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The Implementation of Rio+20 Outcomes Takes a Boost as Experts Kick Start the Development of Regional Flagship Programmes



Experts and partners at the regional flagship programme meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

About 70 African experts and partners gathered in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 10-12 April to concretely launch the process of developing regional flagship programmes.

The overall objective of the meeting, chaired by Dr. Hon. Terezya Huvisa, President of AMCEN and Minister of State for the Environment of Tanzania, was to discuss and provide inputs for updating the concept notes of the respective flagship programmes aimed at contributing to the implementation of the outcomes of Rio+20 in Africa, as mandated by the 14th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) held in Arusha, Tanzania in September 2012.

The flagship programmes are long-term initiatives meant to respond to Africa's needs in a more coordinated way and contribute to the effective implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes in Africa.

These programmes will enhance cooperation and coherent coordination amongst various initiatives and partners in the region and act as an open platform for engagement by all partners. They will have an overarching goal of alleviating poverty and improving livelihoods and incorporate capacity building, technology transfer and skills development as a cross cutting issue.

At the end of the meeting, five concept notes were reviewed and revised and will be distributed to all African countries and other stakeholders for further comments before finalization and submission to an AMCEN special session for adoption.

The Outcomes of the meeting will be shared with the AMCEN Bureau and the AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, and discussed in different sub-regions ahead of the AMCEN special session in October 2013 in view of their adoption.

The meeting was preceded by a side event on green economy and sustainable consumption and production on 9 April 2013. The event was meant to provide additional information to enable participants to contribute effectively to the discussions on the green economy and sustainable consumption and production flagship programmes.

The whole process is carried out under the joint guidance of AUC and AMCEN and with the active support from key partners including United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), African Development Bank (AfDB), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Strengthening Food Security and Building Resilience of Vulnerable Populations in the Sahel Region

The 48th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) was held in N'Djamena, Chad from 7-8 April.

The meeting brought together Ministers of agriculture and other relevant sectors from the CILSS member States, development partners and representatives of international organizations to assess progress and plan the next steps with regard to the implementation of initiatives to strengthen food security and build resilience among vulnerable populations in the Sahel. ECOWAS and UEMOA have designated CILSS as their principal technical agency for the implementation of food security programmes, such as the new Global Alliance for Resilience – Sahel and West Africa (AGIR).

The ministers also discussed the adoption of a new revised CILSS convention; efforts to build closer relations with regional organizations, namely ECOWAS and UEMOA; and improving governance and communications.

Founded in 1973, CILSS is marking its 40th anniversary at a time when its activities and expertise are gaining international recognition, and its membership is expanding, with the addition of Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Togo since 2011.

This session was held in conjunction with the Second Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers of the Great Green Wall took place in Ndjamen on 8-9 April 2013 with Ministers from the 11 member countries including Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, Chad, Niger in attendance.

The Council reviewed the implementation of the Action Plan which is at its initial phase and reaffirmed its resolve to ensure sound ecosystem management and improved livelihood of people living in the Sahel and Sahara belt -15 km wide and 7,100 km long area from Dakar to Djibouti.

The programme is facing financial and human constraint. A donor round table is scheduled during the course of this year. UNEP is providing technical assistance to the Agency of the GGW with the aim of promoting green economy in the countries. UNEP was represented by the Regional Director of Africa at the Council of Ministers.

UNEP was represented at the meeting by the Director and Regional Representative for Africa, Mounkaila Goumandakoye.

Africa- wide Consultations on Post 2015 Development Agenda Gain Momentum Ahead of the 21st AU Summit

An Africa wide consultation meeting was held in Hammamet Tunisia from 11-12 March, 2013 to garner inputs and ideas for the Africa Common Position on the post 2015 development agenda as part of the consultations on MDGs and sustainable development that will feed the UN general Assembly to be held in September 2013 in New York.

The regional process will culminate with the adoption of the African Common Position on the Post 2015 Development Agenda by the 21st African Union Summit from 26-27 May in Addis Ababa.

In this regard, the meeting took stock of the outcomes of preparatory regional, sub regional and national consultations held in Accra (2011), Mombasa (September 2012) and Dakar (December 2012) and further discussed African priorities in the context of the MDGs and SDGs.

Around 100 participants from member states, CSOs, UN agencies and other development partners were in attendance, deliberated on different topics in the areas of partnership, financing and stakeholder's in order to identify emerging issues and the main messages from the 2012 MDGs report.

