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Status report on implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development over the period June 2006–May 2008

Report by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The action plan is a response to the call by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) for the development and adoption of an environment initiative to address Africa's environmental challenges, while at the same time combating poverty and promoting social and economic development. The action plan was prepared through a consultative and participatory process under the leadership of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN). The action plan responds to Africa's common and shared sustainable development problems and concerns, presenting a set of collective and individual responsibilities and actions which African countries are to adopt and implement to maintain the integrity of the environment and ensure the sustainable use of their natural resources through partnerships with the international community.
2. The overall objective of the action plan is to complement the relevant African processes, including the work programme of the revitalized AMCEN, with a view to improving environmental conditions in Africa so as to contribute to the achievement of economic growth and the eradication of poverty. It will also build Africa's capacity to implement regional and international environmental agreements and tackle Africa's environmental challenges effectively within the overall context of the implementation of the action plan.

II. Activities undertaken as part of the implementation of the action plan

3. The present report presents, among other material, a brief overview of progress made since the eleventh regular session of AMCEN, held in Brazzaville, in May 2006. The overview is limited in scope and does not necessarily reflect the work of all the partners involved in the implementation of the action plan, in that it contains only the highlights of the reports from those partners which submitted them to the secretariat upon request.
4. The support provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other partners have enabled AMCEN to carry out its work programme which is an integral part of the action

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plan. This has been crucial in view of the financial constraints facing the Ministerial Conference. Implementation of the AMCEN work programme is being undertaken by UNEP in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations International Development Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), and others, the African Union Commission, the secretariat of the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the regional economic communities, and a number of institutions and organizations such as the secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS), etc.

5. The support of all the partners of AMCEN who are contributing to the implementation of the work programme of the Ministerial Conference is gratefully acknowledged.

6. The present report discusses the activities undertaken in the context of the implementation of the action plan, with special reference to the work programme of AMCEN from June 2006 to May 2008, under the following headings:

- (a) Policy, advocacy and environmental law;
- (b) Overview of the work programme of AMCEN (2007–2008);
- (c) Combating land degradation, drought and desertification (programme area 1);
- (d) Conserving Africa's wetlands (programme area 2);
- (e) Prevention, control and management of invasive alien species (programme area 3);
- (f) Conservation and sustainable use of marine, coastal and freshwater resources (programme area 4);
- (g) Combating climate change in Africa (programme area 5);
- (h) Transboundary conservation and management of natural resources (programme area 6);
- (i) Cross-cutting issues (health and environment; environmental education and training; Africa Stockpiles Programme; environmental (impact) assessment; sustainable consumption and production; assessment and early warning of natural disasters);

A. Policy, advocacy and environmental law

7. The policy, advocacy and environmental law work of AMCEN was generally carried out in the context of the implementation of the decisions of the eleventh regular session of AMCEN, held in Brazzaville in May 2006 (see UNEP/AMCEN/12/4/Add. 1). Some of the work under this heading, however, particularly environmental law, was undertaken within the framework of the AMCEN work programme for the 2007–2008 biennium.

B. Overview of the work programme of AMCEN (2007–2008)

8. The work programme of AMCEN is an integral part of the action plan for the environment initiative of NEPAD. The elements of the work programme for the 2007–2008 biennium include policy, advocacy and environmental law; capacity-building programme; capacity-building and technology support in the context of the Bali Strategic Plan; land degradation and desertification; coastal and marine ecosystems; forests, biodiversity and biotechnology; climate change; sound management and sustainable use of chemicals; environmental and integrated assessment and early warning; environmental education and training; environmental (impact) assessment; sustainable consumption and production; integrated environmental management (wetlands); post conflict environmental assessment.

9. The implementation of the activities under the programme elements, as approved by AMCEN, is described below.

1. Policy, advocacy and environmental law

10. The AMCEN bureau continues to take steps towards harmonizing the roles of the AMCEN secretariat, the NEPAD secretariat and the Commission of the African Union. The linkage between the African Union and AMCEN remains under consideration. At its ninth summit, the African Union requested an audit of the structures and organs of the African Union. The outcome of that audit could have far-reaching consequences, which, in turn, could affect the future form and nature of linkages between ministerial forums and the African Union. In the meanwhile the AMCEN secretariat has developed good working relations with the African Union Commission's department responsible for the environment – the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture – and the NEPAD secretariat.

11. The President of AMCEN participated in the third Global Environment Facility Assembly that was held on 29 and 30 August 2006 in Cape Town, South Africa. The President made a special case to the Facility's Chief Executive Officer, to make concerted effort to formalize the issue of the Facility becoming a financial mechanism for land degradation. In this context, at its extraordinary meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, on 29 August 2006, the AMCEN bureau reaffirmed this position and requested the President of AMCEN to write to the Global Environment Facility to implement the decision made at its second Assembly to create a financial mechanism for land degradation and desertification. In accordance with that request, the President of AMCEN wrote to the Global Environment Facility secretariat seeking redress. The Global Environment Facility Assembly has since taken up the issue and has made the Facility a financial mechanism for land degradation.

12. The President of AMCEN and the Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility convened a conference of African ministers of environment on the TerrAfrica/GEF Strategic Investment Programme for Sustainable Land Management in Sub-Saharan Africa, held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on 24 and 25 April 2007. The meeting resulted in a ministerial declaration and recommendations which were subsequently approved by the Council of the Global Environment Facility, held in June 2007.

13. An account of other activities undertaken by the President of AMCEN and the secretariat may be found in document UNEP/AMCEN/12/4/Add 1.

(a) Environmental law

14. UNEP has continued to invest considerable effort in conducting complementary programmes and initiatives to encourage the development and implementation of environmental law by as many African States as possible. Support by UNEP to the Africa region in the field of environmental law, including through the multilateral environmental agreements, for the year 2006 is divided into activities under the Partnership for the Development of Environmental Law and Institutions in Africa (PADELIA) and technical assistance. The mission of PADELIA is to assist African countries in building capacities for the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, as well as strengthening related institutions for sustainable development and poverty reduction. Over the reporting period, activities were carried out at national, subregional and regional levels, all contributing to capacity-building, development, compliance and the enforcement of environmental law.

15. PADELIA is the leading UNEP-administered programme supporting African countries in their efforts to develop their human and institutional capacity in the development, implementation, compliance and enforcement of environmental law. PADELIA is a partnership that has so far been funded by the Governments of Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland. Other partners include Governments, cooperating agencies, civil society and individuals.

16. During 2006, PADELIA continued working with African Governments, in particular, the 13 project countries, namely, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Swaziland, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, and through, among others, government officials, lawyers, judges, lecturers, non-governmental organizations, financiers, enforcement officials, police, industrialists, environment managers to build and strengthen their capacities for the development and harmonization of environmental laws and institutions at national, subregional and regional levels. The project-wide activities undertaken as part of PADELIA are as follows:

(a) Completion of the external evaluation of PADELIA. The outcome of the external evaluation indicates that PADELIA is a successful project. Preparation of the project document for the third phase of PADELIA has been completed;

(b) A total of 11 publications were prepared and are being distributed and used in the training of legal stakeholders. Some of the publications have been translated into French and Portuguese;

(c) Training of over 200 lawyers and other legal stakeholders in environmental law through a range of regional and subregional training sessions has been undertaken;

(d) Support has been provided for the holding of the second symposium of environmental law lecturers from African universities and the first session of the Scientific Conference, at which the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in African Universities (ASSELAU) adopted its constitutive instrument; the African database of environmental law has been established; the African Journal of Environmental Law and Policy has been launched; and agreement has been reached on the development of a research agenda on environmental law and policy for Africa; and

(e) The Southern African Development Community (SADC)-East African Community (EAC) held a symposium of parliamentarians on their role in advancing environmental law and governance for East and Southern Africa.

(b) Summary of subregional activities and outputs

17. Activities and outputs at the subregional level may be summarized as follows:

(a) East Africa: the EAC Protocol on Environment and Natural Resources was signed by EAC and is now awaiting ratification by the partner States. Action has been taken to enhance the capacity of 15 members of the EAC Court of Justice in environmental law;

(b) Sahel: A regional network of francophone environmental law experts was established. Theoretical studies and related activities for the harmonization of environmental law are nearing completion;

(c) SADC: Steps have been taken to develop and harmonize environmental law in such areas as environmental impact assessment, biosafety and waste management. This activity has highlighted the need to develop a subregional protocol on environment.

(c) Summary of national activities and outputs

18. Activities and outputs at the national level may be summarized as follows:

(d) Capacity-building was conducted for approximately 750 lawyers and legal stakeholders in 13 countries on various aspects of environmental law. The training included officials responsible for drafting legislation, financial institutions, local government officials, judges, parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, inspectors and governors in Botswana, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland, Uganda and The United Republic of Tanzania;

(e) Some 30 pieces of legislation, including laws, regulations or guidelines relating to various areas of environmental law were either drafted or adopted by Botswana, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Kenya, Lesotho, Swaziland and Uganda;

(f) Seven training manuals in environmental law were produced and also used in various training activities in Botswana, Swaziland and Uganda;

(g) Twenty reports and studies were produced on various areas of environmental law and policy;

(h) Twenty workshops or seminars for building consensus, validating laws or training in environmental law were held in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Lesotho, Senegal and Swaziland;

(i) Five laws were translated into local languages in Lesotho and Swaziland, to ensure easy access to information by the local population;

(j) A national compendium of national environmental laws was produced by Swaziland, a set of national environment laws transcribed into electronic format by Uganda and a bulletin on the environment produced by UNEP;

(k) Ten episodes of a court drama in environmental litigation were produced and aired on national television by Uganda.

