



Distr.: General  
20 June 2010

Original: English

*African Ministerial Conference on the Environment*

**Third meeting of the African high-level expert  
panel on climate change**  
Bamako, 20 June 2010

## **Report of the third meeting of the African high-level expert panel on climate change**

### **Introduction**

1. The work of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) on climate change in Africa was initiated as a follow-up to the twelfth session of AMCEN, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in June 2008, during which ministers underscored the importance of the decision and outcomes of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007, in particular the agreement on the Bali Action Plan, which set 2009 as the end date for negotiations on strengthening the climate regime beyond 2012.
2. The objectives of the African process, based on decision 2, on climate change, of the twelfth session of AMCEN, include the following:
  - (a) To support efforts by AMCEN to implement the continent's process to achieve a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012;
  - (b) To provide a platform to deliberate and agree on a shared vision and common position for Africa to combat climate change and achieve sustainable development;
  - (c) To engage with the international community in finding solutions to the challenges posed by climate change;
  - (d) To develop a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes and its associated subregional climate change programmes.
3. Two meetings of the African high-level expert panel on climate change were held to prepare for the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Copenhagen in December 2009. In the light of the outcomes of the Copenhagen summit and the need to continue work to combat climate change, the third meeting of the panel, to discuss the draft comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes and to prepare for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, was organized at the International Conference Centre in Bamako on Sunday, 20 June 2010.

### **I. Opening of the meeting**

4. The meeting was opened at 10.20 a.m. on Sunday, 20 June 2010, by Mr. Peter Acquah, Secretary of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN).
5. Opening statements were delivered by Mr. Abebe Haile Gabriel, Director, Department of Agriculture, Rural Economy and Environment, African Union Commission; Mr. Augustine Njamshi, Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance; Mr. Lancena Toure, Jeunes volontaires pour l'environnement du Burkina Faso; Ms. Isatou Gaye, Chief, Environment and Sustainable Development Section, Food Security and Sustainable Development Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, on

behalf of Mr. Josue Dione, Director, Food Security and Sustainable Development Division; Mr. Mounkaila Goumandakoye, Director, Regional Office for Africa, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and Ms. Judy Beaumont, Chief Policy Adviser, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa, and representative of the President of AMCEN.

6. In his statement, Mr. Haile Gabriel recalled that Africa had chosen to speak with a single voice in Copenhagen. By its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.281(XIV), the Assembly of the African Union at its fourteenth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa from 31 January to 2 February 2010, had reaffirmed its determination to remain united in all future negotiations on climate change and requested the Conference of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change to establish a streamlined, single negotiating structure at the ministerial and expert levels to replace the current coordinating mechanism. He drew attention to the meeting of the Conference that was to take place in Bamako on 23 June 2010, at which representatives would discuss climate change issues further.

7. He called for the panel to continue to provide advice to policymakers at all levels on issues that would advance Africa's common position on climate change, pointing out that the continent should focus on the swift implementation of achievements to date. In that regard, some concerns were being raised about its preparedness to tackle issues arising out of the Copenhagen summit, such as whether it was able to absorb the financial resources being made available.

8. He recalled that the African Union Commission was establishing a climate change and desertification control unit that would assist in tackling climate change concerns and that the Commission was forging strong partnerships with, among others, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, UNEP, the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, development partners and in the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative. Such work would ensure that efforts were synergized and capacity built. The African Union Commission and the Planning and Coordinating Agency of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) were working together, in conjunction with regional economic communities, to harmonize regional efforts and initiatives. They were also seeking to ensure that the NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme took climate change concerns on board. He stressed that the panel could advise policymakers on the various initiatives under way and thereby assist Africa to benefit from informed decisions and processes.

9. Mr. Njamnshi, in his statement, welcomed the solidarity exhibited before and during the Copenhagen negotiations and commended the African negotiators on having stood their ground, the multiple challenges confronting them notwithstanding. He pointed out, however, that the negotiations had identified some gaps in the African common position, suggesting that, in efforts to harmonize coordination between the African group, AMCEN and the Conference of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change, other stakeholders, such as civil society, the private sector and regional economic communities, could be used to harmonize coordination and complement existing human expertise and resources.

