



# AMCEN Bulletin

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## EXPERT GROUP MEETING OF THE TWELFTH SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT: 7-9 JUNE 2008

The expert group meeting of the twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN-12) took place from 7-9 June 2008 at the Sandton Convention Centre, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Expert Group met in plenary to hear presentations and discuss a number of items, including: a report by the AMCEN Secretariat; implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD); reports from the African Union Commission (AUC) and NEPAD; AMCEN's draft indicative work programme for the biennium 2009-2010; and the forthcoming launch of *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment*. The Expert Group then convened in three working groups to prepare draft decisions for the ministerial segment on climate change, AMCEN's Work Programme for the 2009-2010 Biennium, and policy-related matters. It forwarded to the ministerial segment the draft Johannesburg Declaration on the Environment for Development (the Johannesburg declaration), the draft indicative work programme for the biennium 2009-2010, and draft decisions on the following matters: implementation of the Action Plan of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; status and use of the general trust fund; chemicals management; environmental education; Africa Environment Day; the Africa Environment Outlook process and the Africa Environment Information Network; Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012; and the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, containing an indicative list of Africa's climate change decisions and an indicative conceptual outline of a comprehensive framework for African climate change programmes.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF AMCEN

#### AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was established in Cairo, Egypt in 1985 following the adoption of the Cairo Programme for African Cooperation. For over 20 years, AMCEN has facilitated the broadening of the political and public policy debate regarding Africa's

environmental priorities and concerns. As the permanent forum of Africa's environment ministers, AMCEN aims to strengthen cooperation between African governments on economic, technical and scientific activities in order to halt the degradation of Africa's environment.

AMCEN's mandate is to: provide information and advocacy for environmental protection in Africa; ensure that basic human needs are met adequately and in a sustainable manner; ensure that socio-economic development is realized at all levels; and ensure that agricultural activities and practices meet food security needs of the region. In addition, AMCEN's also serves as a forum to:

- provide continent-wide leadership by promoting awareness and consensus on global and regional environmental issues, especially those relating to international conventions on biodiversity, desertification and climate change;
- develop common positions to guide African representatives in negotiations for legally binding international environmental agreements;

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- promote African participation in international dialogue on global issues of crucial importance to Africa;
- review and monitor environmental programmes at the regional, sub-regional and national levels;
- promote the ratification by African countries of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) relevant to the region; and
- build African capacity in the field of environmental management.

AMCEN consists of a bi-annual Ministerial Conference, Bureau, the AMCEN Trust Fund, the Regional Specialized Technical Committee (STCs), and a network of national focal points. UNEP's Regional Office for Africa serves as the AMCEN Secretariat. AMCEN is currently holding discussions with the AUC on issues related to the harmonization and linkages between the Ministerial Conference and the Commission. The Bureau of AMCEN has also initiated steps to harmonize the roles of the AMCEN Secretariat, the NEPAD Secretariat and the African Union. It is expected by many that AMCEN would ultimately become a STC of the AUC in line with the vision of the AU Summit's *Sirte Declaration* of February 2004.

### AMCEN MILESTONES 2000-2008

#### **ABUJA DECLARATION ON AMCEN 2000**

The eighth session of AMCEN took place in Abuja, Nigeria, from 3-6 April 2000, and resulted in the Abuja Declaration on AMCEN 2000 containing a political commitment for a renaissance of AMCEN. Among the policy and institutional reforms, Ministers agreed to establish an intercessional meeting comprising of five Bureau members and five additional Ministers representing each subregion. They also agreed to establish the Inter-Agency Technical Committee, consisting of the Organization of Africa Unity, UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), African Development Bank (AfDB), UNEP, and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) as well as relevant subregional and regional organizations. Ministers also adopted five decisions regarding: programme priorities; global negotiations on the environment; building strategic partnerships; new and emerging environmental matters, and financial resources. Ministers further decided that UNEP should prepare an Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) report to provide a scientific assessment of the African environment and related policies and management programmes. During the 22nd session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC/GMEF), held in February 2003 in Nairobi, the AMCEN decision on the AEO process was endorsed.

#### **KAMPALA DECLARATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT**

The ninth session of AMCEN took place in Kampala, Uganda from 1-5 July 2002, and resulted in the adoption of the Kampala Declaration on the Environment for Development and eight decisions. In the Declaration, Ministers, *inter alia*, endorsed: the Action Plan for the Environmental Initiative of NEPAD, including its annex on capacity building; and the African Common Position on the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). Adopted decisions included those related to the: role of AMCEN after the WSSD; framework of an Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; AEO report and the Environmental Information Network; AMCEN Constitution; revised 1968 African Convention on

the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Algiers Convention); Rabat Declaration on the Environmentally Sound Management of Unwanted Stocks of Hazardous Wastes; Nairobi Declaration for Sustainable Development of African Mountain Regions; and resource mobilization and the state of the General Trust Fund for AMCEN. Ministers also officially launched the first AEO report.

#### **AMCEN SPECIAL SESSION-2**

The second special session of AMCEN took place in Maputo, Mozambique from 9-10 June 2003, and resulted in a ministerial declaration endorsing the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. The meeting also provided guidance to the AMCEN President regarding the modalities for submitting the Action Plan to the AU Summit. Ministers reaffirmed that the African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment in sub-Saharan Africa was an integral part of the Action Plan and its recommendations, and that projects should be entrusted to African institutions under the overall coordination of the Nairobi and Abidjan Convention secretariats.

#### **ALGIERS DECLARATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE OF NEPAD**

The first Partners' Conference on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD took place in Algiers, Algeria from 15-16 December 2003. The Conference adopted the Algiers Declaration for a Global Partnership on the Environment Initiative of NEPAD in which Africa's development partners expressed their appreciation for the efforts made by African governments in the formulation of their priorities in the Action Plan and their commitment to its implementation, and recommitted themselves to entering into structured dialogue aimed at identifying their respective roles and responsibilities in support of the implementation phase. Eighty-one selected projects, grouped into the following clusters, were presented to the Conference: land degradation and desertification and climate change, natural resources, watershed management; conserving Africa's wetlands; prevention, control and integrated management of invasive species; and capacity-building. The Conference also finalized and adopted the Strategic Plan to Build Africa's Capacity to Implement Global and Regional Environmental Conventions.