19. Under the Technical Assistance Programme UNEP provided, on request from the countries, training and awareness-raising in various aspects of environmental law to judges, magistrates, State attorneys and parliamentarians, among others. The requests that were honoured were from Congo, Ethiopia, Seychelles, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In addition, UNEP fielded missions to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ghana.

20. The Belgian-funded project on capacity-building for the development of national legislation to implement the Rio agreements with a focus on poverty reduction is a pilot project implemented in four African countries, namely, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania. It forms part of a wider UNEP-Belgium project on capacity-building programme for the integration and institutionalization of environmental management into national poverty reduction programmes and related activities.

21. Over the reporting period, Rwanda produced nine draft laws and held two awareness-raising and training workshops. Uganda produced one set of guidelines for prosecutors and one draft law while the United Republic of Tanzania carried out an assessment of the linkage between multilateral environmental agreements and poverty reduction. Mozambique undertook an assessment of the linkage between such agreements and poverty and prepared one piece of draft legislation. All the countries are continuing with the implementation of their activities in the year 2007.

22. A project on the United Nations development account fund for the development of national legal databases for capacity-building, as a means of enhancing access to environmental law information in Africa, was also carried out during the period under review. The main objective of the project was to enhance access to environmental law information by promoting methods for using information technology to enhance public awareness of environmental law and to build the capacity of developing countries in Africa to gain access to environmental law information. The project was designed to develop national web-based legal databases on environmental law.

23. Under the project, over the reporting period, memorandums of understanding were concluded for the implementation of the project activities with 13 countries, namely: Botswana, Central African Republic, Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania. The said countries are already implementing the activities and will launch the websites in 2007. In addition, 45 government officials received capacity-building in the development, maintenance and updating of the databases.

24. In January 2008, the President of AMCEN wrote to the Executive Director of UNEP requesting an extension of the project to other African countries.

(d) Collaboration with China

25. Collaboration between UNEP and China aimed at building the capacity of African countries in environmental management was initiated in 2005 during the China-Africa Conference on Environmental Cooperation. The activities undertaken since then by China are briefly described below.

26. Three training courses were organized by the Chinese State Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), in September 2005, January 2006 and September 2006 with a focus on the sustainable use of water resources and management of waste water. A total of over 80 African participants have taken part in the training sessions.

27. Responding to the need of the Central African subregion and with financial assistance from China, UNEP, in cooperation with other partners and stakeholders, launched the Central African Disaster Risk Reduction Centre in Brazzaville, in the margins of the eleventh regular session of AMCEN, held in Brazzaville in May 2006. The overall objective of this project is to build the capacity of the Ministry of Environment in the Congo and to develop the centre's capacity to serve eventually as a base for disaster management in the subregion.

28. With support from China, and in cooperation with UNEP, a training session was organized in May 2008 for experts from 16 African countries in the area of disaster management by Tongji University in Shanghai, under the Young Environment Leaders Programme.

29. An individual benefactor from China has provided seed money to support the development of strategies to counter the decline in flamingo populations and densities in the Rift Valley lakes in Kenya. The aim of the project is to develop a framework to mitigate the problems affecting the sustainability of lakes Nakuru, Elementaita and Bogoria, which are critical habitats of the lesser flamingos in Kenya.

(e) Collaboration with the African Minister's Council on Water

30. The secretariat has continued working in concert with the African Minister's Council on Water (AMCOW) since AMCOW was established, in 2002, to provide political leadership, political and strategic direction and advocacy in relation to the use and management of water resources, and has been providing technical support for a number of activities undertaken by AMCOW including:

- (a) Meetings of AMCOW and its committees;
- (b) Development of the AMCOW work programme;
- (c) The sixth ordinary session of AMCOW, held in Brazzaville on 30 and 31 May 2007.

2. Capacity-building: UNEP-Global Environment Facility-led capacity-building programme

31. Capacity-building was identified as a key element for the effective implementation of NEPAD and its environmental action plan. To that end, a capacity-building initiative to support the implementation of the NEPAD environment action plan was adopted in Cairo in October 2003 by the Steering Committee of the UNEP-Global Environment Facility medium-sized project on NEPAD at its fifth meeting and by the first NEPAD Partners' Conference (Algiers, December 2003).

32. At its tenth session (Sirte, June 2004), AMCEN again emphasized the importance of capacity-building in implementing the action plan for the environment initiative of NEPAD and the need to develop subregional action plans as part of capacity-building for the implementation of the NEPAD environment initiative. At that session, AMCEN requested UNEP to provide technical support to the regional economic communities in the development of NEPAD environment initiative subregional action plans.

33. In that context, UNEP, the Global Environment Facility and the NEPAD secretariat provided financial and technical support to the regional economic communities to develop the subregional environmental action plans for the environment initiative of NEPAD for all the subregions in Africa. Ministerial-level consultative meetings on the subregional environmental action plans for Eastern, Central, Southern, North and West Africa were held from 28 to 30 March, on 7 and 8 April, from 25 to 27 April, on 4 and 5 June, and from 25 to 27 June 2007 respectively.

34. The main objectives of the meetings were, first, to review the finalized subregional environmental action plans with a view to their endorsement by the ministers of environment in the respective subregions; and, second, to discuss the modalities, where appropriate, for submitting the subregional environmental action plans to the respective councils of the regional economic communities.

35. The subregional environmental action plans were endorsed by the ministers of the various subregions, who requested the respective vice-presidents to submit their plans to AMCEN at its twelfth session, scheduled to be held in South Africa in June 2008. Accordingly, these subregional environmental action plans will be submitted by the respective vice-presidents of AMCEN at the Conference's twelfth session.

36. In response to the request from AMCEN for the development of NEPAD national action plans on the environment, the UNEP Regional Office for Africa, with financial support from Norway, is providing assistance to five pilot countries to develop such action plans. Initial consultations on the development of the national action plans for Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Mozambique have been held. These involved field missions to the above-mentioned countries.

3. Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

37. In decision 5, taken at its tenth session (Brazzaville, May 2006), AMCEN endorsed the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and other chemical and hazardous waste management issues. In this regard the following activities have been carried out:

- (a) Symposium on illegal international traffic in hazardous chemicals;
- (b) Nomination of national Strategic Approach focal points and establishment of inter-ministerial or inter-institutional arrangements to oversee implementation of the Strategic Approach at the national level;
- (c) Implementation of the Strategic Approach on an inclusive multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral basis;

- (d) Formulating national action plans for implementation of the Strategic Approach;
- (e) Inclusion of sound chemicals and hazardous waste management considerations in national planning strategies and programmes, where appropriate;
- (f) Exploring possible regional approaches to implementation of the Strategic Approach, including regional and subregional consultations and development of a regional action plan for Africa;
- (g) Ensuring active participation of the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the secretariat of NEPAD and subregional organizations such as the Arab Maghreb Union, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Basel Convention regional centres and others in the implementation of the Strategic Approach;
- (h) Ensuring that the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank give priority to the needs of African countries when developing activities to support implementation of the Strategic Approach; and
- (i) Encouraging international and regional partners to support efforts to strengthen the ability of the Basel Convention regional centres to undertake capacity-building for chemicals and hazardous waste management in related multilateral environmental agreements in Africa.

38. The following paragraphs provide an overview of the above-mentioned activities.

(a) Symposium on illegal international traffic in hazardous chemicals

39. The Government of the Czech Republic and the Chemicals Branch of the UNEP Division for Technology, Industry and Economics, with the support of the German Government, organized a symposium on illegal international traffic in hazardous chemicals on 6–8 November 2006 in Prague-Pruhonice, Czech Republic. The objective of the symposium was to share information and experience from different regions on the magnitude of the illegal international trade in hazardous chemicals and wastes and on the adverse effects of this trade on human health and the environment and to take stock of and evaluate existing measures to address illegal traffic. Four African participants attended the symposium, including representatives of the Nigerian and Cameroon Governments and the University of Dar-es-Salaam. The Governments of the Czech Republic and Nigeria organized a side event summarizing the results of the symposium at the twenty-fourth session of the Governing Council of UNEP on 7 February 2007.

(b) Nominating national Strategic Approach focal points and establishing inter-ministerial or inter-institutional arrangements to oversee implementation of the Strategic Approach at the national level

40. As of 19 February 2008, 43 out of 53 African Governments had nominated national focal points for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. These included the following: Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. Details of the focal points can be found on the website of the Strategic Approach at: <http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/focalpoints.htm>. It is worth noting that one of the important roles of the national focal points is to endorse project proposals for submission to the Strategic Approach Quick Start Programme trust fund.

41. Twenty African countries are developing national Strategic Approach action plans and related activities under the Quick Start Programme, with support from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). Two other African countries are participating in projects to mainstream chemicals management within national development planning, with support from UNDP and UNEP. Non-governmental organizations are undertaking Quick Start Programme-funded projects in two African countries. An African core group has been formed to facilitate the region's implementation of the Strategic Approach, and includes representation by regional organizations. Further details can be found at the website <http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/qsptf.htm#Projects>.

42. The following African Governments reported on initial national institutional arrangements in September 2006 in order to inform discussion at the African regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management held in Cairo from 11 to 14 September 2006: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Gambia, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan and Zambia. Their submissions are available on the website of the Strategic Approach at: http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/meeting/afreg/cairo_06/meeting_docs/default.htm

43. In addition, African countries have nominated Nigeria as their Strategic Approach regional focal point and established an 18-member African core group to assist Nigeria in coordinating the region's work on implementation of the Strategic Approach.

44. The following African non-governmental organizations have nominated their Strategic Approach non-governmental organization focal points: Arab Network for Environment and Development (Egypt), Association pour la Valorisation de l'Environnement et pour la Promotion d'une Gestion Rationnelle des Produits Chimiques (Congo), Community Development Association (Sudan), Ecological Youth of Angola, Hospital Day Institute for Rehabilitation and Development (Egypt), International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (Kenya), Les Amis de la Terre (Togo), Safe Water African Community Initiatives (Nigeria), Suez Canal University (Egypt), and the Tanzanian Plantation and Agricultural Workers Union.

