

## Summary Report July-December 2020

### Regional Facilitators, Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa

The year 2020 was an electoral year for the Regional Facilitators, Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa. UNEP Civil Society Unit announced on June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020 the results of the elections and indicated that Mrs. Gertrude Kenyangi and Mr. Ayman Bel Hassan Cherkaoui were elected as Regional Facilitators, Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa.

The two key priorities for both of them in the July-December semester were:

- Keeping the African Major Groups and Stakeholders active and connected in these challenging times
- Preparing for the 8<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Evidently, COVID-19 had a multidimensional impact on all planned activities.

Both Regional Facilitators, Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa would like to extend their deepest gratitude to the African Major Groups and Stakeholders for their mobilisation and guidance as well as to the UNEP secretariat for their steadfast and ever reliable support and advice.

#### Key Activities July-December 2020:

- Communication
  - 11 email campaigns sent to the Members of the African Major Groups and Stakeholders (as of December 22<sup>nd</sup> 2020, 173 contact emails in that mailing list managed directly by the Regional Facilitators Major Groups and Stakeholders Africa, following an invitation by UNEP CSU to manage it)
  - An “MGS Africa” WhatsApp group comprising in 112 participants (increase of 75 % in participants compared to June 2020)
- Directly UNEP related coordination
  - Participation in the 8<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (December 2020) at the Expert and Ministerial Segments
  - 2 Webinars organized:

- Pre-AMCEN African MGS Preparatory Meeting (November 2020) (Annex 1) with platform and live translation provided by UNEP.
  - African Major Groups and Stakeholders Coordination Meeting (October 2020) (Annex 2) with online platform provided by UNEP.
- Participation in several Major Groups Facilitating Committee Meetings
- Participation in the dialogue with the UNEP Executive Director (October 2020)
- Moderation of the Major Groups and Stakeholders Dialogue with CPR Chair (October 2020)
- Coordination of the Major Groups and Stakeholders Preparatory Meeting for the Annual CPR Meeting (October 2020)
- Coordination and Moderation of a UNEP/IUCN Webinar on WCEL Webinar 10: Environmental Law in Africa: What is the Role of Civil Society in Environmental Governance? (October 2020)
- 1 Statement (both in short and long versions in Annex 3)
- Strategic Advice
  - One Study on status of implementation of the AMCEN decisions by the African governments (key findings in Annex 4)
- The Regional Facilitators, Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa, also coordinated/spoke or attended more than two dozen events linked to Rio Conventions organized by stakeholders such as the UNFCCC

# *ANNEXES*

## *Annex 1*

### **Pre-AMCEN African Major Groups and Stakeholders Virtual Meeting**

Thursday November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020 (Noon Nairobi time)

#### **Context**

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) created in 1985 promotes regional cooperation between African Governments in addressing environmental challenges confronting the region. Through the work of AMCEN there has been heightened policy responses of African Governments and the international community to Africa's environment and sustainable development opportunities and challenges.

AMCEN meetings provide guidance towards key regional policies and initiatives on environment and sustainable development. Pursuant to this, a virtual meeting of the eighth special session of AMCEN will be held in November/December 2020. It will consist of a meeting of the expert group on 30 November 2020 and a ministerial segment on 4 December 2020.

The session will be held under the theme: **'Enhancing environmental action for effective post-COVID recovery in Africa'**. The theme calls for increased environmental action to protect and restore the environment, contribute towards building back different and better, to increase resilience to future crises, and steer the continent on a more sustainable path. Recovery efforts will give countries a chance to make the much-needed environmental improvements an integral part of the economic recovery.

The Pre-AMCEN African major groups and stakeholders virtual meeting is an important opportunity for the African Major Groups and Stakeholders to coordinate its preparation and, if the group so chooses, endorse a statement reflecting the items on the agenda of the Session. Furthermore, the African Major Groups and Stakeholders may also consider the key outcomes of a Pan African and Climate Justice Alliance led study of the implementation of the AMCEN decisions between 2010 and 2016.

#### **Logistics**

Please register at <https://indico.un.org/event/35453/> for this virtual meeting.

