



**RIO+20**

United Nations Conference  
on Sustainable Development

# **Institutional and Strategic Frameworks for Sustainable Development in Africa**



Economic Commission  
for Africa





# Institutional and Strategic Frameworks for Sustainable Development in Africa



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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
AfDB	African Development Bank
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCOST	African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology
AMCOW	African Ministerial Council on Water
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ARDWESTC	Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment Specialized Technical Committee
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CFSSD	Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development
CARPE	<i>Programme Regional d'Afrique Centrale pour l'Environnement</i> (Central Africa Regional Programme for the Environment)
CDP	Community Development Programme
CEMAC	<i>Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale</i> (Central African Economic and Monetary Community)
ClimDev	Climate for Development
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COPAX	Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DREA	Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	<i>Communauté Économique des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale</i> (Economic Community of Central African States)
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FANR	Forestry and Natural Resources
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FSSD	Food Security and Sustainable Development Division/ECA
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IEG	International Environment Governance
IFSD	Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority for Development
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
LDC	Least Developed Country
MDG	Millennium Development Goal

MEA	Multilateral Environment Agreement
MTS	Medium Term Strategy
NCSD	National Council for Sustainable Development
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPCA	NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency
NSSD	National Strategy for Sustainable Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSFAC	<i>Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale</i> (Observatory Monitoring of Forests in Central Africa)
PFBC	<i>Partenariat Forestier pour le Bassin du Congo</i> (Forest Partnership for the Congo Basin)
PFIA21	Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21
PICI	Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative
PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
PRC	Permanent Representatives Committee
PRS-WA	Poverty Reduction Strategy of West Africa
RCM	Regional Coordination Mechanism
REC	Regional Economic Community
REP	Regional Economic Programme
RIM	Regional Implementation Meeting
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
ROA	Regional Office for Africa
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SDRA	Sustainable Development Report on Africa
SIPO	Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ
SMEs	Small- and Medium-Size Enterprises
STC	Specialized Technical Committee
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCSD	United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEO	United Nations Environment Organization
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WEO	World Environment Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development



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## Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development at regional, subregional and national levels on the basis of data gathered through desk review and field visits. It also benefits from the comments and observations of ministers and other participants at the Africa Rio+20 Regional Preparatory Meeting which took place in Addis Ababa from 20 to 25 October 2011.

The report assesses how existing institutional and strategic frameworks have promoted the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development in a balanced manner; enhanced institutional linkages; encouraged multi-stakeholder participation and decentralization in the planning and implementation of programmes; and catered for intra-generational and intergenerational equity through long-term planning and strategies that bridge the equality gaps. A summary of the findings is elaborated in the subsequent paragraphs.

### *Institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development at the regional level*

#### The African Union and its organs

##### *African Union Commission*

The African Union (AU) has pursued sustainable development programmes through the African Union Commission (AUC) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative. AUC-led programmes such as the Africa Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development (AMSED) have enhanced vertical and horizontal linkages, while the Green Wall of the Sahara programme has promoted multi-stakeholder participation.

##### *New Partnership for Africa's Development*

Since its inception, NEPAD has proven to be both an institution and a strategy for sustainable development, and has increasingly gained recognition from the international community as well as from the development partners of Africa. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) has also recognized that NEPAD provides a framework for sustainable development in Africa, and called on the international community to channel assistance to the continent through this framework.

Through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Action Plan on the environment and the energy programme, NEPAD has promoted the integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions of development, enhanced partnerships and multi-stakeholder participation, and has established horizontal and vertical linkages at institutional and programmatic levels.

The challenge that the AU faces at both AUC and NEPAD levels is the difficulty of inter-departmental and inter-agency coordination to ensure better synergy and integration of the various dimensions in programme implementation. AUC has mainstreamed the participation of the ma-

major groups in many ways. For example, gender parity has been attained at the level of the College of Commissioners. However, the participation of major groups in programme implementation across all sectors has not reached the desired level. Another major challenge has been the inadequacy of funds, with the AU depending on partners for the bulk of its programmes.

The report recommends that institutional collaboration should be sustained beyond the design phase of programmes. AUC should scale-up its coordination function and establish effective outreach and communication channels with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). African Governments should also demonstrate ownership by budgeting for and exploring alternative sources of funding for NEPAD programmes. Further, the Concept of Champions, developed in the context of the Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative (PICI), should be extended to other sectors.

### ***Specialized Technical Committees of the African Union***

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW) have both made progress with regard to integrating environmental and water issues in AU and REC programmes. They have also built linkages with other regional and subregional institutions. The major challenges identified include an overlapping and unclear mandate, the unclear status within AU organs, and inadequate financial and human resources.

Recommendations include building synergy through greater programme coordination, linkages with other structures such as the group of African Ambassadors in New York and the African members of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD).

## **African Development Bank**

Through its medium-term strategy (MTS), the Green Growth strategy and other sectoral programmes, the African Development Bank (AfDB) has made significant strides in developing horizontal and vertical programmatic linkages, as well as in enhancing integrated delivery of programmes and projects that satisfy sustainability and poverty-reduction objectives.

The report recommends that AfDB should increase funding, enhance capacity-building, promote multi-stakeholder participation in project design and implementation, and expand the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to cover social dimensions.

## United Nations organizations

### *United Nations Economic Commission for Africa*

The mandate that the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 gave to the five Regional Commissions of the United Nations include promoting the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in their work and in the work of regional and subregional bodies. In response to this mandate, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has put a number of mechanisms in place including the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD), the Africa Regional Implementation Meetings (RIMs), the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) in support of NEPAD and the Sustainable Development Report on Africa (SDRA). In addition, UNECA embarked on a repositioning exercise that realigned its programme of work with the priorities of AU and its NEPAD programme. Each of these programmes has registered remarkable success. The report also recommends measures aimed at bridging gaps such as the lack of adequate data to facilitate tracking of progress on sustainable development, inadequate funding, and general lack of capacity at various levels.

### *United Nations Development Programme*

As one of the institutions identified by Agenda 21 for delivering sustainable development at the global, regional and subregional levels, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has supported countries within the framework of the Capacity 21 programme, to establish their National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSDs) and develop National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs). UNDP has also played a crucial role in coordinating programmatic and institutional linkages at the country level, where UNDP Resident Representatives also serve as the Resident Coordinators of development activities for the United Nations system as a whole.

Evaluation of the United Nations 'Delivering as One' pilot phase in eight countries has shown that it is indeed important that the United Nations delivers as one. The United Nations development system should therefore coordinate and collaborate closely to ensure synergy and coherence at the national level.

African countries should also urge UNDP to engage in more catalytic use of official development assistance (ODA) to unleash the power of all relevant development resources, in order to drive the transformation towards sustainability. African countries should ensure that Rio+20 helps to accelerate such key transformations in accordance with how the United Nations development system and the international financial institutions work.

### *United Nations Environment Programme*

Delivery of the UNEP programme in Africa is done through a coordinated and multi-stakeholder process that involves various partners, including government institutions, ministerial forums, non-governmental agencies, RECs, other United Nations agencies, major groups and other stakeholders as well as civil society organizations (CSOs), the private sector, local authorities and centres of excellence. Through the Regional Office for Africa (ROA), UNEP ensures that there is better coherence and coordination in the effective delivery of environmental capacity-building and technical support at all levels in response to country needs and priorities. Recommendations

include the need to ensure synergy through streamlined mandates, focusing on commonalities and creating mechanisms to influence decision-making processes at all levels.

### ***Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations***

The sustainable development department of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) serves as a global reference centre for knowledge and advice on the integration of biophysical, biological, socio-economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. FAO collaborated with NEPAD to develop CAADP, and with member States to develop national CAADP compacts, which are considered an important step towards ensuring agricultural stability and economic development. As the main United Nations body dealing with agriculture, the support of FAO to African agriculture and food security is crucial. The organization should deepen its support to African countries by implementing policies that best address development, food security, poverty reduction and natural-resource use in an integrated manner. It should also identify how aid and public expenditures can ensure balance between socio-economic development and environmental protection.

## ***Institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development at the subregional level***

The seven RECs that were reviewed have programmes in place on the environment, agriculture, natural resources, energy, disaster reduction, peace and security, governance and socio-economic development. The sectoral programmes are anchored in the long-term strategies of the main regional development frameworks. These include:

- a) The Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and the Strategic Indicative Plan of the Organ (SIPO) for the Southern African Development Community (SADC);
- b) The Regional Poverty Reduction Strategy of West Africa (PRS-WA), the Vision 2020 and the Community Development Programme (CDP) for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Vision 2025;
- c) The Regional Economic Programme (REP) of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC);
- d) The Five-Year Development Plans of the East African Community (EAC);
- e) The Environment and Natural Resources Strategy for the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD); and
- f) The 2011-2015 Strategic Plan for the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the various sectoral programmes of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU).

The review shows that the various programmes, plans and strategies that subregional institutions have put in place with varying degrees of success have encouraged multi-stakeholder participation, built institutional linkages and sought balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development. However, the RECs face a number of challenges including the difficulty of integrating all three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner, the complexity

of the concept of sustainable development, and inadequate financial resources. Recommendations include the need to develop and train RECs on integration tools, elaborate possible financing mechanisms for sustainable development programmes, and promote institutional coherence and programme harmonization.

