

Africa has seen a steady improvement in economic performance. It still, however, continues to face considerable challenges in addressing issues of climate change, the energy crisis, persistent extreme poverty, food insecurity, inadequate health services, political and social crisis in most cases linked to governance issues and the unsustainable use of natural resources.

Based in Nairobi, Kenya, ROA assists African governments and major stakeholders in addressing environmental challenges, using the available opportunities for sustainable development, and ensures that there is better coherence and coordination in the effective delivery of environmental capacity building and technical support at all levels in response to country and regional needs and priorities. While the challenges facing the environment are considerable, governments in Africa have responded, setting environmental

Africa faces significant environmental challenges but governments in the region are responding, setting environmental agendas for action

Highlights:

- The Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) is the comprehensive report on the state of the environment. The latest edition, AEO-3, focuses on the linkages between health and the environment
- The Africa Adaptation Knowledge Network (AAKNet) is a new information portal to mobilize knowledge and provide solutions to mitigate the impact of climate change on livelihoods in Africa. The website is available at: <http://www.africa.ganadapt.org>

Fast Facts

Population: 1 billion (2009)

Land Mass: 30 million km² or 20% of the earth's surface

Environmental Challenges: loss of forests and biodiversity, soil erosion, desertification, climate change, rapid urbanization and scarcity of freshwater

Regional Forums and Consultations on Environment



African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) is the principal forum for African ministers of environment to promote advocacy for environmental protection in Africa, provide guidance with respect to key regional policies and initiatives and build political consensus on issues related to the environment. The Arusha Declaration on Africa's Post Rio+20 Strategy for Sustainable Development adopted in September 2012 spells out key elements of the continent's strategy for realizing sustainable development and for eradicating poverty in Africa, including the development of flagship programmes to boost sustainable development in Africa in the areas of the Green Economy, Sustainable Consumption and Production, land degradation, Environmental Assessments and biodiversity and climate change. UNEP hosts the Secretariat of the Conference.

The Health and Environment Strategic Alliance (HESA) is a country-driven initiative that helps coordinate action by the health and environment sectors and engage in country-level development planning processes to effectively utilize health and environmental inter-linkages in the protection and promotion of public health and ecosystem integrity. UNEP and WHO work together to support the implementation of the Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment adopted in 2008 as the over-arching framework under which health and

environmental issues in the region are being addressed coherently in order to enhance inter-sectoral action and co-benefits for human health and the environment. The WHO and UNEP Joint Task Team has developed various tools and methodologies and provided technical and financial support to countries to carry out their activities in addition to two regional programmes: the Plan of Action for Public Health Adaptation to Climate Change and the African Programme to Reduce Chemical Risks to Human Health and the Environment.

Africa Regional Consultation with Major Groups and Stakeholders of Civil Society. ROA recognizes the importance of major groups and stakeholders as key allies in promoting environmental sustainability and works actively to enhance their engagement in UNEP's work in Africa. Meeting in conjunction with the 14th Session of AMCEN in Arusha, Tanzania, they identified interventions to achieve sustainable development and address adverse climate change impacts as the overarching priorities in Africa.

African Ministers Council on Water (AMCOW) promotes cooperation, security, social and economic development and poverty eradication of member states through the management of water resources and the provision of water supply services. UNEP provides technical support to the Bureau of AMCOW and the consultative processes of its Technical Advisory Committee and hosts and manages the AMCOW Trust Fund.



UNEP and UNDAF

In Cape Verde, UNEP has conducted a climate change vulnerability assessment whose findings form a critical input in the formulation of a national strategy on climate change. In 2012, UNEP supported the UNCTs in Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Niger, Rwanda and Togo to mainstream environmental sustainability and climate change in the UNDAFs. As a result of UNEP support, environmental sustainability is now a distinct component in the UNDAF results matrix where UNEP is partnering with FAO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNIDO and WFP.

Over 60% of the population is employed in agriculture

Post-2015 Development Agenda

In Africa, UNEP supported the Post-2015 national consultations and has contributed to the development of a concept note in Egypt, Kenya, Niger, Rwanda and Tanzania within the UNCT processes. In Tanzania, UNEP actively participated in the development of priorities that capture key environment and climate change issues.

UNEP on the Ground

African 10 Year Framework Programmes (YFP) on Sustainable Consumption and Production

The African 10-YFP, which was developed and technically supported by UNEP, emphasizes the importance of linking sustainable consumption and production with the challenge of meeting the basic needs for sustainable livelihoods, which are of high priority for the African region. Pilot countries include Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mauritius, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia and the pilot cities are Cairo, Egypt, and Maputo, Mozambique.

Climate Change Adaptation and Development Initiative (CC DARE): MDG-F offers useful lessons on addressing climate change issues jointly implemented by UNEP and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the initiative provides timely technical and financial support on a demand-driven basis to countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Small Island Developing States for flexible and targeted action to remove barriers and create opportunities for integrating climate change adaptation into national development planning and decision-making frameworks. The implementation of CC DARE national project activities have helped provide the catalysis in spurring impacts on the policy process in Benin, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania, the Seychelles, Togo, Uganda,

Coordination of the UNEP-China-Africa Cooperation Program on the Environment

The China-Africa Cooperation Program on the environment was initiated under the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the African Union (AU). With over 60% of the population employed in agriculture, the program aims to strengthen national capacities in the fields of ecosystem management, disaster reduction, climate change adaptation and renewable energy.

Strengthening the ability of countries and the region in integrating climate change responses into national sub regional and regional development processes. Three priority areas have been identified: the ecosystem-based adaptation, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) and clean technology readiness. The activities cover both adaptation and mitigation and focus on helping countries with highly vulnerable ecosystems (drylands, mega-deltas and low-lying coastal areas) in Africa to reduce their vulnerability to climate change.

The UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative. The Africa programme supports governments to use natural resources in a more sustainable manner so that the economic and social benefits generated by those resources are not reduced over time. In doing so, the PEI helps Africa to achieve its development goals such as poverty reduction and food security. For example, soil erosion reduces agricultural productivity and incomes so reducing soil erosion is not only good for the environment, it helps achieve food security and reduce rural poverty.

UNEP OzonAction: ROA Compliance Assistance Programme

UNEP's OzonAction Programme, supports the phase out of ozone-depleting substances (ODS) in developing countries and those with economies in transition in the implementation of the Montreal Protocol through the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP). With all 54 African countries having ratified the Protocol, the ROA CAP team supports these countries to establish and implement accelerated Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC) phase-out management plans and meet and sustain phase-out targets of various ODS set by the Montreal Protocol.

UNEP Works to Strengthen Geothermal Energy in East Africa

The African Rift Geothermal Development Facility (ARGeo) is a GEF-funded project being executed by ROA. The project aims at supporting the development of the large untapped geothermal resource potential in six targeted countries in the East African Region-- Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda-- with the main objective of reducing the risks associated with exploration and identifying geothermal sites with high energy potential. ARGeo also aims to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by promoting the adoption of geothermal energy in the region. The utilization of the resource in agriculture and industry will also be promoted. The Project has two components: establishing a regional network with capacity building, information systems, policy advice and raising awareness, and technical assistance for surface exploration.