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## **Draft Agenda:**

*Moderated by the Regional Facilitators, Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa*

1. Opening Remarks *(15 minutes)*
  - a. AMCEN Chair Representative. Mr. Obed Baloyi - Chief Director: Chemicals Management, Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, South Africa
  - b. Mr. Mohamed Atani, Head of Communications and Outreach for Africa, UNEP, on behalf of UNEP Regional Director of Africa
  - c. Mr. Mithika Mwenda, PACJA, on behalf of the co-organizers of the Meeting
2. African Engagement in the Fifth United Nations Environmental Assembly *(15 minutes)*
  - a. Mr. Ulf Bjornholm, Deputy Director, Governance Affairs Office, UNEP
  - b. Moderated Discussion
3. African Perspectives on the post 2020 biodiversity framework and the Convention on Biological Diversity COP 15 *(20 minutes)*
  - a. Scene Setting Presentation by Mr. Levis Kavagi, Head of Biodiversity and Ecosystems Programme for Africa, UNEP *10 minutes*
  - b. Moderated Discussion *10 minutes*
4. African Perspectives on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP 26 *(20 minutes)*
  - a. Scene Setting Presentation: *10 minutes*
    - i. Mrs. Omoyemen Lucia Odigie Emmanuel, Center for Human Rights and Climate Change Research
    - ii. Mr. Luke Kapchanga, Emony Yefwe International
  - b. Moderated Discussion *10 minutes*
5. African Green Stimulus Programme *(20 Minutes)*
  - a. Scene Setting Presentation by Mr. Stuart Mangold, Advisor to the Minister of Environment and current President of AMCEN, South Africa, AMCEN Bureau *10 minutes*
  - b. Moderated Discussion *10 minutes*
6. Considerations for the Ministerial Declaration *(30 Minutes)*

- a. Moderated Discussion to highlight key issues and set up of the Committee that will finalize the key statements
7. Considerations on the PACJA led initiative on the implementation of the AMCEN decisions between 2010 and 2016 *(25 minutes)*
  - a. Scene Setting Presentation by Mr. Fazal Issa, PACJA *10 minutes*
  - b. Moderated Discussion *15 minutes*
8. Capacity Strengthening Initiatives *(15 minutes)*
  - a. Presentation on the role of traditional Knowledge in the implementation of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration in Africa by Mrs. Siham Drissi, Programme Management Officer, Terrestrial Ecosystem Unit, UNEP
  - b. Upcoming Capacity Strengthening webinars
9. Closing *(10 minutes)*
  - a. Mr. Mohamed Atani, Head of Communications and Outreach for Africa, UNEP
  - b. Regional Facilitators, Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa

*Annex 2*

**UNEP Accredited African Major Groups and Stakeholders**

*Coordination Meeting of October 7<sup>th</sup> 2020, 3 pm (Nairobi Time)*

**UNEP Accredited African Major Groups and Stakeholders**

*Coordination Meeting of October 7<sup>th</sup> 2020, 3 pm (Nairobi Time)*

Mobilize and update the community of United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) Accredited African Major Groups and Stakeholders on recent developments and key opportunities of engagement going forward in the UNEP Space.

**Technical modalities:**

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## **Proposed Agenda:**

Overall length of 2 hours

1. Welcoming Remarks and a Brief on Regional Facilitators election Process and the importance to part in this process by Alexander Juras, UNEP Chief Civil Society Unit *5 Minutes*
2. Introduction of the webinar by Mohamed Atani, Head of Communication and Outreach Unit, UNEP Africa Office *5 Minutes*
3. Introducing the Regional Facilitators who will co-moderating the session *2 minutes*
  - a) Gertrude Kenyangi, Support for Women in Agriculture and Environment (1 minute)
  - b) Ayman Cherkaoui, Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection (1 minute)
4. Welcoming the recently UNEP accredited African Major Groups and Stakeholders
5. UNEP Secretariat update: *25 minutes*
  - a) GEO Update (5 minutes) – Franklin Odhiambo, Global Assessment Expert
  - b) AMCEN Update (5 minutes) –David Ombisi, Head of Secretariat of AMCEN

