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Third consultative meeting on the development of an African strategy for ocean governance
Online, 15 and 16 June 2021

Report of the third consultative meeting on the development of an African strategy for ocean governance

I. Introduction

1. In the Cairo Declaration on Managing Africa's Natural Capital for Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication, adopted by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) at its fifteenth session, in 2015, African ministers for the environment agreed to develop a governance strategy, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and regional seas conventions, on oceans and seas in Africa for the effective management of the region's shared maritime resources. In the Nairobi Declaration on Turning Environmental Policies into Action through Innovative Solutions for Environmental Challenges in Africa, of September 2018, adopted by AMCEN at its seventh special session, African ministers for the environment urged African States to promote the growth and development of the regional ocean sector in a sustainable blue economy pathway and support the mainstreaming of aquatic biodiversity in all productive sectors with a view to sustainably harnessing the blue economy. In response to those decisions, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), as the provider of secretariat services for AMCEN, carried out background studies and organized a scoping workshop in Zanzibar as well as the first and second consultative meetings to assist member States in developing an African strategy for ocean governance.

2. The first consultative meeting on the development of an African strategy for ocean governance was held at the headquarters of UNEP, in Nairobi, on 29 and 30 November 2018, to discuss possible elements to be included in an African strategy for ocean governance. The meeting was organized by UNEP and was attended by 45 participants from African countries, international organizations, regional seas programmes, regional economic bodies and research institutes.

3. The second consultative meeting on the development of an African strategy for ocean governance was organized by UNEP and held online, on 21 and 22 October 2020, to discuss outstanding issues with regard to elements to be included in the strategy.

4. The third consultative meeting was held online, on 15 and 16 June 2021, with a view to reviewing the draft African strategy for ocean governance to incorporate input, comments and direction on governance mechanisms.

5. The member States represented at the online third consultative meeting were Algeria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Kenya, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

6. The following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, secretariat units and convention secretariats were represented at the online third consultative meeting: secretariat of the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern Africa Region, secretariat of the Convention

for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean Region, secretariat of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Development Programme and UNEP.

7. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented at the online third consultative meeting: African Union Commission, African Union Development Authority, Arab Maghreb Union, Benguela Current Commission, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, European Commission, Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources of the African Union, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, New Partnership for Africa's Development of the African Union Development Agency, Partnership for Regional Ocean Governance, Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Marine Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, Southern African Development Community, West African Economic and Monetary Union, Western Indian Ocean Governance Initiative and World Bank.

8. The following regional fisheries bodies were represented: Albion Fisheries Research Centre, Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic, Indian Ocean Commission, Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations, Lake Tanganyika Authority, Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization, South-East Atlantic Fisheries Organization and Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission.

9. The following non-governmental, governmental and civil society organizations were represented as observers: Coastal Oceans Research and Development – Indian Ocean (CORDIO) East Africa, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, International Development Law Organization, International Seabed Authority, Nelson Mandela University, Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies of the University of Lagos, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Université Cheikh Anta Diop and Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association.

II. Opening of the meeting

10. The meeting was opened at 1 p.m.[1] (UTC + 3)) on Tuesday, 15 June 2021 by Ms. Leticia Carvalho, Head of Marine and Freshwater Branch, Ecosystems Division, UNEP.

11. Opening statements were delivered by Ms. Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo, UNEP Programme Director and Regional Representative for Africa; Mr. Stephen Karingi, Director, Regional Integration and Trade Division, representing ECA; Ms. Estherine Lusinge Fotabong, Director, Programme Innovation and Planning, representing the Africa Union Development Agency; Mr. Stuart Mangold, representative of the President of AMCEN; and Ms. Olushola Olayide, representing the Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, African Union Commission.

III. Organizational matters

A. Election of officers

12. Mr. Ashley Naidoo, Chief, Directorate, Oceans and Coasts Research, Department of Environmental Affairs, South Africa, was elected as the Chair of the meeting, representing the President of AMCEN. A representative of the UNEP secretariat served as the Rapporteur of the meeting.

B. Organization of work

13. The Chair drew attention to document UNEP/ASOG/WG.3/INF/1, containing the list of documents for the third consultative meeting, which is posted on the meeting website at https://www.unep.org/events/conference/third-consultative-meeting-development-african-strategy-ocean-governance. The list of documents is presented without formal editing.

[1] All times indicated are UTC + 3.

IV. Adoption of the agenda

14. The agenda of the third consultative meeting on the development of an African strategy for ocean governance was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda, which may be viewed on the meeting website and is presented without formal editing (UNEP/ASOG/WG.3/1).

V. Outcome of the first consultative meeting on the development of an African strategy for ocean governance

15. Drawing attention to the Chair's summary of the first consultative meeting (UNEP/ASOG/WG.1/4), the Chair's summary of the second consultative meeting (UNEP/ASOG/WG.2/3) and the draft African strategy for ocean governance (UNEP/ASOG/WG.3/2), the Chair invited a representative of the secretariat to provide an overview of the outcomes of the first and second consultative meetings, including the gaps and opportunities in existing mechanisms and frameworks.

VI. Presentation of the draft strategy

16. The draft African strategy for ocean governance was presented by the secretariat in three sessions. In the first session, the objectives and scope, purpose, and strategic pillars of the strategy were presented, as was a proposed overarching mechanism for ocean governance. In the second session, possible scenarios were explored to identify a suitable form for the implementation of the overarching mechanism. Monitoring and evaluation were discussed in the third session. The outcomes of the three sessions are contained in the Chair's summary of the present meeting (UNEP/ASOG/WG.3/3).

VII. Next steps

17. The representative of the secretariat introduced the next steps, as follows:

(a) Revise the draft strategy and incorporate all comments (August 2021);

(b) Establish a small working group composed of representatives of the African Union Commission, UNEP, ECA, New Partnership for Africa's Development and the AMCEN President (June 2021);

(c) Review the revised draft strategy (September 2021);

(d) Develop an action plan and its financial implications based on the agreed scenarios (November 2021);

(e) Elaborate on monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (November 2021);

(f) Submit the revised draft strategy to member States and stakeholders and hold the fourth consultation meeting (December 2021);

(g) Submit the strategy to AMCEN and the organs of the African Union for approval (February 2022).

VIII. Chair's summary of the meeting

18. Mr. Robert Wabunoha, Regional Coordinator, Africa Office, UNEP, provided an oral summary of the discussion, noting that the Chair's summary (UNEP/ASOG/WG.3/3) would be circulated to participants.

IX. Any other business

19. No other matters were raised.

X. Closure of the meeting

20. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 4.10 p.m. on Wednesday, 16 June 2020.