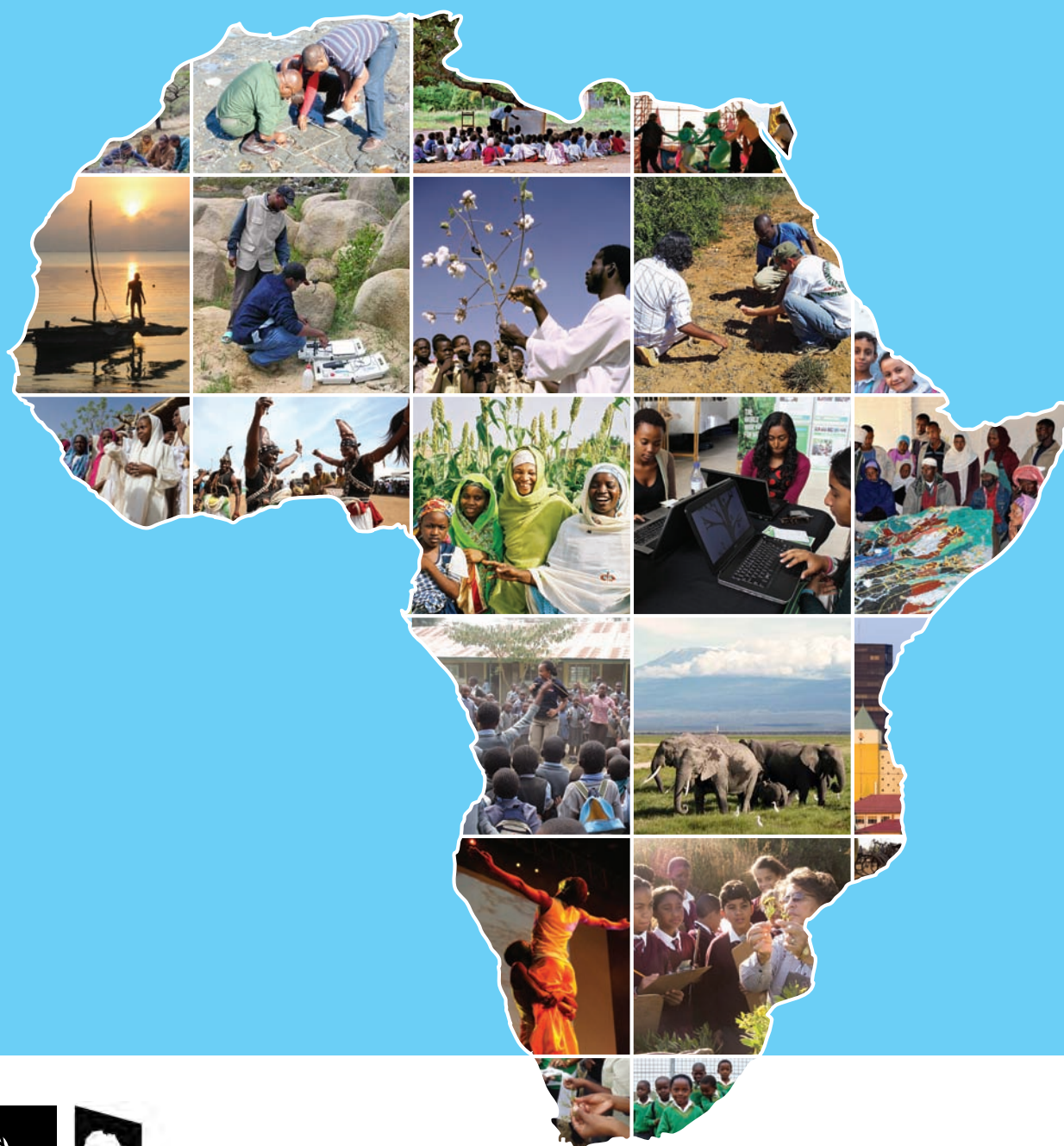


# Strengthening Sustainable Development in Africa



## In response to the AMCEN Arusha Declaration, 2012



# **Africa Environmental Education and Training Action Plan 2015–2024**

Strengthening Sustainable Development in Africa



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## PROJECT TEAM

### **Mahesh Pradhan**

Chief, Environmental Education and Training Unit, UNEP

### **Angele Luh**

Head, Sub Regional Office for West Africa, Regional Office for Africa, UNEP

### **David Ombisi**

Programme Officer, Regional Office for Africa, UNEP

### **Pablo Fuentenebro**

Associate Programme Officer, Environmental Education and Training Unit, UNEP

### **Pamela Mubuta**

Programme Assistant, Environmental Education and Training Unit, UNEP

### **Brian Waswala Olewe**

Environmental Education and Training Specialist, Environmental Education and Training Unit, UNEP

### **Mariam Osman**

Environmental Education and Training Specialist, Environmental Education and Training Unit, UNEP

## AUTHORS

### **Heila Lotz-Sisitka**

Professor in Education, and Murray & Roberts Chair in Environmental Education, Rhodes University

### **Satishkumar Belliethathan**

Assistant Professor, Centre for Environmental Sciences; and Programme Coordinator, Horn of Africa Regional Environment Centre and Network, Addis Ababa University

### **Mahesh Pradhan**

Chief, Environmental Education and Training, UNEP

### **Gregory Odeke**

Environmental Education and Training Specialist, UNEP

### **Brian Waswala Olewe**

Environmental Education and Training Specialist, UNEP

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The authors would like to acknowledge participants of the Regional Consultative Meetings where the draft Action Plan framework was introduced, discussed, reviewed and critiqued as a “work in progress”. The regional consultative meetings were held in Addis Ababa (November 2012), Nairobi (May 2013), Morocco (June 2013), South Africa (June 2013 - SADC representatives’ consultation) and Addis Ababa (April 2014).

