



AMCEN



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Implementation of the Africa green stimulus programme**

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The Africa green stimulus programme was developed and adopted by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) as an innovative, African-led initiative to support the continent's recovery from the devastating socioeconomic and environmental impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic in a sustainable manner.
2. The programme aims to provide an overarching framework that will support the implementation of environmental and sustainable development initiatives in Africa, while identifying new areas requiring strategic intervention. It is intended to bring about a common and unifying continental response by forging and enhancing cooperation and partnerships between African governments, non-State actors, intergovernmental organizations and the private sector in support of a comprehensive green recovery for Africa.
3. The programme is meant to be dynamic and responsive in order to support the attainment by African countries of the aspirations of Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the Sustainable Development Goals and to deliver and scale up impactful interventions as the continent recovers from the pandemic. The programme seeks to contribute to the goal of enhancing action for environmental sustainability and prosperity in Africa, as called for in the Durban declaration of the seventeenth session of the Conference, held in South Africa in 2019.
4. The programme was presented to the special session on environment and natural resources of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment on 13 November 2020. Subsequently, the programme was presented to African ministers for the environment at the eighth special session of the Conference that was held online on 4 December 2020, at which ministers welcomed its development, provided input and expressed their support for the programme. The programme was eventually adopted as of 31 December 2020.

II. Key elements of the Africa green stimulus programme

5. The Africa green stimulus programme has been organized to include immediate and urgent interventions, short- to medium-term interventions and long-term transformative interventions to support sustainable growth in key sectors while building resilience to future shocks in Africa. The programme provides an overarching framework that consolidates and coordinates environment, green

* In accordance with the decision taken at the meeting of the Bureau of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment held on 26 May 2022, the eighteenth session of the Conference, which was adjourned on 16 September 2021, will resume as an in-person meeting in Dakar from 12 to 16 September 2022.

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economy and climate change initiatives in Africa, which have been grouped into 12 key areas as follows:

- (a) Improving air quality, enhancing chemicals and waste management and promoting circular economy;
- (b) Enhancing the conservation of biodiversity and combating illegal wildlife trade;
- (c) Revitalizing ecotourism and the biodiversity economy;
- (d) Combating land degradation, desertification and drought;
- (e) Enhancing climate action;
- (f) Investing in the blue economy;
- (g) Scaling up climate-smart agriculture and food security systems;
- (h) Supporting the sustainable management of forests;
- (i) Improving water conservation and use;
- (j) Investing in renewable energy;
- (k) Developing smart cities and promoting green urbanization;
- (l) Enhancing information, communication and technology.

III. Progress achieved

6. The programme document highlighting the objectives of the Africa green stimulus programme was finalized, including the 12 key elements, institutional arrangements, governance and coordination, assumptions, risks and enabling conditions. The document was translated into French with the support of the African Development Bank and shared with all member States.

7. A working group was established and has been meeting regularly to oversee the operational aspects of the programme. The members of the working group include representatives from the African Union Commission, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the African Union Development Agency, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Wide Fund for Nature, the Nationally Determined Contributions Partnership, the AMCEN secretariat as well as the immediate past and current presidency of the Conference.

8. A coordinating committee comprised of core members and partners as observers was established to provide oversight to the implementation of the programme. The Bureau of AMCEN endorsed the membership, terms of reference, roles and responsibilities of the coordination committee.

9. The core members include the Presidency of AMCEN as Chair, representatives of the AMCEN Bureau members, South Africa as former AMCEN President, African Union Commission, African Union Development Agency, Africa Development Bank, regional economic communities and AMCEN secretariat. The partners include the United Nations Environment Programme, Economic Commission for Africa, United Nations Development Programme, Food and Agricultural Organization, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the World Wide Fund for Nature and the Nationally Determined Contribution Partnership. The coordination committee may invite representatives from other organizations or member States to its meetings as it deems fit.

10. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, the coordinating committee has not been able to meet.

A. Financing and resource mobilization

11. A financing and resource mobilization working group was established to assist in developing a resource mobilization strategy, mapping the initiatives in the region, identifying new areas that require strategic intervention, costing programme activities and promoting North-South and South-South cooperation. The working group is co-chaired by the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank.

