

Minutes of the Fifth Session of the Africa Committee on Sustainable Development Bureau Meeting

Date 1 October 2009
Time 10:00 hrs
Venue Conference Room 6, United Nations Conference Centre

In Attendance

Bureau Members

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| 1. Ms. Beatrice Karago | Kenya (Chair) |
| 2. Mr. David Amutenya | Namibia (First Vice Chair) |
| 3. Mr. Christopher Kwajok | Sudan (Third Vice Chair) |
| 4. Mr. Stephan Sylvain Sambou | Senegal (Rapporteur) |
| 5. Mr. Samy S. Burwin | Libya (Special Invitee) |
| 6. Mr. Nathan Machani | Kenya |

Absent:

Democratic Republic of Congo Second Vice Chair

Secretariat

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| 7. Mr. Josué Dioné | Director, Food Security and Sustainable Development Division (FSSD), ECA |
| 8. Ms Isatou Gaye | Chief, Environment & Sustainable Development Section, FSSD/ECA |
| 9. Mr. Kodjo Abassa | OIC, Agricultural Production Systems Section, FSSD/ECA |
| 10. Mr. Yinka Adeyemi | Communication Officer, Information and Communication Services (ICS)/ECA |
| 11. Mr. Hamdou Wane | Economic Affairs Officer, FSSD/ECA |
| 12. Mr. Charles Akol | Environmental Affairs Officer, FSSD/ECA |
| 13. Mr. Medhat El Helepi | Economic Affairs Officer, FSSD/ECA |
| 14. Mr. Taro Boel | Associate Economic Affairs officer, FSSD/ECA |
| 15. Mr. Benjamin Banda | Associate Economic Affairs officer, FSSD/ECA |
| 16. Mr. Nega Emiru | Research Assistant, FSSD, ECA |
| 17. Ms. Meseret Arega | Research Assistant, ICS/ECA |
| 18. Mr. Franck Ndefo | Intern, FSSD/ECA |

Agenda

1. Welcoming Remarks by ECA
2. Remarks by the Chair
3. Selected implemented activities related to key outcomes of ACSD-5
 - a. Land Policy Initiative;
 - b. Support to the implementation of CAADP;
 - c. Sustainable Modernization of Agriculture for Rural Transformation (SMART) Project; and

d. Sustainable Development Report on Africa.

4. **Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDev-Africa) Programme and its African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC)**
5. **Outcomes of the Seventeenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development**
6. **CFSSD-6 Preparatory Process and Suggested Theme for the Session**
7. **Any Other Business**
8. **Closing remarks**

Welcoming Remarks

Mr. Josué Dioné, Director of the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division (FSSD) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), welcomed Bureau Members to the meeting. He extended a special welcome to the representative of Libya, who received a special invitation to the meeting on account of Libya's position as the Vice Chairperson from the Africa region of the Bureau of the Eighteenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-18), as well as its current position as the Chairperson of the African Union. He expressed his sincere appreciation of the good turn-out of Bureau members, given the many competing demands on their time. He pointed out that the objectives of the meeting were twofold. Firstly, to brief the Bureau on implementation of selected activities related to key outcomes of ACSD-5; and to solicit their guidance on the preparations for CFSSD-6, to be held from 27 to 30 October 2009.

Remarks by the Chair

The chairperson of the Bureau, Ms. Beatrice Karago representing Kenya, introduced the Bureau members present, namely Namibia (1st Vice Chairperson), Sudan (3rd Vice Chairperson) and Senegal (Rapporteur). She extended a warm welcome to the representative of Libya.

Ms. Karago stressed the importance of food security and sustainable development in realizing Africa's peace, growth and development objectives. She expressed the full support of her government to ECA's efforts on contributing to the reduction of poverty and hunger in Africa. She then invited the Bureau members to consider the agenda for adoption. The agenda was adopted without amendments.

