



African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

Seventeenth session

Ministerial segment

Durban, South Africa, 14 and 15 November 2019

Annotated 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 South Africa to host the seventeenth session was accepted by the Conference at its sixteenth session, held in Libreville from 12 to 16 June 2017.
2. Pursuant to that offer, it was agreed that the seventeenth session would be held in Durban, South Africa from 11 to 15 November 2019. The session will consist of an expert segment, to be held from 11 to 13 November, and a ministerial segment, to be held on 14 and 15 November.
3. The Bureau of the Conference considered and adopted a provisional agenda for the ministerial segment of the seventeenth session, which is set out in document AMCEN/17/1. The Bureau also endorsed “Taking Action for Environmental Sustainability and Prosperity in Africa” as the theme for the session.
4. The secretariat has distributed an information note on the seventeenth session (AMCEN/17/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 seventeenth session

5. The main objective of the seventeenth session is to provide a platform for African ministers of the environment to deliberate on practical strategies, plans and action required to implement national policies and regional and global frameworks in order to achieve environmental sustainability and prosperity across the continent. The discussions at the seventeenth session will build on the focus of the Conference at the seventh special and sixteenth ordinary sessions, turning environmental policies into action and investing in innovative environmental solutions to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 of the African Union.
6. To that end, the ministers will have ministerial policy dialogues on promoting a circular economy in Africa; the role of African ministers and policymakers as it pertains to policy implications and financing opportunities for the implementation of nationally determined contributions in Africa; promoting the biodiversity economy and natural capital accounting in Africa; and advancing the blue/ocean economy in Africa.
7. Other matters to be addressed at the seventeenth session will include the preparations for the twenty-fifth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, due to be held in Madrid from 2 to 13 December 2019; matters related to the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and outcomes of major environment meetings. The ministers will also address matters related to AMCEN, in particular contributions by member States to its trust fund, engagement with other sectors and the implementation of decisions adopted at previous sessions of the Conference.
8. In addition to the above, the expert group will bring to the attention of ministers matters for their consideration. Ministers will be invited to exchange views on those matters and reach agreement.
9. Finally, ministers are expected to adopt a declaration, decisions and key messages reflecting their discussions under the various agenda items.

III. Items of the provisional agenda

Item 1

Opening of the ministerial segment

10. The representative of the outgoing President of the Conference, the Minister for Forests, Sea and Environment in charge of the Climate Plan of Gabon, will preside over the opening of the meeting, and the representative of the Vice-President of the Conference, the Minister for the Environment, Forestry and Fisheries of South Africa, will serve as Rapporteur.
11. The outgoing President will introduce the outgoing Bureau members. He will then call upon the opening speakers, including the Executive Director of UNEP and the African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, to make their remarks.
12. The President will invite a dignitary from South Africa to officially open the ministerial session. Thereafter, other speakers will be given the opportunity to make brief remarks.
13. 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. Delegates will be expected to be seated by 8.45 a.m.

Item 2

Organizational matters

(a) Election of officers

14. 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.
15. The outgoing President will invite the new President to assume her place on the podium and make her inaugural speech, after which the official handover of the presidency of the Conference from Gabon to South Africa will take place.

(b) Adoption of the agenda and the programme of work

16. The President will introduce the provisional agenda (AMCEN/17/1).
17. 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

Launch of the *Global Environment Outlook for Youth: Africa*

18. The *Global Environment Outlook for Youth: Africa* will be launched at the seventeenth session of the Conference, immediately after the conclusion of the opening ceremony. The publication is the result of a call by ministers at the sixteenth session of AMCEN to prepare an environmental outlook for youth to guide the strategic development of youth-responsive actions for sustainable development.
19. The publication draws on the scientific information presented in the *Global Environment Outlook GEO-6 Regional Assessment for Africa* and unveils the potential of green jobs to tackle youth unemployment in Africa.

Item 4

Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group

20. The Chair of the expert group (Gabon) will present the report of the expert group segment, which will include a summary of the proceedings and its key messages, draft decisions and draft declaration. The Conference may wish to take note of the report and consider the key messages, draft decisions and draft declaration under the appropriate agenda items.
21. This will be followed by a brief presentation on a geospatial platform for the Africa Environment Partnership Platform by the African Union Development Agency (formerly the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) planning and coordinating agency).