(c) Implementing the Strategic Approach on an inclusive multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral basis

45. As noted above, countries are expected to implement the Strategic Approach at the national level under the coordination of appropriate inter-ministerial arrangements. The Strategic Approach secretariat has endeavoured to maintain the same multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach that characterized the development process for the Strategic Approach. Participants in the African regional meeting on implementation of the Strategic Approach, held in Cairo from 11 to 14 September 2006, included representatives of 38 Governments, six intergovernmental organizations and 18 non-governmental organizations drawn from the agriculture, environment, health, industry and labour sectors. The African core group established at that meeting includes representatives of Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, drawn from sectors such as environment, health, industry, labour and research.

(d) Commencing planning for national action plans for implementation of the Strategic Approach

46. A number of African countries reported on initial national work on implementation of the Strategic Approach in September 2006, in order to inform discussion at the African regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management held in Cairo from 11 to 14 September 2006. Their submissions are available on the Strategic Approach website at: http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/meeting/afreg/cairo_06/meeting_docs/default.htm.

(e) Including sound chemicals and hazardous waste management considerations in national planning strategies and programmes, where appropriate

47. In the first round of applications to the Quick Start Programme trust fund, Uganda was given support for the undertaking, together with UNEP and UNDP, of a project on the mainstreaming of sound chemicals management in national development strategies. The project aims to provide data and analysis on chemicals and its effects on human health and environment, in order to incorporate sound chemicals management into national development planning and to foster national budget commitments, in partnership with donor assistance. The project in Uganda is a pilot project, which, if successful, may be replicated in other African countries

(f) Exploring possible regional approaches to implementation of the Strategic Approach, including holding of regional and subregional consultations and development of a regional action plan for Africa

48. At the African regional meeting held in Cairo from 11 to 14 September 2006, participants compiled a list of potential regional projects and these are being re-prioritized by the African core group with a view to submitting proposals for support under the Quick Start Programme. The present African core group will work on a continuous basis until new elections are held at the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management in 2009. A further African regional meeting on implementation of the Strategic Approach has been proposed for mid-2008, in preparation for the

second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management in 2009. The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has offered to host this second African meeting in 2008.

(g) Ensuring active participation of regional and subregional organizations in the implementation of the Strategic Approach

49. Regional and subregional organizations and other bodies and agencies in Africa, including the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the secretariat of NEPAD, the Arab Maghreb Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), ECOWAS, SADC and the Basel Convention regional centres, have been invited to participate in regional meetings on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. The Basel Convention regional centres were well represented at the African regional meeting held in Cairo from 11 to 14 September 2006. In January 2007, the African Union Summit held in Addis Ababa endorsed the decisions taken by AMCEN at its eleventh regular session in May 2006, including on the Strategic Approach. Efforts to engage other organizations will be continued by the Strategic Approach secretariat in collaboration with the UNEP Regional Office for Africa, the AMCEN secretariat and other regional partners.

(h) Ensuring that IOMC, UNDP and the World Bank give priority to the needs of African countries when developing activities to support implementation of the Strategic Approach

50. IOMC participating organizations attended the African regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management in Cairo from 11 to 14 September 2006. In an address to the World Health Assembly on 9 November 2006, the incoming Director-General identified Africa as a priority for the overall programme activities of the World Health Organization (WHO). In February 2007, UNEP Governing Council noted the African regional action plan for implementation of the Strategic Approach, building on its earlier decision which called on the Executive Director to make provision for activities to assist developing countries in implementing the Strategic Approach as a matter of high priority.

(i) Encouraging international and regional partners to support efforts to strengthen the ability of the Basel Convention regional centres to undertake capacity-building for chemicals and hazardous waste management in related multilateral environmental agreements in Africa

51. The Strategic Approach secretariat has worked with the secretariat of the Basel Convention to facilitate the submission of a project proposal to the Quick Start Programme trust fund involving African countries.

4. Third Africa Environment Outlook and Africa Environment Information Network

52. The first issue of the Africa Environment Outlook report was launched during the ninth session of AMCEN, held in Kampala in July 2002. In view of its usefulness, AMCEN requested a follow-up publication. The second issue was launched during the eleventh session of AMCEN, held in Brazzaville in May 2006. At that session, AMCEN requested UNEP to assist it in preparing a third issue of the Africa Environment Outlook report. The Africa Environment Outlook process incorporates the Africa Environment Information Network (AEIN) and early-warning activities, particularly in the Great Lakes region.

53. Following the launch of the first Africa Environment Outlook report, at its ninth session, AMCEN requested UNEP to continue supporting the regular production of the report as its flagship publication. The first report focused on the opportunities which the environment provides for sustainable development in Africa. The main thrust of the report is to advance the NEPAD environmental objectives and programme areas. The underlying theme for the second issue of the Africa Environment Outlook is "Environment for development" and it profiles Africa's environmental resources as an asset for the continent's development.

54. It highlights the opportunities presented by the region's natural resource base to support the development agenda of NEPAD and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The report also highlights some of the emerging challenges in the region that may require policy innovations on the part of African Governments. These include genetically modified crops, chemical stock piles and alien invasive species. It also discusses how the environment could contribute to regional cooperation. Inputs from Governments and other stakeholders have helped in highlighting these issues, and the AMCEN

Inter-Agency Technical Committee provided valuable policy advice during the preparation of the report.

55. A comprehensive outreach and strategic engagement programme has been implemented to ensure that the findings of the report are disseminated not only to environment ministries but to other arms of government as well. The media launch by the Executive Director of UNEP on 26 June 2006 was attended by more than 90 journalists from different media houses all over the world. So far over 3,500 copies have been distributed worldwide both in English (ISBN No. 92-807-2691-9) and French (ISBN No 92-807-2735-4). Complementary products for the second issue of the Africa Environment Outlook report (*AEO-2*), including executive summaries in both English and French, posters, promotional videos and web versions of the report, have been produced and circulated widely in the region.

56. By decision 6 of the eleventh session of AMCEN and paragraph 25 of the Brazzaville Declaration on Environment and Development African Governments were urged to mainstream the recommendations of the *AEO-2* report into their national sustainable development strategies. The report findings and process have also been presented to a number of focused groups on demand, including the Network for African Trade Unions, the Network of Environmental Journalists in Africa and African Universities participating in mainstreaming environment education for sustainable development.

57. As a result of the special focus on environment for peace and regional integration in chapter 12 of the report, the Woodrow Wilson Institute in Washington DC has offered to organize a discussion forum targeting a select audience, including the United States State Department, to familiarize them with the findings of the report.

58. A joint proposal is being prepared with the Environment Education Unit to support selected universities in developing a comprehensive teaching curriculum based on the *AEO-2* as the main resource document.

59. A publication documenting environmental change in every African country (*Africa: Atlas of Our Changing Environment*), with an accompanying report on each country's progress toward achieving Millennium Development Goal 7, has been produced by UNEP in partnership with a number of other organizations. This publication, which gives a visual portrayal of the dramatic changes being exerted on Africa's landscapes, will be launched at the twelfth regular session of AMCEN.

60. At its eleventh regular session, AMCEN requested the Executive Director of UNEP to continue mobilizing financial support for capacity-building through the Africa Environment Outlook and the Africa Environment Information Network processes and to support the production of the third Africa Environment Outlook report as one of the main components of the programme of work of AMCEN. In this context, an inception meeting for the third report in the Africa Environment Outlook series was held in Cairo on 1 and 2 August 2007. This was a scoping meeting, aimed at establishing the principal focus for the future report (*AEO-3*), taking into account the current environment and development debate in the Africa region and other global processes.

5. Africa Environment Information Network

61. The objective of the Africa Environment Information Network (AEIN) is to strengthen organizational networking and capacities related to the management of data and information for integrated environmental assessment and reporting at the national level, and also to provide input into the regional reporting process for the production of the Africa Environment Outlook report.

62. A total of 34 countries have participated in the AEIN initiative. Twelve of these countries participated in the pilot phase, namely, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Seychelles, Senegal, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zambia. Twenty two additional countries were included in the second phase of the implementation of AEIN, namely, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo, Gambia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, Niger, Morocco, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania.

6. Country-level implementation of the action plan: pilot project

63. It will be recalled that the action plan for the environment initiative of NEPAD is continent-wide in scope. Since its adoption by the African Union Summit held in Maputo, Mozambique in 2003, AMCEN has called for the development of subregional and national action plans within the framework of the environment initiative of NEPAD.

64. The development of NEPAD national action plans for the environment for Mozambique, Ethiopia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Ghana and Cameroon is nearing completion. It is expected that these countries will make presentations to AMCEN at its twelfth session.

7. Implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building

65. Since the Governing Council of UNEP decided to mainstream the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, measures are being taken by UNEP to put this decision into effect, including through the development of the medium-term strategy for 2010–2013. UNEP developed the strategy in consultation with its Committee of Permanent Representatives, the secretariats of UNEP-administered multilateral environmental agreements and representatives of civil society and the private sector. Six cross-cutting thematic priorities were identified, as follows (in alphabetical order) :

- (a) Climate change;
- (b) Disasters and conflicts;
- (c) Ecosystem management;
- (d) Environmental governance;
- (e) Harmful substances and hazardous waste;
- (f) Resource efficiency – sustainable consumption and production.

66. Details on the UNEP medium –term strategy for 2010-2013 can be found in document UNEP/GCSS.X/8. The strategy places strong and renewed emphasis on transforming UNEP into a more effective, efficient and results-focused entity, through:

- (a) Significantly enhancing its capacity to deliver on the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and capacity-building;
- (b) Further promoting its role as the environment programme of the United Nations;
- (c) Ensuring that its activities are based on sound science;
- (d) Fully implementing results-based management.

