



African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
Sixteenth session

Ministerial segment

Libreville, 15 and 16 June 2017

Annotations to the provisional agenda

I. Introduction

1. In accordance with paragraph 1 of article 9 of its constitution, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) holds its ordinary sessions once every two or three years. An offer by the Government of Gabon to host the sixteenth session was accepted by the Conference at its fifteenth session, held in Cairo from 2 to 6 March 2015.
2. Pursuant to that offer, it was agreed that the sixteenth session would be held in Libreville from 12 to 16 June 2017. The session will consist of an expert group segment, to be held from 12 to 14 June, and a ministerial segment, to be held on 15 and 16 June.
3. The Bureau of the Conference considered and adopted a provisional agenda for the ministerial segment of the sixteenth session, which is set out in document AMCEN/16/1. The Bureau also endorsed “Investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa” as the theme for the session.
4. The secretariat has distributed an information note on the sixteenth session (AMCEN/16/INF/1). A complete list of the documents prepared for the session is provided in annex I to the present document.

II. Objectives and overview of the sixteenth session

5. The main objective of the sixteenth session is to provide a platform for African ministers of the environment to deliberate on the strategies, plans and investments required for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals and Africa’s Agenda 2063.
6. To this end, the ministers will have a ministerial policy dialogue on investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa. In addition, the ministers will discuss Africa’s engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, under the theme “Towards a pollution-free planet”, as well as Africa’s contribution to combating climate change. It is envisaged that a brief panel discussion on sustainable agriculture will also be organized. Finally, the ministers will address matters related to the Conference, in particular contributions by member States to its trust fund and the future status of the Conference in relation to the specialized technical committees of the African Union.
7. The expert group will bring a number of issues, in addition to the above, to the attention of ministers for their consideration. The ministers are then expected to adopt a declaration, decisions and key messages reflecting their discussions under the various items of the agenda.

III. Items of the provisional agenda

Item 1

Opening of the ministerial segment

8. The outgoing President, the Minister of Environment of Egypt, will preside over the opening of the meeting and the Minister of Environment of Gabon will serve as Rapporteur. A detailed

programme for the opening session will be developed in consultation with the host country and circulated prior to the opening of the meeting.

9. The outgoing President will introduce the outgoing Bureau members. He will then call upon the opening speakers, including the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, to make their remarks. Thereafter, other speakers will be given the opportunity to make brief remarks.

Launch of the Africa Energy Resources Atlas

10. The Africa Energy Resources Atlas will be launched at the sixteenth session of the Conference. The Atlas, produced in partnership with the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa, Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa and the African Development Bank, provides evidence-based assessment on the environmental dimensions of energy developments in the region.

11. After the opening speeches and the launch, there will be a short coffee break before moving into the main agenda of the meeting. It is to be noted that a dignitary from Gabon will officially open the ministerial segment at around 5.30 p.m. on Thursday, 15 June 2017, which will be followed by a cocktail reception hosted by the Government of Gabon.

Item 2

Organizational matters

(a) Election of officers

12. The outgoing President will present the outcome of the subregional consultations on filling vacant seats on the Bureau in the manner prescribed by the constitution of the Conference and will make his final remarks as President.

13. The outgoing President will invite the new President to assume her place on the podium and make her maiden speech. At that point, there will be an official handover of the presidency of the Conference from Egypt to Gabon.

(b) Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

14. The President will introduce the provisional agenda (AMCEN/16/1).

15. The President will introduce the draft programme of work as set out in annex II to the present document and draw attention to the list of documents for the ministerial segment set out in annex I.

Item 3

Consideration of the report of the expert segment

16. The Chair of the expert group (Egypt) will present the report of the expert group segment, which will include a summary of the proceedings and the recommendations, draft decisions and draft declaration. The Conference may wish to take note of the report and consider the draft decisions and draft declaration under the appropriate agenda items.

Item 4

Ministerial policy dialogue

17. The ministerial policy dialogue will focus on investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa; towards a pollution-free planet: Africa's engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly; and Africa's contribution to combating climate change. It is envisaged that a brief panel discussion on sustainable agriculture will also be organized.

(a) Investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa

18. The African continent needs practical, innovative environmental solutions to directly accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and actualize the shared Agenda 2063 aspirations. This calls for the continent to undertake innovative investments to unlock the catalytic contribution of the environment towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.

19. The ministers are expected to explore and deliberate on some key policy options that could practically unlock domestic and international innovative financing solutions for the environment and catalytic sectors to ensure the environment innovatively contributes to financing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063. A short introductory presentation will be made

by the secretariat on this agenda item. The secretariat has also prepared a discussion paper on the subject (AMCEN/16/3).