12. A draft financing and resource mobilization strategy has been prepared, is being refined and will be finalized after the completion of studies being undertaken to understand the nature and level of resources required for the key priority areas proposed under the programme.

13. Terms of reference have been prepared by the Economic Commission for Africa for a consultancy to develop cost estimates for the key priority areas of the stimulus programme and to deliver a prioritized resource mobilization strategy. The purpose of the consultancy is to strengthen the capacity of the working group for the stimulus programme to mobilize appropriate resources to support the implementation of green stimulus projects and activities by member States.
14. A report entitled “Building Forward for an African Green Recovery”, which examines policies and strategic directions that have the greatest impact in the context of a green recovery and is aligned with the principles of the Africa green stimulus programme, was prepared by the Economic Commission for Africa. The report aims to provide further motivation for African countries to include a green recovery in their national COVID-19 response programmes.
15. The Economic Commission for Africa has partnered with the University of Oxford and Vivid Economics to conduct case studies in South Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to model the impacts and returns of green investments in comparison with investments in traditional sectors of the economy.
16. The studies conducted in South Africa have shown that green investments in renewable energy, sustainable transport solutions and nature-based rehabilitation deliver 250 per cent more jobs and add 420 per cent more value to the economy than traditional investments. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, renewable investments focused on connecting the population to the electricity grid, nature-based solutions in the form of agroforestry, and indicated that improved urban transport solutions provide 130 per cent more jobs and add 280 per cent more value to the economy than traditional fossil fuel investments.
17. The case studies provide evidence that achieving the objectives of the stimulus programme could yield substantial returns by ensuring that investments by African countries prioritize a green recovery from COVID-19, which will stimulate economic activity that aligns with the principles and goals of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Sustainable Development Goals and the aspirations of Agenda 2063.
18. Funding for the consultancy will come from the internal resources of the Economic Commission for Africa and from the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The financing will also support communications in the context of the Africa green stimulus programme.
19. Seed financing of \$50,000 was mobilized from the African Development Bank to fund the development of the first phase of the online platform of the programme, which includes a website, an administration portal and a data management system. UNEP as the secretariat for AMCEN, has provided \$25,000 for the development of the first part of the second phase of the online platform, that is focusing on the content management system.
20. Seed financing has also been secured from the funding provided for the African Nature-Based Tourism Collaborative Platform, which is funded by the Global Environment Facility. With assistance from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment of South Africa, a graphic designer has developed the programme’s visual identity and brand manual, and a manager for the online platform was hired for an initial period of three months.
21. To ensure the successful mobilization of resources and the implementation of the stimulus programme, a platform is envisaged to be established for close collaboration between AMCEN and African ministers for finance, planning and economic development as well as the private sector. The platform will also support the implementation of other AMCEN decisions.

B. Communications and advocacy

22. A communications and advocacy working group was established, whose members are communications officials from intergovernmental agencies and regional organizations that are part of the working group for the stimulus programme. The working group is co-chaired by UNEP and the African Union Development Agency.
23. The main aim of the working group is to implement the communication and advocacy strategy that has been prepared for the stimulus programme; develop common key messages to promote the programme; review the online platform and provide guidance for its further development; lead the development of outreach and branding materials; lead initiatives to advocate for and create awareness of the programme; and mobilize media to publicize and promote the programme.

24. A well-crafted communication and advocacy strategy is essential to the successful implementation of the stimulus programme and will facilitate information-sharing and marketing, enhance collaboration, attract support and allow for feedback on the effectiveness of the programme.

25. The objectives of the strategy include informing communities, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders in member States about the stimulus programme; cultivating interest in the programme and its objectives; galvanizing participation for actions to achieve the objectives of the programme; raising awareness of environmental and sustainable development initiatives intended to contribute to Africa's green recovery; sensitizing and engaging potential partners for environmental and sustainable development initiatives that can contribute to the recovery of African economies; and encouraging partnerships among African member States, organizations and other stakeholders to contribute to a green recovery on the continent.

26. A branding concept and elements have been developed, including a visual identity, a flyer and a logo for the stimulus programme.

