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*African Ministerial Conference on the Environment***African Ministerial Conference on the Environment****Fifteenth session**

Meeting of the expert group

Cairo, 2–4 March 2015

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda\*

**Presentations on matters related to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment process: draft indicative work programme of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment**

## **Draft work programme of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment for the biennium 2015–2016**

### **Note by the secretariat**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The main objective of the fifteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment is to provide a platform for African environment ministers to deliberate on how to harness Africa's natural capital, taking into consideration the region's diverse biodiversity and ecosystems, and how this could help the region to achieve sustainable development and eradicate poverty.
2. The session will also allow for deliberations on substantive follow-up actions related to the key outcomes of the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), held in Nairobi in June 2014, and the twenty-third and twenty-fourth ordinary sessions of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Malabo in June 2014 and in Addis Ababa in January 2015, respectively – especially with regard to the illegal trade in wildlife and the post-2015 development agenda, including the sustainable development goals.
3. The ministers participating in the session will review and analyse the outcomes of the twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Lima in December 2014, and deliberate on Africa's preparations for the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December 2015, where a new legal instrument is expected to be finalized. The ongoing climate change negotiations have entered a critical stage towards the 2015 legal agreement, and the fifteenth session will be an opportune platform to review issues at stake for the continent and to agree on a road map for the continent towards the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
4. The ministers will also consider issues related to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, including the development and implementation of the regional flagship programmes and the operationalization of the specialized technical committees of the African Union and their implications for the Conference. The ministers will also consider the status and use of the trust fund of the Conference. The

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\* AMCEN/15/EGM/1.

latest records show that member States continue to contribute to the fund at a rather low rate, hampering the effective implementation of Conference activities. There is therefore a pressing need for ministers to make critical assessments and give further guidance on how contributions to the trust fund can be enhanced.

5. The expert group will bring a number of other issues to the attention of ministers for their consideration, including the implications of the outcomes of the twelfth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the related draft African Union guidelines for the coordinated implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, the African Climate Change Strategy, the Gaborone Declaration for Sustainable Development in Africa, enhancing the implementation of environmental law in Africa and coastal and marine issues.

6. The draft work programme of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment takes into account the commitments made by heads of State and others at various international meetings; decisions adopted by the Assembly of the African Union; the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); decisions adopted by relevant conferences of the parties to global and regional environmental conventions; regional initiatives in the area of environment and sustainable development; and declarations and decisions adopted by the Conference at its previous sessions.

7. It is therefore worth noting that the draft work programme of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment for the biennium 2015–2016 has taken into consideration the key outcomes of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the twenty-third and twenty-fourth ordinary sessions of the Assembly of the African Union and other pertinent issues and initiatives related to the environment and sustainable development in Africa. The work programme will be fine-tuned to also take into consideration the outcomes and decisions of the fifteenth session of the Conference.

## **II. Clusters in the work programme for the biennium 2015–2016**

8. The proposed draft work programme for the biennium 2015–2016 is organized in clusters of regional flagship programmes, processes involving environmental conventions and related awareness- and capacity-building activities to be implemented in the biennium. These will be complemented and harmonized with the implementation of outcomes of key international and regional meetings, the decisions of the Assembly of the African Union and the declaration and decisions of the fifteenth session of the Conference.

### **A. Regional flagship programmes**

9. By paragraph 4 of its decision 14/1, on Africa's post Rio+20 strategy for sustainable development, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment decided to develop and implement regional flagship programmes as a means to ensure the effective implementation in Africa of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. The decision was subsequently endorsed by the executive committee of the African Union at its summit held in January 2013. At subsequent working sessions convened by the African Union and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, draft concept notes were prepared for the respective flagship programmes that were endorsed during the fifth special session of the Conference in Gaborone in October 2013.

10. At its fifth special session, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment adopted decision SS.V/3, by which it decided to establish a steering committee within the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency to guide the overall development and implementation of the regional flagship programmes. The steering committee was requested to establish such programme coordination committees and working groups or other relevant bodies as might be necessary to ensure effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the regional flagship programmes.

11. Therefore, during the period 2015–2016, efforts will be aimed at finalizing the development of the flagship programmes and initiating their implementation. The five flagship programmes are:

- (a) African green economy partnership;
- (b) Sustainable land management, desertification, biodiversity and ecosystems-based adaptation to climate change;

- (c) Partnership for sustainable consumption and production in Africa;
- (d) African programme on sustainable energy development;
- (e) Africa integrated environmental assessment for sustainable development.

12. The five flagship programmes will be implemented with the overall objective of achieving poverty eradication and sustainable livelihoods in the region. Capacity-building, technology transfer and skills development will be integrated as a cross-cutting theme across all the flagship programmes.