C. Programme area 1: combating land degradation, drought and desertification

67. As discussed above, the Global Environment Facility has become a financial mechanism for land degradation. This milestone is a major achievement of AMCEN and collaborators.

68. A full project proposal on the integrated management of the Fouta Djallon highlands was approved by the Global Environment Facility Council in November 2005. The participating countries include the Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sierra Leone. A series of meetings and field missions have been arranged to carry the project forward. The secretariat was represented at the eleventh meeting of the Regional Consultative Committee of the Regional Programme for the Integrated Development of the Fouta Djallon Highlands, held in Conakry on 21 and 22 June 2007. The purpose of the meeting was to conclude the appraisal of Global Environment Facility Fouta Djallon Integrated Natural Resource Management project, including, first, endorsing the project document prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and UNEP and, second, finalizing co-financing arrangements for submission of the project for endorsement by the Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility.

69. The total funding required for the first phase of the project measures some \$24,750,000, of which the Global Environment Facility is providing \$5 million and approximately \$19,750,000 in co-finance to be mobilized by the countries and their development partners. The African Union has provided \$3.15 million, representing its expected contribution. As at the end of January 2008, a total of approximately \$23 million, including the African Union contribution, had been mobilized as co-finance. The project document will be submitted to the Global Environment Facility for endorsement by its Chief Executive Officer and implementation is expected to start by mid-2008.

70. Recognizing the pervasiveness and severity of land degradation and its impact on livelihoods and on the economies of sub-Saharan African countries, and to complement the Global Environment Facility country partnership programme targeting that problem, the World Bank initiated the TerrAfrica

programme in 2004. TerrAfrica is a global partnership designed as a multi-partner platform organized around three programmatic outcomes, with a view to enabling African Governments and their partners to scale up the mainstreaming and financing of effective and efficient country-driven sustainable land management approaches. It serves to focus attention, facilitate sharing of knowledge and best practices, galvanize advocacy and make the case for increased investment in support of sustainable land management interventions. TerrAfrica has a financing instrument, the strategic investment programme, for action to tackle land degradation in sub-Saharan Africa. The strategic investment programme is being developed collectively in support of TerrAfrica partners' efforts to upscale sustainable land management.

71. As stated above, the President of AMCEN and the Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility convened a meeting of AMCEN on the TerrAfrica-Global Environment Facility strategic investment programme for sustainable land management in sub-Saharan Africa, held in Ouagadougou on 24 and 25 April 2007. The outcome of the meeting was a ministerial declaration which was approved by the Council of the Global Environment Facility in June 2007. It was envisaged that approval of the programme would enable its implementation to be commenced, marking a major step towards securing adequate investment in sustainable land management activities in Africa.

72. In order to effectively tackle the serious problems caused by land degradation in Africa, the Global Environment Facility is committing \$150 million as grant funds to leverage a total of between \$750 million and \$1 billion from domestic sources and bilateral and multilateral partners in support of investments in sustainable land management in Africa through its implementing and executing agencies – the World Bank, the African Development Bank, UNDP, UNEP, FAO and IFAD. The programme is intended to support and strengthen implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, together with both the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme and the action plan for the environment initiative of the New partnership for Africa's Development. The programme was prepared with the support of the above-mentioned agencies under the leadership of the NEPAD secretariat and in close consultation with the Convention to Combat Desertification and the regional economic communities.

73. The Global Environment Facility implementing and executing agencies engaged in the TerrAfrica strategic investment programme for upscaling sustainable land management in sub-Saharan Africa are currently preparing their portfolio of projects for implementation with the funding secured under the programme.

D. Programme area 2: Conserving Africa's wetlands

74. The secretariat of the Convention on Wetlands of international Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention) is the lead partner in the implementation of this thematic area. Work was carried out in various African countries, first, to lay down broad foundations for the preparation of national wetlands policies for Central and Southern Africa; and, second, to develop national wetland policies and prepare action and implementation plans.

75. The work undertaken can be classified into five categories which are described in the following paragraphs.

1. Wise use of wetlands

76. Since June 2004, the principle of wise use of wetlands has been applied in different ways throughout the Africa region. The secretariat was involved in the preparation and the review of national wetlands policies of the following countries: Congo (outline national wetlands policy); Burkina Faso (preparation of the terms of reference to elaborate the national wetlands policy); Botswana, Kenya and United Republic of Tanzania (review of the draft national wetlands policies); Nigeria (preparation of the draft national wetlands policy). Collaborative work with Benin led to the adoption of the national wetlands strategy by the Government in June 2007. Cameroon has also embarked on a national and participatory consultation process to elaborate its national wetlands policy with technical support from the secretariat. An outstanding example in the work done in Ghana, where the provision of funds and technical assistance led to the transformation of the national wetlands policy into an action plan (with a budget) with emphasis on poverty reduction.

77. The preparation of a rapid inventory of the wetlands of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to elaborate a national wetlands policy has been initiated. This project is using earth observation technologies and other geographical information system tools to achieve national coverage of the inventory.

78. In 2008, the Africa Unit will liaise with contracting parties to revisit the concept of national wetlands policies and discuss how the existing policies can best be included in the national development process. The aim is to produce another framework for the preparation of new policies, based on Ghana's example.

2. Wetlands of international importance: Africa

79. Since June 2006, 41 new African Ramsar sites, representing a total surface area of 12,899,786 hectares, were added to the list of wetlands of international importance. These include: Benin (2), of Congo (4), Gabon (3), Gambia (1), Guinea (2), Madagascar (1), South Africa (2), Togo (2), Tunisia (19) and Zambia (5). Currently, 58 new designations and 24 Ramsar information sheet updates are in the pipeline.

3. Threats to Ramsar sites and Montreux record

80. In 2007, several non-governmental, international and other organizations sent complaints and reports to the secretariat regarding threats to Ramsar sites in Africa. Actions were therefore initiated to deal with issues related to the following contracting parties and their Ramsar sites: Algeria: Réserve intégrale du Lac El Mellah, construction of a highway; Democratic Republic of the Congo: Parc National des Virunga, adverse effects of the combat in that area; Kenya: Tana river delta, sugar plantation and lake Natron, soda ash plant; Mauritania: Chat Tboul, oil exploration; Morocco: Embouchure de la Moulouya, construction of a large-scale tourism project; South Africa: Orange river basin, oil drilling, and Langebaan, iron ore activities; Sudan: Sudd marshlands, oil exploration; United Republic of Tanzania: Lake Natron basin, soda ash plant and construction of ecological tourist hotel lodge; and Zambia: Bangweulu swamps, overfishing and excessive hunting of species at the site, and Bangweulu swamps, introduction of alien species

81. Over the past year, there has been no change in the status of African Ramsar sites included in the Montreux record. Accordingly, there are 12 African sites from eight contracting parties currently listed in the Montreux record:

- (a) Algeria (2): Lac Tonga and Oasis de Ouled Saïd;
- (b) Democratic Republic of the Congo (1): Parc National des Mangroves;
- (c) Egypt (2): Lake Bardawil and lake Burullus;
- (d) Mauritania (1): Parc National du Diawling;
- (e) Senegal (2): Djoudj and Bassin du Ndiael;
- (f) South Africa (2): Blesbokspruit and Orange river mouth;
- (g) Tunisia (1): Ichkeul;
- (h) Uganda (1): Lake George.

82. Algeria sent a request on 14 February 2007 for removal of their two Ramsar sites from the Montreux record, as the threats to those sites had been overcome. Egypt requested assistance from the secretariat with removing their two Ramsar sites from the Montreux record, as their past efforts to do so had failed, despite the availability of necessary information. They were informed of the standard procedure for removal of sites from the Montreux record and advised to follow it.

4. Updated Ramsar information sheets

83. Four African Ramsar sites from three contracting parties were successfully updated in 2007:

- (a) Botswana: Okavango Delta;
- (b) Liberia: Lake Piso;
- (c) Zambia: Bangaweulu swamps and Busanga swamps.

84. Updates are presently being evaluated for 24 other sites.

5. International cooperation

85. A memorandum of understanding was signed with the UNEP Division of Environmental Law and Conventions on capacity-building in the area of multilateral environmental negotiations, with a view to supporting and facilitating the participation of government experts and negotiators who participated in the African preparatory meeting for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention.

86. Another memorandum of understanding was signed with the UNEP Great Apes Survival Project, to produce a documentary highlighting the correlations between the sustainable management of wetlands and the great apes, focusing on Petit Loango (Ramsar site no. 352), a wetland of international importance hosting great apes in Gabon. The Ramsar secretariat and UNEP contributed equally to financing this project.

87. The Ramsar secretariat and UNEP have been exploring the possibility of providing support to African countries in tackling the environmental impacts of oil and gas exploration activities. This collaboration has yet to bear fruit.

88. Active collaboration continued with the wetlands and poverty reduction project of Wetlands International and the Ramsar secretariat, with the aim of contributing specific input and guidance for the practical implementation of the Ramsar resolution IX.14 on wetlands and poverty reduction.

89. The Government of Switzerland, operating through the Swiss Agency for the Environment, is assisting the Convention's activities in Africa for a further year through the Swiss Grant for Africa. This helped finance the African regional preparatory meeting for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and will provide the necessary financial support to the implementation of three projects on the continent.

90. The Ramsar Convention and the United States National Ramsar Committee launched a survey of selected African sites listed as wetlands of international importance. The survey aimed at identifying the effects of the designation on those sites.