10. He expressed frustration and regret that the Copenhagen Accord was being brandished as a major outcome of the Copenhagen negotiations when in fact it had been procedurally incorrect and undemocratic and posed a threat to the African science-based common position. He called for that position to be upheld, drawing attention to the Accra Declaration of 17 March 2010 and the People's Agreement of Cochabamba of 22 April 2010, in which various civil society organizations had committed themselves to upholding justice and equity in the climate change process. In that regard, he called for the African science-based position to be updated and strengthened, taking into account developing scientific evidence, to include a global goal of keeping temperature increases below 1° C and carbon dioxide concentrations below 300 ppm.

11. He stressed that Africa should insist on actions based on mitigation, adaptation, finance and technology transfer, and that the way forward in the post-Copenhagen period was to honour the existing two tracks of negotiations established under the Bali Action Plan. The significant progress made in Copenhagen had been undermined by patent efforts to exclude some stakeholders from the negotiations, leading to an unsatisfactory outcome that should not be repeated.

12. In his statement, Mr. Toure drew attention to the threat posed by climate change to the African continent, warning that the issue had taken on such proportions to become one of life and death. On behalf of African young people, he expressed his support for the decisions to establish the common position but stressed that that position should be updated and strengthened, among other things, to set a goal of keeping temperature increases below 1.5° C and carbon dioxide concentrations below 300 ppm. He stressed that civil society organizations should be included in official delegations and that the African Youth Initiative on Climate Change should enjoy observer status with the African Union

Commission, the Conference of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change and the Framework Convention on Climate Change. In addition, young people should also be included in official delegations, given that they would be directly affected by the decisions being taken at the climate change negotiations.

13. Ms. Gaye, in her statement, drew attention to the support provided by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to the panel in the context of the interim activities of the African Climate Policy Centre, part of the Climate for Development in Africa Programme operated jointly by the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank. The Centre stood ready to contribute to the implementation of the AMCEN climate change communication strategy and the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes.

14. She recognized that, while climate change gave rise to myriad challenges, it also offered opportunities for sustainable development. In their development, countries could seek to follow a clean-growth pathway by embracing the concept of the green economy. In that regard, she noted that the green economy would be discussed in the context of poverty reduction and sustainable development at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012. She also drew attention to the forthcoming seventh African Development Forum, to be held from 10 to 15 October in Addis Ababa, which would tackle the theme: “Acting on climate change for sustainable development in Africa”. She invited representatives to attend the Forum, as it would complement current efforts to tackle climate change challenges in Africa in a manner paying due regard to the continent’s sustainable development imperatives.

15. In conclusion, she said that the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Cancún, Mexico, in November and December 2010, loomed large. Africa’s voice had been heard clearly in Denmark and would need to be heard once again in Mexico. Sound negotiating strategies should be put in place, taking into account the need to forge strategic alliances. At the same time, however, negotiators should be ready for trade-offs, provided that those did not compromise strategic interests. The Economic Commission for Africa, she said, stood ready to support efforts in the lead-up to Cancún.

16. In his statement, Mr. Goumandakoye highlighted the need for African countries to work in concert to tackle the challenges threatening to erode the continent’s modest gains towards attaining the Millennium Development Goals. He cited a number of national-level examples of Africa’s strides towards launching adaptation and mitigation efforts, stressing also the opportunities offered by the green economy concept.

17. Acknowledging that Copenhagen had perhaps not reached the desired outcome, he said that the summit had nonetheless moved Africa closer to its goal. He reaffirmed the commitment of UNEP to the continuing negotiations to reach a balanced agreement in Cancún, drawing attention to the three flagship and advisory services – on ecosystem-based adaptation, on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, including forest conservation and the enhancement of forest-based carbon stocks, and on clean technology readiness – that the organization had launched in Copenhagen to assist countries in reaching a successful outcome. Warning that the upcoming negotiations would be arduous, with much work to be done, he welcomed efforts to date, particularly those of the Secretary of AMCEN, to whom he expressed great thanks for his unswerving support and dedication to the African cause. He reiterated that UNEP would continue to work with the African Union Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, in addition to subregional entities, young people, civil society and the private sector, among others, with a view to achieving greater relevance, coherence and success in attaining the continent’s over-arching goals.