From an environmental perspective, some of the issues and recommendations included the need to develop a target on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and resilience as well as capacity in order to anticipate and respond to natural disasters. Participants also highlighted the need for Africa to prioritize green growth initiatives.

The conclusions of the Hammamet meeting were subsequently endorsed by the AU-ECA 6th Joint Conference of African Ministers of Finance in Abidjan in March 2013.

It is clear that UNEP has a critical role to play in the post 2015 consultations on sustainable development. The provision of environmental data- for indicators and results formulation for the post 2015 development agenda- and scientific evidences to the process as well as assuring the lead in addressing issues like green economy in the context of sustainable development, ecosystem based approaches to climate change adaptation, environmental law enforcement among others.

Using adaptation actions to tackle food insecurity

The Local Case for Action in the Xai Xai, Mozambique

In the city of Xai Xai, Mozambique, many households were experiencing an average of 4 to 5 months of food shortage every year, affecting mainly fishers. Coupled with the current drought crises and changing climate, this coastal community needed to draw from other sources of food productivity such as the seascape in addressing the need for additional sources of food supply. Against this backdrop, ecosystem-based adaptation approaches were used to address this food insecurity and build resilience of the local communities.

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) with technical backstopping and financial support helped the Centre for Sustainable Development of Coastal Zones (CDS ZS) and introduced an EbA approach to solve this problem by implementing EbA activities to increase community resilience and to ensure the recovery and the sustainable future use of the mangrove ecosystem.

The EbA approaches used were fish farming, crab farming, and mangrove reforestation. These community-based and community-led interventions helped enhance the adaptive capacity, resulting in the establishment of fish ponds and crab growth cages, directly benefiting 98 households (490 people), including 10 households in crab farming, 20 households in fish farming, and 68 households in mangrove

reforestation which includes four that are permanently involved in the mangrove nurseries.



Local residents in the Xai Xai province in Mozambique dig swampy areas to plant mangroves which will serve as a fish habitat and a harbor for coral reefs.

Kenya target 10 % Tree Cover to mark International Day of Forests and Tasks every Kenyan to take action



UNEP Kenya Country Programme Coordinator Mr. Henry Ndede and Mr Dan Rugabira, FAO Representative planting a tree

Kenya marked the International Day of Forests on 21st March, 2013 at the Ngong' Road Forest Conservancy under the theme: 'Towards 10% National Tree Cover: Ni Wajibu wa Kila Mkenya' (It is a responsibility for every Kenyan), in line with the Constitution of Kenya, which has set 10% as the benchmarked target for national tree and forest cover.

The event, hosted at the Ngong Road Forest Primary School, Nairobi, was honored by the presence of the outgoing Minister for Forests and Wildlife, Hon. Mr Noah Wekesa, who encouraged Kenyans to keep the spirit of planting and taking care of trees. From a low figure of 1.7% forest cover in recent decades, a comprehensive forest cover mapping across the country has been carried out which confirms that Kenya is now at 6.9% forest and tree cover. With the current enthusiasm in tree planting, this constitutional threshold should be achievable within the Vision 2030.

Hon. Wekesa stated that "It is common knowledge that sustainable conservation and management of forests promotes biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, enhances livelihoods and alleviates impacts of poverty".

The Ministry of Forests and Wildlife has embarked on continuous institutional reforms, including: formulation of the National Forest Program (NFP), which is intended to provide a clear strategy for the implementation of forest policy over the coming 10-years. The NFP process will provide a framework for the government and development partners to work closely together on forests issues. It will also generate innovative problem-solving and knowledge-sharing mechanisms amongst forest partners. Other supporting mechanisms that have evolved over time include Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD Plus) process.

UNEP called for enhanced environmental awareness in member countries. Kenya Country Programme Coordinator, Henry Ndede underscored the role of Green Economy principles in sustainable development, and pointed out that Kenya stood to gain during this decade as one of the Roll-Out countries for Green Economy.

For more information: <http://www.unep.org/forests/>

Africa Environment Day celebrates "Partnership for Africa's transition to Green economy in support of African Renaissance

The 11th Africa Environment Day was commemorated on 3 March across the continent with Tunisia hosting the main celebrations under the theme "Partnership for Africa's transition to Green economy in support of African Renaissance".