Briefs on selected activities undertaken by ECA related to key outcomes of ACSD-5

The chairperson invited the Secretariat to brief the Bureau on activities undertaken to implement key outcomes of ACSD-5 and on preparations towards the convening of CFSSD-6.

1- Land Policy Initiative

In relation to the implementation of the AUC/ECA/AfDB Land Policy Initiative, ECA provided technical leadership in conducting five subregional reviews and five consultative workshops, which resulted in the formulation of the Africa Land Policy Framework and

Guidelines (ALPFG), Benchmarks and Indicators. The framework was officially adopted by the AU Conference of Ministers in charge of Land in April 2009 and by the AU Summit in July 2009. Some member States have requested for assistance in using the ALPFG to formulate their land policies. ECA, in collaboration with AUC and AfDB will establish a programme to follow up on the implementation of the approved Framework at national level.

2- Support to the implementation of CAADP

In 2003, the AU-Maputo Summit adopted the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) as a strategy for agriculture development in Africa. As CAADP is in the 5th year of implementation, ECA has prepared a report that assesses progress towards the achievement of expected outcomes and identifies the future direction of CAADP. In this regard, the report provides a review of the CAADP framework, its principles and objectives, an assessment of the status of CAADP implementation and achievements, lessons, and recommendations on the way forward. ECA continues to provide analytical support towards the implementation of CAADP. The Commission is spearheading the implementation of regional agricultural commodities value chains to promote regional integration and foster the development of agriculture, as well as agribusiness in Africa.

3- Sustainable Modernization of Agriculture and Rural Transformation

Validation and synthesis expert group meetings on indicators for the assessment of Sustainable Modernization of Agriculture and Rural Transformation (SMART) readiness and potential were implemented jointly with the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the United Nations Project Office in Geneva (UNPOG). Through the SMART project, the Dairy Africa Initiative, an institution earmarked to advance the development of dairy production in Africa was established. Member States are actively advancing SMART through Subregional Ad Hoc SMART Steering Groups, a network of SMART experts and country focal points.

4- Sustainable Development Report on Africa

The third issue of the Sustainable Development Report on Africa (SDRA), one of ECA's flagship publications, will be jointly produced with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) under the theme "Sustainable Consumption and Production for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction". The thematic reports, from which the thematic chapters of SDRA will be derived, have already been produced. UNEP produced the report on Sustainable Consumption and Production, UNIDO produced the reports on chemicals and waste management and ECA produced the reports on Mining and Transport. The draft reports were reviewed by an Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Monitoring and Assessing Progress on Sustainable Development in Africa in June 2009. The draft SDRA to be produced will be subjected to internal and external peer reviews prior to finalization and publication by December 2009.

Climate for Development in Africa (Climdev-Africa) Programme and its African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC)

The Climate for Development in Africa (Climdev-Africa) Programme was developed by the African Union Commission (AUC), ECA and the African Development Bank (AfDB) in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS). The Programme has received political endorsement at the highest level. The overall goal of Climdev-Africa is to promote the sustainable attainment of the MDGs and overall sustainable development in Africa. More specifically, the programme sets out to scale up the capacities of key institutions and stakeholders with a view to improving climate-related data and observation, information services, policies, investment processes and risk-management practices in climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, water, energy and health.

ClimDev-Africa will be implemented at the regional, sub-regional and national levels with the active involvement of RECs, regional and sub-regional climate institutions, river/lake basin organizations, national weather, climate and water services and other public authorities, research institutions, civil society organisations and the media. The Programme implementation rests on two key instruments: the ECA-based African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) as its policy arm, and the AfDB-based Special Climate Change Funding Mechanism, as its financial arm.

Within the framework of ACPC and with support from the UK Department of International Development (DFID), ECA has been supporting Africa's preparations towards Copenhagen. Activities include support to the Algiers meeting in November 2009, whose main outcome was the African Climate Platform to Copenhagen. ECA also provided technical and financial support to the convening of the Third Special Session of AMCEN on Climate Change. The outcomes of the special session included the Updated Algiers Platform and Ministerial decisions pertaining to the ongoing climate change negotiations towards Copenhagen and the elaboration of Framework Subregional Climate Change Programmes.

