



Distr.: Limited
18 September 2018

Original: English
English and French only

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

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Seventh special session

Ministerial meeting

Nairobi, 19 September 2018

Nairobi Declaration on Turning Environmental Policies into Action through Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges in Africa

We, African ministers of the environment,

Having met in Nairobi on 19 September 2018 at the seventh special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recognizing that achieving long-term sustainable development in Africa will depend on capacity building of human capital and sustainable management of our countries' natural capital which requires investing in and promotion of innovative environmental solutions,

Recognizing that achieving long-term sustainable development in Africa will depend on sustainable management of our countries' natural capital which requires investing in and promotion of innovative environmental solutions and capacity building of human capital,

Acknowledging the role of innovative solutions for environmental challenges in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Agenda 2063 agreed ad ref

Noting that green business in Africa contributes to increased incomes, job and wealth creation, efficient use of resources, increased productivity and improved health and competitiveness, while bringing social benefits and addressing environmental concerns,

Concerned by the high rates of land and ecosystem degradation, and biodiversity loss in Africa,

Recognizing the critical importance of biodiversity in supporting economic growth, sustainable development, livelihoods and human wellbeing in Africa and its contribution to achieving the African Union Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals,

Welcoming the report on the regional assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services for Africa as well as the global land degradation assessment report of 2018 of the Inter-Governmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services,

Welcoming the African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity to held 13 November 2018 and the 2018 UN Biodiversity Conference and its High-level Segment to be held from 14 to 29 November 2018 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, *Reaffirming* that the promotion of the circular economy approach to waste management can contribute significantly to the achievement of Goal 12 of the SDGs as well as the 3rd session UNEA theme "towards a pollution-free planet",

Welcoming the convening of the inaugural meeting of Africa environment partnership platform under the theme "50 years of environmental governance and sustainability in Africa" in Nairobi, 20-21 September 2018,

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Recalling the 2008 Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment in Africa, through which African countries committed to, inter alia, establish a health-and-environment strategic alliance, as the basis for plans of joint action,

Taking note of the 2018 Kigali Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area which recognises the need for environmental protection and overall sustainable development,

Welcoming the 2003 Amended Convention on Nature and Natural Resources that came into force on July 10, 2016,

Noting that women and youth play a critical role as agents of change in empowering families, communities and nations to spur innovative environmental solutions in Africa,

Aware of the forthcoming fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, to be held from 11-15 March 2019 in Nairobi under the theme “Innovative solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable consumption and production”,

Determined to strengthen our efforts in investing in and prioritizing innovative approaches and actions to unlock inclusive wealth while sustainably managing the environment and natural resources,

Hereby declare our resolve:

1. To renew and reaffirm our commitment to promote and invest in innovative environmental solutions to contribute to the reduction of challenges on environmental resources, create wealth and jobs for Africa’s socio-economic transformation;
2. To agree to continue to support the African Environmental partnership platform as a vehicle to promote the sharing of innovative solutions for environmental challenges in Africa to empower member States, innovators, the private sector, micro-small and medium enterprises and civil society to invest in and use innovative approaches to address environmental challenges,
3. To support and promote the continued role of AMCEN, NEPAD Planning and Coordination agency, AUC, and other partners in using the African environment platform as an avenue to create new, and strengthen existing partnerships with different stakeholders to share experiences and lessons, improve coordination with member States and regional institutions and processes on environmental governance and sustainable development in Africa,
4. To commit to the integration of innovative solutions into our countries’ national development agendas and to create awareness at the subnational and local levels among business and local communities on the positive environmental, health and socioeconomic impacts of investing in innovative solutions,
5. To urge African States to invest in and prioritize the urgently needed innovative approaches and start the intrinsic implementation of innovative solutions for environmental challenges that unlock inclusive wealth and simultaneously build climate resilience, while supporting the achievement of the multiple targets of the Sustainable Development Goals;
6. To agree to support green business development by formulating policies, laws, guidelines and programmes to promote sustainable industrialisation and safeguard the environment and natural resources;
7. To agree to develop and strengthen gender-responsive policies to empower African women and youth to engage in innovative solutions to access affordable and clean energy and address environmental and sustainable development challenges, to create jobs and wealth;
8. To agree to take action to strengthen national capacities to collect and manage scientific and quantitative data and information on the state of the environment and natural resources to create opportunities for innovative solutions for environmental challenges and smart investment choices;
9. To call upon civil society and the private sector in Africa to commit, individually and collectively, to promoting and investing in innovative solutions for environmental challenges in order to achieve sustainable development in Africa;
10. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, other relevant United Nations agencies, development partners and the international community to strengthen support for African countries in undertaking studies and assessments and in developing policies, programmes, resource mobilization, projects and measures that contribute to innovative solutions for environmental challenges, by providing adequate, predictable and sustainable means of

implementation, including financial support, the development and transfer of appropriate technology and capacity-building including in accordance with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;