## *Institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development at the national level*

The UNECA study conducted in 2005 and the survey of 16 countries in 2011 showed that the majority of African countries have established NCSDs and other structures that deal with sustainable development at the national level. Both surveys indicated that the mandates of the NCSDs and of bodies responsible for sustainable development at the national level covered a broad range of issues. However, it was also noted that none of these bodies had a broad mandate.

The challenges that the 2011 survey highlighted related to insufficient capacity at all levels; inadequate human, institutional and financial resources; lack of targeted technical assistance; low level of awareness among policymakers and the general public; limited or unknown best practices of successful pilot projects; limited foreign direct investment (FDI); low level of international cooperation and the fact that NCSDs have become dormant. The relatively weak involvement of planning and finance ministries in sustainable development issues is another major challenge to the balanced integration of the three pillars. Thus, the report recommends support to countries to develop NCSDs and integrate strategies, as well as giving finance and planning ministries leadership roles in sustainable development at the national level.

## *Sustainable development governance*

A review of sustainable development governance has shown that the enabling framework for integration of all three pillars has been weak at all levels, and this has engendered extensive debate and various reform proposals. Proposals include creating new structures, strengthening the existing structures or elevating the existing structures to a higher level. More specifically, there are proposals to change the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) into a sustainable development council or to create a forum within ECOSOC that would deal with sustainable development. There are also proposals to elevate UNCSO to a sustainable development council as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly.

Furthermore, to balance the three pillars and align the environmental pillar with the others, there have been proposals to strengthen UNEP. Options explored include elevating UNEP to a specialized agency status, creating a United Nations Environmental Organization (UNEO) or a World Environmental Organization (WEO), or simply revising the mandate of UNEP within its current structure.



## *Position of African environment ministers on international environment governance*

At the Eighteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in June 2011, a decision was taken to revise the institutional frameworks for sustainable development, taking into consideration the need to strengthen, consolidate and transform UNEP into a more specialized institution for the environment, still based in Nairobi.

During the Fourth Special Session of AMCEN in Bamako, Mali, in September 2011, the African Environment Ministers did not only support the Assembly decision, but went further to indicate what shape the proposed body should take. Most importantly, they stressed that a new specialized institution did not imply the establishment of an environment inspection body as a compliance mechanism for developing countries, or the putting in place of green conditionalities or trade barriers, and should not lead to additional financial burdens for Africa.

Review of sustainable development governance at the national level showed that the principal challenges included the relatively weak involvement of planning and finance ministries in sustainable development issues and the resultant weakness of the NCSDs.

The report recommends that Africa should harness its resources to secure at Rio+20: a reformed governance architecture at the global level that promotes coordination and synergies across various sectors and actors and adequate reflection of the voice of developing countries, which is likely to promote integration at all levels:

- a) At the regional level, governance should be strengthened by leveraging the comparative advantages of existing institutions to ensure effective vertical linkages, as well as efficiency and effectiveness in sustainable development actions. More specifically, the Regional Commissions of the United Nations should be strengthened to foster balanced integration through, inter alia, promoting experience sharing and cooperation among countries with similar circumstances and levels of development;
- b) As the RECs can play an important role in spurring the establishment and development of institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development and in ensuring their effective operationalization and implementation, they should be supported to enhance institutional coherence and harmonize relevant development policies, plans and programmes among their member States; and
- c) At the national level, Rio+20 could reactivate and reinvigorate the NCSDs to follow-up the UNCSD 2012 outcomes.

## *Good governance - an essential element for sustainable development*

Progress on good governance includes new governance parameters and benchmarks that AU and NEPAD have defined, and establishment at the national level of competitive multiparty democ-

racy and watchdog institutions such as an ombudsman, a human rights commission, an anti-corruption commission, an auditor-general, and an inspector or minister of good governance. Despite the progress made, a number of challenges exist, including fragile and weak institutions, instruments and processes, and the dependence of watchdog and advocacy agencies on governments for funding.

Recommended measures include: greater tolerance for diversity and more guarantees for gender equality; and establishment of mechanisms that promote free and fair elections, including effective post-election adjudication, and exploration of alternative sources of funding for elections.

## *Conclusions and the way forward*

Africa has responded to the need for balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development, social, economic and environmental, with varying degrees of success. Institutional reforms have been undertaken and sustainable development strategies developed and progressively implemented at all levels. To a large extent, multi-stakeholder participation has been promoted and institutional and programmatic linkages established. The various long-term visions, plans and strategies have also sought to cater for inter- and intra-generational equity.

The problem that is common across all levels is the difficulty of balanced integration of all three pillars of sustainable development in the planning, budgeting and implementation of plans and programmes. The challenges in the balanced integration of the various dimensions also relate to the complexity of the concept and the lack of synergy between the institutions at different levels. Limited financing is another persistent constraint in the balanced integration of the three pillars in the development plans and programmes at the subregional level, just as it is at the national and local levels.

## **What should Africa expect from Rio+20?**

The upcoming Rio+20 Conference will provide a unique opportunity for Africa to effectively articulate its needs and priorities to the international community. The following recommendations reflect some of the region's priorities:

- a) The institutional framework for sustainable development (IFSD) should be based on chapter 11 of JPOI, chapter 38 of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (PFIA21), and the principles of the Rio Declaration, in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities;
- b) Further, the IFSD should promote the achievement of internationally-agreed sustainable development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), taking into account the Monterrey Consensus and the needs of developing countries;
- c) The IFSD should also take the specific needs of Africa into account by addressing the implementation gap, capacity-building, technology transfer and linkage of the science-policy interface for environmental sustainability;
- d) Furthermore, the IFSD should not be seen as an end in itself but as a link to the achievement of commonly agreed sustainable development goals, and should lead to the balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development; and



- e) Also, it should not put any additional burdens on African countries or obstacles against their development prospects. In this regard, the following measures are essential:
- i. The commitment of developed countries to allocate 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP) to developing countries in the framework of Official Development Assistance (ODA) must be met, as well as the target of 0.15 per cent to 0.20 per cent of gross national income (GNI) for least developed countries (LDCs);
  - ii. The commitment of doubling aid to Africa by 2010 as articulated at the G-8 Summit at Gleneagles, Scotland, in July 2005 should be met;
  - iii. The international community should adopt an effective, equitable, durable and development-oriented solution to the debt problem of developing countries. This should include total debt cancellation and increased concessional financial flows;
  - iv. The Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building should be implemented, and so should the provisions contained in Chapter 34 of Agenda 21 and in the JPOI provisions on technology transfer;
  - v. A development-oriented, universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system must be established in order to reinvigorate the multilateral trade negotiations and to achieve a development-oriented outcome from the Doha Round. In this regard, the accession of developing countries to the World Trade Organization (WTO) must be facilitated; and
  - vi. Existing “technological gaps” must be bridged through appropriate technology transfer, in order to enable Africa to fully participate in the global economy; enhance its productive capacity; increase competitiveness; attract private capital flow; generate income and employment; reduce poverty and achieve both sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

Rio+20 should explore the possibility of reactivating and reinvigorating the NCSDs to be able to coordinate, consolidate and ensure the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues in the highest decision-making bodies. These should be adequately capacitated to play a more active role.

Regional and subregional institutions have a significant role to play in spurring the establishment and development of institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development, as well as in ensuring their effective operationalization and implementation. There is therefore the need to support these institutions and facilitate institutional coherence and harmonization of relevant development policies, plans and programmes. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to ensure effective linkages among global, regional, subregional and national processes to advance sustainable development, based on the principle of subsidiarity.

Africa should support the ongoing initiative to reform ECOSOC and UNCSD in order to enhance their capacity to help countries achieve sustainable development and increase the synergies, coherence and coordination within the United Nations system and between the latter and international financial institutions. This is also necessary between the individual mandates of the Rio Conventions with respect to supporting African countries in achieving sustainable development at the national level.

Given the need to mainstream sustainable development goals in national policies, strategies, plans and programmes, the full involvement of all key ministries and relevant stakeholders is needed. Rio+20 should therefore decisively support the involvement of all ministries, including ministries in charge of planning, finance, economic and social affairs as well as other stakeholders, to enable them to exercise their full responsibilities in sustainable development.

In order to address the problems associated with rising sea levels, coastal erosion, dumping of hazardous waste, degradation of lacustrine ecosystems and unsustainable fishing, a global mechanism should be established to revitalize institutions at global, regional and national levels for sustainable management of coastal, marine, and lacustrine resources in line with national policies.

Platforms for dialogue on sustainable development should be encouraged among stakeholders at the regional, subregional and national levels, to promote and popularize sustainable development in the African context.

There is need for a clear and actionable indicator framework for sustainable development at the national level, to enhance understanding, guide integration modalities and identify the type of linkages that should exist among different sectors. Similarly, new reference indicators should be developed to assess the economic, social, and environmental performances of national economies, alongside GDP, and the Human Development Index (HDI). Such indicators ensure a better understanding of the state of African economies, preservation of its natural environment, and a more sustainable development. These should include mechanisms that reflect the true environmental costs of production and consumption in the accounting models, in order to address the causes rather than the symptoms of environmental loss.

UNECA, AUC, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), AfDB, and the RECs should continue facilitating consultative meetings and processes to monitor, evaluate and scale-up implementation of sustainable development commitments in Africa.