The Day was celebrated in conjunction with Wangari Maathai Day, in accordance with the AU decision adopted at its 18th summit. UNEP partnered with the AU and Tunisia in organizing this event, which was marked by a trip showcasing Tunisia's long tradition in water management, panel discussions on Green economy, the continent's environmental challenges and opportunities, inspiring messages by the AUC, the Government of Tunisia, and UNEP.

Tunisia has an important potential in accelerating transition to a green economy, which would contribute to a competitive, innovative and sustainable growth with significant social and environmental benefits.

The day was established in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa by the Executive Council of the African Union in order to raise awareness of African people on environmental issues and stimulate positive actions to overcome the continent's development challenges with the view to transform the prospects that make Africa a continent, which is regarded as a new pole of global growth and opportunities.



Children raising awareness on environmental issues in Tunisia on Africa Environment/ Wangari Maathai Day.

Accelerating the Use of HCFCs and Methyl Bromide Alternatives in Africa Nineteen Months to Total Methyl Bromide Phase-out Deadline



Delegates at the Methyl Bromide Workshop

The count down for the complete elimination of Methyl Bromide (MB) by 1 January 2015 has clearly began in Africa with increased training being organized as a critical element of the global strategy to create awareness of stakeholders about the adoption of alternatives to comply with the total phase out deadline.

Liberia's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) conducted a training workshop to raise awareness and build the capacity of farmers for the adoption of alternatives to MB for field crop production and post-harvest handling. The workshop was held in Monrovia, in collaboration with UNEP OzonAction Programme and with support from the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

The training aimed to discuss national plans for sustaining the MB phase-out, to demonstrate different alternative technologies and to discuss enforcement of national regulations for the restrictions of imports and uses of the controlled substances. Methyl Bromide is a broad-spectrum fumigant mainly used in agriculture for soil fumigation to control soil-borne pests, diseases and weeds of high-value crops, post-harvest fumigation of durable commodities, for structural fumigation and quarantine and pre-shipment (QPS) applications.

In Swaziland, the country gained knowledge in safe use of hydrocarbons technology when the Swaziland Environmental Agency (SEA) in collaboration with UNEP OzonAction Programme conducted a national "train the trainer" workshop for the HCFC alternative technologies in Manzini, from 25-28 March 2013.

The workshop was aimed at providing an opportunity for sharing latest knowledge and building capacity of experts from the refrigeration and air-conditioning sectors in safety on the use of hydrocarbons technology in order for them to train other technicians and disseminate information on the phase-out of HCFC in Swaziland.

The training provided technical assistance to promote the adoption of HCFC alternatives that have been identified, and develop strategies to promote the enforcement of legislation and national policies to regulate the import of HCFCs; and create awareness amongst the stakeholders on the phase-out of HCFCs.

For more information: <http://www.unep.org/ozonaction/>

International Women Day celebrated in ROA

ROA celebrated this year's International Women's Day on 8 March, 2013, in glamour and style as all the male staff presented roses to their female colleagues.

The theme for this year's International Women Day was, '*A promise is a promise: Time for action to end violence against women*'.

The ceremony was filled with laughter and jubilation as the gentlemen impressively issued roses and stickers to the ladies to mark the day. Mr. Mounkaila Goumandakoye, the Director and Regional Representative also received a special gift from H.E Mrs Memia El Benna Zayani, the then Minister of environment of Tunisia as a souvenir in the shape of an olive tree.

The purpose of this day is to recognize the fact that securing peace, social progress, full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedom require the active participation, equality and development of women.

For the women of the world, the day provides an opportunity to review the progress made in the struggle for equality, peace and development. It is also an occasion for both men and women to unite and network for meaningful change.

UNEP has embarked in gender mainstreaming many years back, with the view to promote a result-based approach to its programme development and delivery that fully integrate gender considerations at all phases of the programme cycle, from planning to monitoring and evaluation.

ROA plans to enhance its gender lens into having its various programmes gender mainstreamed. Additional information: <http://song.unwomen.org>.



Cheerful staff from the UNEP Regional Office for Africa

UNEP-China-Africa Cooperation Calls for increased participation of Stakeholders in the Region

UNEP and the Ministry of Science and Technology of China (MOST) organized a mid-term review meeting of the UNEP-China-Africa Cooperation Programme on the Environment in Beijing from 25-26 March 2013, and a field trip in Lanzhou to visit villages using the applications of water harvesting and renewable energy.

