



AMCEN



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African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

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Eighth special session

Meeting of the expert group

Online, 30 November 2020

Annotated provisional agenda

I. Introduction

1. In accordance with articles 9 and 10 of its constitution, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) may hold special sessions between its ordinary sessions. At its meeting held online on 28 May 2020, the Bureau of AMCEN recommended holding a special session of the Conference.
2. Pursuant to that recommendation, and in view of the prevailing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, it was decided that the eighth special session of the Conference would be held online in November and December 2020. The theme of the special session is “Enhancing environmental action for effective post-COVID recovery in Africa”. The special session will consist of an expert group meeting, to be held on 30 November 2020, and a ministerial meeting, to be held on 4 December 2020.
3. The Secretariat has prepared a provisional agenda for the expert meeting, which is set out in document AMCEN/SS.VIII/EGM/1.
4. The secretariat has distributed an information note on the eighth special session (AMCEN/SS.VIII/INF/1). A complete list of the documents prepared for the session is set out in annex I to the present document.

II. Objectives and overview of the eighth special session

5. At its special session, the Conference will consider key issues for discussion at the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, which will be held online in February 2021, and agree on Africa’s common approach for engagement in the Assembly session. The fifth session of the Environment Assembly is aimed at consolidating environmental action within the context of sustainable development and giving impetus to effective implementation, in line with the outcomes of the seventeenth regular session of AMCEN, which called for an action-oriented approach with effective mechanisms for implementation of environmental policies to fully achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the Agenda 2063 strategic framework of the African Union.
6. The special session will provide an opportunity for the continent to find common ground for the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Kunming, China, in 2021. The fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties comes at a critical time, taking into consideration the COVID-19 pandemic and the increase in the number of zoonotic diseases owing to destruction of habitats by human activity. At the meeting, the Conference of the Parties will also be finalizing its post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
7. Participants in the eighth special session of AMCEN will also consider the ways in which the environment sector, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, can contribute to resetting the economy of the region on a path towards a more environmentally sustainable and low-carbon developmental trajectory. It is proposed that a green stimulus programme for Africa be developed and implemented as a priority to contribute to the overall post-COVID-19 recovery plan for Africa. A draft of the proposal will be considered at both the expert meeting and the ministerial meeting.

8. Finally, experts will be briefed on the preparations and key negotiation matters for the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Glasgow, Scotland, from 1 to 12 November 2021.
9. The expert group will bring the above matters to the attention of ministers for their consideration. Ministers are expected to adopt a ministerial statement and key messages reflecting their discussions under the various agenda items.

III. Items of the provisional agenda

Item 1

Opening of the meeting

10. The representative of the President of the Conference, the Minister for Environment, Forestry and Fisheries of South Africa, will chair the expert group meeting, while the representative of the Vice-President of the Conference (Senegal) will serve as Rapporteur.
11. The Bureau of the Conference currently comprises the following members:
 - (a) President: South Africa
 - (b) Vice-Presidents: Algeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan
 - (c) Vice-President and Rapporteur: Senegal.
12. The representative of the President of the Conference will deliver a welcoming statement. Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), as secretariat of the Conference, and the African Union Commission will also make opening remarks.

Item 2

Organizational matters

(a) Adoption of the agenda

13. The expert group will have before it the provisional agenda (AMCEN/SS.VIII/EGM/1) to consider for adoption.

(b) Organization of work

14. The expert group will have before it the programme of work for the meeting, as set out in annex II to the present document, to consider for adoption.

Item 3

Introduction and overview of the objectives of the meeting

15. A representative of the secretariat will present an introduction and overview of the objectives and working modalities for the meeting.

Item 4

Africa's engagement in the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

16. The fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment, will be held under the overarching theme of "Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals". The theme calls for strengthened action to protect and restore nature and the nature-based solutions needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in their three complementary dimensions (social, economic and environmental).
17. However, just as the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the postponement or cancellation of many global meetings and negotiations, its ongoing impact is likely to affect the convening of the Environment Assembly session. A two-step approach has therefore been proposed for the holding of the fifth session, which would allow for it to be convened online in February 2021 to address time-

sensitive administrative and budgetary matters necessary for the business continuity of UNEP and a resumed session to be held in 2022 to deliberate on substantive matters.

18. The eighth special session of AMCEN will provide an opportunity for African countries to agree on a common approach to the matters that will be considered by the Environment Assembly when it meets online in February 2021.

19. A representative from the Governance Affairs Office of UNEP will make a presentation on the road map to and structure of the first part of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly. A brief presentation will be made by a representative of the African Diplomatic Corps technical team on progress made in relation to the preparations for the online Environment Assembly session, including key messages. Additional information related to this agenda item is set out in document AMCEN/SS.VIII/3.