Within the context of the IFSD, the Rio+20 Conference should endorse the decision of the Assembly of the African Union (Assembly/AU/Dec.381 (XVII)). Among other points, the decision recognized that the current institutional structures did not fully address the needs of Africa in matters relating to the environment, sustainable development and climate change, within the context of the institutional frameworks for sustainable development. International environmental governance within the context of the institutional framework for sustainable development should be strengthened in order to promote balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental pillars.

In line with the African position on establishment of an international specialized institution on the environment, it is important to maintain the stance that Africa holds with regard to the characteristics that such an institution should have. It should:

- a) Be universal in its membership and decision-making, with each member State allocated one vote and decisions taken by consensus;
- b) Be an autonomous body that sets the global policy agenda for environment and provides guidance for environmental financing;

- c) Have secure, stable, additional and predictable financing to fulfil its mandate;
- d) Have increased authority to bring coordination and coherence to the range of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) by promoting synergies while respecting the legal autonomy of the conference of the parties to those agreements;
- e) Have a strengthened regional presence and improved implementation at the national level through the development of operational capacity;
- f) Have the authority to lead a process of United Nations system-wide strategic planning for the environment, and to coordinate the inputs of the many agencies with environmental mandates in the international system;
- g) Promote the science-policy interface to deal with pressing environmental sustainability concerns and to support national and regional scientific networks and scientists; and
- h) Have the ability to enhance capacity and technology support, especially for Africa, monitor the effectiveness of implementation, and facilitate access to technology and technology transfer.

It is also important to reiterate the region's position, that a new specialized institution should not imply the establishment of an environment inspection body as a compliance mechanism for developing countries, or the putting in place of green conditionalities or trade barriers, and should not lead to additional financial burdens for Africa.



# I. Introduction

The concept of sustainable development has evolved over time. Up until the mid-1980s, the concept revolved exclusively around the environment, especially environmental protection strategies. Although these strategies implicitly covered social and economic impacts of environmental degradation, the linkage between environmental and socio-economic issues was not fully mainstreamed.

At the first United Nations Conference on Human Environment, which convened in Stockholm, Sweden in 1972, both global environment and development needs were on the agenda. The outcome documents of the Conference, namely, the Stockholm Declaration and the Stockholm Action Plan, showed clearly that environmental issues dominated the meeting. The Stockholm Action Plan in particular was made up of 109 recommendations on international measures against environmental degradation. Besides these two outcome documents, the Stockholm Conference adopted five resolutions calling for: a ban on nuclear weapons tests; the creation of an international databank on environmental data; actions linked to development and environment; creation of an environment fund; and establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the central node for global environmental cooperation and treaty-making.

The Conference created wider public awareness of environmental issues which in turn engendered a broader view of sustainable development, especially the intricate linkage between the environment, society and the economy. Few institutions epitomized this deeper appreciation as did the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), which was created in 1983 as an independent commission to formulate a long-term agenda for action. Over the next three years, the Commission, more commonly known as the Brundtland Commission after its chair, Gro Harlem Brundtland, held public hearings and studied the issues. In 1987, it published a report entitled *Our Common Future*, known also as the *Brundtland Report*, which defined sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs. From this general statement, a more specific definition was deduced according to which sustainable development was referred to as a pattern of development that integrates economic, social and environmental objectives in a balanced manner.

The *Brundtland Report* represented a watershed in the general thinking about sustainable development. It formed the basis of deliberations at the first United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992, which focused on integrating environment with development concerns as well as on intergenerational and intra-generational equity. It also formed the basis of discussions at the subsequent World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002, where the emphasis was on integrating the three pillars of sustainable development in a balanced manner, in addition to intergenerational and intra-generational equity issues.

The principal outputs of the Rio Summit were the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 (a 40-chapter programme of action), and the Statement of Forest Principles. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity were also opened for signature during the Summit.

When progress was assessed during the United Nations General Assembly Special Session in New York in 1997 (Rio+5), it was noted that the Earth Summit had given rise to a number of positive responses, including the emergence of thousands of local Agenda 21 initiatives and an enhanced political profile for sustainable development issues. Indeed, it led to formation of the CSD to monitor and follow up on the implementation and developments of Agenda 21. Many countries set up their own sustainable development commissions and created national strategies for sustainable development.

However, with regard to social equity and poverty, a number of gaps were identified. The level of ODA was declining, while the indebtedness of the poor countries was mounting. Little improvement was recorded with regard to technology transfer, capacity-building for participation and development, or institutional coordination. Further, the patterns of production and consumption remained largely unsustainable. The Special Session therefore adopted PFIA21.

It was against this background that the WSSD was convened in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002. The goal of the WSSD, according to the United Nations General Assembly resolution 55/199, was to hold a ten-year review of UNCED at summit level to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development. WSSD succeeded in negotiating and adopting two main documents, the JPOI and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development:

- a) The JPOI was designed as a framework for action to implement the commitments originally agreed at UNCED. It included chapters on poverty eradication, consumption and production, the natural resource base, health, developing small island States, Africa, regional initiatives, means of implementation, and institutional frameworks; and
- b) The Johannesburg Declaration outlined the path taken from UNCED to WSSD, and highlighted challenges, expressed a commitment to sustainable development, underscored the importance of multilateralism as well as emphasized the need for implementation.

WSSD secured new commitments on sanitation and underlined the need to address sustainable development as an interlinked agenda. It also saw increased ratification of environmental conventions, which significantly strengthened the international environmental regulations first identified as necessary by the Rio Conference. The increased momentum also ensured ratification of the Kyoto and Bio Safety Protocols. Further, WSSD promoted global partnerships for sustainable development which placed emphasis on collaborative project-based implementation as a complement to international regulation. These partnerships became known as 'Type II Partnerships'.

An assessment of the progress made since the WSSD shows that the world continues to face a number of critical and interrelated problems. These include the global food crisis, serious volatility in oil prices, increasing climate variability and the worst global financial crisis for almost a century. What is more, the majority of the planet's ecosystems have been degraded or put under severe pressure as a result of human activity. This reality calls for a renewed commitment to a sustainable development pathway that secures a reasonable standard of living for the global population, whilst preserving the ecosystems and resources.

This constitutes the context in which the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 64/236 on 24 December 2009, that called for the convening of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012. The Conference will aim to secure renewed political commitment to sustainable development, assess the progress and implementation gaps in meeting already agreed commitments, and address new and emerging challenges. It will be convened under the following two themes:

- a) The green economy within the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and
- b) Institutional framework for sustainable development.

## 1.1 Rationale and scope of the report

This report on the institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development is part of the preparations for Rio+20, which UNECA, AUC, AfDB, the RECs and specialized United Nations agencies have jointly undertaken. The report assesses institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development at regional, subregional and national levels. It also examines current debate on sustainable development governance. The overall objective of this exercise is to guide discussions for Africa on these subjects during the Regional Preparatory Conference and to inform the continent's negotiating positions during the Rio+20 Conference.

By definition, institutional and strategic frameworks refer to a wide spectrum of organizations, bodies and networks, strategies, blueprints and vision statements. These are put in place at global, regional, subregional and national levels to enhance the convergence between economic, social and environmental goals of sustainable development. More specifically, institutional frameworks refer to the role of institutions, processes, guiding principles, integration, coordination and communication in providing an enabling framework for implementing commitments to sustainable development.<sup>1</sup>

Strategic frameworks, on the other hand, consists of key policies, strategies, plans and programmes aimed at ensuring the balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development at global, regional, subregional, national and local levels. To be effective, such strategies must have the following five characteristics:

- a) Ownership and strong political commitment;
- b) Integrated economic, social and environmental objectives;
- c) Broad participation and effective partnerships;
- d) Development of capacity and an enabling environment; and
- e) Focus on outcomes and means of implementation

The present report focuses on institutional and strategic frameworks at the regional, subregional and national levels.<sup>2</sup> At the regional level, it looks at the AU programmes and institutions (in-

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1 Hannah Stoddart, ed. *A Pocket Guide to Sustainable Development Governance*. (London, Stakeholders Forum and the Commonwealth Secretariat, 2011).

2 There are several other international institutions and frameworks such as the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) that undertakes important activities in Africa and in partnership with African institutions such as AU and NEPAD. However, it is beyond the scope of this report to cover their activities, important as they may be.

cluding AUC, NPCA, AU Specialized Technical Committees (STCs) such as AMCEN, AM-COW and AfDB) and at United Nations institutions such as UNECA, UNDP, UNEP and FAO which are key players at the regional level. Thus, even though the present report does not cover institutional and strategic frameworks at the global level, it does cover these four United Nations institutions on account of the importance of their regional activities and the linkages they have fostered across the various levels. At the subregional level, the report covers RECs such as ECOWAS, SADC, COMESA, IGAD, Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), EAC, and AMU. Institutions covered at the national level include NCSDs and bodies playing similar roles.

The assessment of these institutions and their programmes focuses on their structure, mandate and legal framework and operational modalities. Particular attention is given to the extent to which they have effectively integrated the three pillars of sustainable development, enhanced institutional and programmatic linkages, promoted multi-stakeholder participation and addressed intergenerational equity.

## 1.2 Methodology

17. The study was based on following desk review and fieldwork:

- a) **The Desk Review** consisted of reviewing and analysing published and unpublished reports, academic works, and other written (online) sources of information on strategic and institutional frameworks at regional, subregional and national levels. These included reports, business plans, strategies, plans of action, speeches, survey reports, especially the UNECA-administered questionnaires on NCSDs and NSSDs, vision statements, treaties, policy documents, decisions, resolutions and directives; and
- b) **Field visits** were made to the headquarters of UNECA, AUC, ECOWAS Commission, AMCOW Secretariat, and SADC Secretariat. In addition, teleconferences were held directly with officials from the UNEP Africa Regional Office (which also acts as the interim Secretariat of AMCEN), AfDB, and the UNECA Subregional Office for North Africa (SRO-NA). Additionally, an interview was conducted with the Director, Programme Implementation and Coordination Directorate of the NPCA.