- c) UNEA Update (5 minutes) – Update from Alaine Nsengimana Umutoni, Secretariat of Governing Bodies
- d) Q and A (10 minutes)
- 6. Discussing a few of the key issues: *40 minutes*
  - a) Biodiversity: (5 minutes) (Fred Kumah, Africa Wildlife Fund)
  - b) Plastic Litter: (5 minutes) (Sheikh Yahya Msangi, Welfare international)
  - c) Climate Change: (5 minutes) PACJA Representative
  - d) Covid 19 Impacts on African Major Groups and Stakeholders: (10 minutes) Catherine (Kate Chumo, ANAW and Lyne Iyadi, Brooke East Africa)
  - e) Open Floor for discussion (10 minutes)

7. Way forward (*Facilitated in English and French by Gertrude Kenyangi and Ayman Cherkaoui, Regional Facilitator of Major Groups and Stakeholders, Africa*): *45 minutes*

- 1. Key Expectations and Priorities from African Major Group and Stakeholders for AMCEN: 10 minutes
- 2. Key Expectations and Priorities from African Major Group and Stakeholders for UNEA: 10 minutes
- 3. How to organize the work of the group to further develop these expectations and priorities? : 10 minutes
- 4. Space to share key upcoming events or initiatives led by African Major Groups and Stakeholders (no more than 1 minute each for a total of 15 minutes)

**FULL STATEMENT AS ADOPTED BY MAJOR GROUPS AND  
STAKEHOLDERS, AFRICA**

**ENGLISH VERSION**

**AFRICAN MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS CONTRIBUTION  
AND KEY MESSAGES TO THE 8TH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE  
AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

***Final Draft***

*We, comprising of Major Groups and Stakeholders from the African region, gathered virtually to discuss how Africa can enhance environmental action for effective post-COVID recovery and our contribution to the Africa Ministerial Conference on the Environment, agree on the following key messages to AMCEN:*

*Noting with concern* that the IPBES' 2019 IPBES Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services finding that Human actions threaten more species with global extinction now than ever before and that by 2100, climate change could also result in the loss of more than half of African bird and mammal species, a 20-30% decline in the productivity of Africa's lakes and significant loss of African plant species and that Africa's extreme vulnerability to the impacts of climate change will have severe consequences for economically marginalized populations in Africa.

*Noting further with concern* the threat that climate change poses to the future existence of humanity, including the negative impact it has on the achievement of sustainable development goals, and the fact that Africa continues to suffer most despite its minimal contribution to global emissions. Climate change is increasingly evident in the increase in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as heat waves, heavy rain, drought, wildfires and coastal flooding events. All of which result in negative impacts to human health, livelihoods, human rights and animal health.

*Deeply conscious* of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Africa and the need to urgently address threats to the environment particularly wildlife and ecosystems and the opportunity it presents to call for urgent action to tackle multifaceted environmental problems in Africa, which are growingly exacerbated by several interactive forces.

*Alarmed* that the postponement of several global sustainable development and environmental focused events is translating in a lack of support for urgently needed action.

We, African Major Groups and Stakeholders 1. **Biodiversity**

1.1. **Call for** a well-articulated Declaration from AMCEN that highlights the urgency of action at the highest levels to prevent, halt & reverse the degradation and loss of ecosystems and species; promote conservation and sustainable use of

biodiversity, and ensure fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of biodiversity and associated traditional knowledge in order to contribute to an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework and to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and place Africa on a path towards realizing the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity.

1.2. **Call for** accelerated action aimed at realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development and promoting investment in sustainable management, conservation and restoration of ecosystems in order to provide services that help people adapt to climate change as part of action to enhance the implementation of the Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration for Increased Resilience which part of Africa's commitment to implementing the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030) without jeopardizing benefits for indigenous peoples and local communities.

