



AMCEN



AU



UNEP

Distr.: General
9 December 2020

Original: English
English and French only

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Eighth special session

Ministerial meeting

Online, 4 December 2020

Report of the ministerial meeting

Introduction

1. The ministerial meeting of the eighth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) was held on 4 December 2020. In view of the evolving global situation with regard to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the meeting was held online.
2. The meeting was attended by representatives of AMCEN member States, other States, African regional and subregional organizations, United Nations entities and the secretariats of various environmental conventions, partners, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.
3. The ministerial segment was chaired by Ms. Barbara Creecy, Minister for the Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, South Africa, and President of AMCEN.
4. Ms. Cecilia Kinuthia-Njenga, Head, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) South Africa office, served as moderator of the opening ceremony.

I. Opening of the ministerial meeting

5. The meeting was opened at 12.10 p.m. on Friday, 4 December 2020 (Nairobi time (UTC + 3)) by Ms. Kinuthia-Njenga, who delivered a brief opening statement.
6. Opening statements were delivered by Ms. Creecy; Ms. Inger Andersen, Executive Director, UNEP; and Mr. Harsen Nyambe, Head, Division of Environment, Climate Change, Water and Land Management, African Union Commission, speaking on behalf of Ms. Josepha Leonel Sacko, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission.

II. Ministerial and high-level statements

7. The Chair introduced the ministerial and high-level statements.
8. Statements were made by Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa; Ms. Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; Ms. Elizabeth Mrema, Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity; Mr. Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal, European Commission, and European Commissioner for Climate Action Policy; Mr. Sveinung Rotevatn, President of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP, speaking via a pre-recorded video message; Mr. Anthony Nyong, Director of Climate Change and Green Growth, African Development Bank Group; Mr. Ayman Cherkaoui, Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact, Morocco, on behalf of the AMCEN Major Groups and Stakeholders; Ms. Philda Kereng, Minister for the Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism, Botswana; Ms. Adelheid Onyango, World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Africa, speaking on behalf of Ms. Matshidiso Moeti, Regional Director, WHO Regional Office for Africa; Mr. Aziz Rabbah, Minister for Energy, Mines and Environment, Morocco; Ms. Yasmine Fouad, Minister for the Environment, Egypt; Ms. Jeanne D'Arc Mujawamariya, Minister for the Environment, Rwanda; Mr. Joseph Séka Séka, Minister for the Environment and Sustainable

Development, Côte d'Ivoire; Ms. Nancy Tembo, Minister for Forestry and Natural Resources, Malawi; Mr. Jonas Chanda, Minister for Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Protection, Zambia; Ms. Nassira Benharrats, Minister for the Environment and Renewable Energy, Algeria; Mr. Benjamin Toirambe Bamoninga, Secretary-General, Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, speaking on behalf of Mr. Claude Nyamugabo Bazibuhe, Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, Democratic Republic of the Congo; Mr. Seydou Bari Sidibé, Secretary-General, Ministry of the Environment, Water and Forests, Guinea; and Mr. Cheikh Ndiaye Sylla, Cabinet Director, Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Senegal.

III. Organizational matters

A. Adoption of the agenda

9. The representatives adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda (AMCEN/SS.VIII/1), as amended by the secretariat:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Ministerial and high-level statements.
3. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (b) Organization of work.
4. Summary of the expert group's deliberations by the Chair of the expert group.
5. Consideration of the proposed green stimulus programme for Africa.
6. Consideration and adoption of the draft ministerial statement and key messages submitted by the expert group.
7. Other matters.
8. Closure of the meeting.

B. Organization of work

10. The representatives agreed to follow the programme of work set out in annex II to the annotated provisional agenda contained in document AMCEN/SS.VIII/1/Add.1, as amended by the secretariat in a separate note.

IV. Summary of the expert group's deliberations

11. The Chair of the expert group meeting held on 30 November and 1 December 2020 as part of the eighth special session of AMCEN, Mr. Stuart Mangold, Senior Policy Adviser for Africa and Bilateral Relations, Department of the Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, South Africa, reported on the work of that meeting.