11. To encourage member States to actively participate in the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, to be held in Nairobi from 11 to 15 March 2019;

12. To mandate the President of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and its Bureau to coordinate the African group to develop common understanding and positions and speak with one voice during the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;

13. To urge member States to continue deliberations on issues of most importance and common interest to Africa in these negotiations, such as the poverty environment nexus, land degradation, environmental displacement and migration, energy security, food security, green business development, chemicals and waste management and biodiversity loss, among others, with a view of formulating resolutions and concluding a ministerial outcome document during the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly;

14. To agree to nominate [XXXX] member States as Africa's representatives to the Bureau of the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly;

15. To reaffirm the request to the African Union Commission to coordinate the African group to develop common understanding and positions on various issues and speak with one voice during the upcoming 2018 UN Biodiversity Conference, the next CITE's COP and further strengthen such coordination during future UN Biodiversity Conference;

16. To agree to develop a common understanding or position on the development of the post 2020 biodiversity framework and request the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency, African Union Commission, regional economic communities and partners to provide support to African countries in the regional consultative engagements for the post-2020 Biodiversity framework;

17. To reaffirm Africa's full support to the Arab Republic of Egypt in convening and hosting the African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity to be held on 13 November 2018, the 2018 UN Biodiversity Conference, its high-level segment and fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Protocols to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt from 14 to 29 November 2018, under the theme "Investing in biodiversity for people and planet";

18. To agree to develop, with the support of partners, a Pan-African Agenda on ecosystem restoration for increased resilience.

19. To support the proposal calling upon the UN General Assembly at its 73rd session to designate 2021-2030 as the "United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration";

20. To note with concern the threat that climate change currently poses on the development efforts in the African countries, and the urgent need to tackle the immediate, short and medium-term adaptation challenges facing African countries. We also acknowledge the actions taken to tackle climate change, both on mitigation and adaptation, would enhance efforts to achieve sustainable development goals and enhance disaster risk reduction capacities;

21. To urge all parties to continue to fulfil their commitments under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol, further urge all parties to confirm their commitment to the Paris Agreement through fulfilling their respective commitments and responsibilities identified in the Paris Agreement, with developed countries taking the lead, both individually and collectively, through providing ambitious quantified economy wide emissions reductions that is a reflection of their level of development, and provisions of predictable, sustainable means of implementation, in particular financial resources, and for developing countries communicating their nationally determined contributions;

22. Stresses that the spirit and aim of the Paris Agreement to enhance ambition of action and support, while acknowledging that level of ambition of developing countries is directly related to level of ambition and provisions of support provided by developed country parties. In this regard, it is crucial that the outcomes of COP24 in Katowice reflect the spirit of the Paris agreement and the delicate balance between its elements, in particular, those related to action and support and transparency, taking into consideration that adaptation and finance are core elements of the Paris Agreement and cornerstones for effective operationalization of the Agreement;

23. To stress on the importance of enhancing accessibility, predictability and sustainability of means of implementation, in particular finance, and we note with concern the rolling back of the pledges by some developed countries, together with the significant decrease of the climate change

allocation in the 7th replenishment period of the GEF, which might negatively impact actions to tackle climate change. In this regard, we call on the development partners to ensure a meaningful and adequate first replenishment process of the GCF that would focus on achieving ambitious results both in mitigation and resilience building. Such replenishment should reflect the envisaged progression of provisions of finance beyond the level of the initial resource mobilization;

24. To reaffirm that adaptation is a priority for Africa, and we expect that the outcomes of COP24 lead to the operationalization of the global goal on Adaptation, and the enhancement of the global action towards supporting African countries national efforts to tackle adaptation, and further invites development partners to engage constructively in the donor roundtable on AAI to be held on the margins of the UNGA in New York on the 24th of September 2018;

25. To welcomes the progress made to date in the operationalization of the AAI and AREI and commends the commitment of H.E. Ali Bongo Ondimba President of the Republic of Gabon, Chair of CAHOSCC in supporting the AAI, and the efforts by HE. Alpha Conde President of The Republic of Guinea, chair of the board of AREI, in leading the work to operationalize AREI;