#### **SIRTE DECLARATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

The tenth session of AMCEN took place in Sirte, Libya from 29-30 June 2004, and resulted in the Sirte Declaration on the Environment and Development and the adoption of eight decisions. In the Declaration, Ministers, *inter alia*, agreed to develop subregional action plans as part of capacity building for the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; committed to promote thematic centres of excellence in support of capacity building, data collection and analyses, and identification of information gaps and needs in Africa; and welcomed the adoption of the revised Algiers Convention by the AU. Ministers also called on the AMCEN President to forge cooperative links with the relevant structures of the AU, its secretariat and its appropriate commissions, as well as with the NEPAD Secretariat with a view to harmonizing institutional arrangements. Ministers further committed to prioritizing and drawing synergies among the issues of chemical management, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) process, environmental impact assessment, the phasing-out of leaded gasoline, sustainable

human settlements, post-conflict environmental assessment, health and environment and disaster risk management. Decisions were also adopted regarding: implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; AMCEN's role in the implementation of the Action Plan; the AMCEN Constitution; development of SAICM and other chemical and hazardous waste management initiatives; the phase-out of leaded gasoline in sub-Saharan Africa; a draft Africa strategy for disaster risk reduction; and Africa's submission to the High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on an Intergovernmental Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building.

**DAKAR DECLARATION FOR ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE OF NEPAD**

The second Partners' Conference on the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD was held in Dakar, Senegal, from 15-16 March 2005. The Conference concluded with the adoption of the Dakar Declaration for Enhanced Partnership in the Implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD in which Ministers, *inter alia*, reaffirmed that international support for the implementation of the Action Plan was essential. Ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation with development partners and all regional and subregional bodies in the pursuit of the successful implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD and to keep its implementation under review. Ministers further adopted proposals for the creation of an African Environment Facility at the AfDB, the utilization of the existing financial mechanisms within Subregional Economic Communities and other subregional organizations, and the utilization of inter-state mechanisms for the implementation of joint programmes where appropriate.

**BRAZZAVILLE DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT**

The eleventh session of AMCEN took place from 22-26 May 2006 in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. The session resulted in the adoption of the Brazzaville Declaration on Environment for Development, which seeks to further AMCEN's goal of halting environmental degradation and promoting sustainable development in Africa.

The session also adopted 11 decisions regarding: implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; institutional linkages and harmonization of activities in the context of the implementation of the NEPAD Environment Initiative; the AMCEN Constitution; status and use of the AMCEN General Trust Fund; implementation of SAICM and other chemical and hazardous waste management initiatives; the AEO and the Africa Environment Information Network; integration of environmental dimensions into disaster risk reduction programmes in the context of the Africa regional strategy for disaster risk reduction; implementation of UNEP's Bali Strategic Plan for Capacity-Building and Technology Support (Bali Strategic Plan); the Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel initiative (GGWSS); resource mobilization for the implementation of environmental projects and programmes at national, subregional and regional levels; and the African Environment Facility. A resolution on the work of the Bureau was also adopted. During the meeting the second AEO report 'Our Environment, Our Wealth' was launched.

The eighth AU Summit, including the tenth Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council held in January 2007, adopted a decision on the Implementation of the AMCEN-11 Work Programme for 2007-08 (EX.CL/Dec.322 (X)). In the decision, the Executive Council endorsed the decisions and the Brazzaville Declaration on the Environment; expressed support for the proposal to establish an African Environment Facility at the AfDB and called on the AfDB to facilitate the establishment of the Facility; and requested the Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and UNEP, as well as other development partners, to support AMCEN in the implementation of its programme of work for 2007-8.

**DECLARATION OF THE AMCEN SPECIAL SESSION ON THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY'S (GEF) STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROGRAMME FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (SIP)**

The AMCEN Special Session on the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) Strategic Investment Programme for Sustainable Land Management in sub-Saharan Africa (SIP) was held from 24-25 April 2007, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The session resulted in the adoption of a declaration in which Ministers committed to advance the sustainable land management (SLM) agenda at local, national and regional levels. Ministers also agreed to request the GEF Council to approve the SIP for SLM in sub-Saharan Africa, called on donors and development partners to join sub-Saharan Africa in scaling up SLM, and urged donors and development partners to align and harmonize their activities to build and share knowledge and develop investment to support African countries, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), NEPAD and the AU in their efforts to scale-up SLM in sub-Saharan Africa. Ministers also called for a concerted approach to deal simultaneously with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) national adaptation programmes of action and the action programmes of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), to be funded through the GEF. Ministers further called upon the GEF to simplify its procedures in order to facilitate speedy implementation of the SIP.

The session also adopted a Joint Partner Declaration of Collaboration in support of the Implementation of the SIP, which establishes core principles and actions in support of the Programme.

**REPORT OF AMCEN-12:  
EXPERT GROUP MEETING 7-9 JUNE**

**OPENING OF THE EXPERT GROUP SEGMENT**

On Saturday, Peter Acquah, Secretary for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), Officer in Charge, UNEP ROA, opened the expert group segment of the twelfth meeting of AMCEN (AMCEN-12) on behalf of the President of AMCEN. In his introductory remarks, Chair Alexis Minga, Director General, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Republic of Congo, thanked the South African government for its hospitality and underscored the importance of AMCEN-12.

In the opening presentation, Foday Bojang, Head of Division, Environment and Natural Resources, African Union Commission (AUC), on behalf of the Director of the AUC, described progress towards formalizing the integration of AMCEN as a specialized technical committee (STC) of the African Union (AU) and noted that there are high expectations

for the imminent conclusion of the process. He underlined that the AUC will continue to work with UNEP to provide assistance to AMCEN in the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Bojang highlighted the status of various regional initiatives, including the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel initiative (GGWSS), Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDevAfrica), and collaboration with the African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW) and African River Basin Organization (ANBO) to develop guidelines on the management of transboundary water resources.