12. Participants took note of the information provided.

V. Consideration of the proposed green stimulus programme for Africa

13. Mr. Mangold gave a presentation on the proposed green stimulus programme for Africa.

14. During the ensuing discussion, the representative of Egypt made several comments on the matter.

15. Participants agreed to express their support for the proposed green stimulus programme, and to authorize the secretariat to further develop the current draft in the light of additional inputs and comments by member States of AMCEN, with a view to considering a final draft for adoption through a round-robin process early in 2021.

VI. Consideration and adoption of the draft ministerial statement and key messages submitted by the expert group

16. The representative of the secretariat introduced the draft ministerial statement and key messages, as submitted by the expert group.

17. The representative of Kenya made a statement.

18. The ministers adopted the ministerial statement and key messages, entrusting the secretariat with the finalization of any needed editorial changes.

VII. Other matters

19. No other matters were discussed.

VIII. Closure of the meeting

20. The ministers entrusted the secretariat with the finalization of the present report. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 6 p.m. on Friday, 4 December 2020.

Annex

Ministerial statement and key policy messages on enhancing environmental action for effective post-COVID-19 recovery in Africa

We, African ministers for the environment, convening virtually on 4 December 2020 at the eighth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) under the theme “Enhancing environmental action for effective post-COVID-19 recovery in Africa”, state as follows:

1. We recognize that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has placed additional pressure on Africa’s socioeconomic development and the continent’s efforts to achieve sustainable development and eradicate poverty, as Africa depends heavily on its environmental and natural resources.
2. We reaffirm our commitment to continuing the efforts to conserve, protect and enhance the resilience of our environment and natural resources as part of our determined efforts in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. We will increase our efforts to build a more sustainable and inclusive recovery so as to conserve, protect and restore the environment and enhance our resilience in the face of future crises, as an integral part of Africa’s socioeconomic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. We note that an effective recovery from the pandemic could present opportunities to further mainstream environmental considerations across all facets of the African economy, striving towards a more environmentally friendly, resilient, low-emission and inclusive sustainable development pathway – one which enhances the availability of the natural resource base and protects the environment.
5. We reiterate the importance of strengthening policy and programmatic linkages between public health, pollution control, climate action, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem integrity, socioeconomic equity, inclusiveness and prosperity as one of the most effective strategies for Africa’s recovery from the pandemic.
6. We therefore call on member States to seize the opportunities presented in the recovery from the pandemic to transform our countries as we move towards a more inclusive and sustainable future, and we urge our bilateral and multilateral partners to support such efforts through the provision of, among others, finance, technology and capacity-building.
7. We express our support for the continent-wide green stimulus programme for Africa, which aims to contribute to both the post-COVID-19 recovery plan for Africa and other response and recovery programmes on a more environmentally sustainable, resilient and low-emission developmental pathway. We will continue to review the draft programme through online circulation until 31 December 2020 and, following the incorporation of comments, will consider it to be adopted on 1 January 2021.
8. We will urgently implement the green stimulus programme for Africa by enhancing and scaling up actions within environmental and sustainable development programmes through consolidated resource mobilization, technical support and capacity-building from domestic, bilateral and multilateral sources, and improved coordination and cooperation. In that context we reiterate the importance of implementing the African Ministerial Declaration on Biodiversity, adopted at the African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 13 November 2018, and the Egyptian initiative for a coherent approach for addressing biodiversity loss, climate change, and land and ecosystem degradation, endorsed by AMCEN in its decision 17/1 on taking action for the sustainability of environmental and natural resources in Africa. The key policy messages for the green stimulus programme for Africa are set out below.
9. We will, in these times of COVID-19, continue to promote and engage in multilateral cooperation at the regional, continental and global levels, with particular regard to matters relating to the environment and natural resources as part of recovery efforts.
10. While we will continue to engage in virtual global meetings as a means of exchanging information, we will maintain the principle of no virtual negotiations on substantive matters among parties in those meetings. In that regard, we state the following:
 - (a) We will participate actively and maintain a common approach for engagement in the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment

Programme (UNEP), to be held online in February 2021, and support Africa's presidency of the Bureau of the sixth session of the Environment Assembly, as contained in the key messages set out below.

(b) We will participate effectively in the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Kunming, China, in May 2021, and continue to provide political direction in support of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework as contained in the key policy messages set out below. We reiterate the importance of implementing the African Ministerial Declaration on Biodiversity.