Preparation of the AEETAP was certainly an international stakeholder collaboration and consultation exercise with representation from the Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in African Universities (MESA) partnership programme, the Horn of Africa Regional Environmental Programme and the Southern African Development Community Regional Environmental Education Programme (amongst others), and also participants attending the 7th World Environmental Education Congress in Morocco (2013).

Finally, we would like to point out that this Action Plan aims to be a “living document” that is updated on a regular basis, based on feedback from African member states and relevant stakeholders. An electronic online portal, where stakeholders are able to incorporate and share their experiences in the implementation and updating of AEETAP, will be created.

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# FOREWORD

A lack of clear and sustained environmental awareness in many African countries has contributed to environmental degradation within the continent. To address this challenge, UN Environment, in collaboration with other stakeholders, is promoting capacity development for future professionals through environmental education.

The Africa Environmental Education and Training Action Plan (AEETAP) 2015–2024, as called for by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), is one of UN Environment’s modes of facilitating and promoting environmental awareness, education and training. The Action Plan advocates for ecosystem resource management; communication and dissemination of environmental material in all forms of education; spatial planning and urban design through green campus designs; sustainable tourism and efficient transport; and water and sanitation, among other green practices.

The Action Plan seeks to promote innovation based on best sustainability practices through information and communications technology (ICT). This includes the development and implementation of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on sustainable development, as well as the promotion of positive attitude and behaviour change, all geared towards ensuring an environmentally resilient continent.

The Action Plan will support UN Environment’s Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in African Universities (MESA) Partnership Programme.

MESA seeks to mainstream environment and sustainability concerns into teaching, research, community engagement and management of universities in Africa. The Action Plan will also contribute to the achievement of AMCEN’s Regional Flagship Programmes, including among others: Green Economy Partnerships; African programmes on sustainable energy development; and Partnerships for sustainable consumption and production. As such, the Action Plan will help ensure that the African Union dream of “A prosperous Africa at peace with itself and its partners” becomes a reality.

The practical application of the Action Plan among member states will build learners’ capacity to critically analyse, synthesise and use emerging environmental information for decision making; promote values and commitment to the environment, based on an understanding of the role of the environment in social justice and in people’s health, quality of life, livelihoods and socio-economic development; and advocate for action competence based on their understanding of environmental issues and on their associated values.

Above all, the Action Plan will complement national and regional sustainability agendas; the achievement of the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the African Agenda 2063; and the UNESCO Global Action Plan for Education for Sustainable Development.



**Mette Wilkie**  
Director  
Ecosystems Division  
United Nations Environment Programme



**Julliette Biao Koudenoukpo**  
Director  
Regional Office of Africa  
United Nations Environment Programme

# PREFACE

Environmental integrity in Africa and the world continues to grapple with a myriad of threats, consequences of increased anthropogenic activities. These issues include desertification, reduced quality and quantity of fresh water, biodiversity loss, climate change, degradation of arable soils, food insecurity and increased pollution. Together, these challenges impact sustainable development, human health and ecosystem resilience.

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) has, over the years, recognised environmental education as an effective means for confronting environmental challenges and identifying future opportunities. Environmental education is critical for creating awareness, enhancing values, changing people's attitudes and improving skills consistent with sustainable development.

To address environmental challenges facing Africa, AMCEN agreed to strengthen environmental education and training and develop an action plan for Africa. The Africa Environmental Education and Training Action Plan (AEETAP) 2015–2024 has been prepared as a direct response to the 2012 AMCEN Arusha Declaration on Africa's post Rio+20 strategy for sustainable development.

The core objective of the Action Plan is to enhance community environmental education and training within Africa, through various forms of education: training, life-long learning, capacity building programmes and projects. It calls for reorientation of the education system; policy development; curriculum and programme innovation and design; transformative learning approaches that support action and change; transformative assessment practices; development of materials to support new approaches to environmental learning and action competence; and technology enhanced learning to foster wider access and participation in environmental education and training.

I take this opportunity to commend all those who have been involved in preparation of this Action Plan, especially UN Environment's Environmental Educational and Training Unit (EETU) for coordinating and driving this initiative. I hope this Action Plan will encourage and support action and participation by all stakeholders at all levels in Africa, to promote an environmental conscious African citizenry and contribute to the achievement of a sustainable, clean, peaceful and healthy Africa.



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