UNEP signed a cooperation agreement with the MOST in November 2008 to build the capacity of African countries in the fields of ecosystem management, disaster reduction, climate change adaptation and renewable energy under the UNEP-China-Africa Program on the environment.

After successful implementation of phase I with four environmental demand-driven projects implemented in Africa, a second phase was launched under the theme 'One River, One Lake, and One Desert', targeting the Nile River, Lake Tanganyika and the Sahara Desert, with the aim of strengthening African capacity for sustainable management of limited water resources within the ecosystem approach.

The program includes 6 projects with increased partnership from the Chinese and African experts, covering water resources planning, safe water supply, water quality and ecosystem monitoring and waste water treatments, drought early warning system and adaptive technologies, water-saving techniques and agricultural mapping, and combating desertification.

The review meeting acknowledged the progress in all the six components of the project, especially the training, and partners on both sides have developed a common understanding of the issues and established the necessary mechanism for its implementation.

The meeting recommended enhancing communication and information exchange within component partners and across project components as well as regions along with ensuring awareness and increased participation of relevant stakeholders at all levels, as this is critical for replication and up-scaling of the lessons. It was also recommended to link the implementation of the project components in all partner countries with broader national strategic programs or processes so that the outcome of the project activities could be effectively utilized and contribute to additional results.

Enhancing Sustainability in the Building Sector in Kenya

Members of the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for the Sustainable Building Policies in Developing Countries (SPoD) Project gathered at the KCB Leadership Centre in Karen, Nairobi from 25 - 26 March, 2013 to review and discuss the Draft Policy Strategy prepared by the University of Nairobi. The retreat organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) provided the opportunity to look at the relevance of the policies in the national context, given the prevailing policy environment in Kenya.

The Policy Strategy provides a framework which ensures that potential for sustainability in the building sector is achieved. Members of the TAG discussed the context of sustainability in Kenya, particularly the building sector, assessed current policies in Kenya by looking at how successful they have been in addressing sustainability in buildings, and how they could be improved to fit into the Policy Strategy. They also deliberated on the implementation framework for these policies and proposed tentative timelines for implementation, the steps that would be followed, relevant stakeholders and the expected impact of the policies.

A follow up meeting to be held from 17-18 June, 2013 at the United Nations Complex in Gigiri, Nairobi which will bring together participants from Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and Nairobi, Kenya.

Accordingly, The communication strategy for the project outputs will be presented and discussed and meeting participants will discuss practical way forward given the project outcomes.



Group photo of the UNEP-China-Africa Programme delegates

Mapping the transition to Green Economy in Cote d'Ivoire

UNEP conducted a scoping study on the transition to green economy in February-March 2013 mainly to identify opportunities, constraints as well as challenges both at operational and institutional levels pertaining to transition to green economy.

This was a follow up to the scoping mission conducted in 2012 in partnership with the Government of Cote d'Ivoire. The scoping mission was meant, among others, to conduct environmental needs assessment of the country; identify potential entry points for UNEP coherent engagement and partnership; obtain support and endorsement of the UN Country Team for renewed UNEP engagement and ensure that UNEP efforts are calibrated and coordinated with other UN agencies; and identify key partners, within and outside Government.

A roadmap has since been agreed upon between UNEP and the Government, which includes UNEP's support and engagement in the Post conflict environmental assessment (PCEA), the transition to Green economy in the context of sustainable development, the UNDAF formulation, and the consolidation of GEF Portfolio.

To this effect a three step process was initiated. Accordingly, a launching workshop took place on March 5th to discuss the terms of reference, expected outputs and the methodology of the study. Thereafter a 3- week consultation process which included literature reviews, interpersonal meetings with relevant stakeholders, etc. was undertaken and involved UN agencies such as UNDP, UNIDO, development partners such as European Union, African Development Bank, Private sector, Civil society organizations, and sectoral ministries.

A national validation workshop was finally held from 21-22 March in Abidjan to present the preliminary findings of the study together with a proposed roadmap for the transition to green economy.

The workshop was co-organized by UNEP and UNDP. Participants present in the workshop included UNDP, UNIDO, head of GEF National Commission and UN ECA, AfDB, development partners, Civil Society Organizations, Private Sector and Academia.

The study identified agriculture, sustainable forestry, youth employment, and sustainable energy as potential sectors for the country's engagement in the transition to green economy. The study also pointed out a few major challenges, including acquisition of new capacity and competencies, technology innovation and /or transfer, scientific research, country's vulnerability to climate change (agriculture sector), financing the startup phase, coastal erosion, the current development model, rapid urbanization, decentralization or the full engagement of local communities and informal actors in shifting from business as usual. The workshop endorsed a clear roadmap.