C. Development of the online platform for the stimulus programme

27. The first phase of the development of the online platform for the programme was completed. The platform includes a user interface, an administrative portal and comprehensive information on the portfolio of projects within each priority area of the stimulus programme.

28. The prototype of the website has been populated with the documents that are currently available, and useful tabs have been created. The key priority areas of the programme have been hyperlinked, which will provide access to the portfolio of projects corresponding to each key priority area.

29. The online platform was launched on 16 September 2021 during the ministerial segment of the first part of the eighteenth session of the Conference. The website is available in English and French (agsp.nepad.org) and is hosted by the African Union Development Agency.

30. The development of phase 2 (A) of the platform has been initiated. The phase involves the development of the database system, but does not include the data analytics component, as additional resources will need to be mobilized for that and it will therefore be done at a later stage.

D. Political commitment and partnerships

31. The Africa green stimulus programme was acknowledged at the seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, which was convened online from 1 to 4 March 2021 under the theme "Building forward better: towards a resilient and green Africa to achieve the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063".

32. A technical meeting was held online between representatives of UNEP and the European Union on 29 April 2021 to discuss synergies and complementarities between the Africa green stimulus programme and the European Union's "NextGenerationEU" recovery plan. Engagement with the European Union will continue with a view to agreeing on concrete areas of collaboration.

33. The Bureau of the Conference, at its meeting held on 26 and 27 May 2021, welcomed the progress made towards the implementation of the Africa green stimulus programme and reiterated the importance of the programme in supporting a sustainable recovery from the socioeconomic and environmental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

34. A presentation on the Africa green stimulus programme was delivered at the meeting of the Committee of African Heads of State on Climate Change held online on 8 June 2021. Committee members expressed support for the programme and for the proposal for the programme to be adopted by the Assembly of the African Union.

35. The programme was adopted by the African Heads of State and Government at the thirty-fifth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, which took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 5 and 6 February 2022.

IV. Implementation of some activities in advancement of the Africa green stimulus programme

36. In the context of implementation the Africa Green Stimulus Programme, a pilot project on "*Hybridized Clean and Sustainable Energy to drive Climate smart agriculture and Agri-business Value Chain*" was launched in December 2021 at Kampi ya Moto in Nakuru county, Kenya. The overall objective of this pilot project is to improve access to sufficient, sustainable and alternative

sources of energy and enhance Climate-Smart Agriculture and Agribusiness value chain through injection of entrepreneurship, job creation and income generation for women and youth small-holder farmers living in Rongai sub-County of Nakuru County. The project is funded by the Government of Italy.

37. UNEP implemented a waste separation at source (S@S) project in Newcastle local municipality (KwaZulu-Natal province), South Africa. The project created a behavioural change and awareness creation at municipality and community levels; increased the value of the recyclable materials when sold to recyclers; diverted waste away from landfills (thereby extending the lifespan of the same); created job opportunities in the collection, sorting and recycling industry for youth and women; contributed to a circular economy where materials are retained in the economy for as long as possible; and reduced the environmental impacts associated with resource extraction and waste disposal.

V. Next steps and way forward

38. The coordinating committee needs to commence with their work, and the President of AMCEN (Senegal) should convene the inaugural meeting to deliberate on the institutional arrangements, modalities for the functioning of the committee and its work programme.

39. A strategy and roadmap for the Africa green stimulus programme is to be finalized to guide the way forward for the entire programme, building on initial developments over the past two years, and to ensure that the programme is fully operational as per the decisions of AMCEN and the African Union Assembly.

40. The operational aspects of the programme need to be fully institutionalized within the African Union Development Agency, including the integration of the initiatives that have expressed their interest to join the stimulus programme. Collaboration with the African Union's Green Recovery Action Plan needs to be enhanced.

41. Resources need to be mobilized to secure the long-term funding for the management of the Africa green stimulus programme. Mobilisation of resources is an important aspect of the strategy, and the involvement of the private sector as well as other important stakeholders will be key in realising the green recovery of the Continent as well as other important issues under Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

42. A monitoring and evaluation framework needs to be developed to track the performance and impact of implementation of the Africa green stimulus programme.
