

DECISIONS ADOPTED BY CONFERENCE AT ITS FIFTH SESSION

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recalling resolution 1/1 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment adopted in December 1985,

Aware of the evolution of global and regional environmental thinking and shifts in emphasis since the institutionalization of the Conference,

Recognizing the many initiatives taken by the African countries in response to the changing environmental conditions, such as the Lagos Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa, Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economy Recovery and Development, the African Common Position on Environment and Development, the Kampala Agenda for Action on sustainable Development, and the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and Control of Transboundary Movement of All Forms of Hazardous Wastes within Africa,

Further aware of the important role of economic performance on the state of the environment and appreciative of the existence of African subregional economic groupings, particularly the treaty establishing the African Economic Community,

Determined to attain the utmost environmental benefits from these economic groupings,

Appreciative of the convening of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 and the adoption of the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21,

Recognizing that the opportunity offered by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development calls for a new spirit of international cooperation in tackling jointly the immense challenge of achieving sustainable development through sound environmental management,

Fully aware of the recommendations of the World Commission on Environment and Development which highlighted the notion of environment and sustainable development,

Expressing its appreciation for the African activities in preparation for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, including the Pan African Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development, held in Bamako from 23 to 30 July 1991, the First Regional African Ministerial Preparatory Conference for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Cairo from 11 to 16 July 1991, and the Second Regional African Ministerial Preparatory Conference for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Abidjan from 11 to 14 November 1991,

Determined to participate fully in the implementation of Agenda 21 within the context of the African Common Position on Environment and Development,

Fully aware of the profound assessments and evaluations of the performance of the organizational and operational components of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Fully recognizing of the recommendations of the African Regional Workshop on Agenda 21 held in Abuja, Nigeria, in January 1993, regarding the role of African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in implementing Agenda 21,

Fully aware of the call in Agenda 21 and the African Common Position for broad-based approach to environmental management,

Realizing that the implementation of Agenda 21, particularly in Africa, requires a revitalization of existing structures at the level of member States and at the regional level, in order to provide the necessary capacity,

Also realizing that other regional institutions dealing as partners with it on environmental matters may reform their structures to respond to their mandates in the implementation of Agenda 21 and in order to facilitate inter- institutional cooperation,

Furthermore appreciative of the proposals of the Expert Group Meeting (Addis Ababa, 22-25 November 1993) which were endorsed by the Ministerial Session on 27 November 1993 regarding the New Policy Orientation for the Conference and the Indicative Conference Programme for 1994-1995,

I. KEY POLICY ISSUES

Decides:

(a) That the primary objective of the Conference is to contribute positively to Africa's transition to sustainable development;

(b) That the mandate of the Conference is:

(i) To provide, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Environmental Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, and the African Economic Community, and the competent regional institutions and forums, continent-wide political and technical leadership on sustainable development within the framework of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community and agreed African positions on environment and development;

(ii) Actively to support, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity, the African Economic Community, and other competent regional institutions the efforts of African States individually and collectively, with regard to national, subregional and regional issues pertaining to environment and sustainable development;

(c) That the functions of the Conference are:

Policy guidance and coordination

(i) To provide guidance and coordination;

(ii) To promote the integration of environment and development through inter-ministerial cooperation and cross-sectoral coordination;

Inter- and intra-African commitments on the environment

(iii) To monitor progress in the implementation of the commitments as well as relevant regional programmes relating to the integration of environmental and

developmental goals through analysis and evaluation of reports from subregional and regional organizations;

- (iv) To review, monitor and evaluate the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national, subregional and regional levels through the analysis of reports submitted to the Conference by African governments and organizations, major groups and UN agencies active in the region;

Conventions and international agreements

- (v) To monitor the implementation of regional and global conventions and agreements of relevance to the Africa region and, in this regard, to pay special attention to the implementation of the Bamako Convention on Hazardous Waste, *biodiversity and climate change* conventions. Attention shall be given to the ongoing negotiations for a convention on desertification;
- (vi) To facilitate the harmonization of Africa's position and encourage active participation in all major negotiations;
- (vii) To promote the signing and ratification of relevant protocols and conventions by African countries;
- (viii) To promote the awareness on the benefits of such international agreements;

Subregional environmental programmes

- (ix) To mobilize support for the subregional environmental programmes of African subregional and regional organizations. In this regard, the Conference should review the information provided by these subregional groupings and on that basis solicit assistance for them with a view to strengthening their activities;

National environmental programmes

- (x) To consider information provided by Governments, including national reports regarding the activities being carried out to implement major environment and development programmes, particularly Agenda 21;