18. The Chair, in her statement, highlighted some challenges that the African group had faced in the lead-up to Copenhagen, such as the thwarted attempt by developed countries to seek an outcome that would eliminate the Kyoto Protocol and the failure of those countries to provide new and additional funding to tackle the problems of climate change as they were compelled to do under the Framework Convention on Climate Change. She welcomed that the group had stood firm and not wavered from its position, while pointing out that the recent discussions at the twelfth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties of the Kyoto Protocol and the tenth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention, held in Bonn, Germany, from 1 to 11 June 2010, had given an indication of where further refinement of the common position was necessary. It was also necessary for the continent to reinforce its work at the regional, subregional and national levels; the framework of climate change programmes could play a central role in that regard, ensuring a coordinated approach to implementation that would support Africa’s sustainable development pathway. She called upon representatives to refine the common position during

the current meeting and ensure that the framework was sufficiently comprehensive to define Africa's priorities for the coming decade, with a view to seeking financing to tackle climate change challenges.

## **II. Organizational matters**

### **A. Election of officers**

19. In accordance with the rules of procedure, the meeting was conducted under the auspices of the Bureau of the twelfth session of AMCEN. Accordingly, the representative of South Africa served as Chair.

20. The representative of Burkina Faso served as rapporteur.

### **B. Adoption of the agenda**

21. Representatives adopted the following agenda based on the provisional agenda prepared by the secretariat (AMCEN/AHLPCC/3/1):

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
  - (a) Adoption of the agenda;
  - (b) Organization of work.
3. Introduction and objectives of the meeting.
4. Presentation on the draft African Ministerial Conference on the Environment climate change communication strategy.
5. Presentation on the draft comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes.
6. Working group session.
7. Desirable legal outcomes of the climate change negotiations for Africa;
8. Closure of the meeting.

### **C. Organization of work**

22. The Chair explained that, following the morning's discussions in plenary session, two working groups would be formed. The first, to be facilitated by the representative of Mali, would discuss the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes. The second, to be facilitated by the representative of South Africa, would discuss a number of initiatives related to efforts to combat climate change. Following those working group meetings, representatives would again meet in plenary session to discuss their outcomes.

### **D. Attendance**

23. As the current meeting was held in the margins of the thirteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, it was attended by the participants who had registered for that session and whose names are recorded in the corresponding section of its report (UNEP/AMCEN/13/3). A full list of participants at the thirteenth session may also be found in document UNEP/AMCEN/13/INF/6.

## **III. Introduction and objectives of the meeting**

24. Giving a general introduction to the meeting, the AMCEN Secretary named its objectives as supporting the process for implementation of the framework of African climate change programmes; providing a platform to deliberate and agree on a common position for Africa; engaging the international community in finding solutions to the challenges posed by climate change; and developing further the comprehensive framework. He emphasized that Africa should be working towards better coherence at the regional and subregional levels and that a comprehensive framework for African climate change could only come from combining regional and subregional frameworks. He reported that desktop research involving the mapping of African climate change programmes had clearly identified

gaps across the continent and showed the importance of preparing a framework of regional and subregional climate change programmes. Information had been gathered at both the regional and subregional levels and the information and data had been used to prepare the framework based on the conceptual outline adopted by AMCEN and the African Union.

25. He noted that, while Asia was taking advantage of the opportunities presented by climate change Africa remained focused on the challenges. As a consequence, it had missed opportunities in the past: the time was now ripe to capitalize on the climate change process. He concluded by saying that Africa needed to take key initiatives in the wake of Copenhagen and that the time had come to reflect on what had been achieved and to build on those achievements.

#### **IV. Presentation on the draft African Ministerial Conference on the Environment climate change communication strategy**

26. Ms. Angèle Lu Sy, UNEP Regional Office for Africa, summarized the background to the AMCEN climate change communication strategy, establishing that its roots lay in the specific conditions pertaining to Africa. She explained that climate change in Africa posed a significant threat, given the continent's limited adaptive capacity, poverty and low levels of development. Although much had been done to date, insufficient information was being disseminated on the challenges and potential solutions to climate change issues. In particular, negotiators within the Framework Convention on Climate Change process needed updated scientific information to enable African countries to make a justified commitment to mitigation and adaptation activities.

