

Arusha Declaration on Africa's post Rio+20 strategy for sustainable development

We, African ministers of the environment,

Having met in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 12 to 14 September 2012 at the fourteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

In relation to Africa's post Rio+20 strategy for sustainable development,

Welcoming the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012,

Recalling the decision¹ of the Assembly of the African Union at its nineteenth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa on 15 and 16 July 2012, on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, at which requests were made to:

(a) The fourteenth ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment to conduct a substantive analysis of the Rio+20 outcomes in order to develop a plan of action for Africa and to prepare for the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly of the United Nations;

(b) The African Union Commission, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, regional economic communities and other partners to step up efforts in terms of providing the necessary facilitation and coordination support towards the effective implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes to support sustainable development efforts in Africa,

Stressing the need for Africa to seize the opportunities available to achieve its sustainable development ambitions as a result of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development,

Recognizing the continued relevance and importance of the New Partnership for Africa's Development in providing a framework for sustainable development, and its action plan for the environment initiative as the framework for addressing environmental matters in Africa,

Expressing appreciation to all partners, including the African Union Commission, regional economic communities, the African Development Bank, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, other United Nations agencies and partners for the support in the preparatory work and successful participation of African countries in the Rio+20 Conference,

Welcoming the adoption by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development of the global 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns,² which supports regional and national initiatives to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production, contributing to resource efficiency and decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, while creating new job opportunities and contributing to poverty eradication,

Acknowledging that programmes in the adopted global 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns cover consumer information aimed at promoting tools such as eco-labelling,

Recalling the Luanda Commitment (2010) on the implementation of the Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment in Africa, in which ministers of health and the environment identified chemicals management as one of the top continental health and environment priorities to be addressed to accelerate the implementation of the Libreville Declaration,

Determined to resolve current health and environmental challenges through the effective implementation of both the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the chemicals-related international conventions, which requires that the policies of the health and environment sectors be aligned with each other, and the strengthening of institutional mechanisms to facilitate collaboration and the greater integration of the sound management of chemicals into the sustainable development agenda,

1 Assembly/AU/Dec.437(XIX).

2 A/CONF.216/5, annex.

Noting with appreciation the support provided by the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, regional economic communities, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the Global Environment Facility and other partners for the implementation of environmental programmes in Africa,

Reaffirming the importance of the Africa Environment Outlook as a framework to support decision-making for the implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes by member States and other stakeholders,

Recognizing the ongoing United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005–2014 and the Tbilisi Communiqué – Educate Today for a Sustainable Future, adopted by the Tbilisi Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education for Sustainable Development (Tbilisi+35), held on 6 and 7 September 2012,

Expressing our support for and stressing the importance of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, to be held in Hyderabad, India, from 1 to 5 October 2012, and the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Hyderabad from 8 to 19 October 2012, including its high-level segment, scheduled for 17 to 19 October 2012,

Noting with satisfaction the adoption of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement Plan of Action for Africa 2012–2017 by the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement, which calls upon African Governments to fully support and implement the plan at the national level and encourages developed country partners and other partners to provide additional technical and financial resources for the full implementation of the plan,

Concerned with the limited progress in the implementation 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,

Considering that the forthcoming sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, to be convened in September 2012, will discuss and make decisions on the implementation of some of the Rio+20 outcomes,

Recognizing that the Rio+20 Conference reaffirmed the Rio principles on sustainable development as contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, made at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

Reaffirming the important role played by non-governmental and civil society organizations in implementing the programme of work of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recognizing the important role that young people, the private sector, major groups, non-governmental organizations and civil society will play in the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the need for their effective involvement in all such processes,

Recalling decision 13/4, adopted by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its thirteenth session, on the compulsory minimum contribution of \$10,000 by each member State to the trust fund of the Conference, and committed to having secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources to ensure that the Conference fulfils its mandate,

Concerned that the non-contribution by some member States to the trust fund affects the ability of the Conference to carry out its activities,

Hereby declare our resolve:

1. To agree to enhance the political visibility of the African sustainable development agenda and promote the stronger integration, in a balanced manner, of the three sustainable development dimensions;
2. To agree to strengthen and consolidate our commitment to the promotion of sustainable development and effectively integrate the economic, environmental and social dimensions into our local, national and regional development policies and strategies;
3. To reaffirm the need to continue speaking with one voice and ensure the adequate representation of Africa in all committees established for the follow-up of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20);

4. To develop a common strategy for negotiation and engagement that represents the interests of Africa in the intergovernmental processes to be established by the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session on:

- (a) The establishment of the universal intergovernmental high-level political forum;
- (b) The sustainable development goals;
- (c) The strengthening and upgrading the United Nations Environment Programme;
- (d) The operationalization of the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns;
- (e) The mechanism for the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technology;
- (f) The intergovernmental process for an effective and sustainable development financing strategy;

5. To develop and implement regional flagship programmes that will contribute to the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Africa;

6. To call on the African Union-New Partnership for Africa's Development (AU-NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency, in collaboration with the African Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and regional economic communities and other relevant partners, to create the African Environment Partnership Platform as a mechanism for cooperation and resource mobilization for the implementation of the action plan of the environment initiative of AU-NEPAD;

7. To initiate an African green economy partnership that facilitates coordinated support to member States and serves to implement the global partnership for action on the green economy as a vehicle for poverty eradication, the creation of decent jobs and sustainable development;

8. To effectively address and meet the commitment made at the Rio+20 Conference to strive to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world in the context of sustainable development and within the implementation for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;

9. To agree to transform the Marrakech Process Task Force on Cooperation with Africa into a partnership for sustainable consumption and production in Africa so as to ensure the continuation of the implementation of activities and programmes on sustainable consumption and production in the region;

10. To emphasize the importance of linking sustainable consumption and production with the challenge of meeting basic needs in the process of developing national, subregional and regional activities in Africa under the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns.

11. To call on the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to dedicate a session during the upcoming Africa regional implementation mechanism meeting to examine African priorities and determine the guidelines for Africa's engagement with the intergovernmental process set up by the General Assembly, including the high-level political forum, sustainable development goals, financing and the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on sustainable consumption and production;

12. To recognize and support the further development of the African eco-labelling mechanism and its Eco-mark Africa eco-label as an effective market-based instrument and consumer information tool to enhance access for African products to regional and international markets;

13. To call upon member States to use the findings of the Africa Environment Outlook in national policies, development plans and strategies, and to call upon the African Union Commission to integrate the process and preparation of the Africa Environment Outlook in its programme of work, with the technical support of the United Nations Environment Programme;

14. To request the United Nations Environment Programme to conduct a study of the situation, best practices and needs concerning, and to agree to develop and adopt a plan of action on, access to information, participation and justice regarding environmental issues in Africa;

15. To agree to develop programmes that will support the development of networks and the capacity of parliamentarians in raising awareness and integration of multilateral environmental agreements into national and regional policies and programmes;

16. To invite the Assembly of the African Union to reconsider the decision to abolish sectoral ministerial conferences, including the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, to allow for further consultations and to request the establishment of a specialized technical committee on the environment, given the increasing importance of the environmental dimension in sustainable development in Africa and the world;
17. To call upon member States individually and collectively to develop policies, guidelines, legislation and other strategies or mechanisms for the management of electrical and electronic wastes;
18. To agree to strengthen environmental education and training and develop an action plan for Africa, covering formal and non-formal education, capacity-building and information networking components, among others, and to explicitly include a focus on technology-enhanced learning in this action plan;
19. To reinforce the need for increased coordination and cooperation among the chemicals and wastes conventions, namely, the Bamako Convention, the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and to encourage continued enhanced coordination and cooperation among them and with the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, and to call upon member States to follow this synergistic approach in implementing the chemicals and wastes conventions at the national level;
20. To request the member States, the African Union Commission and the United Nations Environment Programme, in collaboration with the World Health Organization and other partners, to support the implementation of the African programme to reduce chemical risks to health and the environment in Africa and to develop and disseminate for use by member States the necessary technical tools required for the implementation of the programme in the context of the Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment in Africa;
21. To urge the African Union Commission, together with the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and other partners, to develop a marine and coastal environment strategy for Africa;
22. To call upon partners, including the Global Environment Facility, to support African countries and relevant regional bodies in their efforts to effectively implement environmental matters, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, through, in particular, national-level implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Convention and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and efforts towards the ratification, early entry into force and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization;
23. To urge member States and all relevant regional bodies to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity for 2011-2020;
24. To appeal to member States to continue conserving and sustainably using biological diversity by supporting the objective of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, implementing national biosafety frameworks and promoting the safe use of modern biotechnology;
25. To urge member States to continue to promote synergy in the implementation of the Rio Conventions;
26. To encourage the African Union Commission to continue its ongoing work in the development of guidelines to support the coordinated implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on access and benefit-sharing in Africa;
27. To request the United Nations Environment Programme, in collaboration with member States and partners, to support, with financial and technical assistance, through multilateral, North-South and South-South cooperation, the implementation of the agreed decision under the Rio+20 Conference regarding mountains in Africa;
28. To urge all countries to raise awareness of and use the African Union Commission strategy to guide the promotion of the ratification and implementation of the 2003 Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources;
29. To call for accession by all member States to the 1994 Lusaka Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement Operations Directed at Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora and for the implementation of appropriate measures to combat transboundary environmental crimes in this regard;