91. The WacoWet regional initiative was finally officially launched (20–22 June 2007) in Benin with the aim of promoting the objectives of the Convention in West African contracting parties belonging to the Gulf of Guinea ecological continuum (Benin, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Nigeria, Togo, Guinea, etc.). Progress made in the framework of this project was reported during the Africa preparatory meeting. The Government of Benin has been requested to produce the requisite progress report by mid-January 2008, following the secretariat guidelines.

92. On 14 July 2007, a memorandum of understanding was signed with Ateliers Techniques des Espaces Naturels (ATEN) in France, aimed at capacity-building for French-speaking Ramsar focal points in Africa for the implementation of the Convention. The module was tested for the first time in Ouagadougou, during the NigerWet-ChadWet regional initiative meeting organized by WWF in July 2007. It was further tested during the African regional preparatory meeting for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held in Yaoundé in November 2007. It will be officially presented at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in Changwon, Republic of Korea.

93. Collaboration with the African Development Bank has progressed considerably, as the Convention's Secretary General and Senior Advisor for Africa paid their first visit to the Bank in October 2007.

6. Implementation capacity

94. The Government of Switzerland, through the Swiss Agency for the Environment, has agreed to assist the Convention's activities in Africa for another year through the Swiss Grant for Africa. The 2007 Swiss Grant for Africa will allow the secretariat to support three projects on the continent. Part of the Swiss Grant was used to support the organization of the Africa regional preparatory meeting for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held in Yaoundé from 26 to 30 November 2007.

95. The proposal to the Swiss Government for 2007 relates to support for the following activities in Africa:

(a) Preparation, in conjunction with FAO, of a series of radio programmes to illustrate the importance of wetlands for social and economic development and poverty reduction in Rwanda. It is anticipated that the documentary will be in English, French and Kinyarwanda and will cover four

wetlands, namely, the Rugezi marsh, the Akagera complex, the Mugesera-Rweru complex and the Kamiranzovu marsh;

(b) Preparation and implementation of a Ramsar national action plan for Mali;

(c) Assistance to the Government of Swaziland in acceding to the Convention and designating its first Ramsar site.

E. Programme area 3: Prevention, control and management of invasive alien species

96. Even though a number of activities are being carried out in Africa in connection with the prevention, control and management of invasive alien species, no institution or country has formally offered to take a lead role in this programme area, notwithstanding efforts by the secretariat. As a result, a formal report cannot be given for this component for this reporting period.

F. Programme area 4: Conservation and sustainable use of marine, coastal and freshwater resources

97. The implementation of the marine, coastal and freshwater resources component of the action plan for the environment initiative of NEPAD is being implemented through the Abidjan and Nairobi conventions. At its eleventh session, held in Brazzaville in May 2006, AMCEN approved its work programme for the biennium 2007–2008. The component of the work programme on marine and coastal resources indicated that the implementation of Abidjan and Nairobi conventions would be continued under the four main themes of assessment, management, coordination and legal aspects, and cross-cutting issues such as information dissemination and exchange and emerging issues.

98. At the joint meeting of the Contracting Parties to both the Abidjan and Nairobi conventions – held under the auspices of AMCEN in Johannesburg in November 2007 – the Contracting Parties reviewed progress in the implementation of activities in the conservation and sustainable use of marine, coastal and freshwater resources as contained in the work programme of the two conventions and adopted a new work programme for the period 2008–2011.

99. The Nairobi Convention area extends from Somalia in the north to South Africa in the south, and includes the five island States in the Western Indian Ocean. The contracting parties are Comoros, France (La Reunion), Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania. The Nairobi Convention provides a mechanism for regional cooperation, coordination and collaborative actions, and enables the Contracting Parties to harness resources and expertise from a wide range of stakeholders and interest groups towards solving interlinked problems of the coastal and marine environment.

100. The Global Environment Facility, with the support of the contracting parties to the Nairobi Convention and their development partners, have embraced an ecosystem-wide approach to management of the large marine ecosystems of the region. UNEP, the Global Environment Facility and the contracting parties are investing over \$78 million, between 2004 and 2012, to support large marine ecosystem projects in the Western Indian Ocean. The three main projects include: the South West Indian Ocean fisheries project, with a budget of \$35,670,000, implemented by the World Bank; the Agulhas and Somalia Current large marine ecosystem project, with a budget of \$31,186,000, implemented by UNDP; and the project on land-based activities in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO-LaB) with a budget of \$11,413,000, implemented by UNEP.

101. In 2004 the contracting parties launched the WIO-LaB project funded by the Global Environment Facility and the project on strengthening the coordination mechanisms, management and assessment activities within the Nairobi and Abidjan conventions over the period 2003–2007, supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). Both projects are executed by the secretariat of the Nairobi Convention, UNOPS and the national focal points of the Nairobi Convention.

102. The WIO-LaB project's primary focus is on major environmental problems that lead to the degradation of the marine and coastal environment due to land-based activities. The project is a direct follow-up to the recommendations of World Summit for Sustainable Development in 2002. The total budget for the WIO-LaB project is \$11,413,000, drawn from the following sources: contracting parties – \$3,136,750; the Norwegian Government – \$3,395,650; UNEP – \$375,000; and the Global Environment Facility – \$4,511,140.

103. The WIO-LaB project is a demonstration project, designed to achieve three objectives, namely;

- (a) To reduce stress to the ecosystem by improving water and sediment quality;
 - (b) To strengthen the regional legal basis for preventing land-based sources of pollution;
- and
- (c) To develop regional capacity and strengthen institutions for sustainable, less polluting development.

1. Progress in the implementation of the WIO-Lab project

104. Since its inception in 2004, the WIO-LaB project has made considerable progress; several national and regional reports and activities have been completed. Thus, the lead national institutions in all participating countries have prepared national pollution status reports, and also proposals for the implementation of national water and sediment quality monitoring. A regional water and sediment quality monitoring programme has been put in place and, in addition, equipment has been purchased for key laboratories in some countries to facilitate their participation in the monitoring programme.

105. The WIO-LaB project is supporting the implementation of demonstration projects intended to promote innovative actions that will help reverse the degradation of the coastal and marine environment in the Western Indian Ocean region. These demonstration projects are focussed mainly on the management of municipal wastewater, using constructed wetlands and integrated algal ponding systems; restoration of degraded mangrove forest areas through community-led replanting programmes and the provision of alternative livelihood systems; management of the use of coastal and marine resources through ecotourism; and the promotion of better approaches for waste management in ports. These demonstration projects are designed to be replicated at both regional and national levels and it is expected that, through their implementation, countries will develop strategies to ensure wide dissemination of the applied approaches

106. National policies, legal and institutional frameworks, including the status of ratification of environmental conventions relevant to land-based sources and activities, have been reviewed. Based on the findings of the review and recommendations from the legal and technical regional task force, a draft protocol on land-based sources and activities for the Nairobi Convention has been developed. The draft protocol was submitted for endorsement at the meeting of the contracting parties in November 2007 and now awaits adoption by a conference of plenipotentiaries in 2008.

107. The WIO-LaB project has also prepared a regional transboundary diagnostic analysis focused on land-based activities in the Western Indian Ocean region. The analysis forms the basis for a regional strategic action programme on land-based activities for the region. Under the strategic action programme, a number of activities will be implemented, as priorities for the 2008–2012 period. The key themes of the strategic action programme include:

- (a) Pollution from land-based sources and activities;
- (b) Physical alteration and destruction of habitats;
- (c) Changes in freshwater flows and sediment loads;
- (d) Cross-cutting issues.

2. Progress in implementation of the project to strengthen the coordination mechanism, management, and assessment activities within the Nairobi and Abidjan conventions

108. In 2003 UNEP and SIDA signed an agreement for funding to the amount of SEK 9,600,000. The objectives were: to strengthen the coordination structures within the secretariat of the Nairobi and Abidjan conventions; to provide support to the regional coordinating units; to support the national focal points; and to establish thematic task forces. This process was aimed at enhancing efficiency in implementation of the priority components of the work programmes through partnerships with regional institutions and non-governmental organizations.

109. Key activities implemented under the terms of the agreement include the following:

(a) Establishment of task forces: the secretariat, working together with the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the Western Indian Ocean Marine Sciences Association (WIOMSA), established a group of experts on marine protected areas, which is hosted by WIOMSA. With support from IUCN, the group of experts was responsible for developing a toolkit on marine protected areas. The secretariat also entered into an agreement with IUCN under which IUCN reviewed all programmes on integrated coastal management projects and the management effectiveness of marine protected areas and launched a toolkit on marine protected areas through a series of workshops in the region;

(b) The Abidjan Convention and its protocols have been reviewed and updated through collaboration with the Guinea Current large marine ecosystem (GCLME) project, and a new protocol on land-based sources and activities has been developed. Six of the 16 countries covered by the GCLME project – namely, Angola, Cape Verde, Gambia, Namibia, Senegal and South Africa – have been invited by the secretariat to participate in the internal review process;

(c) The secretariat has established partnerships with national focal institutions through memorandums of understanding. The main objective of the memorandums is to strengthen the Nairobi Convention's national focal points; to operationalize their offices; and to compile reports on the state of the marine environment. The status reports serve as the foundations for an effective and continuous reporting mechanism for the Nairobi Convention. Draft national status reports on the coastal and marine environment reports have been posted on the Convention's website.