Furthermore, ECA provided technical support to the Third Financing for Development (F4D) Conference, held in Kigali, in May 2009, under the theme, "climate change. In September 2009, it hosted the Special Session of the Africa Partnership Forum on Climate Change and the Regional Conference on Enhancing the Potential for Clean Development Mechanism in Africa. Several other activities are lined up in October and November, including the Africa Preparatory Meeting for the 15th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, COP-15)

Outcomes of the Seventeenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

The 17th Session of the CSD (CSD-17) adopted policy options and other practical measures to expedite food security and sustainable development. ECA made a presentation that highlighted and articulated Africa's sustainable development challenges and priorities at the review and policy sessions of CSD. The Sustainable Development Report on Africa (SDRA) produced in 2008 and other regional inputs including, the Thematic Review Reports and the Africa Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) Statement were effectively used by member States at the CSD-16 Review Session in May 2008, the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting for CSD-17 and at the CSD-17 Policy Session in May 2009. Africa's contribution

helped shape and facilitate dialogue on the thematic issues of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and “Africa.” Africa was observed to be the only region with an articulated statement at CSD. This was highly commended and regarded as a best practice. The articulation provided a unique opportunity to present Africa’s priorities and needs for consideration.

CFSSD-6 Preparatory Process

The Sixth Session of the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD-6) will take place at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 27 to 30 October 2009 under the theme: “Sustainable Consumption and Production for Sustainable Growth and Poverty Reduction”.

About one hundred and sixty invitation letters have been sent out. Confirmations of attendance were being received, however, many member States were yet to confirm. A meeting website has been created to provide information on the session. All background documents, including aide memoire, information note, provisional agenda, annotated agenda, provisional programme and registration form have been posted on the website. Working documents have been prepared and were being translated into French.

UNDESA is providing round trip economy class ticket for the thirteen African countries that are members of UNCSD to attend the RIM. This has been communicated to the countries, however, only three out of the thirteen, had confirmed participation as at the time of the Bureau meeting. Bureau members were urged to encourage all their colleagues to confirm their participation in CFSSD-6, as well as in the RIM.

As part of the preparation for CFSSD-6, ECA will conduct a Briefing Meeting for the African Diplomatic Missions in Ethiopia on 8 October (now rescheduled for 7 October), to sensitize member States to participate in CFSSD-6. The agenda of the Briefing Meeting was presented to the Bureau members for their consideration. It was agreed that the main highlights of the Bureau Meeting will be presented at the Briefing Meeting.

Discussions

The Chair of the Bureau invited members to raise comments, questions, or observations.

The member from Namibia Mr. David Amutenya expressed his appreciation of the briefing by the Secretariat. He commended the achievements of ECA in its support to Africa in realizing its poverty reduction and sustainable development aspirations. He noted that the meeting provided a good account of the activities that have been undertaken towards the organization of CFSSD-6.

He said that land utilization has a substantial impact on food security, thus proper land management that enables high agriculture productivity is essential for food security. He lauded countries that have achieved food security such as Malawi and Nigeria and indicated that the experiences of these countries should systematically be shared with other member States. He opined that African countries should provide subsidy to the agricultural sector to boost production and productivity, as well as to enhance the competitiveness of agricultural exports in the face of highly subsidized exports from developed countries. He stated that Namibia would be interested to learn from the experiences of other African countries on land

distribution, in order to gain insights into how to efficiently resolve the chronic land distribution dilemma in Namibia. He stressed the importance of Africa speaking with one voice in international fora. In concluding, he urged all Bureau members to sensitize the African Diplomatic Community on the importance of participating in CFSSD-6.