Peter Acquah, UNEP, described AMCEN-12 as the most crucial meeting since AMCEN's inception because of the unprecedented environmental challenges facing Africa, especially due to climate change. He underscored the need for African environmental experts to ensure that the continent is not further marginalized in the face of this. Acquah outlined UNEP technical support to AMCEN member states and activities relating to resource efficiency, hazardous waste management, climate change, ecosystem management, disaster management and environmental governance. He urged participants to work towards providing Ministers with comprehensive draft decisions.

Nosipho Jezile, Acting Director General, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa, drew attention to constraints facing Africa relating to poverty and environmental degradation. She emphasized AMCEN's vital role in fostering policy dialogue and initiatives on addressing environmental challenges and climate change impacts. She said AMCEN-12 should be used as a platform to strengthen AMCEN's role as the strategic voice on African environmental issues.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS**

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** The expert group segment was conducted under the auspices of the Bureau of AMCEN-11, with Alexis Minga, Republic of Congo, as Chair and Atwa Hussein, Egypt, as Rapporteur. Peter Acquah requested nominations for regional representatives to serve on the Bureau: North Africa elected Libya, West Africa elected Burkina Faso, and East and Central Africa called for further time to confer. Acquah stated that South Africa, as incoming AMCEN President, will automatically serve on the Bureau. Mali offered to host AMCEN-13.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND PROGRAMME OF WORK:** The Expert Group adopted the agenda (UNEP/AMCEN/EGM/12/1 and 1/Add.1) without amendment.

### **CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT**

Peter Acquah presented the AMCEN Secretariat report on activities undertaken since AMCEN-11. Noting that "AMCEN is no longer a talking shop," he highlighted progress made in six thematic areas covered by the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, including: expanding GEF funding to cover land degradation; collaborating with the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention to develop implementation plans and conducting reviews of national wetlands policies; progress in implementing the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions on Marine, Coastal and Freshwater Resources; facilitating meetings to draw up common African positions in the UNFCCC process; and contributing to the development of subregional action plans for transboundary conservation and management of natural resources.

Acquah further highlighted actions in a number of cross-cutting areas, including: capacity building for negotiators and legislators on multilateral environment agreements (MEAs), improved coordination between AMCEN, UNEP, AUC and NEPAD; and linkages between health and the environment, chemicals management, environmental impact assessment, disaster risk reduction, and the flagship 10-year Framework on Sustainable Consumption and Production. On the implementation of AMCEN-11 decisions, he highlighted work on the forthcoming publication of *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment* (the *Africa Atlas*) and the third Africa Environment Outlook (AEO). He concluded by noting the low level of member state contributions, which is negatively impacting follow-up activities, notably the formation of an interagency technical committee to guide the Secretariat's work.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE OF NEPAD**

Estherine Lisinge-Fotabong, NEPAD, reported on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD (UNEP/AMCEN/EGM/12/4 and 4/Add.1) and development of NEPAD's five subregional environment action plans. Highlighting the process leading to the finalization of the subregional action plans, she explained that a number of consultative meetings had been held, with the participation of environment ministers, experts, civil society organizations and other partners. Priorities identified included: combating desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD); invasive alien species; marine and coastal resource management; climate change; and cross-border conservation. The subregional action plans were subsequently endorsed and adopted by the respective Ministers and resolutions were passed to facilitate joint implementation with subregional organizations. She stated that Ministers called for, among other things: a network of national focal points for implementing the subregional action plans; enhanced human and institutional capacity; resource mobilization; public-private partnerships; support for implementing and integrating action plans in national development strategies; and including environmental assets in national accounting systems.

### **PRESENTATION BY THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

Foday Bojang, AUC, presented an information note on the activities undertaken with regard to the 2004-7 Strategic Plan, highlighting progress made in implementing the Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDevAfrica) Programme - a joint initiative of AUC, ECA, and AfDB, and the completion of a draft implementation plan for the GGWSS in 2007. He also reported that a Programme Steering Committee for the Africa Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) Programme is now in place and that implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action for Disaster Reduction adopted by the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Conference on Disaster reduction in January 2004 is on track. He reported other positive developments, including: the strengthening of existing river and lake basin organizations under the umbrella of ANBO and its incorporation into the AMCOW; the continuing process to integrate AMCOW and AMCEN as an STC to the AU; the launch of the Africa Environment Day, commemorated on March 3; and collaborative efforts with the European Commission to utilize the AUC as a hub for the enhanced implementation of MEAs in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries.

In the discussion, a representative from Tunisia expressed his country's willingness to provide more information on the Tunis Declaration and Action Plan issued following the International Conference on International Solidarity for the Protection of Africa and the Mediterranean, held in 2007. Ethiopia emphasized the importance of engaging in the Clean Development Mechanism under the UNFCCC's Kyoto Protocol. Mali stressed that, although there was potential incoherence of having separate World and Africa environment days, it provided an opportunity to highlight regional priorities. On the GGWSS, the Democratic Republic of Congo questioned the AU's role in the project. and Nigeria called for the publication of the AU action plan to implement the GGWSS.

#### **AFRICA: ATLAS OF OUR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

Charles Sebukeera, UNEP, gave an overview of the forthcoming publication of *Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment* (<http://www.na.unep.net/AfricaAtlas/>), which aims to strengthen the information base for decision making and programme implementation. He described the *Africa Atlas* as a "picture book," providing visual evidence of important changes to environmental assets, using satellite data and supported by ground photographs. He noted that the focus is on Millennium Development Goal 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability) as well as on other events that impact on Africa in the global context and those requiring attention in terms of regional cooperation. He observed that the *Atlas* highlights success stories and emphasizes key environmental issues in the region such as deforestation, threats to biodiversity, soil erosion and land degradation, pollution, desertification and overfishing.