1.3. **Call for** action that promotes participatory, human rights-based, accountable and gender-sensitive and inclusive frameworks for action and demonstrate a commitment to scale up the implementation of the African Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa through consultations and involvement of civil society, major group and stakeholder in assessment and monitoring of Africa's effort to address biodiversity including efforts to address illegal wildlife and biodiversity trade as a move to promote accountability and ensure strong, implementable, measurable and universally applicable measures to ensure compliance and address environmental crimes.

1.4. **Call for** action that addresses the lack of enforcement, the problem of implementation & compliance of environmental law through by the development of comprehensive legal frameworks for nature action at regional and national levels, which builds synergies and coherence across provisions of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, human rights instruments & the Sustainable Development Goals and revolutionize the enforcement of laws related to biodiversity - its interlinkages with

climate change, pandemic prevention, poverty and other development issues and objectives.

We, African Major Groups and Stakeholders

## 2. Climate Change

2.1. **Urge** African leaders to set the pace, in the context of sustainable development, by driving African climate action towards pursuing and achieving a world on a pathway of resilience, transition to low carbon and carbon neutral economies focused on articulating, kick-starting and pursuing concrete measurable efforts to limit warming to 1.5 degree Celsius.

2.2. **Stress the urgency** of strengthening multilevel regional and national environmental governance in Africa for Climate Action.

2.3. **Recommend to** invest in education, enhanced institutional capacity building, development of integrated policy instruments, free movement of technological innovation and transfer and mobilization of finance aligned with the long-term finance goals of the Paris Agreement without jeopardizing human rights and development commitments.

We, African Major Groups and Stakeholders

## 3. Plastic Pollution

3.1. **Commend** African Ministers' commitment to supporting global action to address plastic pollution including reinforcing existing agreements and the option of a new global agreement on plastic pollution that takes a comprehensive approach to addressing the full life cycle of plastics as stated in the Durban Declaration in the 7th Session of AMCEN.

3.2. **Recognise** the convergence of support, including that from the Africa Group representatives, for a new global legally binding agreement on plastic pollution as the preferred response option at the fourth session of the UN Ad-Hoc Expert Group on Marine litter and Microplastics.

3.3. **Call for** a Declaration from AMCEN to reinforce African Countries' commitment to work towards a new global response on plastic pollution that takes a comprehensive approach to address the full lifecycle of plastics, from production and design to waste prevention and management, while ensuring coherence and

coordination of activities undertaken by existing regional and international instruments. Such a response needs to address technology transfer, research on alternatives to plastic, and adequate financing to enable African countries to implement the agreement. We underscore the need for a global agreement to address, inter alia, technology transfer, research on alternatives to plastic, and adequate financing to enable African countries to implement the agreement. We call for the establishment of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to start negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution.

We, African Major Groups and Stakeholders

#### **4. African Green Stimulus Programme**

4.1. ***Strongly invite*** AMCEN to commit to support an inclusive African Green Stimulus to achieve the SDGs targets by 2030 through revitalizing economies

and livelihoods and mainstreaming environmental concerns into all policies and tools promoting economic recovery.

4.2. ***Underline*** that there should be a demonstrable plan exploring and utilizing green economy pathways, increasing resource efficiency, environmentally sound business models and sustainable finance, and by reducing greenhouse gas emissions while adapting to climate change in line with the Paris Agreement.

4.3. ***Underscore*** that we all have to work towards enhancing the resilience of our economies and societies to future crises, and contributing to poverty eradication, putting people on a trajectory towards a healthy and harmonious relationship with nature, including when it comes to animal health.

We, African Major Groups and Stakeholders

#### **5. Enhancing Implementation of AMCEN Decisions**

5.1. ***Recognise*** the role that AMCEN has played in providing a platform for the African governments and stakeholders to deliberate, form common position and find solutions to address environment-related challenges at the continental level.

5.2. ***Indicate***, based on the preliminary findings of a study conducted within the African Major Groups and Stakeholders,

(i) *Our concern* on the inadequate translation of such solutions, in terms of decisions, from the AMCEN level to the respective Member States with limited implementation at the national and sub-national levels.

(ii) *Our conviction* that AMCEN should develop and operationalise a robust, clear and transparent monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanism that will regularly track progress, assess the results of implementation of the agreed decisions at the regional and national levels, and document best practices.