Item 5**Ministerial policy dialogues in the context of the theme of the seventeenth session,
“Taking action for environmental sustainability and prosperity in Africa”**

22. The ministerial policy dialogues will focus on promoting the circular economy in Africa; the role of African ministers and policymakers as it pertains to policy implications and financing opportunities for the implementation of nationally determined contributions in Africa; promoting the biodiversity economy and natural capital accounting in Africa; and advancing the blue/ocean economy in Africa.

23. The dialogues will be organized such that ministers responsible for the environment, finance, economic planning and industry will deliberate to find common solutions on policy gaps that require concrete action. All dialogues during the plenary will take place under the guidance of a facilitator. Opening remarks will be made by the President of AMCEN, followed by the interventions of the panellists of each session.

(a) Promoting a circular economy in Africa

24. Globally, the concept of the circular economy has become increasingly relevant in recent years. The circular economy represents an opportunity to promote higher levels of resource efficiency and to add value during the processing of Africa’s natural resources.

25. Ministers from sectors including industry, finance, planning and economic development are expected to deliberate on key policy options that could support the creation of enabling environments and promote the scaling-up of circular economy practices in the region. Short introductory presentations will be made by the panellists and followed by interactive discussions. The secretariat has prepared a background paper on the subject (AMCEN/17/4).

(b) Policy implications and financing opportunities for the implementation of nationally determined contributions in Africa: the role of African ministers and policymakers

26. Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2015, African countries have made significant progress in the implementation of their nationally determined contributions. Despite the progress made, the creation of enabling policy environments to harness opportunities for the implementation of nationally determined contributions remains a challenge.

27. The dialogue represents an opportunity for ministers to engage in a constructive discussion and familiarize themselves with policy and financing implications and options for the implementation of nationally determined contributions. Information on this agenda item is set out in document AMCEN/17/7.

(c) Promoting the biodiversity economy and natural capital accounting in Africa

28. Africa’s extraordinary richness in biodiversity and ecosystem services and its wealth of indigenous and local knowledge represent a strategic asset for sustainable development in the region. Data on the true value of the contributions of biodiversity to human well-being in Africa are lacking and those contributions therefore receive insufficient consideration in decision-making processes. To make the case for the biodiversity economy, it is important to quantify nature’s contributions to gross domestic product.

29. It is expected that the dialogue will enable ministers to devise key messages on how African countries can create an enabling environment that is conducive to doing business with biodiversity-related value chains in mind, in order to foster the coordinated development of the biodiversity economy. Information on this agenda item is set out in document AMCEN/17/5.

(d) Advancing the blue/ocean economy in Africa

30. A sustainable blue/ocean economy seeks to promote economic growth, responsible production and consumption, social inclusion, and the preservation or improvement of livelihoods and of the environmental sustainability of aquatic, marine and coastal areas. Across three-quarters of the continent, the blue/ocean economy is primordial and, if well utilized, has the potential to become the principal engine of economic growth. Despite the recognition that Africa’s oceans are one of the richest environmental resources in the world, their importance as a source of income to steer the growth of the economies of African countries remains underappreciated.

31. African ministers and other high-level officials will have the opportunity to engage in detailed discussions on the opportunities offered by the blue economy and to agree on the steps required to advance its growth in Africa. The secretariat has prepared a background paper on the subject (AMCEN/17/6).

Item 6

Trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

32. Contributions to the trust fund, and the interest that it generates, are in decline, rendering its situation unsustainable to the extent that it may be difficult to convene future sessions of the Conference if the current trend continues. The AMCEN Bureau has underlined the importance of all member States making their contributions as a way of demonstrating regional ownership and commitment.
33. Urgent measures and commitments are required to ensure regular and sufficient contributions to the trust fund. The ministers are expected to make a critical assessment and provide further guidance on how to ensure that member States meet their obligations. Member States with large arrears in their annual contributions to the trust fund should be requested to formally communicate their plans for how they intend to clear their arrears and sustain their contributions.
34. A representative of the secretariat will report on the status of the general trust fund as set out in document AMCEN/17/8.

Item 7

Consideration of the draft declaration, decisions and key messages

35. The President of the Conference will introduce the agreed draft declaration, decisions and key messages during a closed session which will be open only to African member States and regional institutions.
36. A representative of the secretariat will take ministers through the draft declaration, decisions and key messages for their consideration, input and subsequent adoption.

Item 8

Venue and date of the eighteenth session

37. The eighteenth session of the Conference is to be hosted by a member State from West Africa. In order to ensure optimal planning, the secretariat has proposed that the date and venue of the eighteenth 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 eighteenth session be hosted by UNEP in Nairobi, the seat of the secretariat.

