



AMCEN



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African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Tenth special session

Abidjan, 3–6 September 2024

Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Annotated provisional agenda**

I. Introduction

1. The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) holds its special sessions as and when necessary. An offer by the Government of Cote d'Ivoire to host the tenth special session was accepted by the Bureau of the Conference at its meeting, held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 1 March 2024.
2. Following the above offer, the tenth special session will be held from 3 to 6 September 2024 at the Sofitel Hotel Ivoire in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. The ministerial meeting will be held on 5 and 6 September 2024.
3. The Bureau of the Conference considered and adopted a provisional agenda for the ministerial meeting of the tenth special session, which is set out in document AMCEN/SS.10/1.
4. The secretariat has distributed an information note on the tenth special session (document AMCEN/SS.10/INF/1). A list of the documents prepared for the session is provided in annex I to the present document and the programme of work is set out in annex

II. Objectives and overview of the tenth special session

5. The tenth special session will be held under the theme: "*Raising Ambition for Accelerating Action on Drought Resilience and Combating land degradation and desertification*". The theme envisages scaling up of existing initiatives, taking advantage of new opportunities as well as enhancing collaboration and strengthening the role of those institutions that support implementation of regional and global outcomes.
6. The session will provide a platform for strengthening Africa's collective engagement in the global environmental agenda, including in the various conference of the parties of environmental agreements and other multilateral processes related to combating climate change, desertification, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution, among others, and ensure that the region is not only able to address the challenges in these areas but also seizes emerging opportunities for sustainable development of the continent.
7. The session will be an opportunity for ministers to provide policy guidance for Africa's participation in upcoming key environmental events, including the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity; the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; the fifth

* AMCEN/SS.X/1.

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

session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment and; the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

8. The session will also aim to further strengthen the work of the Conference in its contribution to the region's environment and sustainable development agenda including strengthening efforts to mitigate droughts in Africa; assessing progress of land degradation neutrality targets in Africa; enhancing opportunities for ecosystems restoration and; identifying and strengthening partnerships and synergies to enhance resource mobilization to address land degradation, desertification and drought.

9. The expert group will bring to the attention of ministers a number of matters for their consideration. Ministers will be invited to exchange views on those matters in order to reach agreement thereon.

10. Finally, ministers are expected to adopt a declaration, decisions and key messages reflecting their discussions under the various agenda items.

III. Items of the provisional agenda

Item 1

Opening of the meeting

11. The President of the Conference, the Minister of Planning and Development of Ethiopia, will preside over the official opening ceremony and will introduce opening speakers, including the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the African Union Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment.

12. The President will invite a dignitary from Cote d' Ivoire to officially open the ministerial session. Thereafter, other speakers will be given the opportunity to make brief remarks.

13. The President will then introduce the launch of an Atlas of Africa Natural Capital produced by the African Development Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme.

14. A detailed programme for the opening session will be developed in consultation with the host country and circulated prior to the opening of the ministerial meeting.

Item 2

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

The President will introduce the provisional agenda, document AMCEN/SS. 10/1.

15. The President will introduce the draft programme of work as set out in annex II to the present document and draw attention to the list of documents for the ministerial segment, set out in annex I.

Item 3

Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group

16. The Chair of the expert group will present the report of the meeting of the expert group, which will include a summary of the proceedings and the recommendations developed. Ministers will take note of the report and consider the draft declaration, decisions and key messages under the appropriate agenda item.

Item 4

Ministerial dialogues on land degradation, desertification and drought

(a) Finance and partnerships for land degradation, desertification and drought

17. Land degradation increases vulnerability to drought, reducing ecological functions and productivity. For instance, over 23 million people are severely food insecure across the Horn of Africa due to drought and land degradation. In addition, the 2023 El Niño drought crisis in Southern Africa affected over 40 million people, leaving 23 million with severe food insecurity. Approximately 65% of

Africa's land is already degraded, affecting over 400 million people with poor people being the most affected due to their dependency on natural resources.

18. Desertification contributes to the loss of 27,000 species annually, costing the global economy 10% of Gross Domestic Product per year. Desertification has led to the loss of 4.4 million hectares annually which has affected 45% of Africa's land area. Moreover, desertification has also reduced agricultural productivity leading to the under-nourishment of approximately 68.1 million people.

19. Despite Africa's steady efforts to address land degradation, desertification and drought, the region is still facing significant challenges affecting its environment, people as well as its economies.

20. Availability of adequate and predictable financial resources play a pivotal role in mitigating the impacts of drought, land degradation and desertification. Development partners, governments, and financing mechanisms provide financial resources to initiatives aimed at enhancing resilience, conserving biodiversity, and improving livelihoods. Global commitments on land degradation, desertification and drought, through organizations, such as, the Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund, are known to provide critical large-scale funding opportunities.