(b) Towards a pollution-free planet: Africa's engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly

20. The third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly will be held in Nairobi from 4 to 6 December 2017 under the theme "Towards a pollution-free planet". Pollution from a range of sources is now found everywhere, including the most remote areas in Africa, and thus constitutes a significant challenge for achieving sustainable development.

21. There is, therefore, an urgent need to move towards a pollution-free planet that would help to improve overall human well-being, prosperity and the conditions for the poor and disadvantaged by improving ecosystems. Ministers will be expected to deliberate on some key policy actions that could help to prevent, control and manage pollution in the African region.

22. It will be recalled that universal membership in the Environment Assembly calls for the effective engagement of all African countries in order to help shape the environmental agenda and make the subject of pollution an area of focus and priority in Africa. African countries will need to explore ways in which they can work with countries in other regions of the world to achieve the objective of the theme.

23. The sixteenth session of AMCEN will provide an opportunity for Africa to agree on a common approach for better engagement in the work of the third session of the Assembly. Africa's strategic and active engagement in the work of the Environment Assembly will ensure that the priorities of the region are taken into consideration and prioritized in terms of follow-up and implementation.

24. A brief presentation on preparations for the third session of the Environment Assembly will be made by the Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps based in Nairobi, while a representative of the secretariat will make a presentation on the theme "Towards a pollution-free planet", focusing on policy gaps and the impact of pollution. This will be followed by a ministerial dialogue on the item in plenary with a view to identifying policy actions to address the gaps highlighted above and agreeing on Africa's common approach for engagement in the third session. Elements related to this agenda item are set out in document AMCEN/16/6.

(c) Africa's contribution to combating climate change

25. The global community adopted the Paris Agreement in 2015 as a framework that aims to strengthen the global response to climate change. Africa is responsible for only approximately 2.3 per cent of global emissions yet the region is disproportionately affected by the problem. But rather than being despondent, Africa is playing a large part in combating climate change.

26. With 37 ratifications as of mid-May, representing a ratification rate of some 68 per cent, Africa is among the regions with the highest number of countries that have ratified the Paris Agreement. Such leadership demonstrates that the region has taken cue of the opportunities inherent in the agreement. The secretariat will give a brief presentation focusing on the analysis for catalytically implementing Africa's climate obligations (AMCEN/16/EGM/7).

27. The Chair of the African Group of Negotiators will then give an overview, analysis and report on the progress made with regard to the operationalization of the Paris Agreement, as well as on outstanding issues in preparation for the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Bonn from 6 to 17 November 2017.

28. The Africa Renewable Energy Initiative and the Africa Adaptation Initiative were launched in Paris during the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2015. The outgoing President of AMCEN and Minister of Environment of Egypt will provide a brief update on the implementation of the two initiatives which are a key part of Africa's contribution to combating climate change.

29. The above presentations will be followed by a ministerial dialogue on the agenda item with a view to charting optimal policy trajectories for Africa to implement the Paris Agreement, strengthen the response to Africa's climate change priorities and enhance climate action aimed at making a decisive difference to the African region and its people.

Item 5**Matters related to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment****(a) Trust Fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment**

30. Contributions to the trust fund, and the interest that is generated, are in decline, rendering the situation unsustainable to the extent that it may be difficult to convene future sessions of AMCEN if the current trend continues. The secretariat of the Conference has continued to encourage member States to pay their contributions to the trust fund, with very limited improvement being observed.

31. Urgent measures and commitments are required to ensure that contributions to the fund are regular and sufficient. The ministers will be expected to make a critical assessment and provide further guidance on how to ensure that member States meet their obligations. A representative of the secretariat will report on the status of the general trust fund as set out in document AMCEN/16/4.

(b) Specialized technical committees of the African Union and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

32. The Conference at its sixth special session mandated the President of the Conference to submit a decision to the African Union Commission for consideration by the next African Union Summit, requesting that, given the increasing importance of the environmental dimension in sustainable development in Africa and the world, AMCEN continues to operate as an independent body. This independent body could operate as a specialized technical committee or a body affiliated to the African Union.

33. The ministers will be updated on the progress and elements of the decision to be submitted to the next African Union Summit, requesting that AMCEN continues to operate as an independent body and provide their further guidance, if any.