## **B. Environmental conventions**

13. The key components of this cluster include:

- (a) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- (b) The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;
- (c) The Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (d) The chemicals-related conventions;
- (e) The Amended Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean and the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region (Abidjan Convention);
- (f) The Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Maputo Convention);
- (g) The Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa.

## **C. Capacity-building activities (others)**

14. The key components of this cluster include:

- (a) The Africa Environment Outlook process, production of relevant reports and convening of seminars and workshops;
- (b) Environmental education and training;
- (c) The commemoration of environment events for awareness-raising, including Africa Environment Day (Wangari Maathai Day);
- (d) The implementation of decisions of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.

15. The draft work programme of the Conference for the biennium 2015–2016 outlines the main objectives and key components, specific activities to be undertaken and possible collaborators (see annex).

## **III. Conclusion**

16. The implementation of the regional flagship programmes will constitute the main part of the work programme of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment for the biennium 2015–2016, and it is anticipated that this will offer an opportunity for scaling up Conference activities in the region. The regional flagship programmes will also offer a good opportunity for the creation of synergies with other on-going initiatives and enhanced resource mobilization.

## Annex

## Draft work programme for the biennium 2015–2016

| <i>Programme area</i>                                                                                        | <i>Objectives</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <i>Specific activities</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <i>Collaborators<br/>(indicative list)</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Regional flagship programmes</b>                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| African green economy partnership                                                                            | Provide a coordinated and consolidated capacity-building and technology support system for African countries to implement the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development on green economy and contribute to poverty eradication and sustainable development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize regional/subregional/national platforms and events that promote a better understanding of the contribution of an inclusive green economy to Africa's development</li> <li>• Support the integration of inclusive green economy approaches and measures in (existing) regional policy frameworks</li> <li>• Initiate joint mechanisms, programmes and activities aimed at enhancing the capacities of African countries to integrate green economy principles and objectives into existing national development strategies</li> <li>• Undertake quantitative and qualitative assessments of the key opportunities and options to promote an inclusive green economy</li> <li>• Support programmes on training, skills building and youth entrepreneurship to enable African countries to take advantage of emerging areas of the green economy</li> <li>• Create a network of leading African policy research institutions able to support and provide research and policy advice on green economy issues</li> <li>• Assist in developing national investment plans and strategies</li> <li>• Compile best practices and generate and share knowledge on green economy issues</li> <li>• Identify the key issues that have to be addressed by the global consultation and negotiation processes on green economy</li> <li>• Foster the involvement of the private sector and major groups in the promotion of the transition to a green economy</li> </ul> | African Union Commission (AUC), New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Labour Organization, African Development Bank (AfDB), World Wide Fund for Nature, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) |
| Sustainable land management, desertification, biodiversity and ecosystems-based adaptation to climate change | Provide a framework for coordinated action among countries and for stakeholders at all levels to adapt to climate change, combat land degradation and desertification, conserve biodiversity and water resources and promote the integrity and resilience of ecosystems               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate dialogue in policy and institutional innovations/reforms</li> <li>• Demonstrate through innovative projects</li> <li>• Build partnerships</li> <li>• Support knowledge generation and sharing (policy analysis and outreach)</li> <li>• Build human and institutional capacities</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | NEPAD, UNEP, UNDP, African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC), AUC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

| <i>Programme area</i>                                            | <i>Objectives</i>                                                                                                                                                   | <i>Specific activities</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <i>Collaborators<br/>(indicative list)</i>                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Partnership for sustainable consumption and production in Africa | Provide support for the development, mainstreaming, implementation and scaling up of sustainable consumption and production programmes and projects in the region   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize regional and national capacity-building and awareness-raising workshops on sustainable consumption and production programmes</li> <li>• Support the development, implementation and scaling up of specific initiatives and mechanisms under the African 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production</li> <li>• Liaise with development partners to provide financial and technical assistance to support the implementation of sustainable consumption and production activities at the regional and national levels</li> <li>• Engage with stakeholders, including organizations of employers and workers in Africa, to ensure consensus-building and full uptake of sustainable consumption and production initiatives by relevant actors</li> <li>• Publish literature on sustainable consumption and production and reference materials that are tailor-made to the context of African countries</li> </ul> | UNEP, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, ECA, African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production, Ministry of the Environment of Germany |
| African programme on sustainable energy development              | Facilitate the provision of a coordinated and consolidated support system for African countries to develop their energy sector and achieve a sustainable energy mix | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the key issues that have to be addressed by African countries and the international community and foster the development of common positions</li> <li>• Establish partnerships with key stakeholders to provide the broad range of capacity-building, project development support and financing tools required for sustainable energy growth across the continent</li> <li>• Use existing regional, subregional and national platforms/programmes to deepen alignment and collaboration among African institutions and key stakeholders involved in sustainable energy development, including the Sustainable Energy for All initiative</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | AUC, NEPAD, UNEP, AfDB, UNDP, ACPC                                                                                                                                  |

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