During the discussion session, many participants commended the *Africa Atlas* publication. Responding to concerns about the accuracy of the *Africa Atlas* data, Sebukeera noted that while earlier images contained margins of error, the latest satellite images are accurate. He concluded that the *Atlas* provides a practical illustration of how countries can use the data already provided to them by UNEP.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF THE SECOND DRAFT REVISED CONSTITUTION OF AMCEN**

Peter Acquah noted that the consideration of draft decision relating to the draft revised constitution (UNEP/AMCEN/12/7) would be deferred until the AU had concluded its consideration of this issue, which includes carrying out an audit and making an announcement relating to the AMCEN's status as an STC.

Participants discussed the merits of AMCEN becoming an STC of the AU, with Peter Acquah underscoring that its role and *modus operandi* would remain relatively unchanged.

#### **STATUS OF THE GENERAL TRUST FUND FOR AMCEN**

Regarding the General Trust Fund for AMCEN (UNEP/AMCEN/12/5), Peter Acquah underlined that, notwithstanding the recently improved financial situation, further monetary contributions are required. He reported that for the first time, AMCEN had been obliged to pay for direct conference costs from its own resources, and stressed the need for AMCEN to become self-reliant.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT INDICATIVE WORK PROGRAMME OF AMCEN FOR THE BIENNIUM 2009-2010**

Peter Acquah said that the draft indicative work programme (UNEP/AMCEN/12/3) envisaged continuing work on chemicals, environmental assessment, environmental education, early warning, environmental impact assessment

and sustainable consumption and production. He highlighted other matters to be addressed by the programme, including: capacity building at the sub-regional and country level; resource mobilization; land degradation and desertification; marine coastal and freshwater resources under the Abidjan and Nairobi conventions; enhanced regional and sub-regional forest management; and support to the UNFCCC.

In the discussion, the Foday Bojang stressed that the Bamako Convention lacks implementation and gave structural reasons for this. He also highlighted the capacity constraints on the AU and urged countries to take initiative. Ethiopia underscored the importance and the difficulties involved in linking regional, subregional and national implementation. Noting the turnover of people involved in negotiating MEAs, Djibouti called for capacity building and the continued use of negotiators. He also called for more coordination meetings and proactive work on position papers to contribute to regional negotiating strategy. Peter Acquah stressed UNEP's support for the proposed African Climate Policy Centre, which is intended to promote the integration of climate change-related issues into economic policy.

#### **WORKING GROUPS**

On Sunday and Monday, three working groups (WGs) convened in parallel to consider climate change and financing; AMCEN's work programme for the 2009-2010 biennium; and environmental policy and related matters. The working groups reported back to plenary on Monday afternoon and extended discussions followed the presentation of the reports.

**WORKING GROUP I – CLIMATE CHANGE:** WG-I considered climate change and was chaired by Alf Wills (South Africa) with Kwashirai Chigodora (Botswana) as Rapporteur.

On Sunday, Youba Sokona, Sahara and Sahel Observatory, presented a scoping paper on climate change adaptation in Africa, emphasizing AMCEN's potential role in linking national strategies to international agreements and connecting climate change negotiations with action across the continent. He highlighted a number of Africa's needs, including capacity building to support adaptation planning and implementation and the development of strategies and measures to protect vulnerable regions, sectors and populations. He underscored the importance of moving from reactive adaptation to proactive policy strategies and plans.

Sekou Toure, GEF, explained that the GEF is focusing on carbon markets and other mechanisms to create financing opportunities for Africa. He highlighted the ancillary role that AMCEN could play by fostering a better understanding among Ministers of carbon financial mechanisms. On funding, he noted the need to increase the level of resources available to those most affected by climate change and urged Ministers to focus on securing predictable funding sources from the international climate change regime beyond 2012. Toure further highlighted improved streamlining and accessibility of GEF funding and noted the need for capacity building at the national level to access and use these resources.

Herbert Acquay, World Bank, discussed the development perspective of climate change adaptation in Africa in the context of the link between macroeconomic performance and climate variability, where economies are highly dependent on climate-related sectors. He discussed emerging priorities, such as: disaster risk management; scaling-up investment; renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies; and climate-proofing economic investments. On mobilizing financing for

adaptation and mitigation he outlined existing World Bank instruments such as zero percent investment loans for low income countries, grants, risk management, and other financial instruments. He highlighted the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and the proposed climate investment funds to bridge the funding gap from 2008-2012. Noting the high transaction costs of accessing funds, he acknowledged the need to streamline access to finance.

Hany Shalaby, AfDB, presented a strategic framework on access to energy, mitigation and risk management in the context of climate change and financial resources. He highlighted the AfDB's activities in the renewable energy sector, particularly regarding hydroelectric power. On adaptation, he discussed short- and long-term climate variability in addition to a strategic approach involving climate proofing.

Hammadi Bel Hardji Ali, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Tunisia, gave an overview of the Tunis Declaration and Action Plan on International Solidarity against Climate Change in Africa and the Mediterranean Region emanating from the International Conference on International Solidarity for the Protection of Africa and the Mediterranean Strategies held in November 2007. He explained that the declaration highlights a number of needs, including: combining adaptation and development strategies; reinforcing different support mechanisms; and enhancing stakeholder engagement.

Foday Bojang, AUC, presented ClimDevAfrica. He said the programme was developed to improve climate-related information and services to support sustainable development and the achievements of the MDGs. He highlighted challenges such as the lack of climate data in a usable format and weak information networks.

Jian Liu, UNEP, discussed financing climate mitigation for Africa. He explained that UNEP has taken the lead on assessing the impacts of, and adaptation to climate change and would pursue a regional approach to enhance key adaptive capacity through integrated planning, piloting and implementation.