(iii) *Our Encouragement to* Member States to commit to environment discourse, strengthen their resource mobilisation strategies at the national level and fulfil their annual compulsory contribution of USD 10,000 to the AMCEN's general trust fund,

(iv) *Our Invitation to* Member States to strictly curb illicit financial flows from African natural capital that still hamper implementation of environment-related and sustainable development initiatives through a

loss of natural and financial resources of up to USD 195 billion annually.

We, African Major Groups and Stakeholders

## **6. The Path Forward**

6.1. ***Call on*** the leaders of Africa to commit to and support ambitious, accelerated and transformative action that delivers nature-based solutions to climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution for effective and sustainable post-COVID recovery.

6.2. ***Further call*** upon our African governments to foster a strategic partnership with African Major Groups and Stakeholders to further enhance implementation of AMCEN decisions at both regional and national levels. The African governments can leverage on African Major Groups and Stakeholders' technical expertise, networks with key stakeholders, linkages to communities and mobilisation of financial and human resources. To benefit from these, both AMCEN and Member States should enhance the African Major Groups and Stakeholders participation at the AMCEN processes and provide a conducive environment to contribute at the national level from planning, implementation to monitoring and evaluation.

**SUMMARY STATEMENT AS DELIVERED BY A REGIONAL  
FACILITATOR, MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDER, AFRICA  
DURING THE MINISTERIAL SEGMENT OF THE 8<sup>TH</sup> SPECIAL SESSION  
OF AMCEN**

*Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*We, comprising of African Major Groups and Stakeholders, have agreed on key messages to AMCEN, summarized as follows:*

*We are alarmed of the threat that ecological destruction and climate change pose to the future existence of humanity, including the negative impact they have on the achievement of sustainable development goals, and the fact that Africa continues to disproportionately suffer most despite its minimal contribution to global emissions of Greenhouse Gases*

*We are deeply conscious of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Africa and the need to urgently address threats to the environment, to reduce pollution from all sources and take measures for animal health and to prevent future pandemics*

*We are convinced that post-COVID-19 recovery provides an opportunity to call for urgent action, in the context of sustainable development, to tackle multifaceted environmental problems in Africa, which are growingly exacerbated by several interactive forces*

*We are concerned that the postponement of several global sustainable development and environmental focused events is translating in a lack of support for urgently needed action*

***We call*** for a well-articulated Declaration from AMCEN that halt & reverse the degradation and loss of ecosystems and species; promote conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, ensure fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of biodiversity and associated traditional knowledge in order to contribute to an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework, to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the context of the UN Decades of Ecosystem Restoration and Ocean Science and place Africa on a path to enhance the implementation of , *inter alia*, the African Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa, the Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration for Increased Resilience and the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity through consultations and involvement of African Major Groups and Stakeholders and addressing environmental crimes

**We urge** African leaders to set the pace, in the context of sustainable development, by driving transformational African climate action towards pursuing and achieving a world on a pathway of resilience, transition to low carbon and carbon neutral economies focused on articulating, kick-starting and pursuing concrete measurable efforts to limit warming to 1.5 degree Celsius.

**We recommend** investing in education, enhanced institutional capacity building, development of integrated policy instruments, free movement of technological innovation and transfer and mobilization of finance for Africa aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement without jeopardizing human rights and development.

**We call** for a Declaration from AMCEN to reinforce African Countries' commitment to work towards a new global response on plastic pollution that takes a comprehensive approach to address the full lifecycle of plastics, from production and design to waste prevention and management, while ensuring coherence and coordination of activities undertaken by existing regional and international instruments. We underscore the need for a global agreement to address, inter alia, technology development and transfer as well as adequate financing for Africa.

**We strongly invite** AMCEN to commit to support an inclusive African Green Stimulus Programme to build back better and achieve the SDGs by 2030 through revitalizing economies and livelihoods and mainstreaming environmental concerns into all policies and tools promoting economic recovery through intergenerational and youth sensitive approaches.