3. Partnership building

(a) The Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention directed the secretariat to facilitate the establishment of the network of academic and research institutions in the region. In response, UNEP signed a memorandum of understanding with WIOMSA to facilitate the establishment of the Forum for Academic and Research Institutions in the Eastern African region. The Forum's first informal meeting was held in May 2005 and its formal launch took place in September 2005. With financial support from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, WIOMSA and UNEP, the first training workshop for the Forum was held in October 2005 in Mozambique, at which heads of academic and research institutions were trained in advanced leadership skills;

(b) In July 2006 and in partnership with WWF, IUCN and WIOMSA, the Nairobi Convention secretariat catalysed the establishment of a consortium for the conservation of coastal and marine ecosystems in the Western Indian Ocean. The consortium, known as "WIO-C", is a partnership between major non-governmental organizations and other regional organizations in the Western Indian Ocean, such as WWF, IUCN, WIOMSA, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and NEPAD. WIO-C is anchored in the Nairobi Convention. Its stated aim is to improve information exchange, synergy and coordination between non-governmental organizations working on coastal and marine environment issues in the Western Indian Ocean region. Strengthening WIO-C and building on this partnership is an important component of the work programme for the Nairobi Convention, as reflected by the incorporation into the Convention's work programme of relevant elements of the work plans and activities from partner non-governmental organizations.

G. Programme area 5: Combating climate change in Africa

110. The stated aim of this component in the work programme of AMCEN for the 2007–2008 biennium is to support and enhance implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol.

111. The African Ministerial Conference on Hydropower and Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg from 6 to 9 March 2006, reached a number of conclusions, recommendations and decisions, which are set out in its ministerial declaration, and an action plan for sustainable hydropower development in Africa. Paragraph 5 of that action plan called on Egypt and South Africa to support other African countries in developing their designated national authorities for clean development mechanisms and to provide technical assistance for project development. Egypt and South Africa conferred on the matter and agreed to sign a protocol to support African countries in clean development mechanism projects. The two countries reaffirmed their willingness to assist in building the capacity of

other African countries at the twenty-second meeting of the bureau of AMCEN, held in Johannesburg in November 2007.

112. The Tunisian Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development organized an international conference on international solidarity on climate change strategies for African and Mediterranean regions in Tunis from 18 to 20 November 2007 under the patronage of the Tunisian President, Mr. Zine Elabidine Ben Ali. The main objectives of the conference were:

- (a) To engage all relevant stakeholders in tackling the vulnerability and impacts of climate change in the African and Mediterranean regions;
- (b) To mainstream efforts to tackle climate change in sustainable development planning, programming and financing in the African region;
- (c) To promote mitigation and adaptation measures at various levels;
- (d) To strengthen the commitment of stakeholders to efforts to tackle climate change; and
- (e) To agree on a common African and Mediterranean contribution to the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the third Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali in December 2007.

113. Twenty eight Ministers and some one thousand participants, mainly from African and Mediterranean countries, deliberated on climate change issues in such crucial sectors as energy, infrastructure, health, natural resources, agriculture and environment. Ministers and representatives from donor countries, climate change experts and representatives of relevant multilateral institutions, the private sector and civil society organizations were also present.

114. The outcomes of the meeting included a ministerial declaration and an action plan. The Minister of Environment of Tunisia was invited by the President of AMCEN to present the outcomes of the meeting at the twelfth session of AMCEN.

115. A preparatory meeting for African experts and negotiators designated to attend the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the third Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol was held in Abuja in October 2007. The main purpose of the preparatory meeting was to deliberate on issues of relevance to Africa. The deliberations led to a common African position that guided the African negotiators during the climate change meetings held in Bali in December 2007.

H. Programme area 6: Transboundary conservation or management of natural resources (including forests)

116. Information made available to the secretariat under this programme area was rather limited. Nevertheless a major component of the work carried out in Central Africa will have a positive impact on the natural resources management in the subregion. This relates in particular to the development of the subregional environmental action plan for Central African States.

117. The Congo basin is the second largest area of tropical forest in the world. Due attention was given to this fact in the formulation of the subregional environmental action plan for Central Africa by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), with support from UNEP, the Global Environment Facility and the NEPAD secretariat. As stated above, the subregional environmental action plan for Central Africa has been endorsed by the ministers of the environment in the subregion. The subregional environmental action plan was also taken into account during the preparation of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) strategic plan for environment and natural resource management.

118. Among other activities undertaken in Africa attention is drawn, in particular, to the projects on indigenous vegetation change and on transboundary conservation; the management of protected areas; and the above-mentioned study on the lesser flamingo.

119. The project on indigenous vegetation change was concerned, in particular, with capacity-building for biodiversity conservation in mountain ecosystems and river basins in East Africa. This project was a joint initiative between the WWF Eastern Africa Programme Office and UNEP, targeting two montane areas: the Ruwenzori mountains in Uganda and the Mau forest in Kenya. Efforts were geared towards capacity-building for the promotion of community-based biodiversity protection and conservation in mountain ecosystems in East Africa, including major river basins, through best

practices in land management. The project also involved working in close partnership with relevant organizations at local and national levels and with the private sector. Three reports were published in May 2007, namely *Water Towers of Eastern Africa: Policy, Issues and Vision for Community-based Protection and Management of Montane Forests*; the proceedings of the regional workshop on the conservation of Eastern Africa mountain ecosystems as water towers; and a brochure outlining a conceptual framework of the key factors and opportunities to enhance long term protection, management and restoration of montane forests in East Africa and a strategic plan for the conservation and sustainable use of montane forests in East Africa as water towers.

120. With regard to transboundary conservation, UNEP continued to support efforts by the Governments of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe, which are working jointly towards the establishment of a transfrontier conservation area, to be known as the Kavango-Zambezi, measuring some 300,000 km² of prime tourism destinations and land compatible with other uses. The initiative aims at the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources in transboundary ecosystems. UNEP has been collaborating with Roots of Peace and Conservation International to develop and implement a programme to open a wildlife corridor which will enhance conservation of wildlife and stimulate economic development. It is also working with the Kavango-Zambezi project secretariat and liaising with SADC on the programme.

121. With regard to the management of protected areas, UNEP supported the hosting of the 2007 African Wildlife Conference in Nairobi in April 2007. The conference focused on the topic of research imperatives for biodiversity conservation and management. Its objective was, among other things, to mainstream science and research into decision-making in protected areas and landscape conservation and management by strengthening the technical and scientific capabilities of African wildlife institutions and scientists, with a view to ensuring enhanced biodiversity management, policy development and systems planning. Participants came from the following countries: Botswana, Cameroon, Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania and guest participants from other countries, including: Canada, Germany, Italy, Nepal, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

122. UNEP is implementing a project, with its partners, that is investigating the possible causes of recent mortalities of lesser flamingos in the Rift Valley lakes in East Africa. The project aims to come up with strategies to address the drop in the populations of these birds and to lay a foundation for the sustainable management of the Rift Valley lakes' ecosystems and related water catchments areas. Conservation of flamingos is important because of their unusual concentration. The flamingos are regarded as flagship and indicator species for the Lakes' ecosystem health and ecological integrity. The status and trends of the flamingo populations and densities are a reflection of the hydrology and land-use systems within the catchment areas. Mitigating the challenges affecting the conservation of flamingos would have added benefits for the conservation of all other species, both within the lakes and in the wider catchment area. The Rift Valley lakes are critical conservation areas for water birds. More than 300 species have been recorded in some of the lakes in the past. The lakes that are critical for the maintenance of the Flamingo populations include Nakuru, Bogoria, Elementaita, Oloidien, Manyara and Natron. This project received funding from a private benefactor in China, Mr. Luo Hong. A literature review report, a national flamingo action plan for Kenya and the proceedings of the flamingo multidisciplinary stakeholder consultative workshop are all currently under preparation .

I. Programme area 7: cross-cutting issues

1. Health and environment

123. One of the recent successes scored by UNEP and its partners in the management of urban air pollution was the elimination of leaded gasoline in sub-Saharan Africa early last year. Leaded gasoline has serious environmental and health effects, leading to an increased instance of heart attacks and strokes, kidney ailments, respiratory problems and brain malfunction. There are currently 16 countries worldwide that are still using leaded gasoline, including Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. In this context, plans are being made by UNEP and its partners to implement a global campaign to eliminate leaded gasoline worldwide, it is hoped even by the end of 2008, within the framework of the global initiative for the elimination of leaded gasoline by that date. National consultative meetings and follow-up activities are being planned for Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

124. A crucial meeting of health and environment ministers of Africa is scheduled to be held in Libreville in August 2008. WHO and UNEP are the co-organizers of the meeting and the Government of Gabon has graciously offered to host it.

2. Environmental education and training

125. The approved activities under this topic included, first, facilitating innovative programmes in African Universities to mainstream environment and sustainability into teaching and learning; second, providing institutional capacity-building and facilitation in the development of regional training courses in environmental education; and, third, developing learning support materials on cross-cutting environmental issues.

126. In 2005 the United Nations launched the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. In March 2006, African ministers of education made a commitment to implement the Decade in the context of the Second Decade of Education in Africa. In their statement of commitment, the ministers of education of sub-Saharan African States agreed to support the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and to support the development of strategies for the implementation of the Decade in their respective countries within the framework of the African Union's Second Decade on Education, and to ensure that principles of sustainable development were included in educational development frameworks, programmes and activities at all levels.

127. UNEP and its partners have been supporting this process of mainstreaming environment and sustainability concerns into the teaching, research, community engagement and management of universities in Africa, under a project on mainstreaming environment and sustainability in African universities. As part of that project, an innovations programme on education for sustainable development for universities in Africa has been developed, through a collaborative process that draws on the experience of university lecturers from different contexts across Africa.

128. The universities partnership to mainstream environment and sustainability is strengthening the special focus placed by UNEP on Africa and is constituted a major contribution to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. It also supports the NEPAD environmental action plan and the objectives of AMCEN. In the southern African context, the programme to mainstream environment and sustainability in African universities contributes to the implementation of the SADC regional indicative strategic development plan. The plan calls, among other issues, for the integration of environmental and sustainable development issues into sectoral, national and subregional social and economic planning. The initial part of the mainstreaming environment and sustainability project is being carried out in two phases.