(c) We will participate effectively in the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, in November 2021, and fully support whichever African member State hosts the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. We will advocate for the key policy messages as set out below.

(d) We will participate actively in the meetings of the conferences of the parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, to be held in Geneva in July 2021, and in the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, to be held in Bonn, Germany, in the same month.

(e) We reaffirm our support for global action to address plastic pollution, which will require further work in order to engage more effectively on global governance issues relating to plastic pollution, including reinforcing existing agreements and the option of a new global agreement on plastic pollution that takes a comprehensive approach to addressing the full life cycle of plastics, from production and design to waste prevention and management, while ensuring coherence among and coordination of activities undertaken by existing regional and international instruments and highlighting the importance of technology transfer, research on alternatives to plastic and adequate financing to enable African countries to deal with plastic pollution.

(f) We will endeavour to hold the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in 2021.

11. We acknowledge the outcomes of the meeting of the major groups and stakeholders in Africa, which was held virtually on 26 November 2020 as part of the eighth special session of AMCEN. We encourage the major groups and stakeholders in Africa to contribute actively to the green stimulus programme for Africa, multilateral engagements and the enhancement of the environmental and natural resource capital base of the continent.

12. We express our profound appreciation to the African Union Commission, the African Union Development Agency, the African Development Bank, UNEP, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, other United Nations organizations and development partners, institutions and stakeholders for their continued support for the work of AMCEN.

13. We mandate the President of AMCEN to convey the content of the present ministerial statement and key messages and the report of its eighth special session to all relevant parties, including partners and organizations, with a view to enlisting their support and collaboration, and to report thereon to the Conference at its eighteenth ordinary session.

Key policy messages on the development of the green stimulus programme for Africa

14. The green stimulus programme for Africa is an African-led programme designed to respond to the continent's identified priorities for a green recovery.

15. The development and implementation of the green stimulus programme for Africa will be fast-tracked in order to contribute meaningfully to broader African response and recovery programmes following the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

16. Establishment of a user-friendly and accessible online green stimulus for Africa platform will be a critical success factor, as will the allocation of sufficient financial and human resources for its functioning. In that regard, a reputable African intergovernmental organization needs to be identified to host the platform.

17. Aligning and integrating biodiversity loss, climate action, waste and air management and sustainable resource management, among others, should be prioritized in the recovery phase in Africa.
18. Adopting the green stimulus programme for Africa with elements of resource efficiency and sustainability will lead to cost savings and stimulate economic growth, which are the cornerstones of crisis prevention and resilience.
19. The green stimulus programme for Africa will be designed to deliver impact and scale up green-economy and climate-change interventions to transform and catalyse Africa's sustainable development by moving it onto a low-emission developmental trajectory.
20. For it to be successful, the green stimulus programme for Africa will require commitment, support and political will from member States, individuals, institutions, the private sector and civil society, as well as finance, technology and capacity from bilateral and multilateral partners. The involvement of young people, local communities, women, and the addressing of gender issues will be key elements of the programme.
21. In order to foster local entrepreneurship, provide practical solutions to promote nature-based solutions and enhance job creation within the green economy, an enterprise development approach will be adopted to ensure uptake by non-State actors in developing practical solutions to the implementation of projects and activities.
22. Mobilizing sufficient resources from domestic, bilateral and multilateral partners, the effective utilization of such resources in implementation, and the fostering of partnerships and collaboration with the green stimulus programme for Africa will all determine its success.
23. The availability of appropriate data and information will be fundamental to supporting the implementation of the green stimulus programme.
24. In order to maximize resources and avoid duplication, comprehensive mapping of existing efforts across the continent will be required to identify existing scalable green recovery initiatives and enhance coordination.