27. She highlighted the need for innovative thinking and approaches in communicating information at every level within the region, in order to influence proactive and relevant decision-making and the actions to be taken, leading to appropriate mitigation and adaptation strategies. She identified three priority objectives: to communicate that climate change and climate variability were increasing and explain current climate events and possible future ramifications; to communicate the need to take action as proactively as possible and reactively as relevant, in order to offset the negative impacts of climate change; and to create the conditions for discussing both adaptation and mitigation strategies while sharing knowledge, experiences and lessons within the region, between the subregions and with the rest of the world. Together, they represented the crucial need to ensure effective and successful communication with all stakeholders on climate change issues to enable them to initiate appropriate and relevant actions for mitigation and adaptation at all levels.

28. She proposed that those objectives should be achieved through priority activities and outputs, including an updated African common position; quick reference documents and materials; and advocacy materials on climate change. The specific products included pocket reference books, distributed at the current meeting, and a toolkit for the media. She sought feedback, further suggestions and input throughout the meeting.

29. In the ensuing discussion, representatives stressed the need for African countries to speak with one voice and to constitute a force for change in the international policy on climate change. One suggested that the proposed communications strategy should more clearly identify the impacts of climate change on Africa and highlight the proposals emanating from Africa to mitigate those impacts. To that end, one representative suggested that Africa should move away from its fixed position and, instead of censuring industrialized countries, take steps to ensure that they met their commitments. Another lamented the low level of participation by African representatives in key processes under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and stressed the need to boost the participation of African scientists in such key activities as preparation of the fifth assessment report, if due attention was to be paid to the needs of the continent.

30. One representative suggested that a baseline survey should be conducted to ascertain the knowledge already available. Where implementation was concerned, he highlighted the need to consider the opportunities available within UNEP and to use the networks already in place. It was also suggested that the communications strategy should incorporate an inventory of success stories in such areas as adaptation which could be replicated by other countries. Another representative, welcoming the strategy, pointed to the lack of data on the vulnerability of Africa and called for more attention to be paid to the economic consequences of adaptation measures, which, in his view, were still poorly understood. To that end he stressed that African delegations to major climate forums should include economic and legal experts. The representative of a small island State called for the needs of such States to be taken into account in developing the negotiating position.

## **V. Consideration of the draft comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes**

31. Ms. Dorothy Amwata, Sahara and Sahel Observatory, gave a presentation on the draft comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes. Pointing out that the draft framework was a work in progress, consisting of preliminary findings, she said that the information contained in the document had been drawn from a wide variety of sources and that the report was not exhaustive. She observed that the terms of reference were based on the specificities of the various regions within Africa and that, as the experts involved had adopted differing approaches, it had been difficult to standardize some of the information. Explaining the terms “global”, “regional”, “subregional” and “local” as used in the report, she said that the objective had been to look at the main focus of each programme involved and identify the specific element of adaptation to which it responded. The report looked at various aspects of adaptation, mitigation and support and enabling measures, listing the various challenges faced in each of those sectors and putting forward recommendations in that regard.

32. Following that presentation, the AMCEN Secretary stressed that the draft framework was already a usable document and could be submitted to ministers once representatives’ comments had been incorporated. The revised document could then be considered by the ministers without awaiting further inputs, on the understanding that it was a living document and would be further developed. Noting the gaps in certain subregional inputs to the presentation, he said that the secretariat was aware of those gaps and had commissioned work to fill them.

33. In the ensuing discussion, representatives welcomed the document, drawing attention to areas that they found particularly interesting and valuable, including the proposed recommendations. One pointed out that the document offered African countries a unified approach, enabling them to avoid the pitfalls of Copenhagen, where there had been discordant voices within the continent. Another pointed out gaps in the information relating to his subregion and suggested that those could be rectified in the further development of the document. A third sought guidance on how the draft could be used in developing a framework for policy development on climate change.