129. The first phase of project implementation focused on the process of establishing and piloting the mainstreaming environment and sustainability project. All the goals and activities of the first phase have been successfully completed. During the first phase, an active network of African universities willing to participate in mainstreaming environment and sustainability issues was established; and an effective partnership framework for the mainstreaming environment and sustainability programme, with active participation from partners including UNESCO, the United Nations University, the Association of African Universities and the SADC Regional Environmental Education Programme.

130. A training programme with a toolkit of flexible materials for use by African academics to conceptualize and plan multi-disciplinary innovations in the field of education for sustainable development has been developed, and the materials have been translated into French (with funding from UNESCO), to expand the programme into all regions of Africa. Three pilot training programmes involving over 87 academics from African universities have been run. A leadership seminar on mainstreaming environment and sustainability in universities was held in 2006 in Nairobi at UNEP headquarters, bringing together some of Africa's university leaders, leadership networks and key university associations. A communications and monitoring mechanism was set up to monitor and support progress, and an awards framework was developed to recognize innovative practice.

131. A workshop on mainstreaming environment and sustainability in African universities was held in Nairobi from 15 to 17 May 2007. The participants were drawn from partner organizations and institutions in Cameroun, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Norway, South Africa, Sudan and United States of America. The aim of the meeting was to review and finalise the project document on mainstreaming environment and sustainability for use in an intensive fund-raising campaign to mobilize funds for a fully fledged programme, and also to present the programme to various UNEP units, identifying linkages and synergies. The following were the outcome of the workshop:

(a) Increased collaboration, linkages and synergies developed between the programme to mainstreaming environment and sustainability and other UNEP programmes;

- (b) A final project document on mainstreaming environment and sustainability in universities developed on the basis of a common understanding by all the stakeholders;
- (c) Joint ownership of the partnership on mainstreaming environment and sustainability achieved through stakeholder input and participation;
- (d) Partnerships strengthened;
- (e) An intensive fund-raising campaign initiated;
- (f) Integration of all the independent initiatives by the participating universities into a single large-scale programme capable of sustaining itself for the duration of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development;
- (g) Integration of education for sustainable development into African universities over the next eight years, through the project document on mainstreaming environment and sustainability.

132. A subregional workshop on mainstreaming environment and sustainability for francophone countries was held from 3 to 5 May 2007 in Cotonou, on the topic of promoting education for sustainable development. The French version of the toolkit on mainstreaming environment and sustainability, funded by UNESCO, was launched at that workshop.

133. The first awards on mainstreaming environment and sustainability were conferred at the World Environmental Education Congress, held from 2 to 6 June 2007 in Durban, South Africa. Two universities* were recognized for their efforts in mainstreaming environment and sustainability into the normal programmes and activities of their universities. Forty-five university professors were given certificates of appreciation for their university-based innovations in teaching, research and community, private sector engagement and management. The innovations were judged, among other criteria, on their relevance to the social, economic and environmental contexts in Africa and the extent to which they reflected the way in which universities respond to changing social needs. UNEP sponsored 11 participants to the World Environmental Education Congress.

134. Working in collaboration with the SADC Regional Environmental Education Programme, in partnership with the University of Zambia, UNEP gave support to Rhodes University in South Africa in hosting a workshop on the reorientation of higher education curricula towards education for sustainable development at the University of Zambia. The objective of the workshop, held from 30 July to 2 August 2007, was to pilot a strategy for mainstreaming environment and sustainability in African universities through the use of available environmental materials from the SADC Regional Environmental Education Programme and UNEP at the pedagogical and content level in higher education institutions in Southern Africa. By the end of the workshop all participants, in addition to using the UNEP toolkit to review their curriculum, adopted the African Environment Outlook report as a textbook for their courses. They noted that the African Environment Outlook report could be used as a reference source for students, could provide content and historical background and could also be used for context.

135. Further to ensuring that the valuable resources produced by UNEP were geared to the needs of universities and supported teaching research and learning in sustainable development, UNEP held a workshop on the African Environment Outlook and mainstreaming environment and sustainability in universities. The aim of the workshop, held on 20 and 21 August 2007, was to develop an African Environment Outlook module (conventional and IT-based) that would be adopted and used in African universities. The module would be comprehensive, flexible and adopted by universities as a short or long-term course. The draft curriculum is intended to be ready for use in September 2008 in at least five pilot universities.

136. The student component of the programme on mainstreaming environment and sustainability in universities held a two-week course from 9 to 26 November 2007 in Njoro, Kenya. Known as the Youth Encounter on Sustainability (YES), the course was held for the first time in Africa and brought together 38 students (19 male and 19 female) from 25 countries. The Africa YES course provides intensive interdisciplinary training for upper-level university students and young professionals, aimed at building the trainees' awareness on basic issues of sustainability. The course was held in partnership with ETH Sustainability-Zurich.

137. UNEP collaborated with UNESCO and other regional and national stakeholders to launch the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in Africa and to set up three regional centres of expertise in South Africa, Nairobi,

* Kenyatta University, Kenya, and University of Gondar, Ethiopia

138. The Fourth International Conference on Environmental Education was held in Ahmadabad, India, from 24 to 28 November 2007. The conference is held once every 10 years. A particular significance was attached to that particular conference in the light of it being held in the third year of the current United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. To this end, the Conference provided a forum to consider how environmental education and education for sustainable development can partner and strengthen each other with a view to building a sustainable future. At that time, the UNEP Environmental Education and Training Unit website recorded 54, 000 downloads of its newsletter – *Educator*. UNEP hosted three workshops: the first on volume 4 of the UNEP Global Environment Outlook report, *GEO-4*, held under the slogan “Promoting environmental research and learning for sustainable development”; the second on sustainable production and consumption; and the third on “Ozzy Ozone”. All workshops were well received. UNEP sponsored the participation of 10 professors from African universities at the conference and in particular at the *GEO-4* workshop.

3. Africa Stockpiles Programme

139. The Africa Stockpiles Programme is a multi-stakeholder initiative aimed at cleaning up the thousands of tons of obsolete pesticides in Africa, disposing of them safely and preventing more stocks from accumulating. The programme is being implemented in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tunisia and the United Republic of Tanzania.

140. The programme’s implementing committee steers the programme towards its stated objective. Its membership includes the World Bank, FAO, Croplife International, WWF, Pesticides Action Network and NEPAD as key partners.

141. At its twenty-second meeting, held in Johannesburg in November 2007, the bureau of AMCEN considered, among other things, the African Stockpiles Programme. This took place in the context of the implementation of the action plan for the NEPAD environment initiative. The Bureau commended all the partners involved in the programme on their commitment and support for the programme. The bureau further recommended that the NEPAD secretariat should be confirmed as the regional African institution to be represented on the programme’s implementing committee. The bureau further recommended that the NEPAD secretariat should host a proposed secretariat for the programme. In furtherance of these recommendations the President of AMCEN wrote to the World Bank and FAO and requested efforts to revitalize the Africa Stockpiles Programme.

142. The World Bank has responded positively to the letter from the President of AMCEN, indicating that it would be pleased to continue dialogue with NEPAD in connection with hosting of the Africa Stockpiles Programme secretariat.

4. Environmental impact assessment

143. At its meeting in Durban, in June 1995, AMCEN recognized and endorsed the usefulness of environmental impact assessments and identified a number of priorities for immediate action to build the capacity of African countries to conduct such assessments. In response to this call a number of initiatives culminated in the formation of a regional network of environmental impact assessment practitioners in 2000, called Capacity Development and Linkages for Environmental Impact Assessment in Africa (CLEIAA) and later transformed into the organization Capacity Development and Linkages for Environmental Assessment in Africa (CLEAA).

144. The Declaration on the Environment and Development adopted by AMCEN at its eleventh regular session, held in Brazzaville in May 2006, made reference to the Durban Declaration on Environmental Impact Assessment, adopted by the Conference in 1995, and recognized the role of the pan-African CLEAA network as a tool to raise the awareness and boost the capacity of African professionals in respect of environmental assessment and management, as needed for the implementation of the action plan for the NEPAD environment initiative.

145. Furthermore, the objectives of the action plan for the NEPAD environment initiative have been further elaborated as follows: “environmental valuation must be made part of investment and infrastructure projects for sustainable development to ensure the integration of economic growth, social development and environmental protection. Thus environmental impact assessments must be carried out for all infrastructure projects.”

146. In pursuance of all the above goals, CLEAA has undertaken a number of activities. For example, CLEAA, ECA, the IUCN Eastern Africa Regional Office and partners organized an African experts workshop on effectiveness of environmental impact assessment systems, in Addis Ababa on 12 and 13 April 2007. The workshop had special focus on issues of the quality and financial sustainability

of the review of, follow-up to and compliance with environmental impact assessments. The workshop brought together a group of experts in environmental impact assessments (from Benin, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Namibia, Tunisia, Senegal, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda), including regulators from environmental impact assessment agencies recognized as leaders in Africa and from agencies now engaged in, or committed to improving the effectiveness of their environmental impact assessment systems, representatives of environment assessment associations and private environmental assessment consultants from various subregions in Africa, and representatives of partner, donor and other institutions engaged in efforts to increase the effectiveness of environmental impact assessments in the continent.

147. At the above-mentioned workshop, agreement was reached on critical recommendations in six different areas for action. These were synthesized and presented as key recommendations of the workshop and formally submitted to the secretariat. Recommendations in each area were divided into, first, “technical recommendations” – environmental impact assessment regulatory and institutional practices identified as critical to or strongly supporting the effectiveness of such assessments and, second, “recommended implementation actions” – the actions and strategies recommended to Governments, partners and donors to implement the technical recommendations. These recommendations will be submitted for further consideration and possible endorsement by AMCEN at its twelfth session.