26. To recognize the priority of safeguarding food security and eradicating hunger, and acknowledge the vulnerabilities of agriculture and food production systems in Africa to the adverse impacts of climate change, we stress on the importance that Koronivia joint work on agriculture provide recommendation on resilience building of agriculture and food production systems;

27. To stress on the importance of technology development and transfer as a main enabler to tackle climate change, in this regard, we call on developed country parties to enhance technology transfer of low emission and climate resilient technologies to African countries on concessional and preferential terms to assist them to achieve their nationally determined contributions. We further reiterate the importance of enhancing capacity building of African countries as part of the enablers to plan and implement climate actions on the national level;

28. To reiterate that the measures taken to combat climate change, including unilateral ones, should not lead to unjustifiable discrimination or disguised restriction on international trade specially exports from Africa;

29. To note the efforts put forward to achieve successful outcome of the Talanoa dialogue, and highlight the importance of ensuring that any outcomes of this process would reflect the views of all participants and ensure that it covers all issues related to climate change, in particular mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation;

30. To reiterate African countries' commitment to take appropriate actions, in line with their national circumstances and capacities, and as part of Africa's fair share of the global action towards tackling climate change;

31. To agree to enhance the negotiation capacity of African negotiators through promoting and strengthening the existing UNEP's environmental diplomacy programme and platforms so as to strengthen African common positions on various environment issues,

32. To support the 2018 Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area in Africa, as a means of facilitating the protection of the environment and overall inclusive growth and sustainable development that are necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health;

33. To encourage member States to actively participate in the third Inter-Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa, to be held in Libreville, 9 to 12 October 2018, under the theme "Health and environment strategic alliance: a catalysis for action on the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa";

34. To reaffirm our support to Kenya in hosting the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, to be held in Nairobi from 26 to 28 November 2018 which will promote innovative blue economy strategies in our countries and contribute to the implementation of the Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

35. To urge African states to promote the growth and development of the regional ocean sector in a sustainable blue economy pathway and support the mainstreaming of aquatic biodiversity in all productive sectors with a view to sustainably harnessing the blue economy,

36. To encourage member States to actively participate in the first extraordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa to be held in Khartoum, on 25 and 26 February 2019;

37. To request the Bamako Convention Secretariat to expedite the development of the new scale of assessed contributions in line with the outcomes of the second Conference of the parties to the Convention held in Abidjan in February 2018,

38. To call upon countries to consider developing and ensure implementation of Lead Paint Laws and to establish the lowest and most protective regulatory limit as appropriate; especially the 90 parts per million total lead content;

39. To agree to take action and create enabling conditions including by formulating enabling national policies, introducing innovative technologies, providing adequate investment, promoting regional integration and capacity building for cleaner mobility;

40. To encourage member States that have not yet ratified multilateral environmental agreements including the Minamata Convention on mercury Bamako Convention on wastes, Maputo Convention on Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and others to do so and to urge partners to support their implementation;

41. To agree to convene the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the 2003 the Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources as a step for its full implementation and call upon member States and partners to support the conference and its related activities;

42. To agree to continue supporting the work of member State missions led by the African Diplomatic Corps in Nairobi and the Permanent Representatives Committee in Addis Ababa in their efforts to coordinate African common understanding and positions during negotiations and effective engagement in the African Union, United Nations, other regional and global processes on sustainable development;

43. To urge member States to pay their contributions to the General Trust Fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in a timely manner, including outstanding arrears

44. To mandate the President of the Conference to convey to all stakeholders, the priorities and position of Africa contained in this declaration and in the decisions, key messages and report of the seventh special session of the Conference, including to external partners and organizations, with a view to enlisting their support, and to report to the Conference at its next regular session;

45. To also mandate the President of the Conference to submit the report of the seventh special session of the Conference, including the recommendations of the Nairobi Declaration on Turning Environmental Policies into Action through Innovative Solutions and the annexes thereto, to the African Union Commission for further action by the African Union policy organs;

46. To express our gratitude to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for the hosting of the secretariat and the continued support to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and to this seventh special session of Conference;

47. To express our profound appreciation to, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the President of the African Development Bank and the Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility, the Chief Executive Officer of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, among others, for the continued support of their organizations to the work of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

Special tribute to Dr. Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations

48. To extend our heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, the Government and the people of the Republic of Ghana, and the international community for the passing of Dr. Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations, and to express our appreciation for his role, in advancing the sustainable development agenda and advocating Africa's interests.