## 1.3 Report outline

The report is divided into four sections:

- a) **Introduction:** This section provides the background, states the objectives and scope of the study and indicates the methodology and the data sources;
- b) **Institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development:** This section reviews the existing institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development at regional, subregional and national levels. It examines the mandates, legal frameworks, structures, operational modalities, and sustainable development strategies in place at the various levels. The section specifically focuses on how these frameworks have strengthened institutional and programmatic linkages, encouraged multi-stakeholder participation, enhanced the integration of the three pillars of sustainable devel-



opment in a balanced manner, and catered for intra- generational and intergenerational equity through long-term planning and vision statements. The section also reviews the measures that address the equality gaps at the various levels. In this regard, it outlines the progress and achievements made, indicates key challenges and provides policy recommendations;

- c) **Sustainable development governance:** This section identifies the challenges of sustainable development governance at the global, regional, subregional and national levels and provides an overview of the reform proposals that have emerged from the ongoing debate on this issue and on international environment governance (IEG). In particular, it assesses the feasibility and desirability of the following avenues for reform:
  - i) Strengthening existing institutions;
  - ii) Merging institutions;
  - iii) Improving coordination among existing institutions;
  - iv) Establishing new institutions;
  - v) Changing mandate(s) of institution(s); and
  - vi) Streamlining institutions.
  
- d) **Conclusion:** The concluding section assesses the status of institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development at all levels, summarizes the challenges and make recommendations with respect to what Africa should expect from Rio+20.

## II. Institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development

### 2.1 Introduction

A cursory review shows that there are a multitude of institutions, programmes and agencies that deal with sustainable development at the various levels. Over the years, these institutions have put in place strategies, plans and programmes that aim at: balancing integration of the environmental, social and economic dimensions of development; fostering institutional and programmatic linkages; encouraging multi-stakeholder participation; catering for intergenerational and intra-generational equity through long-term planning and vision statements; and seeking to address equality gaps within and across generations. Progress in these matters has been stalled by a number of challenges and constraints that the institutions at various levels face. The recommendations made are meant to address some of these challenges.

### 2.2 Institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development at the regional level

#### 2.2.1 The African Union and its organs

Created in 2002 as successor to the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the AU is the principal organization for the promotion of integration, development and a collective approach to peace and security. Its objectives include: achieving greater unity and solidarity among African countries and their people; promoting and defending common African positions; encouraging international cooperation; establishing enabling conditions for the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations; promoting sustainable development and integration of African economies; and advancing the continent's development through research in all fields, particularly science and technology.<sup>3</sup>

The principal organs of the AU are: the Assembly of Heads of State; the Executive Council; the Commission; Permanent Representatives Committee; Peace and Security Council; Pan-African Parliament; Economic, Social and Cultural Council; the African Court of Justice; Financial Institutions; and STCs, which include Ministerial Committees on industry, science and technology, energy, natural resources, environment and water.

The Assembly is composed of the Heads of State and Government of AU Member States, and acts as the supreme organ of the AU. The Executive Council of Ministers is composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs or other ministers or authorities designated by Member States. The Executive Council is assisted by the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC), which is composed of Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives of Member States accredited to the AU. The Commission is responsible for the day-to-day management of the AU and AUC-led programmes and works to harmonize the programmes and policies of AU and RECs.

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<sup>3</sup> Constitutive Act of the African Union, 2000.

Since its creation, the AU has put various development strategies and frameworks in place. Key among these are: strategies on peace and security in Africa; the Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC); the Common African Defence and Security Policy; the African Non-Aggression Pact; and conventions and programmes on governance and human rights. Others include the peace-support operations in the Sudan and Somalia, and the AU stance on anti-constitutional change of government. These have all been undertaken within this framework. Alongside these programmes and activities are various social, economic and environmental programmes as well as disaster-reduction strategies that are being implemented at regional, subregional and national levels.<sup>4</sup>

In July 2009, the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted the AUC *Strategic Plan 2009-2012* that was built on the Strategic Plan 2005-2007. The new plan rested on four pillars: (a) peace and security; (b) integration, development and cooperation; (c) shared values; and (d) institutional and capacity-building. To implement it, programmes and projects are being developed under each pillar, in accordance with the key responsibilities of AUC.

Within AUC, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Economy (DREA) deals with agriculture, rural development, environment, water, natural resources and climate change. This falls within the “Integration, Development and Cooperation” strategic pillar. DREA coordinates sustainable development within AUC.<sup>5</sup>

The AU sustainable development programmes comprise such AUC-led initiatives as:

- a) The African Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) programme, whose products are to be integrated into planning and decision-making processes;
- b) Capacity building for natural resources accounting;
- c) The Sustainable Development Forum; and
- d) The Great Green Wall initiative for the Sahara.<sup>6</sup>

The most comprehensive sustainable development programme that the AU has established is NEPAD, which focuses on social, economic and environmental aspects of development. Adopted in 2001, NEPAD aimed at accelerating growth and sustainable development, eradicating widespread and severe poverty, and halting the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process. These objectives translated into priorities in six sectors: infrastructure, human resources, agriculture, environment, culture, and science and technology.

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4 African Union Commission, *Reports of the Commission, 2004-2010*.

5 African Union Commission, Department of Agriculture and Rural Economy, *Strategic Plan 2009-2012*.

6 UNECA, *Final Report of the Workshop on Institutional and Strategic Frameworks for Sustainable Development in Africa, 2011*.

### **Box 1: New Partnership for Africa's Development sectoral priorities**

These include:

- Bridging the infrastructure gap (this priority is tackled from four different angles - bridging the digital divide, energy, transport, water and sanitation)
- Building human resources (this priority regroups four missions - reduce poverty, bridge the education gap, reverse the brain drain and improve health)
- Developing strong and sustainable agriculture
- Ensuring the safeguarding and defence of the environment
- Spreading and promoting culture across the continent
- Developing science and technology

*Source:* [www.nepad.org](http://www.nepad.org)

The highest authority of NEPAD is the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC), which comprises 20 Heads of State. The HSGOC has the task of setting policies, priorities and programmes of action. It identifies strategic issues that need to be researched, planned and managed at the continental level. It also develops mechanisms for reviewing progress in the implementation of past decisions and takes appropriate steps to address obstacles and delays. A Steering Committee comprising the personal representatives of the members of HSGOC, oversees project and programme development. The NPCA, based in South Africa, is responsible for coordinating and preparing programmes and projects for NEPAD; mobilizing technical and financial support; and facilitating and supporting implementation of NEPAD programmes.

Within the framework of the agriculture pillar, NEPAD developed the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). Considered as one of its most ambitious programmes, CAADP centres on five pillars. Parallel to CAADP is the NEPAD environment initiative programme that focuses on energy, a short-term action plan on water, the Programme on Infrastructure Development (PIDA), and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

### **Box 2: Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme focus areas**

CAADP aims to:

- Expand areas under sustainable land management and reliable water-control systems
- Improve rural infrastructure and trade-related capacities for better market access
- Enhance food supply and reduce hunger (including emphasis on emergencies and disasters that require food and agricultural responses)
- Develop agricultural research and adopt and disseminate technology for sustaining long-term productivity growth
- Sustainable development of livestock, fisheries and forestry resources (added after the Maputo Summit of July 2003)

*Source:* [www.nepad.org](http://www.nepad.org)

### Box 3: Structure and process of the African Peer Review Mechanism

Considered the most innovative dimension of NEPAD, the APRM constitutes the continent's own means of monitoring compliance with national, regional and international norms of political, economic and corporate governance. The process looks at four focus areas: democracy and good political governance; economic governance and management; corporate governance; and socio-economic development.

Structurally, the APRM is constituted as follows:

- The Committee of Participating Heads of State and Government (APR Forum) is the highest decision-making authority in the APRM.
- The Panel of Eminent Persons (APR Panel) oversees the review process to ensure integrity, considers reports and makes recommendations to the APR Forum.
- The APRM Secretariat provides secretarial, technical, coordinating and administrative support for the APRM.
- The Country Review Mission Team (CRM Team) visits member States to review progress and produce an APRM report on the country.

The review process begins with a support mission to a country. This is a pre-country review phase, in which members of the APR Panel, assisted by the APRM Secretariat and NEPAD strategic partner institutions (AU, UNECA, AfDB, UNDP), assess the preparedness and capacity of the country to participate in the APRM process, particularly to undertake self-assessment and prepare a national programme of action. The missions also ascertain the robustness of the APRM instruments, including the degree of participation of major stakeholders in the national process.

After the support missions are completed, each participating country is expected to undertake a self-assessment with a view to preparing the preliminary national programme of action. The self-assessment of a country is the first of five stages of the peer-review process. It is followed by a country review visit by the APR Panel, which then prepares a country-review report. The overall aim of the country review, and more generally of the peer review itself, is to help countries identify institutional, policy and capacity weaknesses, and suggest and seek support for remedial measures for such shortcomings.