Item 9

Adoption of the report of the ministerial segment

38. A representative of the secretariat will introduce the draft report of the ministerial segment for adoption by the Conference, on the understanding that the secretariat will finalize the report after the meeting.

Item 10

Other matters

39. Other key matters of interest not included in the agenda will be discussed.
40. 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 11

Closure of the session

41. 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/17/EGM/1	Provisional agenda for the expert group segment
AMCEN/17/EGM/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda for the expert group segment
AMCEN/17/EGM/3	Report of the secretariat (2017–2019)
AMCEN/17/EGM/5	Africa's perspectives in the post-2020 biodiversity framework
AMCEN/17/1	Provisional agenda for the ministerial segment
AMCEN/17/1/Add.1	Annotated provisional agenda for the ministerial segment
AMCEN/17/3	Action for environmental sustainability and prosperity in Africa: contribution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCEN/17/4	Enhancing the circular economy in Africa
AMCEN/17/5	Biodiversity economy and natural capital accounting in Africa
AMCEN/17/6	Advancing the sustainable blue/ocean economy in Africa
AMCEN/17/7	Policy implications and financing opportunities for the implementation of nationally determined contributions in Africa: the role of African policymakers
AMCEN/17/8	Status of the general trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
Information documents	
AMCEN/16/INF/1	Information note on the seventeenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCEN/17/INF/2	AMCEN Bureaux 1985–2019
Reference documents	
AMCEN/16/8	Report of the ministerial segment of the sixteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCEN/SS.VII/2	Report of the ministerial segment of the seventh special session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCEN/17/REF/1	Briefing note on the fourth and fifth United Nations Environment Assemblies
AMCEN/17/REF/2	Briefing on scientific, research and observation issues by the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology
AMCEN/17/REF/3	Briefing note on the Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (the Maputo Convention)
AMCEN/17/REF/4	Briefing note on clean air, health, environment and climate
	Africa's Blue Economy: A policy handbook
K1803172	Report of the Africa Environment Partnership Platform on the work of its first meeting
UNEP/BC/COP.2/11	Report of the Conference of the Parties to the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa on the work of its second meeting

Annex II

Programme of work for the ministerial segment, 14 and 15 November 2019

Thursday, 14 November 2019

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
Opening session	
8.45 a.m.–10.00 a.m.	Opening ceremony
10.00 a.m.–10.15 a.m.	Photo session and departure of guest of honour
10.15 a.m.–10.45 a.m.	Other invited speakers
10.45 a.m.–10.55 a.m.	Launch of <i>Global Environment Outlook for Youth: Africa</i>
10.55 a.m.–11.05 a.m.	(a) Election of officers
11.05 a.m.–11.10 a.m.	(b) Adoption of the agenda and programme of work
11.10 a.m.–11.30 a.m.	Item 4 Consideration of the report of the meeting of the expert group and presentation on geospatial platform for the Africa Environment Partnership Platform
Ministerial policy dialogues	
11.30 a.m.–1.00 p.m.	Item 5 (a) Promoting a circular economy in Africa
1.00 p.m.– 3.00 p.m.	Lunch break
3.00 p.m.– 4.30 p.m.	Item 5 (b) Policy implications and financing opportunities for the implementation of nationally determined contributions in Africa: the role of African ministers and policymakers
4.30 p.m.– 6.00 p.m.	Item 5 (c) Promoting the biodiversity economy and natural capital accounting in Africa
6.30 p.m.	Social event – official dinner hosted by the Government of South Africa

Friday, 15 November 2019

<i>Time</i>	<i>Description</i>
7.00 a.m.–9.00 a.m.	European Union – Africa breakfast meeting
9.30 a.m.–11.00 a.m.	Item 5 (d) Advancing the blue/ocean economy in Africa
11.00 a.m.–12.00 p.m.	Item 6 Trust fund of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
12.00 p.m.–1.00 p.m.	Item 7 Consideration of the draft declaration, decisions and key messages (closed)
1.00 p.m.– 3.00 p.m.	Lunch break
3.00 p.m.–4.30 p.m.	Item 7 (continued) Consideration of the draft declaration, decisions and key messages (closed)
Closing session	
4.30 p.m.–5.00 p.m.	Item 8 Venue and date of the eighteenth session
5.00 p.m.–5.30 p.m.	Item 9 Adoption of the report of the ministerial segment
5.30 p.m.–6.00 p.m.	Item 10 Other matters
6.00 p.m.	Item 11 Closure of the session
7.00 p.m.–9.30 p.m.	Working dinner of the African Network of Women Ministers and Leaders for the Environment