Funding of environmental programmes

- (xi) To review the adequacy of funding arrangements for environmental programmes at the national, subregional and regional levels in the African region and formulate appropriate remedial strategies;

Non-governmental organizations and other major groups

- (xii) To promote actively the participation of non-governmental organizations and the major groups in the implementation of environmental programmes. In this regard, the Conference should receive and analyse relevant reports from them, particularly on their contribution to the implementation of African initiatives and commitments in the field of environment and development. This implies the development of a mechanism for dialogue between the Conference, non-governmental organizations and the private sector;

Cooperation with the United Nations Agencies on environmental programmes

- (xiii) To examine at each session the outcome of actions of the United Nations agencies active in Africa on issues related to the environment and other efforts in support of the integration of environment and development at the national, subregional and regional levels and consider the Conference inputs to the decision-making processes of the agencies;

Commission on Sustainable Development

- (xiv) To support and promote the activities of the Commission on Sustainable Development, particularly regarding the implementation of its multi-year thematic programme of work;
- (xv) To cooperate closely with the Commission to enhance the participation of African countries;
- (xvi) To promote the integration of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Non-Legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development on 14 June 1992;
- (xvii) To review continuously the implementation of Agenda 21 in Africa, taking into account its linkages with and implications for the African environment;
- (xviii) To submit necessary recommendations on the matters referred to in subparagraph (xiv) to (xvii) above to the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity and the Conference of Ministers of Economic Planning and Development of the Economic Commission for Africa;

Financial resources and related mechanisms

- (xix) To facilitate the mobilization of Capacity 21 resources;
- (xx) To review modalities for encouraging direct financial contributions towards environmental conservation and management programmes, particularly through an increased flow of resources from the North, funding of programmes, particularly of relevance to national priorities and speedy disbursement of funds for agreed programmes;
- (xxi) To provide a suitable forum for discussing and reviewing Africa's priority concerns within the context of the Global Environment Facility in order to ensure that its scope and coverage take into account Africa's concerns such as desertification control, drought mitigation and water resources management;
- (xxii) To provide a suitable forum for examining modalities for holding dialogue with the North on the cancellation of official bilateral debts, export credit debts, allocation of new and additional resources for the implementation of

environmental programmes, taking into account their potential impact on natural resources management;

- (xxiii) To encourage African countries to allocate a percentage of their gross domestic product for environmental programmes at the national, subregional and regional levels;

Integrated development and management of freshwater resources
- (xxiv) To promote and support initiatives aimed at the integrated development and management of shared freshwater resources, including the activities of the African river and lake basin organizations;

Preventing and reversing desertification and mitigating the impacts of drought
- (xxv) To review at each session the status of desertification and drought in Africa, the progress in the implementation of desertification control programmes and plans of action at both the national and subregional levels and the adequacy of funding arrangements for desertification control programmes;
- (xxvi) To play an active role in the ongoing negotiations for an international convention to combat desertification by facilitating the participation of member states in all stages, including follow-up;

Technology transfer
- (xxvii) To review and monitor issues relating to the transfer of adaptive and environmentally safe and sound technology on concessional and preferential terms, as well as technological cooperation, intellectual property rights, access to technological information and indigenous capacity-building;

Securing greater energy efficiency and sufficiency and managing the environmental impacts of climate change and variability
- (xxviii) To promote the participation of African countries in programmes and conventions dealing with energy and climate change;
- (xxix) To review existing policies on alternative and renewable energy sources, particularly at the national level;

Sustainable management and use of forests
- (xxx) To promote and support programmes for the sustainable management and use of forests;
- (xxxii) To promote the incorporation of the Non-Legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests;

Management of biological diversity
- (xxxiii) To promote the ratification by African countries of the Convention on Biological Diversity;

- (xxxiii) To review issues relating to the ownership, management and use of biological resources and recommend strategies for action;
- (xxxiv) To promote the implementation of scientific research programmes on biodiversity;

Capacity-building and cross-sectoral issues

- (xxxv) To consider issues on the integration of environment and development in decision-making;
- (xxxvi) To review national reports on capacity-building (institutional strengthening, reinforcing environmental legislation, environmental training, particularly in natural resources accounting, awareness-building, research, environmental policy formulation);
- (xxxvii) To review national reports on the adoption of policy frameworks that reflect a long-term perspective and cross-sectoral approach as the basis for decisions, taking into account the linkages between and within the various political, economic, social and environmental issues involved in the development process;
- (xxxviii) To review national reports on measures for improving the processes of decision-making so as to achieve the progressive interaction of economic, social and environmental issues in pursuit of development that is economically efficient, socially equitable and responsible, and environmentally sound;