**We underscore** that we must all work towards enhancing the resilience of our societies to future crises, and contributing to poverty eradication, putting its people on a trajectory towards a healthy and harmonious relationship with nature.

**We recognise** the role that AMCEN has played in providing a platform for the African governments and stakeholders to deliberate, form common position and find solutions to address environment-related challenges at the continental level.

**We indicate**, based on the preliminary findings of a study conducted within the African Major Groups and Stakeholders, *our* concern regarding gaps in the translation of such solutions, in terms of decisions, from the AMCEN level to the respective Member States in terms of implementation at the national and sub-national levels.

**We call** on the leaders of Africa to commit to and support ambitious, accelerated and transformative action that delivers nature-based solutions for the Climate, addresses

biodiversity loss and pollution towards effective, sustainable and inclusive post-COVID recovery.

**We further call** upon our African governments to foster a strategic partnership with African Major Groups and Stakeholders to further enhance implementation of AMCEN decisions at both regional and national levels. Both AMCEN and Member States should enhance the African Major Groups and Stakeholders participation at the AMCEN processes and provide a conducive environment to contribute to planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

Thank you, this summary and the full statements will be made available online.

## *Annex 4*

# SUMMARY OF THE PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION STUDY ON STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AMCEN DECISIONS BY THE AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

This paper provides a summary of the preliminary findings of the evaluation study on status of implementation of the AMCEN decisions by the African governments. It provides both the status and recommendations on the best approaches to enhance implementation. The study focused on decisions from 2010 to 2016 but also included previous period. It covered four main areas which are: 1) analysis of all decisions of the previous AMCEN; 2) Status of implementation of the AMCEN decisions; 3) Outline of the African Major Groups and Stakeholders' (MGS) role in implementation of the AMCEN decisions; and 4) Recommendations on enhancement of implementation of the AMCEN decisions.

A detailed review of literature has been done including all the AMCEN decisions and declarations from 1985 to 2019; Africa MGS statements; and selected initiatives by Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and partner organs/agencies such as African Union (AU), Pan-African Parliament (PAP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Stakeholders' consultation is being done to representatives from the Members States; AMCEN Secretariat and supporting officers from UNEP Regional Office for Africa; RECs; Africa MGS; and PACJA members.

## Status of Implementation

From the literature review and initial stakeholders' consultation, it was identified that between 1985 and 2019, the AMCEN has held 17 regular and 7 special sessions approving over 100 decisions. While specifically between 2010 and 2016, five sessions (three regular and two special) have been held approving over 30 decisions. The decisions were on areas related to air pollution, biodiversity and ecosystem management, climate change, energy, environment governance, waste management, and other cross-cutting and AMCEN operational issues.

In the period prior to 2010, from 1985 to 2009, the AMCEN decisions and implementation evolved around establishment of its operational organs and adoption

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Fazal Issa, Pan African Climate Justice Alliance

of its constitution, organizational structure and modalities for convening conference sessions. It shifted focus from running operational programs in its early days to policy guidance and identified priority programme areas for implementation. Also, the AMCEN recognised civil society engagement, influenced political leadership in the field of environment and enhanced cooperation with the AU, UNEP, UNECA, AfDB and RECs. In addition to earlier advocacy work, emphasis was placed on monitoring the implementation of regional and global conventions and agreements of relevance to the African region and also on facilitating the harmonization of Africa's position and encouraging active participation in all major negotiations.

During the period from 2010 onwards, the AMCEN managed to guide development of key African regional flagship programs including African green economy partnership and others related to biodiversity and ecosystem, waste management, climate change adaptation, energy, technology transfer, capacity building and skills development. Also, significance of monitoring of environment for sustainable development was recognised through commitment to produce the African Environment Outlook which has been a successful tool and framework for periodic environment reporting at sub-regional and national levels. African countries though will need to integrate and make use of Earth observation data as well as environment information system at regional level. The extent of implementation of these programs and initiatives at the national level needs further deliberation.