Key policy messages to the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

25. We, African ministers for the environment, express our appreciation to the Africa Group in Nairobi and elsewhere for its work in the negotiations towards the holding of the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP and urge it to continue to work towards the success of the session under the theme "Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals".
26. We are fully supportive of the efforts to strengthen UNEP to enable it carry out its functions as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda.
27. We reiterate the importance of commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of UNEP, which is headquartered in Nairobi, the global South and Africa. In that regard, Africa will play a key role in the preparations of UNEP for the commemoration.
28. Acknowledging that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges, we support the two-stage approach of holding a short online session as the first part of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly in February 2021 to consider only the medium-term strategy and the programme of work and budget, to be followed by a resumed in-person session in 2022 to consider substantive matters. Furthermore, in view of the foregoing, we support the holding of the resumed session of the fifth session at a date to be agreed upon in a transparent, participatory and representative manner.
29. We agree to the principle that there should be no online negotiations regarding substantive matters in Environment Assembly processes, including in resolutions, decisions, ministerial declarations and high-level leadership dialogues.
30. We will, during the intersessional period of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly and prior to the online part of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly in February 2021, continue to engage, online, at both the regional and global levels, on matters relating to the environmental dimension of the COVID-19 pandemic. That cannot, however, undermine the much-needed negotiation on substantive matters that will take place during the resumed session of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly in 2022.

31. The African region will assume the presidency of the sixth session of the Environment Assembly. In that regard, whether elections to the Bureau of the sixth session are conducted during the first or second part of the fifth session of the Environment Assembly, the full term of Africa's presidency must not be affected.

32. We call for the strengthening of the intersessional body of the Environment Assembly, namely the Committee of Permanent Representatives, by enabling and empowering it to fulfil its roles and functions as mandated by the General Assembly.

33. As a follow-up to the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development 2020–2030 (the political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the General Assembly in September 2019; see resolution A/RES/74/4), we support the medium-term strategy as a tool for the decade of action so that UNEP can contribute to strengthening the collective United Nations response to the challenges posed by climate change, biodiversity loss, desertification, land degradation, disasters and pollution in a holistic manner, while fully respecting the mandates and autonomy of the relevant multilateral environmental agreements.

Key policy messages to the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity on the development of a post-2020 global biodiversity framework

34. We, African ministers for the environment, express our appreciation to the African Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity in leading the region in the negotiations for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the preparations for the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Kunming, China, in May 2021.

35. Africa is committed to working with the global community to secure a robust, ambitious and transformative post-2020 global biodiversity framework to immediately halt and start to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, so that by 2050 we will have achieved the vision of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (2011–2020) of living in harmony with nature.

36. The Regional Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Africa released in 2018 by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services concluded that Africa's extraordinary richness in biodiversity and ecosystem services, and wealth of indigenous and local knowledge, is central to, and constitutes a strategic asset for, the pursuit of sustainable development in the region.

37. Africa's biodiversity and traditional knowledge can be sustainably and equitably used to reduce inequality and poverty on the continent to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Aligning post-2020 biodiversity targets with the Sustainable Development Goals and the goals of the Agenda 2063 strategic framework of the African Union will facilitate interventions towards the achievement of multiple positive outcomes for Africa, ensuring that its environment and ecosystems are healthy and protected to support climate-resilient economies and community livelihoods.

38. We welcome the ongoing process to develop an ambitious and transformative post-2020 global biodiversity framework for adoption at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and in that regard we reaffirm the decisions adopted at the seventeenth regular session of AMCEN, held in Durban, South Africa, from 11 to 15 November, 2019 and at the African Biodiversity Summit, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 13 November 2018, emphasizing the critical need for adequate provision of financial resources, access to technology and capacity enhancement, commensurate with the level of ambition of the new global biodiversity framework.

39. We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a heavy impact on our economies, particularly affecting the least affluent and most vulnerable, who are most directly reliant on biodiversity for their livelihoods, health and well-being. The collapse in international travel has clearly shown that depending on tourism to fund wildlife conservation is not a reliable strategy, and we note the need to diversify funding for conservation and explore innovative financing solutions.

40. We recognize and acknowledge the new circumstances which have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, as we undertake our work under the Convention on Biological Diversity. However, it must not compromise the much-needed in-person intersessional meetings or the African common position negotiations.

41. We also recognize and acknowledge the efforts undertaken by Egypt, whose Minister for the Environment was elected President of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular with respect to its step-by-step approach, approved by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, beginning with the convening of informal virtual meetings of the Parties in order to move forward with the preparations for the forthcoming fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties. We stress that the convening of those meetings must be implemented in full consultation with all parties concerned, including the African Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity. We will, nevertheless, continue to engage in virtual global meetings as a means of exchanging information while continuing to maintain the principle of no virtual negotiations on substantive matters among parties in those meetings.