Environmentally sound management of oceans and coastal areas

- (xxxix) To accord a higher degree of priority to promoting the ratification of the regional conventions related to the protection and development of the marine environment in order to enhance protection and development of the marine environment, this would be useful in the implementation of the four regional seas programmes involving Africa;
- (xl) To promote Africa's participation in the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in 1994 and regularly review thereafter the implementation of the decisions of that Conference;
- (xli) To review the progress in the implementation, by African countries of related conventions, protocols and agreements relating to seas, oceans and island ecosystems;

Environmentally sound management of hazardous and all types of waste and toxic chemicals

- (xlii) To promote the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement of All Forms of Hazardous Waste with Africa and convene a conference of the Parties;
- (xliii) To examine policies and policy instruments that enhance the management of toxic chemicals, hazardous waste and solid waste to prevent the illegal traffic;

Monitoring the financial commitments undertaken at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

- (xliv) To review at each session, in the context of financial resources and related mechanisms, the status of actions with regard to the Global Environment Facility in response to Africa's priority concerns;
- (xlv) To set up modalities for holding dialogue with the North in the allocation of new and additional resources for the implementation of environmental programmes at the national, subregional and regional levels;
- (xlvi) To undertake concrete measures for the mobilization of resources from the international community;

II. ORGANIZATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Decides, in addition to reaffirming the present arrangements for the Conference, Bureau and Expert Group membership:

Committees

- (a) That the present five ecosystems committees (Desert and Arid Lands, Forest and Woodlands, River and Lake Basins, Seas, and African Island Ecosystems) are transformed into standing committees of the Conference to be functional only at sessions of the Conference. In the meantime, that is, up to the sixth session of the Conference, the existing secretariats of the Committees (Units of the United Nations Environment Programme) as well as the various experts who hitherto supported the work of the committees will be maintained and used, *inter alia*, for: (a) follow-up of on-going activities as well as relevant activities in the approved 1994-1995 Indicative Conference Programme; (b) preparing documents for subregional conferences; and (c) African expert group consultations. A report on the outcome of this arrangement will be submitted to the sixth session;

Subregional ministerial conferences

- (b) That subregional ministerial conferences be convened in between sessions of the Conference to review and monitor policies, programmes and initiatives on the environment at the subregional level between sessions;

Networks

- (c) That:
 - (i) The networks and their coordinating units should be located within the already existing African national, subregional and regional institutions and they should be provided with additional funding from within and outside the region for the discharge of the tasks assigned to them, including capacity-building, particularly those aspects relating to environmental training and information exchange;

Note. The delegation of Cameroon requested that the criteria for the Bureau membership should be reviewed.

- (ii) The role of United Nations agencies in providing support to the Networks should be strengthened;

Inter-Agency Working Group

- (d) That:
 - (i) The Inter-Agency Working Group should be retained as an advisory body;
 - (ii) The role of the Working Group should be reviewed in the light of Agenda 21 and in such a way that it would enable the Conference to receive and consider progress reports on the activities of its members with regard to the support being provided to African countries and organizations in the implementation of Agenda 21;
- (iii) As appropriate, relevant non-governmental organizations should take part in the activities of the Working Group;

III. CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

1. ***Decides*** to approve the Indicative Conference Programme for 1994-1995;
2. ***Decides*** that appropriate agreements should be worked by the Secretariat for the participation of subregional organizations, regional bodies and international agencies in the implementation of the Programme;

IV. OTHER MAJOR CONFERENCE MATTERS

1. ***Desertification***

1. ***Expresses appreciation*** to the Executive Heads of the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank for the progress report on the status of Africa's inputs to the intergovernmental negotiating committee for a convention on desertification and urges them to continue the close cooperation with the ministerial conference on this matter;
2. ***Decides*** to step up efforts in support of Organization of African Unity and other regional efforts aimed at ensuring that Africa's interests are fully taken into account in the convention;
3. ***Urges*** African countries to participate at the ministerial level in the negotiations for a convention on desertification in full support of Africa's interests;
4. ***Decides*** to facilitate the efforts of the Secretariat of the negotiating committee in addressing Africa's regional concerns;
5. ***Decides*** to provide all possible support to the expert groups of the Organization of African Unity charged with the responsibility of facilitating regional consultations and developing consensus;