**Source:** [www.nepad.org](http://www.nepad.org)

### *Progress made*

#### *AUC-led programmes*

In many ways, AMESD has enhanced institutional linkages for the development of geo-information services.<sup>7</sup> The project, which is continent-wide, is financed by the European Union and allocated to the various RECs and the Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). It therefore promotes partnerships among such institutions as AUC, RECs, the ACP Secretariat and the European Union. United Nations bodies including UNECA, UNEP, FAO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) are also linked to the programme.<sup>8</sup>

The Green Wall of the Sahara Initiative is a multi-stakeholder programme aimed at arresting the advance of the Sahara desert. It brings together partners from regional, subregional and national levels to enhance environmental sustainability, control land degradation, promote integrated natural resource management, and contribute to poverty eradication.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Marc Leroy, *The African Monitoring of Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) Programme and its Link with Disaster Management Issues*. Presentation at the United Nations Spider Workshop, Addis Ababa, 2010.

<sup>8</sup> European Commission, *Research – International Cooperation*, (2007). Available from <http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/index.cfm>.

See also [www.amesd.org](http://www.amesd.org)

<sup>9</sup> AUC, NPCA and Community of Sahelo-Saharan States. *The Great Green Wall: A Sustainable Development Mechanism*. Concept Note. 2011. Available from [http://www.grandemurailleverte.org/donneeseng/Concept\\_Note.pdf](http://www.grandemurailleverte.org/donneeseng/Concept_Note.pdf).

Since its inception, NEPAD has proven itself to be both an institution and a strategy for sustainable development. NEPAD has a number of characteristics that qualifies it as a sustainable development programme. It is African led and African-owned; it mainstreams the active participation of CSOs and the private sector, although with variations across priority areas; and it is based on strong partnership with the United Nations system, the donor community and African subregional and continental organizations.

Thus, NEPAD has increasingly gained recognition from the international community and the continent's development partners. In November 2002, the United Nations General Assembly passed a declaration (A/RES/57/2) and a resolution on NEPAD (A/RES/57/7), affirming the support of the United Nations system for the implementation of NEPAD and recommending that the international community use NEPAD as its framework to support development in Africa. The Secretary-General also established the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa to coordinate that support, guide reporting on Africa and coordinate global advocacy in support of NEPAD.

The JPOI also recognizes NEPAD as the framework on sustainable development in Africa and called on the international community to: promote technology development, transfer and diffusion to Africa; further develop the technology and knowledge available to African centres of excellence; and support African countries in developing institutions and research activities capable of developing and adapting "world-class" technologies.

NEPAD integrates the three pillars of sustainable development through its development, social and environment programmes. Its agriculture programme, for example, is meant to achieve economic growth and social well-being through enhanced service delivery in the health and education sector, and, simultaneously, to protect the environment.

Integration is also done through the linkages with regional and subregional institutions. NEPAD action plans on the environment and agriculture are developed in collaboration with various institutions, including UNECA, AfDB and other stakeholders.

The transformation of the NEPAD Secretariat into the NPCA has resulted in a clearer mandate, and has also cleared the confusion over the role and status of the erstwhile NEPAD Secretariat. The fact that NPCA and AUC have recently held joint meetings on programme harmonization on CAADP, suggests that the transformation will enhance integration and institutional linkages and put a stop to the fragmented approaches.

Two other initiatives, PICI and the Rural Futures Initiative, are a means to enhanced implementation, horizontal and vertical integration, and linkages at programmatic level as well as at regional, subregional and national levels.

#### **Box 4: Priority Programmes of Presidential Infrastructure Champions Initiative**

The idea of the PICI was proposed by President Zuma of South Africa. Based on the NEPAD African Action Plan (AAP) and the PIDA, the PICI objective is to assess the implementation of existing infrastructure projects and agree on a Head of State who will champion a particular priority programme. The expectation is that having a Head of State to champion a particular programme will unlock economic activities in other areas linked to the priority programme. Thus, seven priority programmes have been identified:

- Missing link of the Sahara (200 km road between Algeria and the Niger) and optic fibre from Algeria via the Niger to Nigeria
- Dakar-Ndjamena Djibouti Road/Rail
- Nigeria-Algeria Gas Pipeline
- Kinshasa- Brazzaville Bridge Road/Rail
- ICT broadband and fibre optic link to neighbouring countries
- North-South Corridor Rail/Road
- Water management, river and rail transport

**Source:** [www.nepad.org](http://www.nepad.org)

A lot of progress has been registered with respect to the implementation of CAADP. At the close of 2010, 18 countries had concluded their national CAADP compacts, thereby committing to allocate a minimum of 10 per cent of their national budgets to agriculture. Best practices included subsidizing agricultural inputs, infrastructure and marketing systems.

The energy programme has captured comprehensive data on the current state of energy projects across the continent from which it has prepared a list of priority projects. Most importantly, the NEPAD Bioenergy Programme has been recognized as a multisectoral programme that cuts across the energy, environment, agriculture, and science and technology sectors. The programme has built partnerships with institutions such as the Power Institute for East and Southern Africa (PIESA), and has initiated a public-private partnership (PPP) within the NEPAD-Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) framework. It has also advocated other forms of multi-stakeholder participation such as the involvement of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the electricity business, especially in the use of renewable sources. Similar efforts have led to programmatic linkages such as the inclusion of renewable energy sources as part of PIDA.

The Rural Futures Programme represents a NEPAD effort, in collaboration with its development and regional partners, to respond to the challenge and opportunities of rural Africa in an integrated manner and through multi-stakeholder participation.

## **Box 5: NEPAD Rural Futures Programme**

The Rural Futures Programme recognizes that rural transformation is a vehicle for job creation and improved livelihoods for the continent's growing population. It also recognizes that the rural and agriculture sectors are keys to economic growth, structural change and environmental protection. The Programme focuses on building a common and integrated development vision and strategy that connect institutional frameworks, public policy, investments and market opportunities, to raise productivity of the rural economy, add value to rural and agricultural investments, address the changes caused by globalization, and enhance environmental sustainability.

*Source:* [www.nepad.org](http://www.nepad.org)

### ***Challenges***

The challenge that AU faces at both the AUC and the NPCA levels is the problem of inter-departmental and inter-agency coordination to ensure better synergy and integration of the various dimensions in programme implementation. Although programmatic linkages are provided for in the AUC and departmental strategic plans, the actual implementation does not follow through on this. Similarly, while institutions collaborate in the design of NEPAD programmes, they do not collaborate sufficiently in the implementation phase.

As a multi-stakeholder organization, the AUC has mainstreamed the participation of major groups in many ways, for example, with gender parity having been attained at the level of the College of Commissioners. However, the participation of major groups in programme implementation across all sectors has not reached the desired level.

Funding is always a perennial problem and this affects the capacity of the AUC to integrate all three aspects of sustainable development in programme design and implementation, and to foster institutional linkages. While its AUC recurrent budget is met from the assessed contribution of member States, the programme budget is largely dependent on donor-funded support.

### ***Recommendations***

The AUC departments work more closely now than before, but the programmatic linkages and integrated approach to programme implementation needs to be enhanced. Similarly, institutional linkages should be maintained through the various phases of programmes, and integration should be strengthened at the highest level and go beyond merely convening meetings. AUC should continue to play the leadership role in fostering institutional linkages at both the regional and subregional levels. In this regard, it should leverage the weekly meetings of the College of Commissioners and the monthly meeting of the Directors of Departments. It should also use the presence of the REC liaison officers in Addis Ababa to strengthen linkages with and among the regional bodies.

NPCA should be strengthened not only to design programmes, but also to monitor their integrated implementation, especially now that its new mandate includes facilitating programme coordination and implementation. In this regard, the linkage between NPCA and UNECA should be strengthened so that they can undertake joint activities.

AU Member States should demonstrate ownership of and commitment to the programmes by putting in seed money that will be complemented by the support of external partners. It is clear



that the AU does not need any other sustainable development framework than NEPAD. What is needed is calibrating and re-vitalizing NEPAD, which already enjoys recognition at all levels.

The AUC, NPCA, AfDB and United Nations agencies that are providing support to the implementation of NEPAD programmes should establish effective outreach and communication channels with the RECs and African countries. They should also step up information dissemination to enhance public awareness of NEPAD, including its vision, processes, main interventions, implementation criteria, achievements and success stories at all levels. This will contribute to enhanced ownership and buy-in to NEPAD programmes.

The AUC and NPCA, with the support of African regional institutions, should develop results-based monitoring and evaluation frameworks for all programmes and projects, to ensure accountability and facilitate objective reporting of progress and achievements.

The AUC, NPCA, AfDB and United Nations agencies supporting NEPAD implementation should strengthen and promote integration of the different dimensions of sustainable development, as well as institutional and sectoral collaboration and coordination in the implementation of NEPAD programmes and action plans.

The AUC and NPCA should provide RECs and African countries with guidance frameworks for developing and implementing sustainable development plans and programmes.

In order to avoid over-reliance on the donor community for funds to implement NEPAD projects, the AUC, NPCA and their collaborating partners should promote ownership of NEPAD at all levels and secure political and policy commitment from African countries to budget for and provide adequate funding for NEPAD programmes.

The identification of champions is essential to ensuring sustainability and enhancing the implementation of NEPAD projects. The concept of “champions” should therefore be promoted by all stakeholders in fostering sustainable development. Furthermore, this concept can be extended to more projects. An important lesson learnt is that sustained effort is needed in communicating NEPAD achievements.