5. Sustainable consumption and production

148. The key activities under the African 10-year framework programme on sustainable consumption and production, which was approved by AMCEN in March 2005, included development of an African eco-labelling scheme; development of sustainable consumption and production action plans at the national and local levels; compilation of best practices on sustainable consumption and production and “leapfrogging” – the process whereby developing countries advance rapidly to non-polluting technologies; pilot project on plastic waste management in Nairobi; capacity-building in life-cycle assessment in Africa; and capacity-building for promoting sustainable consumption and production in the lake Victoria region.

6. Development of an African eco-labelling scheme

149. The overall objective of this activity is to develop an African eco-labelling scheme that promotes appropriate environmental and health-related standards within the design and production of African products and to promote better market access for African products in the regional and global markets.

150. A regional assessment on existing eco-labelling initiatives in the region was conducted and a regional expert meeting was organized in collaboration with the African Union and ECA.

151. As a follow-up to the regional expert meeting and the consultation processes, a preliminary paper has been prepared on the structure and function of an African eco-labelling mechanism.

152. At its fifth session, held in October 2007, the African Committee on Sustainable Development and the General Assembly of the African Organization for Standardization, at its sixteenth session, in November 2007, expressed their support for efforts to develop the regional mechanism.

7. Development of sustainable consumption and production action plans at national and local levels

153. The overall objective of this component is to provide support to selected pilot countries in the region in developing national and local action plans on sustainable consumption and production. Guidelines to serve as terms of reference for the development of national or city programmes on sustainable consumption and production were prepared, covering the key steps that needed to be developed in the process. Based on the criteria that have been developed for the selection of the pilot countries, the United Republic of Tanzania was selected as the pilot country while Cairo and Maputo were selected as pilot cities for developing sustainable consumption and production programmes.

154. Start-up seminars have been carried out at the national level and a regional working session on developing national and city sustainable consumption and production programmes was held from 9 to 11 October 2007 in Nairobi with the working teams from the pilot countries and cities.

8. **Compilation of best practices on sustainable consumption and production and “leapfrogging”**

155. The main objective of this component is to facilitate knowledge and experience sharing through the identification of best practices in cross-cutting issues within the African framework programme and indicate the potential that African countries have for leapfrogging to a more sustainable society. The following activities have been undertaken under this theme:

- (a) Report on best practice in African countries produced and distributed throughout the region. It contains information on selected practices in different parts of the regions in such areas as water provision and use, waste management; and energy efficiency;
- (b) Report providing an overview of leapfrogging possibilities for sustainable consumption and production in Africa produced on the basis of a desktop study;
- (c) First issue of *BioEnergy International Africa* newsletter published as part of the September 2007 edition of the Bioenergy International online magazine <www.bioenergyinternational.com>. Further information on the African 10-year framework programme can be found at <http://www.unep.org/roa/Projects_Programmes/10YFP/index.asp>.

9. **Pilot project on plastic waste management in Nairobi**

156. The objective of this project was to develop a comprehensive framework programme for addressing the growing problem of plastic waste management in Nairobi and to gather region-specific experience for Africa. The project was implemented in partnership with the National Environmental Management Authority, UNDP and the Kenyan Association of Manufacturers and it led to:

- (a) Development of a set of policy and economic instruments that need to be implemented by the Government, including the introduction of a minimum thickness standard for plastic bags;
- (b) Development of a comprehensive plastic waste management programme for Nairobi, covering the key measures that need to be taken by the Nairobi City Council;
- (c) Organization of plastic recycling cooperatives, with more than 300 members, to facilitate plastic recycling in the city; and
- (d) Series of awareness and education activities aimed at promoting a shift in consumption patterns and participation at the community level.

157. The Government of Kenya has introduced a requirement for the minimum thickness of plastic bags and introduced a levy on plastic products.

10. **Capacity-building on life-cycle assessment in Africa**

158. Working in collaboration with the secretariat of the African Round Table on Sustainable Consumption and Production, UNEP organized the First African Symposium and Workshop on Life-Cycle Assessment. The event was attended by 34 participants drawn from 22 countries. The training in life-cycle assessment was supported by hands-on familiarization with some of the life-cycle assessment software products, such as SimaPro and GaBi4, and each participant received a demonstration CD on the software. In addition to the training on life-cycle assessment, participants received training in environmentally sound technology information systems. The workshop also led to the establishment of the African Life-Cycle Assessment Network, as an affiliate network to the African Round Table on Sustainable Consumption and Production.

159. Through information provided to the existing regional networks, five members of the African Lifecycle Assessment Network competed for the UNEP-SETAC International Award on Life-Cycle Initiatives. The submissions from teams working on paper industry at the University of Zimbabwe and the sugar industry at the University of Cape Town took two of the three awards in 2007.

11. **Capacity-building for promoting sustainable consumption and production in the Lake Victoria region**

160. UNEP supported the Kenya National Cleaner Production Centre in organizing a subregional round table on mainstreaming cleaner production and sustainable consumption in Lake Victoria basin development programmes. The round table was organized in consultation with the national cleaner production centres in Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania and with the secretariat of the East African Community. The round table provided a forum for the principal stakeholders to come together and identify the key priority areas and activities that need to be undertaken.

161. This provided the basis for the development of a subregional project proposal on institutional capacity-building for cleaner production implementation under the Lake Victoria environmental management programme, which is currently being supported by SIDA. This project is being implemented by the cleaner production focal institutions in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania while the Kenyan NCPC is serving as the regional focal point.

12. Disaster risk reduction

162. The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, whose mandate is to promote and support the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development and humanitarian processes and to support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, supports implementation of the decision of the eleventh session of AMCEN, in particular decision 7 and the work programme of AMCEN. The International Strategy has contributed to strengthening the capacity of the Africa Union Commission to facilitate implementation of the Africa Action Plan for disaster risk reduction, including recruitment of an International Strategy for Disaster Reduction advisor to be based in Addis Ababa from April 2007.

163. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction facilitated the development of the subregional disaster risk reduction strategy for ECOWAS, which was approved by the ECOWAS Summit of Heads of States and Governments on 19 January 2007. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction has been working with the Economic Commission of Central African States (ECCAS) to develop a subregional strategy for disaster risk reduction. To date, the Africa office of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction has provided technical assistance to 22 African Governments, aimed at establishing national platforms, among other initiatives in the region with the aim of fostering national and regional ownership of and leadership in disaster risk reduction.

164. Working together with the World Bank, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction is facilitating a study of toxic waste and related hazard management in West and Central Africa. The Government of Nigeria, with the support of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, is currently mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into the Nigeria Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, which is the Nigerian equivalent of the poverty reduction strategy papers.

165. A cost-benefit analysis of disaster risk reduction in Africa has been conducted by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and, since April 2007, the Strategy has been facilitating the assessment and mapping of Africa regional hazard risks. The Strategy continues to facilitate the collection of progress reports on the implementation of disaster risk reduction and the Hyogo platform of action by national Governments, regional economic communities, thematic partners, academic/research institutions and the African Union Commission. So far 28 reports have been collected, analyzed.

166. UNEP jointly organized the West Africa subregion hazards and risk education conference, together with the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the World Bank and WHO under the auspices of the African Union and ECOWAS. The Conference identified the main natural and technological hazards in the subregion and agreed on the priority capacity needs and actions to reduce disaster risk within the framework of the African Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Conference was attended by ministers and other high-ranking government officials from 15 countries of the subregion, and also by representatives from the African Union, ECOWAS, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the World Bank, WHO, UNICEF, FAO, UNDP, African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development, the Regional Centre for Training and Application in Agrometeorology and Operational Hydrology (AGRHYMET) and UNEP.

167. The secretariat was represented at the following meetings:

- (a) Twelfth African training course on local and regional development planning management, held in Nairobi on 23 February 2007;
- (b) Workshop on Climate Change adaptation challenges in the Greater Horn of Africa, held in Nairobi on 8 and 9 March 2007;
- (c) Pan-African Forum on International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles, held in Nairobi on 14 and 15 May 2007;
- (d) First regional platform for disaster risk education: consultative meeting in Nairobi on 26 and 27 April 2007; and

(e) Workshop on regional disaster management centre of Workshop, held in Nairobi from 10 to 12 July 2007.

13. Post conflict environmental assessment

168. UNEP conducted a post-conflict environmental assessment in Sudan. This report is contained in a landmark UNEP publication entitled *Sudan – Post Conflict Environmental Assessment*, which was launched by the Executive Director of UNEP in mid-2007.

14. Challenges to implementation

169. The need for member States of AMCEN periodically to submit to AMCEN, through its secretariat, their country report or reports on what they are doing to implement the action plan, as requested by the President of AMCEN, still remains urgent.

170. Much awareness-raising, within and outside Africa, is still required to dispel any conceptual misunderstandings about NEPAD and to ensure its full comprehension, especially with respect to its environment initiative, so as to deepen ownership of prioritized projects. This responsibility lies particularly with national Governments and the regional economic communities, which will ultimately implement NEPAD projects.

171. Accordingly, it is sectoral ministers that have the leadership responsibility of providing political guidance and promoting NEPAD initiatives at national, regional and continental levels and ensuring that annual budgetary allocations were made at the national level to implement its programmes. The lack of integration of NEPAD priority initiatives into national development frameworks has further compounded the difficulties encountered in ensuring that projects are implemented.

172. Major constraints to implementation continue to arise from institutional weaknesses and the lack of adequate financial and human resources. As a result and in some cases, even the most basic needs for coordination and facilitation – not to mention implementation – have not been met.

173. There is still a need for the harmonization of existing programmes and institutional coordination to avoid the duplication and overlap of institutions in the sector. Coordination is particularly important for the implementation of country-owned and subregionally owned projects which are cross-border in nature.