Discussions on the transition to Green Economy in Cote d'Ivoire

UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative Bearing Fruits

In Malawi, following the government approval of the Guidelines for Integrating Environment and Natural Resource Management into national budgets in 2012, the Ministry of Finance have in the Guidelines for the preparation of the 2013/14 Budget included a chapter on the importance of the alignment with sustainability guidelines that makes it imperative for Budget Agencies to ensure that environment and climate change priorities are appropriately reflected in the budget submissions in accordance with the environment and climate change mainstreaming guidelines. It further recommends that environment and natural resources be used 'as a vehicle for poverty alleviation as an entry point for communities to appreciate their environment better.'

Revitalization of P-E Coordination Mechanisms in Mozambique and Integration of P-E linkages in Economic and Social Plans: In 2012 the government of Mozambique re-confirmed that sustainable natural resource use should be a government priority across sectors resulting in continued efforts to revitalize the Environment Units and focal points covering 17 sectors.

With assistance from PEI Mozambique the Ministry for Coordination of Environmental Affairs (MICOA) has established routine procedures for assisting the Environmental Units with their planning process. This has led to strengthened synergies and the integration of P-E objectives in sector plans.

In Burkina Faso, the local Agenda 21 of PO which has integrated poverty and environment has been validated. The local agenda 21 experimented with PEI aims to support local authorities in their local planning processes.

The final document has fully integrated poverty and environment objectives and was validated in April 2013. The document will be implemented from this year to help the government in reducing poverty at local level through a better management of Natural resources and the environment.

Cost of Inaction on Chemical Management in mining on cotton sectors: With the support of PEI and UNDP SAICM initiative, the government of Burkina has carried out a strategic Assessment report on the cost of inaction for human health due to unsound chemicals management in the mining and cotton sectors.

The study revealed important impact of the cost of inaction for human health but also reducing the productivity in those sectors.

A policy brief will be produced to influence decision makers to reinforce legal framework on chemical management.

PEI awarded the movie 'Le Bois de la Survie' that highlights P-E and gender issues at the Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou on 1st March.

Link to trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEFihQkGVUY>



Opening ceremony of the Twentieth (20th) Ordinary session of the Assembly of the Union, 27-28 January 2013, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Photo credit: African Union (AU)

Ordinary session of the AU- 19- 27 May — Addis Ababa will host the 21st Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU). This will include the celebration of the 50th year anniversary of the AU that was established on May 25th, 1963 as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) with 33 States as members. In 2002 OAU was replaced by the AU now consisting of 54 member States acting to promote a consistent and sustainable political and economic unity in Africa.

Main Meeting of the English-Speaking Network of Ozone Officers (HPMP Implementation and steps towards the 2013 and 2015 HCFC targets) 13 - 16 May 2013 - Banjul, Gambia — Key recommendations and Action Plan for English Speaking African countries to phase out HCFCs in line with Montreal Protocol requirements

5 June 2013 – World Environment Day-Regional Celebrations — Kisumu will host national event in Kenya. The 2013 theme for the event, the single biggest day for positive action on the environment worldwide, is *Think.Eat.Save. Reduce Your Footprint* – building on the global campaign of the same name to reduce food waste and loss launched earlier this year by UNEP, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and partners.

For more information: <http://www.unep.org/wed/news/hostcountry2013.asp#sthash.x9q13Fpc.dpuf>

World Environmental Education Congress : 09 - 14 June, 2013 - Marrakech, Morocco — The Conference will discuss the social movements and building ecological societies, communications and the impact of social media, ecological economics and green economy.

The Mediterranean Green Energy Forum: 16 - 21 June, 2013 - Fez, Morocco — The World Renewable Energy Congress (WREC), a major recognized forum for networking addresses issues of the source and nature of energy, the security of supply and the equity of distribution, the environmental impact of its supply and utilization, are all crucial matters to be addressed by suppliers, consumers, governments, industry, academia, and financial institutions.

Main Meeting and Thematic workshop of the French speaking Network of Ozone Officers (Steps towards the 2013 and 2015 HCFC targets) 17 – 21 June - Praia, Cape Verde — Key recommendations and Action Plan for French Speaking African countries to phase out HCFCs in line with Montreal Protocol requirements.