### ***The Specialized Technical Committees of the African Union***

The STCs are provided for under article 5 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union and their functions spelt out in article 15. Accordingly, the STCs are composed of Ministers or senior officials responsible for sectors falling within their respective areas of competence. Each STC is tasked within its field of competence to, inter alia, prepare projects and programmes and harmonize and coordinate implementation.

Institutions such as AMCEN, AMCOW, African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST), African Ministerial Council on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD), and the Forum of Energy Ministers in Africa (FEMA) are expected to form part of different STCs provided for by article 5 of the Constitutive Act. While all of these bodies have set up programmes, this report focuses on AMCEN and AMCOW.

AMCEN comprises a biannual Ministerial Conference, a Bureau, the ACMEN Trust Fund, the Regional STCs, and a network of national focal points. The UNEP Regional Office for Africa serves as the AMCEN Secretariat.

The roles of AMCEN include:

- a) Providing continent-wide leadership by promoting awareness and consensus on global and regional environmental issues, especially those relating to international conventions on biodiversity, desertification and climate change;
- b) Developing common positions to guide African representatives in negotiations for legally-binding international environmental agreements;
- c) Promoting African participation in international dialogue on global issues of crucial importance to Africa;
- d) Reviewing and monitoring environmental programmes at the regional, subregional and national levels;
- e) Promoting the ratification by African countries of MEAs relevant to the region; and
- f) Building African capacity in the field of environmental management.

The major functions of AMCOW are to facilitate regional and international cooperation through the coordination of policies and actions among African countries regarding water resources issues, and to review and mobilize additional financing for the water sector in Africa. Also, to provide a mechanism for monitoring the progress of implementation of major regional and global water resources and water supply as well as sanitation initiatives. AMCOW provides a forum for dialogue with United Nations agencies and other partners on water issues, and promotes participation in regional studies regarding climate changes and development of observation networks. It also facilitates information exchange and aims to develop policies and strategies for addressing water issues in Africa.<sup>10</sup>

The AMCOW institutional set-up consists of a Ministerial Council, an Executive Committee composed of three representatives from each of the five subregions. The Executive Committee is advised by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The Secretariat, which is based in Abuja, Nigeria, is headed by an Executive Secretary.

### ***Progress made***

For almost 21 years, AMCEN has facilitated the integration of environmental concerns into public policy in many ways, for example, by providing political guidance to the development of the continent's position with respect to multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), including the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol. The work of AMCEN also led to the adoption in January 1991 of the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.amcow.org>.

AMCEN led the process for development of the action plan of the NEPAD environment initiative, and prompted and encouraged UNEP to prepare a comprehensive regional report on the state of the continent's environment, entitled, *Africa Environment Outlook*. Furthermore, AMCEN successfully facilitated revision of the 1968 Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Algiers Convention). Measures were also taken to strengthen the linkages between AMCEN and the region's two marine and coastal conventions, namely, the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region (Nairobi Convention, 1985), and the Convention for Cooperation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region (Abidjan Convention, 1984).<sup>11</sup>

AMCEN has played a key role in fostering institutional cooperation around the NEPAD environment action plan. The plan was prepared with financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), under the leadership of AMCEN, the Regional Office of UNEP for Africa, and in close cooperation with the NEPAD Secretariat and AUC.

The AMCEN Secretariat has also been working in concert with AMCOW since its establishment in 2002, to help provide political leadership, policy and strategic direction, and advocacy for the use and management of water resources in Africa. In this regard, the Secretariat has been providing technical support for a number of activities undertaken by AMCOW.

AMCOW has built institutional and programmatic linkages with the AUC and RECs, whose water-related activities remain largely uncoordinated. At AUC, for example, water is covered by two different departments. The Department of Infrastructure deals with hydro matters, while the Department of Agriculture and Rural Economy deals with drinking water. In this context, AMCOW is working with AU on the African water architecture to enhance the coordination of water-related activities.

Similarly, by being aware of the social dimension of water, AMCOW has integrated the three pillars of sustainable development by developing a framework and a work programme, and by encouraging the RECs to internalize these frameworks. Furthermore, as part of its integration efforts, AMCOW has been working with UNECA to convene a joint meeting of African Ministers of Finance and African Ministers of Water as a way of ensuring adequate integration of the water sector in the national planning process.

### **Challenges**

Some of the main challenges that the STCs of the AU face are overlapping mandates, fragmented approaches and weak horizontal and vertical linkages.

The proliferation of multiple Ministerial Councils without due attention paid to future sustainability weakens the effectiveness of the STCs, which are required to serve important functions within AU.

While CSOs take part in the activities of STCs, the participation of other major groups is lagging.

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<sup>11</sup> *African Ministerial Conference on Environment*. Available from <http://africasd.iisd.org/institutions/african-ministerial-conference-on-environment-amcen/>

### ***Recommendations***

Most of the Ministerial Councils have overlapping mandates. As members of the same STC, AMCEN and AMCOW should, under AU leadership, revise and redefine their individual mandates. The two bodies should also be strengthened and empowered to integrate the other dimensions of sustainable development in their activities.

AUC should leverage AMCEN, AMCOW and AUC/UNECA joint meetings of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to promote coherence and integration in the development and implementation of programmes. In addition, the linkage of their programmes should be strengthened to ensure synergy.

The status of AMCEN and AMCOW within the Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment STC (ARDWESTC), should be clarified as some of their staff believe their individual councils form distinct STCs. Such clarification will promote coordination and programmatic linkages.

Linkage with other AU organs such as the PRC and the Executive Council should be clarified and strengthened to ensure harmonious working relations and better coordination. Some of the Ministerial Councils have expressed the desire to report directly to the Assembly of the African Union, when the existing rules of procedure provide for reporting through the Executive Council.

Similar linkages should be established between the ARDWESTC and the Group of African Ambassadors in New York, especially the African members of the UNCSD, to ensure better coordination. The role of the AU Office in New York in this process is crucial. A joint AU/UNECA/AfDB mechanism should be put in place to enhance the capacity of the Office.

### **2.2.2 African Development Bank**

Founded in 1963, AfDB comprises three entities: the African Development Bank, the African Development Fund (ADF) and the Nigeria Trust Fund. The Board of Governors is the Bank's highest decision-making body and is responsible for the conduct of its general operations. The Board elects the President of the Bank, who is responsible for the Bank's management and for the proper application of policies and guidelines issued by the Board. The President is supported by the Chief Economist along with five Vice-Presidents who supervise 30 departments with 57 organizational divisions and six units.

As the premier development finance institution on the continent, AfDB aims to help reduce poverty, improve living conditions in Africa and mobilize resources for the continent's economic and social development. It promotes sustainable development by financing projects, programmes and studies in the areas of agriculture, health, education, public utilities, transport, telecommunications, industry and the private sector.

The AfDB Group has, since 1968, also sought to finance non-project operations, including structural adjustment loans, policy-based reforms and various forms of technical assistance and policy advice. The Group has widened the scope of its activities to cover new initiatives such as NEPAD, water and sanitation as well as HIV/AIDS. It is also involved in important initiatives

on debt reduction under the Highly-Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, which aims at reducing the debt stock of 33 eligible countries to sustainable levels.

The Bank's MTS of 2008-2012 constitutes the main strategic framework for sustainable development.<sup>12</sup> It builds and draws on its previous multi-year Strategic Plan (2003-2007).

### **Box 6: Focus areas of the medium-term strategy of the African Development Bank**

The MTS focuses on:

- Poverty reduction, primarily by supporting the drivers of stronger and more equitable growth, opportunity and economic integration
- Full range of activities in its RMCs
- Infrastructure, governance, private sector operations, higher education, technology and vocational training
- Regional integration and fragile States, especially in post-conflict circumstances
- Gender, climate change and knowledge management
- Human development objectives and the MDGs, notably through the water and sanitation sector
- Partnerships, particularly with the private sector, to better leverage existing strengths and extend effective outreach and impact.

**Source:** AfDB. Available from <http://www.afdb.org>

### ***Progress made***

Within the framework of its MTS, AfDB has provided high-impact, well-focused integrated support to development. It has also put in place a *Green Growth Strategy*, whose objectives include ensuring sustainable and equitable economic growth, climate and environment protection, ensuring efficient use of natural capital and promoting best practices.

At the national level, AfDB promotes the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development by taking these considerations into account during the design and implementation phases of its projects. The Bank also sponsors capacity-building programmes to raise awareness of sustainable development and of the need for an integrated approach to development. Further, it hosts international and regional gatherings on sustainable development, publishes the *Africa Development Report*, and partners with AU and UNECA on the Climate for Development in Africa programme (ClimDev).<sup>13</sup>

A major AfDB objective is support to higher education, science, technology and to vocational training. It also aims to deepen knowledge on the linkages between employment, youth and skills development at the country level, as well as to improve multi-stakeholder participation in education through the promotion of PPPs in the sector.

AfDB has also aligned its agriculture portfolio with CAADP. The Agriculture Strategy 2010-2014, for example, is an integrated response to the challenges of enhancing agricultural productivity, food security and poverty reduction. It is within this context that the AfDB invested approximately US\$53 million in the Mali Markala Sugar Project, which is expected to develop

<sup>12</sup> African Development Bank, *Mid-Term Review of the Bank Group's Medium-Term Strategy 2008-2012*, AfDB/BD/WP/2011/52 and AfDF/BD/WP/2011/30, 11 April 2011.