21. Investments in land degradation neutrality and ecosystem restoration are not only environmentally crucial but also economically beneficial.

22. There is therefore an urgent need for Africa to increase its momentum and develop focused ambitions to accelerate the efforts to combat land degradation, desertification, and drought

23. This dialogue will therefore focus on policy interventions that would catalyze resource mobilization and forge partnerships and synergies to enhance implementation of agreed targets This dialogue will also focus on policy interventions to strengthen efforts to mitigate droughts in Africa; raise ambition to meet Africa's land degradation neutrality targets and; enhance opportunities for ecosystems restoration. The dialogue will further examine how effective management of natural capital as described in the natural capital atlas launched earlier can contribute to the continent's efforts of addressing its challenges related to land degradation, desertification and drought.

(b) Optimizing benefits for natural capital in Africa

24. More than 95% of Africa's population relies on natural resources to sustain their livelihoods. The African continent is well endowed with natural resources, but most remain untapped, unquantified, undervalued or not properly managed. The seventeenth regular session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, and other previous sessions requested UNEP and its partners to develop evidence-based strategies for enhancing the sustainability of Africa's natural capital. The African Development Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme therefore has developed the Atlas of Africa Natural Capital to support national and regional planning and decision making, including strategic investments.

25. The Atlas of Africa Natural Capital describes assets in their role of providing inputs and services for economic consumption and production. It describes the parts of the natural environment (e.g. our stock of waters, land, biodiversity and flow of ecosystem services) that produce value to people as well as goods and services from natural capital including medicines, food, fuel wood, water, clean air and services such as climate regulation, food regulation, carbon storage and pollination of crops. The key policy intervention is to enhance national capacities on ecosystems restoration and natural resources valuation.

26. The focus of the dialogue will be to develop a common strategy for optimizing benefits from Africa's natural capital for national development, including key accelerators for institutional and legislative capacity for regulating and managing strategic resources, including critical minerals.

(c) Africa's preparedness for COP 16 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

27. The sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification will take place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 2 to 13 December 2024.

28. The sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties will be a landmark event to raise global ambition and accelerate action on land and drought resilience through a people-centred approach. It will coincide with the Convention's 30th anniversary.

29. The sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties is expected to catalyze new initiatives on land restoration and drought resilience. It is also set to leave a strong legacy, building on the G20 Global Land Initiative, as well as Saudi and Middle East Green Initiatives.

30. At the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, countries are expected to decide on collective actions to:- accelerate restoration of degraded land between now and 2030; boost drought preparedness, response and resilience; ensure that land continues to provide climate and biodiversity solutions; boost resilience to escalating sand and dust storms; scale up nature-positive food production; strengthen women's land rights to advance land restoration, and; promote youth engagement, including decent land-based jobs for youth.

31. This dialogue will focus on how the African Continent is prepared to decide on these collective actions.

(d) Addressing marine and coastal challenges in the Abidjan Convention

32. the 1981 Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West and Central Africa Region (Abidjan Convention) promotes regional cooperation to address marine and coastal challenges. Since its adoption, several achievements have been made, notable among the recent ones are the adoption of four additional protocols that is, a) Malabo Protocol on the Management of Offshore Oil and Gas Activities, b) Bassam Protocol on Pollution from Land-based Activities, c) Pointe Noire Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management, and d) Calabar Protocol on the Sustainable Management of Mangroves. These protocols have yet to be ratified. In addition, a draft Protocol on Marine Protected Areas and Other Conservation Measures and guidelines for the management of marine protected areas are being developed by the Parties to the Convention.

33. The Parties are also exploring ways to strengthen the financial status of the Convention and mobilise partnerships and new initiatives so as to support implementation of its programme of work and its Secretariat.

34. This dialogue will provide an opportunity for the Parties and partners to engage on the leadership required in repositioning the Abidjan Convention on combating marine pollution, reducing biodiversity loss and adaptation to climate change for a sustainable blue economy, including on emerging issues such as biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction, global biodiversity framework, accelerate the ratification of the protocols.

Item 5

Consideration of upcoming international environmental conferences

(a) Preparations for the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

35. The Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on biodiversity will give an overview, analysis and progress report on the biodiversity negotiations and preparations to date, highlighting the negotiation matters of interest to Africa, and will present a set of key messages for consideration by the ministers in the preparations for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties.

(b) Preparations for the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

36. The Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on climate change will give an overview, analysis and progress report on the climate change negotiations and preparations to date, highlighting the negotiation matters of interest to Africa, and will present a set of key messages for consideration by the ministers in the preparations for the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties.