42. We note that protecting biodiversity and ecosystems from further destruction is important, but alone is not sufficient. Africa's top priority must therefore be the restoration of already degraded ecosystems to sustain and safeguard the socioeconomic development needs of present and future generations. Furthermore, the restoration of degraded ecosystems will contribute towards the achievement of a number of Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, we reaffirm our commitment to the Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration for Increased Resilience, adopted at the African Biodiversity Summit in November 2018 and endorsed by AMCEN at its seventeenth regular session, and by the African Union.

43. We urge all parties to the Convention to reduce, mitigate or reverse direct drivers of land and ecosystem degradation; mainstream land and ecosystem restoration in relevant sectoral policies, plans and programmes; identify and implement specific actions to achieve agreed ecosystem restoration commitments and targets; and communicate ecosystem restoration efforts, results and benefits to increase and promote active public support and involvement.

44. We note with concern that the true value of the contribution made by biodiversity to human well-being remains underappreciated in decision-making processes and we emphasize the need for a just transition to biodiversity-based economic development strategies that enhance the value of biological goods and services, integrate natural capital accounting, scale up investments in protecting and enriching natural resources, and enable Africa to use its biodiversity and associated traditional knowledge sustainably for economic and technological development.

45. While acknowledging that loss of biodiversity constitutes a threat to the priorities of the African Union, the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, to livelihoods, cultural identity, the traditional knowledge of communities and the productive capacity of African economies, equal attention should be given to priority work under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, including those benefits arising from the utilization of digital sequence information.

46. We also urge all parties to the Convention to tackle overexploitation of natural resources, which, together with addressing land use, can help to address biodiversity loss, climate change and reduce risk from zoonotic pandemics through the use of a "one health" approach at the country and regional levels. We stress that the post-2020 global biodiversity framework must address all three objectives of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, namely the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and to technologies, and by appropriate funding. We also stress the need to integrate priority work from the Cartagena and Nagoya protocols.

47. We emphasize the fact that the utilization of African natural assets, including genetic resources and related digital sequence information, must result in sufficient sharing of monetary and non-monetary benefits to make sustainable use of biodiversity more attractive than unsustainable extraction, leading to good conservation outcomes. We strongly urge the international community to establish, as part of an ambitious and transformative new deal for people and nature, a global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism that will direct adequate benefits to the custodians of biodiversity to ensure conservation and sustainable use.

48. We recognize the important role of technology development and transfer to support the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and urge that it should include the updating of technology needs assessments, provision of support for the implementation of the outcomes of such assessments, identification of technologies that are ready for transfer and the enhancement of enabling environments to address barriers and meet the specific needs and concerns of Africa, including the development aspirations set out in Agenda 2063.

49. We underline the importance of the means of implementation as an integral part of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and stress the need for adequate provision of financial resources, access to technology and capacity enhancement, including the establishment of a dedicated biodiversity fund to support effective implementation of the framework.

Key policy messages in preparation for the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

50. We, African ministers for the environment, express our appreciation to the African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change for leading the region on climate negotiations and in the preparations for the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, in November 2021.

51. We acknowledge the findings of the international scientific community, including the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, on the call for urgent and ambitious action on climate change, and emphasize the findings that recognize the special needs and circumstances of Africa that contribute to the vulnerability of all African countries to the impact and consequences of climate change.

52. We recognize that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has had a severe impact on the economies of all African countries, affecting a variety of economic sectors and already highly volatile markets, contracting the gross domestic product of the continent by up to 3.4 per cent, with an estimated loss of between \$173.1 billion and \$236.7 billion for the period 2020–2021, thereby exacerbating the adverse impact of climate change and reducing the capacity of African countries to adapt to climate change and contribute to the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions.

53. We reaffirm our commitment to ensuring an effective multilateral approach to addressing climate change through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto and the Paris Agreement adopted thereunder and reiterate our commitment to their implementation in line with the principles and provisions of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, while emphasizing equitable access to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and recognizing the specific needs and special circumstances of African countries.