Item 5

Briefing on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and preparations for the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

20. The fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity is scheduled to be held in 2021. At that meeting, the Conference of the Parties is expected to address a number of matters related to the implementation of the Convention and its protocols. It is also anticipated that the final decision on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework will be taken, together with decisions on related topics, including capacity-building and resource mobilization.

21. The post-2020 global biodiversity framework aims to build on the Convention's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and sets out an ambitious plan to implement broad-based action to bring about a transformation in society's relationship with biodiversity with the aim of ensuring that, by 2050, the shared vision of living in harmony with nature is fulfilled.

22. The Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on biodiversity will make a brief presentation on the preparations by the region to date, indicating Africa's priorities and highlighting the continent's views and perspectives on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The Chair will also present the draft key messages for consideration by the expert group in preparation for submission to the ministerial segment.

Item 6

Consideration of the proposed green stimulus programme for Africa

23. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and exacerbated economic, social and environmental challenges globally, and particularly in Africa. However, the pandemic recovery effort presents an unprecedented opportunity to reset the global economy on a path towards a more environmentally sustainable, low-carbon developmental trajectory.

24. Recognizing that dealing with the impact of the virus requires a sound environmental response, the AMCEN Bureau has considered how the environmental sector can best respond to the pandemic. To that end, the Bureau has proposed the development and implementation of a green stimulus programme for Africa as a contribution towards the recovery of the continent from the pandemic.

25. The green stimulus programme will seek to enhance ambition to boost implementation of existing environmental and sustainable development programmes in Africa through consolidated resource mobilization, technical support, capacity-building and improved coordination and cooperation under the umbrella of the programme.

26. The secretariat will give a brief presentation on the proposed programme. A summary of the proposed programme is set out in document AMCEN/SS.VIII/4.

Item 7

Briefing on preparations for the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

27. The twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, originally to be held in Glasgow, Scotland, from 9 to 19 November 2020, was postponed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and will now be held in Glasgow from 1 to 12 November 2021.

28. In the interim, a number of online events have offered opportunities for parties and other stakeholders to continue to exchange views and share information in order to maintain momentum in the Framework Convention on Climate Change process and show how climate action is continuing to progress in the unprecedented circumstances that the world is facing. In addition to several technical meetings organized by the secretariat of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, a number of key political events have taken place this year, including the Petersberg Climate Dialogue and the Placencia Ambition Forum.

29. The African Group of Negotiators on climate change will make a brief presentation on the preparations to date, highlighting negotiation issues of interest to Africa and the key messages to be considered by the expert group in preparation for the ministerial segment.

Item 8

Preparation of the draft statement and key messages for consideration by ministers at the ministerial meeting

30. A representative of the secretariat will present an overview of the draft statement and key messages to be forwarded to the ministerial meeting and will request that they be considered for endorsement under the guidance of the Chair of the expert group meeting.

Item 9

Other matters

31. Major issues of interest not included on the agenda will be noted.

Item 10

Closure of the meeting

32. The Chair will invite the representatives of the UNEP Africa Office and the African Union Commission to make concluding remarks and will then declare the meeting closed.

Annex I

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Document</i>
Working documents	
AMCEN/SS.VIII/EGM/1	Provisional agenda for the expert group meeting
AMCEN/SS.VIII/EGM/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda for the expert group meeting
AMCEN/SS.VIII/1	Provisional agenda for the ministerial meeting
AMCEN/SS.VIII/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda for the ministerial meeting
AMCEN/SS.VIII/3	Africa's engagement in the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly
AMCEN/SS.VIII/4	Summary of the Africa green stimulus programme
Reference documents	
AMCEN/17/9	Report of the ministerial segment of the seventeenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
Information documents	
AMCEN/SS.VIII/INF/1	Information note on the eighth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Annex II

Programme of work for the expert group segment*

Monday, 30 November 2020

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
Noon–12.30 p.m.	Item 1: Opening ceremony
12.30–12.45 p.m.	Item 2: Organizational matters Item 2 (a): Adoption of the agenda Item 2 (b): Organization of work
12.45–1 p.m.	Item 3: Introduction and objectives of the meeting
1–1.45 p.m.	Item 4: Africa’s engagement in the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme
1.45–2.15 p.m.	Break
2.15–3.15 p.m.	Item 5: Briefing on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and preparations for the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
3.15–4.15 p.m.	Item 6: Consideration of the proposed green stimulus programme for Africa
4.15–4.45 p.m.	Break
4.45–5.30 p.m.	Item 7: Briefing on preparations for the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
5.30–6.30 p.m.	Item 8: Preparation of the draft statement and key messages for consideration by ministers at the ministerial meeting
6.30–6.45 p.m.	Item 9: Other matters
6.45–7 p.m.	Item 10: Closure of the meeting

* All times shown are Nairobi time (UTC + 3).