(c) Preparations for the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment

37. The Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on plastic pollution will provide an overview of Africa's engagement and outcomes of the fourth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee and then give an analysis and update on Africa's common priorities, and the next steps in the preparations for the fifth session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee, including the need for an African common position.

(d) **Preparations for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification**

38. The Chair of the African Group of Negotiators on combatting desertification will give an overview, analysis and progress report on the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties negotiations and preparations to date, highlighting the negotiation matters of interest to Africa, and will present a set of key messages for consideration by the ministers in the preparations for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties

Item 6

Venue and dates of the twentieth ordinary session

39. The twentieth session of the Conference is to be hosted by a member State from North Africa.
40. During the 19th Ordinary Session, the ministers agreed that consultations within the North Africa subregion would continue on the issue of the venue and dates of the twentieth ordinary session, with a view to the subregion reaching a decision and reporting back during the consultative meeting of the Conference to be held in the margins of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change.
41. At the 35th Meeting of the Bureau of the Conference held on 1 March 2024, the Bureau noted the ongoing consultations of the North Africa Region and urged the sub-region to achieve a consensus on the venue of the twentieth ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.
42. In the absence of any offers to host the session, the President may propose that the twentieth session be hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi, the seat of the secretariat.

Item 7

Consideration of the draft declaration and key messages

43. The President of the Conference will introduce the draft declaration, decisions and key messages during a closed session open only to African member States and regional institutions.
44. A representative of the secretariat will take ministers through the draft declaration, decisions and key messages for their consideration, input and subsequent adoption.

Item 8

Adoption of the report of the ministerial meeting

45. A representative of the secretariat will introduce the draft report of the ministerial meeting for adoption by the Conference, on the understanding that the secretariat will finalize the report after the meeting.

Item 9

Other matters

46. Other key matters of interest not included in the agenda may be discussed. It is proposed that any Government that introduces any other matter should provide the secretariat with a copy of a background document for circulation during the session.

Item 10

Closure of the session

47. The President will bring the session to a formal close after the customary exchange of courtesies.

Annex I

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Document</i>
Working documents	
AMCEN/SS.10/EGM/1	Provisional agenda for the expert group segment
AMCEN/SS.10/EGM/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda for the expert group segment
AMCEN/SS.10/1	Provisional agenda for the ministerial segment
AMCEN/SS.10/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda for the ministerial segment
AMCEN/SS.10/2	Background paper on Raising Ambition for Accelerating Action on Drought Resilience, and Combating land degradation and desertification
AMCEN/SS.10/3	Background paper on Leveraging Financing and Partnerships for Combating drought, land degradation, and desertification in Africa
Information documents	
AMCEN/SS.10/INF/1	Information note for participants in the tenth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCEN/SS.10/INF/2	AMCEN Bureaux 1985 - 2023
Reference documents	
AMCEN/BUR.9/2	Constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCEN/BUR.9/3	Rules of procedure of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Annex II

Programme of work for the ministerial meeting on 5 and 6 September 2024

Thursday, 5 September 2024

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Item 1
9.00 a.m.–10.00 a.m.	High-Level Opening Ceremony
10.00 a.m.–10.30 a.m.	Launch of the Africa Natural Capital Atlas
10.30 a.m.–12.00 p.m.	Ministerial statements
	Item 2
12.00 – 1.00p.m	Organizational matters: Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
1.00 p.m.–3.00 p.m.	Lunch break (And Associated Events)
	Item 3
3.00 p.m.–3.45 p.m.	Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group
	Item 4
3.45 p.m.–6.00 p.m.	Ministerial policy dialogues; Ministerial dialogue 1 – land degradation, desertification and drought – Restoring Africa's Natural Capital Ministerial dialogue 2 – finance and partnerships to address land degradation, desertification and drought
6.00 p.m.	Official reception by the Government of Cote d' Ivoire

Friday, 6 September 2024

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
	Item 5
9.00 a.m.–10.00 a.m.	Ministerial policy dialogues (a) Ministerial dialogue 3 – Africa's preparedness for UNCCD COP 16
10.00 a.m.–11.30 a.m.	(b) Ministerial dialogue 4 – Abidjan Convention
11.30 a.m.–1.00 p.m.	(c) Briefing on Africa's preparations for COP 29 UNFCCC, COP 16 CBD, INC 5 and UNCCD COP 16
1.00 p.m.–3.00 p.m.	Lunch break
	Item 6
3.00 p.m.–3.30 p.m.	Venue and dates of the twentieth ordinary session
	Item 7
3.30 p.m.–5.00 p.m.	Consideration of the draft declaration, decisions and key messages of the session
	Item 8
5.00 p.m.–5.15 p.m.	Adoption of the report of the ministerial meeting
	Item 9
5.30 p.m.- 5.45 p.m.	Other matters
	Item 13
5.45 p.m.	Closure of the meeting