2. ***Natural Disasters***

Expresses appreciation for the efforts of the Organization of African Unity, the Economic Commission for Africa, the World Health Organization and the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction within the context of the International Decade for Natural Disaster

Reduction and urges African countries to take an active part in the ongoing initiatives;

3. *African Strategies for the implementation of Agenda 21*

1. **Takes note of and expresses appreciation** to the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa for the African Strategies for the Implementation of Agenda 21;

2. **Encourages** African countries and organizations to use it as a framework for formulating their national action programmes in the implementation of Agenda 21;

4. *African regional meeting on biological diversity*

1. **Welcomes** the proposal of the African Group of Ambassadors in Geneva for the convening of an African regional meeting on biological diversity;

2. **Decides** that the Conference secretariat should undertake the necessary consultations and measures essential to the holding of the meeting;

3. **Agrees** a position paper should be prepared by the end of January 1994 to be distributed to member States and in this regard requests the assistance in the preparation of the document of the executive heads of the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Environment Programme, the African Development Bank and other concerned parties;

4. **Further agrees** that the secretariat should undertake the necessary consultations immediately in order to ensure an effective follow-up to ensure the timely preparation of the position paper referred to in paragraph 3 of the present section;

5. **Decides** to convene an African ministerial-level meeting, to be preceded by an expert group meeting, for the purpose of adopting an African common position and also in order to consider other related environmental concerns of Africa. This ministerial meeting should be convened before the second session of the Intergovernmental Committee on the Convention on Biological Diversity which is expected to take place in May/June 1994;

V. RESOURCES REQUIRED

1. **Encourages** African countries to allocate a percentage of their gross domestic product for environmental programmes at the national, subregional and regional levels;

2. **Agrees** that member States could contribute, in any appropriate way, in local or foreign currency towards the costs of implementing the work programme and functions of the Conference secretariat;

3. **Agrees** to mobilize support from relevant African organizations, United Nations and international agencies for the work programme and Secretariat costs;

4. **Expresses its profound gratitude and appreciation** to the Executive Director and the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme for the continued firm support to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and, in particular, for providing the necessary budgetary resources for the implementation of the programme as well as the running of the secretariat. The Conference notes with full satisfaction the favourable actions regarding the support to regional cooperation already taken by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its seventeenth session;

5. **Further requests** the United Nations Environment Programme to provide the same level of technical and financial support to the Conference and if possible to increase it in the light of Agenda 21 challenges;

6. **Expresses deep appreciation** to the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity for the continued support for the Conference and the participation of the Organization of African Unity in the running of the Conference secretariat;

7. **Requests** the Secretary-General and the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity to examine the modalities needed for entrusting specific responsibilities and tasks to the Conference in the implementation of the treaty establishing the African Economic Community and the participation of the Organization of African Unity in the running of the Conference secretariat;

8. **Expresses deep appreciation** to the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa for the continued support for the Conference and the participation of the Economic Commission for Africa in the running of the Conference secretariat;

9. **Requests** the Economic Commission for Africa to examine modalities for mobilizing greater support and in this regard to consider possibilities with the African, Caribbean and Pacific states/European Economic Community;

10. **Expresses appreciation** to the United Nations Development Programme and its Regional Office for Africa for the resources and other forms of support provided to the Conference, particularly in the implementation of its pilot projects;

11. **Requests** the administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and its Governing Council to urgently consider allocating specific funds (earmarked for environmental management in Africa) in support of the Conference activities from:

(a) Regional United Nations Development Programme indicative planning figure funds;

(b) Capacity-building resources taking into account paragraph 37.5 of Agenda 21, which states, inter alia, that the United Nations Development Programme should use and further improve its broad mandate to provide assistance using its experience in the field of technical cooperation for facilitating capacity-building at the country and regional levels;

12. **Expresses appreciation** to the President and Board of Directors of the African Development Bank for the various forms of support extended to the Conference, particularly its Network on Environmental Education and Training;

13. **Requests** the President, the Board of Directors and governing body of the African Development Bank urgently to consider allocating specific resources in support of the activities of the Conference and the running of the Secretariat;

14. **Expresses appreciation** to the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and Director-General of the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the President of the World Bank for the support being provided to the

Conference particularly its networks, and urges them to increase the support in the light of the challenges of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;

15. **Expresses appreciation** to the executive heads of all United Nations agencies for the various forms of support being provided and urges them to increase the support in the light of the challenges of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;

16. **Expresses appreciation** to the African organizations, non-governmental organizations, the United Nations and international agencies for their contributions to the success of the fifth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment.