sale of polythene bags in the country. The move prompted private sector to establish recycling plants for plastics and manufacture alternative packaging and carrier bags.

In 1992, the government of Uganda banned the importation of polyethylene packaging materials. The ban was done selectively on a phase-out approach. To accelerate the implementation, the government increased



taxes on all polythene and plastic containers from 20 to 50 per cent which increased the unit price of the cheapest polythene. A tax levy of 13 per cent was introduced, which led to smuggling of plastics into the country. The ban on plastics was enacted into law in 2009 in the Finance Act, which prohibits the importation, local manufacture, sale or use of polyethylene bags and materials.

The current initiative to stop the use of plastic bags in Kenya is a culmination of previous attempts in 2007 and 2011.



AFRICA OFFICE
NEWSLETTER

SWITCH AFRICA GREEN



HOME



CALENDAR



CONTACT

ACCELERATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: LESSONS FROM APPLYING INTEGRATED APPROACHES IN AFRICA

A new publication, 'Accelerating Sustainable Development in Africa' was launched at the Sixteenth Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) held from 12 to 16 June 2017 in Libreville, Gabon.

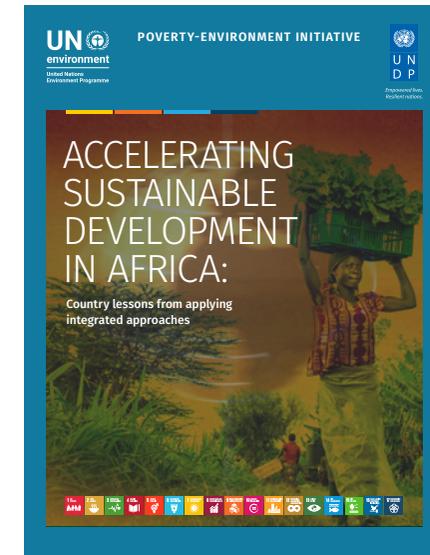
Over 50 participants from governments, civil society and African entrepreneurs attended the launch of the report during the SWITCH Africa Green Ministerial Dialogue: 'Enabling Green Business Development in Africa'

During the launch, Juliette Biao Koudoukpo, UN Environment Director and Regional Representative for Africa said that the work of the Poverty-Environment Initiative, a UNDP-UNEP led initiative, has been groundbreaking to foster collaboration between ministries of environment and ministries of finance as well as economic and social players in Africa.

Examples provided in the new publication illustrate how policymakers, government officials and development practitioners can start putting in place what the former UN Secretary General called: "a practical twenty-first century development model that connects the dots among the key issues of our time: poverty reduction; job generation; inequality; climate change; environmental stress; water energy and food security."

To view the report please visit:

http://unpei.org/sites/default/files/publications/UNDP_UNEP_Accelerating%20Sustainable%20Development%20in%20Africa%20high%20Res%20fa.pdf



AMCEN

WED

PARTNERSHIP

POLLUTION

SWITCH
AFRICA GREEN

PEI

NATURAL
RESOURCES

SUSTAINABLE
ENERGY

PUBLICATIONS



POVERTY-ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE



RUBAYA GREEN VILLAGE GENERATES NET BENEFITS OF \$21M AND LIFTS 13,500 PEOPLE FROM EXTREME POVERTY - SHOWS NEW COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Since 2010, Rubaya, a rural village nestled among the hills of northern Rwanda, has been quietly leading a sustainable development revolution. In partnership with the Rwanda's Environment Management Authority and a range of other ministries including Local Government, Infrastructure and Agriculture and under the leadership of a local women's-led cooperative, the Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) supported the adoption of a range of environmentally sustainable approaches and technologies making Rubaya the country's first 'Green Village'.

Terracing and tree planting has reduced soil erosion and deforestation which improved agricultural productivity and reduced flooding, siltation and water pollution from fertilizer run-off. The new biogas plants have provided Rubaya with a clean source of energy, reducing smoke related health problems from open fires and dependency on firewood, thereby reducing rates of deforestation. Rainwater harvested and stored in reservoirs and underground tanks is used for crop irrigation and household consumption. With these resources now available close at hand, women and children have more time to engage in other productive activities.

The 'Green Village' initiative has improved the lives and livelihoods of community residents, particularly women. Ms. Muhawenimana Solange, the leader of the cooperative, observed that since the beginning of the 'green village' project "we are getting more crops, yields have increased and we live in better houses. Living conditions are better. Now we have biogas, a school, a health centre and water. We have solved most of our problems".

A cost-benefit analysis of the project (2017) has proven that the green village project is very cost-effective. The village cost about US\$636,000 to construct and costs about US\$22,000 per year to run. Using conservative figures, the project demonstrates an internal rate of return of 5.8 percent, 7.7 percent and 8.9 percent over 15, 20 and 30 years, respectively.

The study also assessed the benefits of investing in an additional 30 villages of 100 households each – a total of 3,000 beneficiaries, which would cost about US\$48 million. It is estimated this would generate net benefits of about US\$21million at a 6 percent discount rate over 30 years, generate further indirect economic benefits equivalent to 0.8 percent of



GDP and lead to a 0.71 percent decrease in the extreme poverty rate of 16.3 percent (in 2015).

Excited by what Rubaya's green village has demonstrated, the Environment Authority has worked with the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Economy and Finance and other government partners to promote the replication of green villages and green practices. Since 2016, all 30 district development plans in Rwanda have included the setting up of at least one green village.

To view the study please visit: http://unpei.org/sites/default/files/e_library_documents/Costing_Green_Village_Benefits_Final%20report_2017.pdf



NATURAL RESOURCES



HOME



CALENDAR



CONTACT

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN ARTISANAL AND SMALL-SCALE MINING IN AFRICA



A regional workshop on building capacity for environmental sustainability in artisanal and small-scale mining in Africa was held in Addis Ababa, 24-26 May 2017. The workshop was jointly organized by African Mining Development Centre of the United Nations Economic Commissions of Africa and UN Environment.

The workshop was attended by 42 participants from the government, civil society, academia, development agencies, international organizations and the private sector.

Africa Mining Vision adopted by the African Union Summit in 2009 recognizes that sustainable harnessing of Africa's natural resources is critical for the continent's development. One of the interventions proposed under the framework for action is to promote environmentally sustainable, safe and socially responsible mining and material stewardship that includes mining communities as beneficiaries.

As part of its global strategy on the environmental governance of the extractives sector, the UN Environment has planned to initiate regional platforms for dialogue and capacity development at the regional level, to engage with countries and key partners on key issues related to mining.

Artisanal and small-scale mining is widespread in many African countries. It is an important source of income particularly in remote rural communities, contributing to poverty reduction and income diversity.

Environmental challenges such as the use of mercury by miners, deforestation as well as other socio-economic issues were identified by participants as key challenges that need urgent interventions to make the artisanal and small-scale mining sector sustainable.





AFRICA OFFICE
NEWSLETTER

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY



HOME



CALENDAR



CONTACT



A Workshop on “Women Entrepreneurs and Sustainable Energy in Africa” was held in Gabon on 13-14 June 2017 under the auspices of the sixteenth African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN).

The workshop was hosted by the Government of Gabon and organized by UN Environment in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Icelandic International Development Agency (MFA-ICEIDA), United Nations University-Gender Equality Studies and Trainings (UNU-GEST), “UN Women” and the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA).

The Workshop brought together more than 100 delegates from more than 20 countries that included representatives from governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society, financiers, women entrepreneurs, multi-lateral agencies, the private sector, and Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

The workshop concluded with the formulation of the “Libreville Outcome Statement on Women Entrepreneurs and Sustainable Energy in Africa”. It called upon African governments to:

- develop and implement environmentally sustainable and gender responsive energy policies ,
- facilitate access to finance and markets for women energy entrepreneurs across the value chains, and
- build the capacity of women entrepreneurs in the field of sustainable energy.

The outcome of the workshop was incorporated the sixteenth African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) Declaration.

AMCEN

WED

PARTNERSHIP

POLLUTION

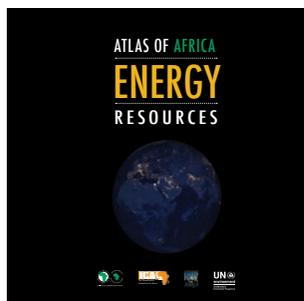
SWITCH
AFRICA GREEN

PEI

NATURAL
RESOURCES

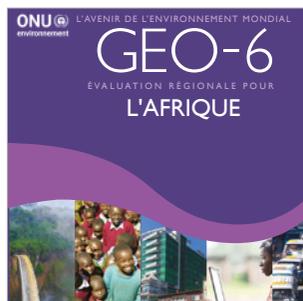
SUSTAINABLE
ENERGY

PUBLICATIONS



Atlas of Africa Energy Resources:

Africa is rich in energy resources but still has limitations in its capability to exploit and use them. In many African countries, power is inaccessible, unaffordable and unreliable – about half the population still has no access to electricity.



GEO-6 - Évaluation régionale pour l'Afrique

L'évaluation régionale GEO-6 pour l'Afrique arrive à un moment important. Elle dresse un portrait complet des enjeux environnementaux qui ont un impact sur le développement économique et social de l'Afrique.



UPCOMING EVENTS



10-12
JULY
2017

African Waste Marine Conference
Port Elizabeth, South Africa

12-13
JULY
2017

High Level Ministerial Workshop
and Energy Investment Forum
Swaziland

30 AUG –
1 SEPT
2017

Responsible Business Forum on
Sustainable Development in Africa
Johannesburg, South Africa



FEEDBACK



PUBLISHED BY:

UN ENVIRONMENT

AFRICA OFFICE

NOF Block 2, Level 1, South-Wing
P.O. Box 30552, 00100
Nairobi, KENYA
Email: communication.roa@unep.org

www.unep.org/africa