30. To urge member States to take the necessary measures to ratify and implement the 2003 Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources;

31. To request the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and regional economic communities to support the convening of the first conference of the parties to the Bamako Convention and facilitate the mobilization of resources for its operationalization;

32. To call upon partners, including the Global Environment Facility, to support African countries and relevant bodies in their efforts to effectively implement the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative and to use it as a flagship programme that represents Africa's contribution to the achievement of a land degradation neutral world in the context of sustainable development;

33. To promote South-South cooperation, including through intra-Africa and Africa-Brazil-China cooperation for sustainable development in Africa;

In relation to the updated common African position on climate change,

Welcoming the decisions³ of the Assembly of the African Union adopted at its nineteenth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa on 15 and 16 July 2012, inter alia, endorsing Namibia as the African candidate to bid for the hosting of the secretariat of the Green Climate Fund,

Recalling the decisions adopted by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its thirteenth session, held in Bamako from 20 to 25 June 2010, on strengthening the international climate change regime through the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto,

Recalling the outcome of the fourth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, held in Bamako from 12 to 16 September 2011, by which the Conference adopted the updated African common position on strengthening the international climate change regime through the full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto,

Noting the outcome of the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Durban, South Africa, from 28 November to 9 December 2011,

Aware of the forthcoming eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Doha from 26 November to 7 December 2012,

Recognizing the urgency of progress on all outcomes under consideration at the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, in particular an ambitious and science-based second commitment period for Annex I parties under the Kyoto Protocol, an ambitious package of outcomes to implement the Convention under the Bali Action Plan, as well as progress on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action,

Stressing Africa's vulnerability to the effects of climate change, in particular the adverse effects on ecosystems, food production, and social and economic development in Africa, and noting the urgent need for all countries to take action to mitigate and adapt to climate change,

Emphasizing that climate change represents an urgent and irreversible threat to human societies and the planet, that the window of opportunity to avoid dangerous climate change is closing, and that there is a growing risk of runaway climate change and catastrophic impacts, particularly to Africa,

Recognizing that a global goal of limiting average global warming to 2 degrees Celsius risks warming of over 3 degrees Celsius on the continent of Africa and represents extremely dangerous interference with the climate system and a threat to ecosystems, food production and sustainable development,

Concerned that inadequate mitigation ambition by developed countries will allow them to consume an excessive share of the global emissions budget for 2020, resulting in increased warming, limited atmospheric space for developing countries, and rising costs of adaptation and mitigation in developing countries, in particular in Africa, owing to its levels of vulnerability and development,

3 Assembly/AU/Dec.416-449(XIX).

Concerned that there is insufficient transparency and slow disbursement of the financial resources pledged by developed countries as “fast-start” financing for the period 2010 to 2012, that the bulk of funds disbursed are neither “new” nor “additional” and that there is no agreed level of financing for the period 2013 to 2020,

Concerned also that inadequate ambition on mitigation and finance reflects a broader tendency by some parties to fundamentally reorder the balance of rights and obligations in the international climate change regime to embody weaker obligations for developed countries and stronger obligations for developing countries and to weaken the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities,

Calling on all parties to fulfil their commitments and to work together to preserve and strengthen the international architecture to address climate change through multilateral cooperation based on science, equity and the principles and provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto,

Aware of the impacts of rising sea levels, especially on small island developing States as a result of climate change,

Expressing appreciation for the work of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change in providing political direction for the promotion of African interests in the climate change negotiations,

Expressing appreciation also for the efforts of the African group of negotiators in the development of the updated African common position on strengthening the international climate change regime through full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto,

Emphasizing the importance to all the States and peoples of Africa of a successful outcome to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Doha from 26 November to 7 December 2012,

Recalling the decision⁴ of the African Union Executive Council, adopted at its eighteenth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa from 24 to 28 January 2011, in which the Council endorsed the Extended Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006-2015) and the declaration of the second Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Nairobi from 14 to 16 April 2010,

Hereby declare our resolve:

34. To endorse the updated African common position on climate change as the basis for negotiations by African States on strengthening the international climate change regime through full, effective and sustained implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto;

35. To agree that the key messages⁵ on climate change negotiations for the eighteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the eighth Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol should guide and inform the discussions of the African group;

36. To affirm that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto constitute the fundamental global legal framework on climate change, and that the climate change negotiations in Doha must conclude agreed outcomes in line with the Bali Road

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