34. Several representatives commented on the role of national adaptation programmes of action, one pointing out that those programmes applied only to least developed countries and suggesting that their scope should be widened to include other countries. Others stressed the need to focus on the implementation of those programmes, rather than their updating.

35. Several representatives drew attention to the issue of capacity- building and, in that context, one stressed the need to ensure that African delegations to major climate forums included not just ministers of environment, but also those of finance, thus ensuring a better understanding of the resource challenges facing their countries and the provision of the necessary national resources. In that context, one representative suggested that Governments should be encouraged to allocate a minimum percentage from their national budgets for climate change activities, recalling a similar exhortation in the domain of agriculture put forward in the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa, endorsed by the Assembly of the African Union at its second ordinary session.

## **VI. Working group session**

36. The two working groups formed met during the afternoon of Sunday, 20 June 2010. Following the conclusions of their deliberations, the facilitators of the working group reported back in plenary session.

37. The representative of Mali explained that the working group that he had facilitated had considered the draft comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, but had found the document to be incomplete, as information from West Africa had not been included. He therefore requested the inclusion of the omitted information and further time to consider the document.

38. The AMCEN Secretary explained that some information from West Africa had been received by the Secretariat belatedly, but the salient aspects had nonetheless been included in the report. He suggested that the working group should simply validate the facts contained in the document so that it could be submitted for the approval of the ministers and further guidance on the way forward. The document could then be adopted by the bureau during the intersessional period. It was agreed that the working group would discuss the document on the understanding that additional information from West Africa would be incorporated before the end of August 2010. A consultative and validation meeting would be held in Accra on the framework of subregional climate change programmes for West Africa in

that regard. Additional information incorporated into the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes as a result of the update would also be reviewed at that meeting.

39. The representative of South Africa explained that the working group that she had facilitated had focused on the opportunities that could be derived from tackling the effects of climate change and climate variability, citing a number of examples that had been given during the meeting. The working group had heard presentations on sustainable transport in Africa by Ms. Patricia Kim; on the carbon market and innovation by Ms. Assetou Bakayoko; and on climate change, clean technology and opportunities offered by green growth in Africa by Ms. Merlyn van Voore.<sup>1</sup> She stressed that there should be a clear correlation between the work of the two working groups, as the comprehensive framework should incorporate the opportunities that could be developed on the continent. Opportunities identified by the working group are set out in annex I to the present report, while key messages devised during the break-out sessions are set out in annex II.

40. The panel took note of the information.

## VII. Desirable legal outcomes of the climate change negotiations for Africa

41. Mr. Seth Osafo, legal adviser to the African group of negotiators under the Framework Convention on Climate Change, gave a presentation on the desirable legal outcomes of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention for Africa. He reviewed possible reasons why the outcome of the Copenhagen discussions had not been favourable. Annex I parties, he said, were currently unwilling to accept emission-reduction commitments for a second commitment period and some even seemed intent on abandoning the Kyoto Protocol altogether. Those parties, he claimed, were unwilling to agree to an aggregate 1 target and wished to keep their targets below the 40 per cent reduction levels of 1990. Some held that any agreement that did not include the United States would not be acceptable to them. It was the wish of African countries, however, that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol should work on Annex B of the protocol, on enhancing the commitment of those parties and bringing them to agreement on that second commitment period, while the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention should endeavour to enhance the commitment of the Conference of the Parties to its five pillars.

42. Observing that some developed countries were of the view that some developing countries should take on specific emission-reduction commitments, he pointed out that such action ran counter to the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. He said that the resources currently on offer were totally inadequate and that, against the backdrop of the current economic recession in the United States of America and Europe, it was unlikely that funding could be made available to developing countries to tackle climate change issues. He suggested that Annex I parties should take on more ambitious emission reduction targets, agree to the second period as proposed by the Group of 77 and China, and accept an aggregate reduction target for all developing countries. Africa remained in favour of the two-track process and of limiting temperature rise to 1.5° C. Turning to the issue of a new protocol under the Framework Convention on the comparability of efforts by countries that were not parties to the Kyoto Protocol, he said that any new protocol that absorbed the Kyoto Protocol while failing to preserve its commitments would be unacceptable. Instead, any new protocol would have to

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