The member from Sudan Mr. Christopher Kwajok noted with satisfaction, efforts made by ECA in implementing the Land Policy Initiative, culminating in the adoption of the Land Policy Framework by the AU Summit. He noted that endorsing the land Policy framework at the highest level was very essential to ensuring the political will and attracting the necessary resources for implementation. He commended ECA and its partners for developing the Land Policy Framework as many countries lack an effective policy on land utilization. He urged African countries to place the Land Framework in the heart of agricultural development plans, so as to accelerate the realization of expected benefits. He enquired whether in implementing a follow-up mechanism, ECA would ensure that the approved Land Policy Framework will be translated into effective land policies at the national level. He expressed hope that the developed land policy framework has taken into consideration factors that can substantially influence land utilization, including population displacement and livestock movement.

Further, Mr. Kwajok confirmed that his Embassy has received the invitation to the upcoming CFSSD-6 and that feedback was being awaited from the Capital. He expressed Sudan's commitment to playing an active role in sensitizing the African Diplomatic Community on the importance of the upcoming meeting. He advised the Secretariat that special invitations should be sent to the 13 African countries that are members of the UNCSD, to enable these countries take advantage of the ticket being provided by UNDESA. Finally, he urged ECA to avail hard copies of the documents to be presented at the CFSSD-6 well in advance of the meeting to give delegates ample time to go through the documents.

In his response to the comments and observations made by Bureau members, Mr. Dioné expressed his gratitude for the sentiments of appreciation directed at the Secretariat on the organization of the Bureau meeting and the implementation achievements registered. He then provided the following response to the specific issues raised.

The recently endorsed Land Policy Framework was developed based on two main processes: The first included conducting subregional review assessments, during which existing land policies of member States were reviewed and assessed. The second entailed presentations of the findings of the review assessments to stakeholders for validation. These steps ensured that the framework captured the different situations that prevailed in different regions. Further, the development of the framework was guided by three principles namely: land policy must indicate support for the most efficient utilization of land; land policy should ensure social equity; and land policy should guarantee environmental protection. A land policy that incorporates these three principles would certainly ensure efficient, fair and sustainable land utilization.

There is an urgent need to adopt regional integration and abolish inconsistent policies that have led to poor intraregional trade in Africa. In this context, Africa should take lessons from other parts of the world such as the European Union (EU) and the North African Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that have adopted regional trade liberalization. Regional integration has contributed to successful agricultural development in these regions where common markets

have been established. Facilitating intraregional trade would provide a huge market for local farmers, to the tune of US\$ 150 billion.

On the implementation of Land Policy Framework, ECA in collaboration with AUC and AfDB, is planning, to provide advisory services and technical assistance, as well as to mobilize resources for member States. In this regard, the Department for International Development (DFID), the European Community (EC) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have expressed readiness to provide funds to assist African countries translate the Land Policy Framework into effective, implementable policies at the national level. He cited Kenya as a good example of a country that has used the Policy Framework to formulate a draft national land policy. In concluding, Mr. Dioné said that the Land Policy Framework will be circulated widely once published.

In addition to being a threat to peace, climate change is a major factor that will determine the shape of the development map in Africa in the decades to come through its impact on land and its pattern of utilization.

The Secretariat confirmed that a special invitation had been issued to the 13 African countries that are members of UNCSD to enable them take advantage of the ticket being provided by UNDESA. The Secretariat promised to make efforts to ensure that the meeting documents are posted on the website in a timely manner.

Any other Business

No other matter was considered under this agenda item.

Closing remarks

The Bureau Chair Ms. Beatrice Karago thanked ECA for organizing the meeting and for the comprehensive briefing on activities undertaken to implement key outcomes of the ACS5D-5, and on preparations towards CFSSD-6. She expressed satisfaction with the fruitful deliberations and reiterated that food security and sustainable development are curial issues for Africa that should continue to be given special attention.

Mr. Dioné thanked Bureau members for their participation and useful guidance on issues of importance to the work of the Secretariat.