<sup>13</sup> AfDB, *Annual Report 2010*.

14,132 hectares of farmland and produce an annual yield of 1.48 million tons of sugarcane. This will enable Mali to be self-sufficient in sugar and therefore reduce imports with a direct positive effect on its balance of payments, macro-economic resilience and social cohesion.

In the same vein, AfDB has been supporting African countries to access global resources to help finance initiatives related to climate change, while developing its own innovative mechanisms such as the Africa Carbon Support Project, the ClimDev Africa Programme, the Congo Basin Forest Fund and the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa.

Besides the strategies and policies put in place, the Bank has made significant strides in developing an appropriate institutional structure that enhances horizontal and vertical programmatic linkages and integrated delivery of programmes and projects to satisfy sustainability and poverty-reduction objectives. For example, prior to 1 January 2002, the Bank was divided into four groups, the Presidency and three Vice-Presidencies - for Planning and Finance (FPVP), for Corporate Management (CMVP), and for Operations (OPVP). The OPVP included five country departments covering the North, West, Central, East, and South regions, a Private Sector Department, and the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (OESU) established in 1996. On 1 January 2002, the Bank was substantially reorganized. The OPVP was divided into Operations Vice-Presidencies, covering operations in the East, North and South Regions, and in the West and Central Regions, respectively. The OESU, renamed the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Unit (PSDU), was moved from the Operations Vice-Presidency to a newly created Vice-Presidency for Policy, Planning and Research (PRVP). The Head of PSDU reported directly to the PRVP Vice-President. The transfer of the PSDU from the operations part of the Bank to the PRVP was to ensure that environmental and social classification and review of Bank projects would be conducted in an objective way. It also ensured that project environmental and social reviews would be done in close collaboration with operational personnel and projects developed and modified to incorporate sustainability dimensions.

### ***Recommendations***

Various recommendations made in the previous sections are equally valid for AfDB, and are therefore to be taken into account alongside with the following subsequent recommendations.

Limited financing is a persistent constraint in the implementation of sustainable development plans and programmes at subregional, national and local levels. AfDB, in collaboration with AU, UNECA and NPCA, should analyse and elaborate possible mechanisms for financing sustainable development programmes, taking into account the region's specificities and priorities.

In collaboration with AU, UNECA and NPCA, AfDB should deepen capacity-building programmes to strengthen the capacity of RECs and member States in the application of such integration tools as natural resources accounting, economic valuation of environment and natural resources, environmental and social impact assessment, strategic environmental assessment and other integration tools.

In order to boost the sense of ownership of projects, AfDB should promote greater multi-stakeholder participation in project design and implementation at all levels. In particular, the participation of the rural community in all phases of the project cycle should ensure that local culture, and traditional knowledge and wisdom are taken into account.

The scope of the EIA that routinely precedes project decisions should be widened to cover social issues such as teenage pregnancy and the spread of HIV/AIDS, which are associated with major projects in rural areas.

Feasibility studies that pay scant attention to integration account for a number of 'white elephant' projects across the continent. AfDB should therefore ensure that the projects it funds address multidimensional concerns.

### 2.2.3 United Nations institutions

#### *United Nations Economic Commission for Africa*

The five United Nations Regional Commissions provide intergovernmental frameworks for regional cooperation, economic and social development as well as for addressing sustainable development issues. On account of their unique convening power in organizing ministerial conferences and high-level meetings to further the implementation of regional and global sustainable development action plans, the WSSD mandated the Regional Commissions to:

- a) Promote the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development into their work in a balanced manner. They should in this regard enhance their capacity through internal actions and be provided with external support;
- b) Facilitate and promote balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development into the work of the regional, subregional and other bodies, for example, by facilitating and strengthening the exchange of experiences, best practices, case studies and partnerships;
- c) Assist in mobilizing technical and financial assistance for regional and subregional programmes; and
- d) Promote multi-stakeholder participation and encourage partnerships to support the implementation of Agenda 21 at regional and subregional levels.

UNECA has responded to this mandate through various measures such as the setting-up of various sectoral committees including the CFSSD and its predecessor, the Africa Committee on Sustainable Development (ACSD); convening the RIMs; establishment of the Africa RCM in support of AU and its NEPAD programme; and publication of SDRA. The response has also included programme development and implementation in specific sectors such as climate change, water, mining and trade. The Commission also embarked on internal reforms and reorganization that aim at enhancing its response to the tasks assigned to it by WSSD and by United Nations General Assembly resolution 57/7 of 2002.

CFSSD is a multi-stakeholder organ composed of policymakers and high-level experts from Government and non-government actors from the 53 member States of UNECA. It meets every two years and provides policy guidance to the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division of UNECA. It serves equally as the platform for the Africa RIMs of UNCSD, and undertakes periodic review of the implementation of Agenda 21 and the JPOI. Further, it advises the Commission on the integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development; promotes the formulation of policies and measures on sustainable

development; and promotes information exchange and experience sharing on sustainable development.

In addition to CFSSD, there are six other committees that UNECA has put in place and which also deal with various aspects of sustainable development. These are the Committee on Women and Development (CWD), Committee on Development Information, Science and Technology (CODIST), Committee on Human and Social Development, Committee on Trade, Regional Cooperation and Integration (CTRCI), Committee on Governance and Popular Participation (CGPP) and the Committee on Statistics.<sup>14</sup>

The RIMs stem from the decision of ECOSOC to invite the Regional Commissions to organize these meetings in collaboration with the Secretariat of UNCSD, regional and subregional organizations and bodies, the regional offices of funds, programmes and international finance and trade institutions; and other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system. The objectives of RIMs include contributing to advancing the implementation of Agenda 21, the PFIA 21 and JPOI by, among other actions, providing input to the Secretary-General's reports and the sessions of UNCSD.

SDRA was launched in the 2004-2005 biennium as an important medium for monitoring and assessing as well as promoting balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development in Africa. Since then, it has occupied a unique and important niche in promoting the development and implementation of sustainable development policies, plans and programmes in the region.

The RCM is a mechanism for enhancing United Nations system-wide coherence, coordination and cooperation at the regional and subregional levels to "Deliver as One" in support of the AU and the NEPAD programme. It was established as part of United Nations reform to improve coherence, promote synergy and coordination among United Nations agencies and organizations in Africa, in order to improve their collective response to the priority needs of each of the five subregions.

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<sup>14</sup> UNECA, *Review of the Intergovernmental Machinery of the Economic Commission for Africa*. Note by the Secretariat. 1 March 2007 (E/ECA/COE/26/10),



## Box 7: UNECA Intergovernmental Committees

- Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development

The Committee serves as a forum of experts that provides advice to the Commission in the interlinked areas of food security and environment. It provides a platform for advocacy and assessment of follow-up activities by African Governments to regional and global plans of action, such as the relevant decisions and outcomes of the WSSD.

- Committee on Governance and Popular Participation

The Committee serves as a forum for discussion on issues related to the promotion of good governance and the participatory development in Africa. It oversees the work of UNECA in the areas of governance, public administration, private-sector development, engagement of civil society, and support to the APRM.

- Committee on Development Information, Science and Technology

The Committee aims to strengthen the role of the Commission in assisting its member States to develop their national information and communication infrastructure (NICI), as well as integrate science and technology in their development programmes and strategies. The Committee also addresses issues related to knowledge and information services, these being the key to forwarding the African development agenda.

- Committee on Trade and Regional Cooperation and Integration

The Committee promotes the implementation of measures designed to strengthen economic cooperation and integration among African countries. It coordinates and harmonizes economic policies among African countries as a prerequisite for accelerating regional economic integration. In view of the importance of trade in regional cooperation and integration, the Committee also focuses on issues related to intra-African and international trade. In addition, the Committee also deals with natural resources development and management.

- Committee on Women and Development

The Committee provides guidance to the Commission in its work on gender and women in development. It continues to provide a platform for advocacy and for assessing follow-up and implementation by African Governments of the global and regional agenda for the advancement of women, especially issues relating to the economic empowerment of women, protection of their legal and human rights and improved access to education and health.

- Committee on Statistics

The Committee, composed of experts and policymakers in the field of statistics, provides strategic directions to the work of the Commission on statistical development in Africa.

- Committee on Human and Social Development

The Committee promotes human and social development in African countries and provides guidance to the work of the UNECA subprogramme in this area. It conducts development and follow-up activities pertaining to global conferences and regional action programmes. It also reviews major trends and issues of regional interest regarding human and social development.

**Source:** UNECA Annual Report 2008 and 2010, and UNECA document E/ECA/COE/26/10, 1 March 2007

Following the adoption of NEPAD by the United Nations General Assembly, each United Nations agency was requested to examine how it should respond to the priorities of NEPAD, and resolution 57/7 of 4 November 2002. It also called upon the United Nations organizations and agencies, within their respective mandates, to align their activities in Africa with the priorities of NEPAD and to organize the activities of the United Nations system around clusters covering the priority areas of NEPAD. The resolution further urged the strengthening of this process as a means of enhancing a coordinated response of the United Nations system in support of NEPAD. The resolution specifically tasked UNECA, in its capacity as the regional arm of the United Nations in Africa, with the responsibility of coordinating United Nations support to NEPAD at the regional and subregional levels through the RCMs.