54. We reaffirm the commitment of African countries to the implementation of the Paris Agreement in line with articles 2 and 3 thereof, by communicating and implementing ambitious nationally determined contributions that include mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation, reflecting equity and the common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities of parties, while acknowledging the special circumstances of Africa, in relation to which we stress the importance of respecting country ownership and policy space in all aspects related to climate change.

55. We also call upon developed countries to submit their revised or updated nationally determined contributions before the end of December 2020.

56. We stress the importance of the equitable, accurate and timely implementation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, and the link between the actions of developing countries and the support provided to them by developed countries; we also stress that those developed countries must take the lead in climate action and in the provision of predictable, sustainable and adequate support, both financial and technological, to developing countries.

57. We note that Africa's extraordinary richness in biodiversity and ecosystem services is a valuable natural asset in adapting and mitigating climate change effects and consequences, and that conserving and restoring biodiversity and ecosystem services can simultaneously contribute to tackling biodiversity loss and climate change.

58. We call upon developed countries to honour their commitments in accordance with article 4 of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and article 9 of the Paris Agreement by providing new, additional, adequate and predictable financial sources from both public and private entities to the climate-related funds, in particular, the Adaptation Fund, the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund, to reflect the level of ambition and climate action of African countries. The mobilization and provision of climate finance needs to be scaled up towards the 2020 goal of \$100 billion per annum until 2025 (as set out in the Framework Convention on Climate Change Roadmap to \$100 Billion plan), to be increased thereafter.

59. We emphasize that adaptation is a key priority of the African continent in that regard and we stress the need for further elaboration of adaptation planning and implementation under the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement to address extreme weather events and slow-onset events. We call upon all parties to reach an agreement in a timely manner on the implementation of article 7 of the Paris Agreement, including on the global goal of adaptation, adaptation needs and associated costs, and the recognition of the contributions made by African countries from their own budgets, and we encourage African countries to report on their adaptation needs, gaps, planning, efforts and action.

60. We further emphasize the need for leadership by developed country parties in the implementation of nationally determined contributions, ensuring that they are fair, progressive and ambitious, and we highlight the estimated US\$ 3 trillion finance gap for the implementation of nationally determined contributions of African countries, in particular for their conditional nationally determined contributions, and we stress the importance of enhanced, predictable, additional and sustainable climate finance and technology transfer to allow for the effective implementation of the full scope of nationally determined contributions. We also stress the importance of ensuring that the support provided to African countries does not result in an additional burden, in particular, a debt burden, on African countries and future generations.

61. We emphasize that the full and effective achievement of the goals under the Paris Agreement depends on the fulfilment of the pre-2020 obligations under the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol thereto, and we urge developed country parties to deliver on their commitments on pre-2020 mitigation and finance targets.

62. We emphasize the principles of the Paris Agreement on common but differentiated responsibility and the fact that developing countries require technology transfer, expertise and financial resources.

63. We highlight the importance of the forthcoming twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change for the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement and stress the importance of balance in both its organization and outcome to reflect the three goals of the Paris Agreement, which represent related and equally important aspects of ambition: ambition of mitigation, ambition of adaptation and ambition of mobilization and provision of means of implementation by developed countries for developing countries.

64. We urge the consideration of the market mechanism of the Paris Agreement in terms of raising ambition in mitigation and adaptation actions and to help to meet the cost of adaptation for developing countries, and we emphasize the need for both market-based and non-market-based approaches to ensure environmental integrity, avoid duplication and double-counting, and support fair regional distribution and inclusiveness, and we stress the importance of ensuring that there is no discrimination between the various new market mechanisms and that all the market mechanisms, in particular under articles 6.2 and 6.4 of the Paris Agreement, should channel at least 2 per cent of their proceeds to adaptation, primarily through the Adaptation Fund;

65. We acknowledge with appreciation the work of the Africa Adaptation Initiative, and of the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative, as endorsed by African Heads of State and Government through the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change and the African Union Summit, and we further acknowledge the work done in other regional initiatives, such as the initiative for the Adaptation of African Agriculture, and the efforts of the African climate commissions (the Congo Basin Climate Commission, the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region and the African Island States Climate Commission) in coordinating the implementation of Africa's response to climate change; and we call for additional support to increase the scale of implementation of such initiatives.

66. We call for finalization of the revised African climate change strategy before the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties through consultations with member States and other relevant stakeholders.