The AMCEN also continued to harmonise African positions for global process and specifically towards the UNEA 1-4; the UNFCCC COP 16-25 which was important period towards the preparation, approval and operationalization of the Paris Agreement; and the CBD COP 10- 14. Furthermore, measures were also agreed to invest in strengthening and developing institutional and governance mechanisms, processes and interventions for sustainable harnessing of environmental assets and reversing natural capital losses as part of the contribution to implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063. This was though identified to still be a challenge at the national level.

Despite such progress made, some gaps have been identified that hinder effective implementation of AMCEN decisions. These include among others:

- o Lack of adequate translation of policies, strategies and plans into implemented actions and in some cases even lacking preparations of the policies themselves at the national level. One of the example of the latter is preparation and submission of National Adaptation Plans (NAP) whereby only five African countries have done so, these are Cameroun, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Togo.

- o Low and non-fulfilment of annual compulsory contribution of USD 10,000 to the AMCEN general trust fund by most of the Member States. During the period, 20 out of the 54 Member States did not contribute at all.
- o Lack of modern, proper and environment-friendly technologies.
- o Illicit financial flows from natural capital still hamper implementation through loss of natural and financial resources. It was identified that Africa loses an estimate of up to USD 195 billion annually of its natural capital through illicit financial flows; plundering of resources; environmental crimes; illegal mining practices; food imports, unsustainable patterns of consumption and production; and degraded ecosystems. This amount exceeds the total annual amount Africa needs to invest in infrastructure, health care and education, and to combat climate change.
- o Environment related matters largely remain just a cross-cutting issues at national level despite continued loss and threat pose to development. Political will, commitment and leadership on environment related issues still lacks though AMCEN promoting them since its establishment.

### Recommendations to Enhance Implementation of AMCEN Decisions

To address the identified gaps and enhance implementation of the AMCEN decisions, a number of recommendations have been made including:

- o A robust, clear and transparent Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) mechanism that will regularly track progress, assess results of implementation of the agreed decisions at regional and national level, and document best practices.
- o Strengthen resource mobilisation strategies at AMCEN and national level.
  - Member States shall adhere to the annual compulsory contribution of USD 10,000 to the general trust fund for the AMCEN. This will provide sustainable financial basis for the functioning of the organs and the implementation of its activities including technical support to Member States and MEL process.
  - — At country level, Member States should enhance their resource mobilisation capacity through, among others, innovative domestic resource mobilisation and diversification of sources; engagement of stakeholders including private sector by packaging environment-related initiatives into investment portfolio; and strengthen capacity to access multilateral funds for environment-related

initiatives.

- o Shifting focus from unintended “coordination/re-grouping and decision preparation only” role rather than also providing policy guidance and technical support to Member States to enhance implementation. This should not though affect the alignment of AMCEN decisions to global environment-related process such as UNEA, UNFCCC and CDB COPs.
- o Enhance strategic partnership with African MGS to leverage on their technical expertise, financial resources, expanding stakeholders reach and link with communities who are the main implementers. To benefit from these both AMCEN and Member States should provide conducive environment for African MGS to engage from planning, implementation to monitoring and evaluation at both regional and national levels.
- o Member States, through support of AMCEN Secretariat and partner organisations, should translate environmental policies into action plans backed by resources to support its implementation. This will also need to be supported by political will and commitment from African leaders.

### Role of African Major Groups and Stakeholders

The African MGS have continued to be a great asset to environment and sustainable development process across the continent including the ones under the AMCEN. Their roles and importance of engagement have been recognised in various AMCEN decisions. The African MGS can play both supportive/collaborative and watchdog roles to enhance implementation of AMCEN decisions at regional and national levels through: provision of technical expertise; mobilisation of financial and human resources; advocacy work; information dissemination; linking government officials with key stakeholders and communities; and aligning AMCEN process with national and global process.

To effectively do this, the African MGS needs to strengthen coordination and mobilisation at national and regional level including mapping of capacities among MGS; enhance their capacity to understand the process and key issues of discussion; actively participate and provide concrete suggestions/recommendations to AMCEN sessions; have sustained and intensive advocacy (not one-off event); good liaison with government officials and key stakeholders; and make best use of African MGS Forums and thematic networks.