Item 6**Consideration of the draft declaration and the draft decisions and key messages**

34. The President of the Conference will introduce the agreed draft declaration, decisions and key messages. A representative of the secretariat will take the ministers through the draft declaration, decisions and key messages in order to get their inputs.

Item 7**Venue and date of the seventeenth session**

35. The seventeenth session of the Conference is to be hosted by a member State from Southern Africa. In order to ensure better planning, the secretariat has proposed that the date and venue of the seventeenth session be agreed upon in the form of a decision. In the absence of any offers to host the session, the President will propose that the seventeenth session be hosted by UNEP in Nairobi, the seat of the secretariat.

Item 8**Adoption of the report of the ministerial segment**

36. A representative of the secretariat will introduce the draft report of the ministerial segment.

Item 9**Other matters**

37. Other key matters of interest not included in the agenda will be discussed.

38. It is proposed that any Government that introduces any other matter should provide the secretariat with a copy of a background document for circulation during the session. Any draft decisions submitted by Governments should also be made available in writing.

Item 10**Closure of the session**

39. The President will bring the session to a formal close after the customary exchange of courtesies.

Annex I

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Document</i>
Working documents	
AMCEN/16/EGM/1	Provisional agenda for the expert group segment
AMCEN/16/EGM/Add.1	Annotations to the provisional agenda for the expert group segment
AMCEN/16/EGM/3	Report of the secretariat for the period 15 March 2015 to 31 May 2017
AMCEN/16/EGM/4	Energy as an enabler to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa
AMCEN/16/EGM/5	Environmental security
AMCEN/16/EGM/6	Drought, land degradation and desertification in Africa
AMCEN/16/EGM/7	Analysis for catalytically implementing Africa's climate obligations
AMCEN/16/EGM/8	Governance Mechanisms for Ocean Ecosystem-based Management in Africa using the Regional Seas Programmes
AMCEN/16/EGM/9	Environment and youth engagement
AMCEN/16/1	Provisional agenda for the ministerial segment
AMCEN/16/1/Add.1	Annotations to the provisional agenda for the ministerial segment
AMCEN/16/3	Investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa
AMCEN/16/4	The general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCEN/16/6	Africa's engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly
AMCEN/16/7	Highlights of the achievements of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
Information documents	
AMCEN/16/INF/1	Information note on the sixteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCEN/16/INF/2	Regional flagship programmes
AMCEN/16/INF/3	Briefing on outcomes of the recent conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions
AMCEN/16/INF/4	Briefing on the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol
Reference documents	
AMCEN/15/4	Report of the ministerial segment of the fifteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCEN/SS/VI/6	Report of the ministerial segment of the sixth special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
	Agenda 2063: First Ten-Year Plan
	Brazzaville Declaration on Illegal Exploitation and Illicit Trade in Wild Flora and Fauna in Africa
	African Strategy on Combating Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa
	Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want
	Paris Agreement on climate change
	Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Annex II

Programme of work for the ministerial segment, 15 to 16 June 2017

Thursday, 15 June 2017

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
Opening session	
9–10 a.m.	Opening ceremony Launch of Africa Energy Resources Atlas
10–10.15 a.m.	Coffee break
10.15–10.30 a.m.	(a) Election of officers (b) Adoption of the agenda and programme of work
10.30–11 a.m.	Item 3 Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group
Ministerial dialogue	
11 a.m.–12 noon	Item 4 (a) Investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa
12 noon–1 p.m.	Item 4 (b) Towards a pollution-free planet: Africa's engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly
1–3 p.m. Lunch break	
3–3.30 p.m.	Item 4 (b) (continued) Towards a pollution-free planet: Africa's engagement in the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly
3.30–5 p.m.	Item 4 (c) Africa's contribution to combating climate change
Official Ceremony	
5–6 p.m.	Official opening ceremony by dignitary from Gabon
6.30 p.m.	Social event – cocktail by Government of Gabon

Friday, 16 June 2017

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
9–9.15 a.m.	Brief remarks by the CEO of the Global Environment Facility
9.15–10 a.m.	Item 5 Matters related to the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment: (a) Trust Fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (b) Specialized technical committees of the African Union and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
10 a.m.–12 noon	Item 6 Consideration of the draft declaration and the draft decisions and key messages
12 noon–2 p.m.	Lunch break
Closing session (open)	
2–2.15 p.m.	Item 7 Venue and date of the seventeenth session
2.15–2.45 p.m.	Item 8 Adoption of the report of the ministerial segment
2.45–3 p.m.	Item 9 Other matters
3–3.30 p.m.	Invited brief statements
3.30 p.m.	Item 10 Closure of the session