Charles Akol, ECA, described the African Climate Policy Centre to be established under ECA. He said its objectives are to contribute to poverty reduction through climate change adaptation and mitigation in Africa, improve the capacity of countries to participate in multilateral climate negotiations and, enable them to benefit from emerging carbon markets.

A representative of the International Centre of Energy Environment and Development, on behalf of African civil society organizations, outlined a consultative process for promoting African interests within an international climate change regime beyond 2012, which includes: applying the polluter pays principle to historical and current greenhouse gas emitters; streamlining funding mechanisms; enhancing capacity for adaptation at all levels; strengthening and supporting civil society networks; and promoting debt cancellation to free-up funds for adaptation.

Following a general discussion, delegates turned to adaptation and mitigation issues. WG-I Chair Wills recalled a decision at the eighth AU Summit mandating AMCEN to address climate change, the Tunis Declaration and the establishment of a high-level panel on climate change at the 10<sup>th</sup> AU Summit. He stressed the importance of articulating the "African voice" in future climate change negotiations, and proposed coordination meetings as a way to develop regional positions and strategies, and human resources to achieve this aim. In the ensuing discussion, UNEP highlighted the value of

the African Climate Policy Centre, calling it a "one stop shop" for the region's coordination of financial, environment and development policy relating to climate change.

On adaptation, South Africa stressed that while early warning systems, plans and response measures are important, economic resilience is critical. Zimbabwe called for localized forms of capacity building and knowledge management and stressed that cultural sensitivities should be considered. Malawi highlighted that land pressure in a number of African countries restricts availability of land for climate-related projects. UN Habitat provided details of the organization's support for local government as a component of its Cities and Climate Change programme

On mitigation, WG-I Chair Wills stressed the need for Africa to adopt a proactive approach and to access energy technologies. He also highlighted the need to foster technology transfer, and suggested incentive-based approaches to address African priorities.

A number of participants raised the issue of Africa's limited participation in the Clean Development Mechanism and questioned whether the region could play a role in determining the price for carbon. Discussion also centered on the development potential of mitigation activities, biofuels, and achieving low carbon economies.

On Monday, WG-I met in the morning to consider two draft decisions: the first on Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a new international climate change regime beyond 2012; and the second on a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes. Regarding the first draft decision, South Africa called for the word "new" to be deleted, while Nigeria preferred to retain it, asserting that the negotiation of a new agreement beyond 2012 provides the opportunity for Africa to articulate concerns and priorities. WG-I Chair Wills pointed out that the international regime beyond 2012 did not seek to replace agreed principles or open up the UNFCCC for renegotiation, adding that developing countries are seeking full implementation of existing obligations under the convention. Participants eventually agreed to "a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012." On preparing for negotiations, Togo proposed language urging African countries to actively participate in international climate change negotiations, particularly the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the *Ad hoc* Working Groups in Accra, Ghana, and the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Poznan, Poland, in August and December respectively.

On the draft decision concerning a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, Zambia called for reference to technology transfer developed at the local level. Language was added to "enhance and support the research and development capacity in Africa to foster the development of clean technologies." Participants also agreed on the need to develop human resources through, *inter alia*, focused training, mentoring and learning-by-doing approaches. Regarding capacity building, Seychelles highlighted the need to establish regional centers of excellence to provide member states with research and other necessary support with regard to climate change adaptation. Participants also proposed other textual amendments, which WG-I Chair Wills said would be reflected in the revised draft decisions.

**WORKING GROUP II: DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE 2009-2010 BIENNIUM:** WG-II, chaired by Mohamed Hamoud, Libya, with David Ombisi, UNEP, as

Rapporteur, met on Sunday and Monday to consider the Work Programme for the 2009-2010 Biennium (UNEP/AMCEN/EGM/12/3).

On Sunday WG-II addressed the annex to the Work Programme for the 2009-2010 Biennium. On the role of AMCEN in the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, participants commented on efforts to prepare AMCEN member states for sessions of the UNEP Governing Council, Rio conventions meetings and chemicals conventions. Djibouti mentioned the recent AU preparatory meeting on Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)-related topics in Bonn, supported by Germany, as an example to follow. Cameroon suggested text on strengthening negotiating skills especially on biodiversity-related topics beyond biosafety.

Participants also addressed the links between AMCEN and NEPAD. UNEP stressed AMCEN's role in supporting interagency cooperation among AMCEN, AMCOW, the AU and NEPAD. At the practical level, it was pointed out that 68 projects, all regional in scope, had been identified at the Conference of African Ministers in February 2008 that are ready for implementation, pending funding availability. Uganda and Ethiopia noted their concern about the progress of project implementation. UNESCO highlighted its collaboration with AMCEN on coastal management related to the Abidjan and Nairobi conventions. Malawi, BirdLife International and others noted that AMCEN's support for implementation should not be restricted to the Rio conventions, but should also include support for regional conventions.

On environmental law, the Democratic Republic of Congo suggested assessing Africa's legal instruments. Kenya pointed to the importance of sharing environmental law information in Africa, and of enhancing access to such data. Cameroon mentioned UNEP's Registry of Environmental Conventions as a useful tool in this regard, and called for this document to be updated and widely circulated. UNEP drew attention to ECOLEX, a national and international legal resource website developed with IUCN and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). South Africa identified the importance of building legal capacity on access and benefit sharing and biosafety for the region. Cameroon noted that in addition to environmental inspectors, training for customs officials is imperative given their role in implementation.

On land degradation and desertification, Cameroon, supported by many, stressed that desertification is an important issue for their countries. Cameroon and Ethiopia reported that they had adopted a national action plan in this regard. Senegal called for the expansion of the GGWSS.

The Democratic Republic of Congo drew attention to the links between mining and land degradation and noted that in time this may put areas at risk of desertification. Cameroon and Djibouti also expressed concern about the impact of mining activities on the environment and Cameroon further emphasized the importance of environmental assessments and audits.

Regarding coastal and marine ecosystems, Cameroon pointed out that, in addition to reference to the Abidjan and Nairobi conventions, the text should include reference to other conventions related to coastal and marine ecosystems. Djibouti added that reference should also be made to AMCEN supporting the Jeddah Convention, with WG-II Chair Hamouda adding that support should also be given to the Barcelona Convention for the Mediterranean.

Addressing forests and biodiversity, Djibouti called for the inclusion of other thematic areas in addition to protected areas. Cameroon called for the consideration of invasive alien species (IAS) as well as awareness raising on carbon sequestration to be included in the draft. Regarding climate change, Uganda cautioned against duplication of activities included in the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. Cameroon said that biofuels should be added, and Sudan emphasized the need for information sharing.

Turning to sound management and sustainable use of chemicals, South Africa, supported by others, called for implementation of the African Stockpile Programme and asked if nuclear waste should be included under this section. Nigeria emphasized the need for creating synergies between governments in order to promote the sustainable use of chemicals on the continent.

On environmental and integrated assessment and early warning and environmental security, Egypt called for the strengthening of environmental indicators, while Sudan suggested that countries build on existing observatory systems to strengthen these indicators. BirdLife International proposed that stakeholder involvement be enhanced at all levels and South Africa stressed the need to link impact assessment with environmental law.

On sustainable consumption and production, the issue of capacity building in the Lake Victoria region drew comments from Djibouti and Cameroon, which wanted the programme expanded to benefit other African countries.

WGII then heard four presentations. Jonathan Allotey, Environment Protection Agency, Ghana presented on steps taken by his country to implement the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD and detailed Ghana's concerns about threats posed by IAS.

Fatoumata Keitoo-Ouane, Stockholm Convention, presented on sound chemicals management and public health, stressing that chemicals may have harmful effects, and emphasized the special vulnerability of poor people in this regard. She encouraged countries to become signatory to chemicals-related conventions and to increase their understanding of the processes to access technical and financial assistance. Keitoo-Ouane suggested that the Johannesburg declaration include a request to make funds available for chemicals management.

Abiola Olanipekun, Ministry of Environment Housing and Urban Development, Nigeria, presented on opportunities and challenges arising from nanotechnology and manufactured nanomaterials. She emphasized the need for governments to develop effective frameworks for the responsible introduction of these materials, taking into consideration impacts on human health and the environment, by applying the precautionary approach and developing a global code of conduct.

Khathutshelo Tshipala, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), discussed the implications of locating the African Environment Facility within the DBSA. He noted that the Facility would have to be complimentary to other funding sources and that arrangements would be governed by certain terms and conditions including the Bank's mandate, adding that such a request could be pursued further with the DBSA.

On Monday, WG-II met to hear two presentations and consider draft decisions on: the status and use of the AMCEN General Trust Fund; environmental education; the AEO process and the African Environment Information Network; and chemicals management.

Onesmus Thiong'o, UNEP, presented on the financial status of the AMCEN General Trust Fund highlighting the fact that although income increased during the 2006-2007 period because a number of countries settled their outstanding contributions, the real contributions decreased by 68%. Ethiopia suggested setting up a committee to investigate why governments are failing to contribute financially to AMCEN. In response, Egypt and Kenya stressed that AMCEN must persuade governments to provide timely and adequate funds to it. Eritrea suggested that AMCEN come up with a flexible payment schedule to assist countries to clear unpaid contributions. Uganda requested the Secretariat to provide a list of activities requiring funding. Cameroon proposed encouraging donor countries to contribute to the Trust Fund.

Gerard Cunningham, UNEP, presented on mainstreaming environmental education and technology-supported learning in Africa. He highlighted different forms of "e-Learning," the importance of linking it to environmental education and outlined various initiatives such as the e-Learning Africa series of conferences. He explained that UNEP is interested in using technology-supported education to raise awareness of environment and sustainable development issues, and as a tool to implement the Bali Strategic Plan.

Jane Gaithuma, BirdLife International, outlined her organization's efforts to support the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. She highlighted the close connection between AMCEN and NEPAD objectives and BirdLife International's work programmes and current projects; BirdLife's contributions to the AEO, and its work on building Africa's environmental expertise through internships and nongovernmental organization (NGO) training programmes. She concluded by urging AMCEN to: link livelihoods with conservation; carefully consider the implications of biofuel production on food security; support the ratification and implementation of the revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources; and to recognize BirdLife International a partner in the implementation of its work programme.

On the draft decision concerning environmental education, Cameroon proposed collaborating with the African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology (AMCOST). Reference was also added to working with UNEP and UNESCO as part of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. BirdLife International added language to enhance greater stakeholder involvement, and UNEP, reporting on outcomes from the recent High Level Roundtable in Ghana, suggested establishing an African Environmental e-Learning Network.

Regarding the draft decision on the AEO process and the African Environment Information Network, participants welcomed the publication of the *Africa Atlas* and other processes generating African environment information. Uganda, supported by Nigeria, Sudan and others, urged UNEP to support subsequent editions of the *Africa Atlas*. Cameroon suggested requesting the UNEP Executive Director to liaise with the secretariats of relevant conventions and other international organizations to mobilize resources for the continuation of the AEO, African Environment Information Network and *Africa Atlas* processes.

During Monday's lunch break, WG-II reconvened to consider two decisions, namely the draft decision on the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD and the draft decision on chemicals management. Nigeria proposed extensive

amendments to the draft text on chemicals, including language to reflect: the development of an African regional plan of action and submissions for project funding requests under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management's Quick Start Programme; requests to governments to promote building national institutional capacity on sound chemicals management; requests for bilateral and multilateral donors and the GEF with support of UNEP to make funds available to support least developed countries to implement the Stockholm Convention and other chemicals management instruments; and requests to the AMCEN Secretariat in collaboration with others to periodically review progress on chemicals management. Taking into account the link between chemicals and public health, the Stockholm Convention representative proposed that the AMCEN President submit the subsequent decision to the joint conference of Health and Environment Ministers in Africa and International Conference on Chemicals Management for further consideration.

**WORKING GROUP III – POLICY AND RELATED MATTERS:** WG-III met on Sunday and Monday to hear presentations, review the draft Johannesburg declaration, and consider two draft decisions: on the AMCEN Constitution and on Africa Environment Day. WG-III was chaired by Amadou Maïga, Mali, with Zaheer Fakir, South Africa, as Rapporteur.

WG-III Chair Maïga invited the Secretariat to present a brief overview of the draft Johannesburg declaration. Robert Wabunoha, UNEP, explained the process used to develop the draft declaration, noting that it is primarily based on African expertise. He explained that the draft declaration would be submitted to AMCEN's ministerial segment for consideration, and subsequently to the AU Summit in July and the UN General Assembly High Level Segment on Africa in September.

The draft declaration, contains: a general preamble; a section on progress made in implementing the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; an overview of eight key themes and cross cutting issues relating to environment and sustainable development; and concluding remarks.

During the discussion, Morocco, supported by many participants, stressed that the Ministerial declaration should be a brief political statement setting out the key priorities for African governments over the next biennium. Participants also highlighted the importance of sending a clear message to African heads of state and the international community.

WG-III then considered the language in the draft declaration. Regarding the preamble, Morocco highlighted the need to emphasize AMCEN leadership at the political level and to include priorities for implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD. Morocco further proposed making reference to the links between poverty and sustainable development.

Turning to progress in implementing the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, the AUC stressed the need to include commitments on the financial obligations for African countries to implement the decisions taken, noting that past financial commitments have not always been honored. Swaziland, supported by several participants, pointed out that human and technological aspects are also important.

On policy, advocacy and environmental law, South Africa, Morocco and several others suggested avoiding references to specific projects unless they are part of the AMCEN Work Programme. Several participants called for an emphasis on African-developed initiatives.

Regarding capacity building and technology support, South Africa requested language to underline their importance, and suggested that the outcome of the other working groups on these matters should be taken into account.

Regarding land degradation and desertification, Burkina Faso, supported by the GEF, called for an emphasis on broader research and monitoring of land degradation rather than a focus on specific technical tools. The AU called for mention of relevant African initiatives such as the AMESD programme and GGWSS, which were set up at the request of African countries to address these issues.

On conserving Africa's wetlands, the AU asked that the text recognize initiatives by individual African countries, and suggested that synergies between the Ramsar Convention and other conventions should be highlighted.

On prevention and management of IAS, the AUC emphasized the need to recognize ongoing initiatives in different countries. UNEP, opposed by South Africa, proposed linking this to the AUC proposed formulation relating to the Biosafety Protocol. Other participants maintained it was important to bring such issues to the attention of decision makers.

Turning to the conservation and sustainable use of marine, coastal and freshwater resources, UNEP, stressed the need to highlight the slow pace of implementation of the Abidjan Convention. Morocco, supported by Ghana highlighted the need for integrated management approaches for freshwater resources.

On combating climate change, South Africa suggested coordinating input on this section with WG-I. South Africa mentioned a request to the AUC to hold back-to-back meetings with the AU Summit in 2009 to enable the drafting of a common African position, and requested that the declaration mention South Africa's interest in hosting the UNFCCC COP 17 in 2011. Birdlife International proposed mentioning links to the CBD and the outcomes of its recent Conference of the Parties (COP). South Africa also raised the issue of the financing gap to meet Africa's adaptation needs and called for enhanced regional cooperation in this area.

Regarding transboundary conservation or management of natural resources, several participants disagreed with a reference to forests, stating that it is just one of many shared resources. It was agreed that ongoing subregional initiatives on transboundary resource management should be highlighted in the final text.

WG-III considered the declaration's section on cross-cutting issues under two headings: capacity building and financing. Ghana called for stronger language on the need to mobilize resources for capacity building. South Africa argued that current priorities of global financial arrangements are contributing to further marginalization of issues important to Africa and called for this to be reflected in the text. The UNCCD further emphasized the importance of operationalizing the African Environment Facility at the AfDB. Morocco underscored the need for Africa to allocate regional resources to finance its priority environmental issues, including exploring innovative funding mechanisms such as eco-taxes.

On Monday, WG-III reconvened to consider the revised draft Johannesburg declaration, review two draft decisions, and hear presentations. Regarding the draft Johannesburg declaration, participants drew attention to several missing elements, including: the GGWSS and its potential for integrated implementation of the CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC; the threat of IAS; gender mainstreaming; and capacity building. Nigeria

questioned whether the name of the declaration might cause confusion because of the similarity to WSSD's Johannesburg Declaration.

Regarding the draft decision on the AMCEN Constitution, the AMCEN Secretariat recalled an earlier request to postpone consideration of this matter pending the outcome of the AU restructuring process. Delegates agreed to defer this until the next AMCEN session. On the draft decision on Africa Environment Day, the AUC clarified that since it emanated from an AU Summit decision, any amendment would necessitate a second AU decision.

WG-III also heard three presentations on new regional initiatives relating to the implementation of MEAs. Mansour N'Diaye, UNCCD, briefed participants on the road map for implementing the UNCCD-10 year strategic plan adopted at COP-8, and the alignment of desertification and climate change initiatives at national and regional levels taking into account the links between land degradation and climate change. In response to a question by Morocco on the connection to the GGWSS, N'Diaye confirmed that the UNCCD is in discussion with the AUC and other partners, and will continue to facilitate this process.

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, UNEP, discussed a new five-year European Commission-UNEP Programme to enhance the capacity of ACP countries to implement and enforce MEAs in four key areas. She reported that the project would strengthen the African hub at the AUC to coordinate, among other matters: the training of national and regional MEA negotiators; development and dissemination of policy guidelines; and harmonization of national reporting for MEAs.

Bather Koné, AUC, presented on the AU-GTZ Biosafety Initiative. He cited several achievements and ongoing studies on genetically modified commodities in Africa. He noted a concrete outcome of the project is the decision by AMCOST to extend a budget line in 2008 to integrate the biosafety unit into the AUC. He highlighted the challenge of reaching a common position on biosafety, and the need to link biotechnology and biosafety.

A representative of the African Network of Environmental Journalists urged AMCEN to recognize the work of the network in its resolutions, particularly its contribution to environmental awareness raising and behavioral change on the continent.

## **REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS**

**WORKING GROUP I – CLIMATE CHANGE:** On Monday afternoon, WG-I Rapporteur Kwashirai Chigodora presented two draft decisions on: Africa's preparations for developing a common negotiating position on a comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012; and the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, which contains an annexed indicative list of Africa's climate change decisions and an annexed indicative conceptual outline of a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes. He said the draft decision on the comprehensive framework had been drafted to avoid "reinventing the wheel" by acknowledging the range of climate change initiatives in Africa and creating a consolidated framework. He explained that the conceptual outline aimed to address gaps in African climate change programmes with the main issues identified as: adaptation; mitigation; and supporting and enabling measures consisting of building capacity, financing, and technology development and transfer.

On the comprehensive framework, Togo supported by Uganda and others, proposed strengthening language on financing to ensure adequate funding for activities within the framework of African programmes on climate change and other climate change activities. South Africa noted that financing should take into account existing as well as future programmes. A small group was then established to refine the text and incorporate other proposals.

Delegates subsequently accepted language on: strengthening and mobilizing capacities of existing facilities and institutions to address climate change; and mandating the AMCEN President to present progress in developing a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes to relevant AU and ECA conferences, to ensure the adequate financing of programmes under the framework. Participants also agreed to language requesting multilateral financial institutions and others to support the implementation of the comprehensive framework; and to invite these institutions and other development partners to take into account the special needs of Africa in ongoing decision making on international financing schemes and to streamline their procedures to improve access to finance. The two draft decisions were accepted with amendments in plenary.

**WORKING GROUP II: DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE 2009-2010 BIENNIUM:** WG-II Chair Mohamed Hamouda outlined the work completed by the WG, including: deliberations on the draft indicative work programme for the biennium 2009-2010, particularly amendments to the annex setting out major objectives and key components, specific activities and collaborating partners. He then presented five draft decisions addressed by the WG, including on: the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD; the status and use of the AMCEN's General Trust Fund; chemicals management; environmental education; and on the AEO process and the African Environment Information Network. He noted that an extensive review had taken place of the chemicals management draft decision.

The draft decisions on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, the status and use of the AMCEN General Trust Fund, and the AEO process and the African Environment Information Network were agreed with minor amendments.

Regarding the draft decision on chemicals management, the AUC suggested adding a reference to the Bamako Convention in addition to the international chemicals management conventions. An NGO proposed including text on prohibiting the dumping of chemicals and hazardous waste in Africa. Taking into account the scope of the draft decision, which extends beyond chemicals, the Seychelles suggested amending the title of the decision to also include hazardous waste. The draft decision was agreed on with these amendments.

On the draft decision regarding environmental education, UNEP recalled discussions within WG-II to amend the title to reflect the component on e-learning and technologies for learning. The decision was subsequently titled "Environmental Education and Technology-supported Learning" and was accepted with this amendment.

**WORKING GROUP III – POLICY AND RELATED MATTERS:** WG-III Rapporteur Zaheer Fakir, reported that participants had considered the draft Johannesburg declaration, reviewed draft decisions on the constitution of AMCEN and on the commemoration of Africa Environment Day, and

heard presentations by UNCCD, the EU-UNEP ACP project on capacity building for implementation of MEAs, and the AU-GTZ Biosafety Initiative.

Fakir noted that in addition to a general preamble, the draft declaration contains 35 operational paragraphs that highlight, *inter alia*: the leadership role of AMCEN; the need for continued implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD as the overall guiding framework for African environmental activities; the need to harmonize institutional arrangements, policies and programmes, and strengthen links between AMCEN and UN bodies; key MEAs of relevance to Africa; and required technical and institutional capacity building and financial mechanisms for the effective implementation of the identified actions.

The plenary discussed the draft declaration at length, and suggested amendments as well as substantive additions. New issues raised included the need to: mention the UN Decade for Education on Sustainable Development, and emphasize capacity building on technology-supported learning; strengthen language on strategic chemicals management; facilitate the continued production of the *Africa Atlas*; recognize the specific vulnerabilities of African small island developing states (SIDS); highlight key African environmental conventions, including calling on member states to accelerate ratification of the African Convention on Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources; include the role of civil society organizations; and up-scale best practice from subregional and continental initiatives such as TerrAfrica and GGWSS. A drafting group was established to further consider the draft declaration.

Peter Acquah, explained that the draft Johannesburg declaration's name may need to be amended to distinguish it from the 2002 Johannesburg Declaration adopted at the WSSD, and explained that it was being reviewed to include previous proposals. The Democratic Republic of Congo asked for a meeting of a small group to review the French version of the draft declaration ahead of submission to the Ministers, and participants agreed that Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo and Mali would constitute the group.

With regard to the draft decision on the constitution of AMCEN, WG-III Rapporteur Fakir reported that participants agreed to defer the discussion to the next AMCEN session to allow institutional arrangements within AU to be finalized. This proposal was agreed.

On the decision relating to Africa Environment Day, Fakir noted that the rationale for creating an additional environment awareness day, separate from the World Environment Day, had been questioned. Many participants reiterated this position and called for the expert meeting to draft advice for consideration by African Heads of State. After further discussion, the draft decision was agreed without amendments.

The draft decisions on the constitution of AMCEN and on Africa Environment Day were agreed and forwarded to the ministerial segment for adoption.

### **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP SEGMENT**

Participants reviewed and adopted the report of the expert group segment (UNEP/AMCEN/EGM/12/L.1) with minor amendments.

### **CLOSING CEREMONY**

Chair Minga thanked the experts for their contributions and closed the meeting at 8:23pm on Monday.