Internal reforms at UNECA were undertaken within the context of its “Repositioning UNECA” programme. Embarked upon in 2006, the repositioning UNECA initiative was built on the principles of excellence, cost-effectiveness and enhanced partnerships to improve delivery at programme, managerial, organizational and intergovernmental levels. It was anchored on the two key pillars of promoting regional integration and helping Africa to meet its special needs. These two pillars were supplemented by two other salient thrusts focused on efforts to enhance the role of UNECA subregional offices and to leverage partnerships to scale-up the impact.

### ***Progress made***

#### ***UNECA Intergovernmental Committees***

As part of its repositioning exercise, UNECA restructured its intergovernmental machinery and realigned it with its new strategic orientation and programme structure. The restructured intergovernmental machinery has since enabled the Commission to achieve greater congruence and coherence between its subprogrammes and sectoral committees.<sup>15</sup>

A review of the CFSSD and its predecessors has revealed that together, the two mechanisms have:

- a) Fostered partnerships among United Nations agencies and African regional and subregional institutions to support African countries in implementing sustainable development commitments, and prepare for and follow-up on the outcomes of the UNCSD sessions;
- b) Ensured that the concerns and priorities of Africa are well articulated in the outcomes of the various sessions of UNCSD, by facilitating the provision of substantive inputs to the United Nations Secretary-General’s reports and the UNCSD review and policy sessions;
- c) Created awareness to enhance implementation of sustainable development commitments in the region;
- d) Contributed to the promotion of balanced integration of the three pillars by enhanced advocacy and capacity-building in the application of integration tools; and
- e) Facilitated the production of the SDRA as a monitoring and advocacy tool for sustainable development.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> See also UNECA, *Africa Committee on Sustainable Development Bulletin*. Various editions.

### ***Regional Implementation Meetings***

RIMs have enhanced the review of progress in the implementation of Agenda 21, the PFIA21 and the JPOI commitments. Although most member States are represented by diplomatic missions in Addis Ababa during RIMs, the RIMs outcomes have adequately informed the deliberations at UNCSD sessions in New York, as evidenced by the reports of the various sessions.

### ***Sustainable Development Report on Africa***

SDRA provides relevant, robust and quality analyses of priority sustainable development issues. This should be supported by wide dissemination and advocacy to achieve the desired impact.<sup>17</sup>

In terms of institutional linkages, SDRA is often produced in collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies, in particular UNEP, FAO, the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, AUC, AfDB, NPCA, RECs, the World Tourism Organization, and UNDP.

### ***Regional Coordination Mechanisms***

Overall, RCM has come a long way since its establishment. Effective coordination has ensured increased and high-level participation of some 30 United Nations agencies and African regional and subregional organizations in the RCM process. This has led to active institutional support and technical assistance to AU and NEPAD, especially in priority areas such as CAADP, APRM and Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness.<sup>18</sup>

#### **Box 8: UNECA support to the APRM process**

1. UNECA has provided extensive technical and material support to the APRM Panel of Eminent Persons, the APRM Secretariat and the participating countries at each of the five stages of the review process. This ranges from country support missions to the drafting of background documents, country review visits, the drafting of country reports, the final country report and the National Programme of Action and publication of the country review reports. UNECA has also been supporting participating countries in mobilizing stakeholder participation and fostering peer learning among APRM countries by identifying best practices in the APRM process and promoting their replication. In addition, it has provided technical assistance in integrating the APRM with existing national development strategies.
2. UNECA has supported the APRM process by reviewing APRM-related documents (country self-assessment reports and country programmes of action) and contributing to the preparation of documents (country profiles, background papers, issues papers and final review reports). It has also collaborated closely with United Nations agencies and other partners, in particular AfDB and the RECs, in supporting NEPAD infrastructure development.
3. UNECA has continued to support the APRM process and has contributed to the increasing capacity of member States to conduct the APRM, of the continental Secretariat of APRM based in Midrand, South Africa, to manage the process better, and of various stakeholders to engage in the process. A practical demonstration of these joint efforts is that some 30 countries have acceded to the APRM process while others are completing it.

**Source:** ECA Annual Reports (2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010)

In addition to the collective activities undertaken by United Nations entities in support of NEPAD, specific assistance was offered by individual entities to advance the work in the various the-

<sup>17</sup> UNECA, *Sustainable Development Report on Africa*, 2008.

<sup>18</sup> UNECA, *Annual Report 2010*, p.20.

matic clusters. UNECA has supported implementation of NEPAD priorities, most of which are at the core of its mandate, through its analytical work and technical assistance in different areas of socio-economic development.

The 10 meetings that the RCM convened between 2002 and 2009, facilitated institutional interlinkages and a coordinated approach to nine thematic clusters which corresponded to the NEPAD priority areas: infrastructure development; governance; peace and security; agriculture, food security and rural development; industry, trade and market access; environment, population and urbanization; human resources development, employment and HIV/AIDS; science and technology; and communication, advocacy and outreach.<sup>19</sup>

Through the RCM Secretariat, UNECA has been able to provide more strategic coordination and support. The coordination of clusters has been strengthened with an increasing number of jointly implemented programmes. In addition, steps have been taken to establish subregional coordination mechanisms in order to provide more coherent support to RECs and to complete the missing link between the regional and country levels. Such a mechanism has been in operation in Central Africa through the efforts of the UNECA subregional office (SRO-CA). Similar efforts are under way in East and Southern Africa to establish a subregional coordination mechanism to adequately support the RECs and improve synergy between RCM and the Regional Directors Team.<sup>20</sup>

In recent years, UNECA has embarked on efforts to scale-up its technical support to the AUC. With the recent formulation of the AUC MTS, the strong partnership between the two institutions was boosted. The UNECA Business Plan 2010-2012, prepared in 2009, was substantially aligned with AUC strategy. Ongoing collaboration with AUC, particularly in the areas of trade, gender, ICT, science and technology, governance and public administration, land policy and climate change, were streamlined and strengthened. Similarly, various joint initiatives in support of knowledge generation and dissemination continue, such as, publication of the *Economic Report on Africa, Assessing Regional Integration in Africa*, and the *Millennium Development Goals Report*. Joint implementation of activities includes the Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.<sup>21</sup>

## Repositioning UNECA

As a result of the repositioning exercise, UNECA has become a stronger, more relevant and better-focused organization, able to deliver more effectively on its mandate. Its credentials both as a regional forum for policy dialogue and as an advocate for the continent's development have been enhanced.<sup>22</sup>

The repositioning and subsequent review of the process enabled UNECA to make remarkable progress in integrated programme implementation and in fostering linkages with regional and other institutions. Outcomes of the strong partnership forged with AUC and AfDB include: joint ministerial meetings; joint knowledge generation and dissemination activities; joint institutions such as the AU/UNECA/AfDB Joint Secretariat; and other initiatives such as the

19 UNECA, *Outcome Documents of the Regional Coordination Mechanism of the United Nations Agencies and Organizations Working in Africa in Support of the African Union and its NEPAD Programme*, several years.

20 UNECA, Annual Report 2010, p.20, para. 116.

21 UNECA, Business Plan 2010-2012; UNECA Annual Reports, 2008, 2009, 2010.

22 UNECA, Business Plan 2010-2012.

ClimDev Africa Programme. Partnership with bilateral partners led to increased funding support for the 2007-2009 Business Plan, reaching \$72 million by the end of 2009. Linkages with the regional institutions were strengthened with the signing of multi-year programmes by the SROs with their respective RECs.<sup>23</sup>

The repositioning and the review have also led to enhanced internal programmatic linkages. For example, the former Trade, Finance and Economic Development Division, was reconfigured to become the Economic Development and NEPAD Division, covering macro-economic analysis, NEPAD, finance and investment, and MDGs/LDCs sections. Bringing NEPAD and the MDGs/Barbados Programme of Action together in one division is expected to promote coherence across the various global and African frameworks.

Water-related functions were moved back from the former NEPAD and Regional Integration Division (NRID) to FSSD.

The former NRID was reconfigured as the Regional Integration and Trade Division (RITD) incorporating regional integration, infrastructure and trade sections. This was meant to help overcome the fragmentation of the trade sector, which was split across two divisions, with one handling intra-African trade and the other international trade.

UNECA on one hand has created a critical mass of planning, monitoring and evaluation resources by merging these functions, and on the other hand, has created a new section to handle quality assurance. The refined and strengthened planning, monitoring and evaluation structure has provided not only a critical mass with added capability but also enhanced synergy between the functions. This structure is expected to result in establishment of an integrated programme management loop that should fully satisfy the requirements of the results-based, sustainable management approach. The strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013 is a product of this new synergized structure.<sup>24</sup>

### **Challenges**

While greater coherence has been established between UNECA intergovernmental machinery and subprogrammes, there is little evidence of stronger linkage among the intergovernmental sectoral committees themselves. Such linkage is required to create synergies, avoid duplication and enhance balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development in the work of UNECA.

The process of development for the first issue of SDRA (SDRA-I) included compilation of indicators from a wide range of international sources, which were, in some cases, complemented by indicators from national sources. However, due to paucity of data, the analysis in part I remained largely descriptive.

The ability of UNECA to track progress on sustainable development, especially implementation of institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development, is being hampered by the low response to the questionnaires that UNECA sends out to member States at regular intervals. In 2005, 22 countries responded to the questionnaire on institutional frameworks at the national

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> UNECA, *Annual Report 2010*.

and subnational level. In the same year, 16 countries responded to the questionnaire on national strategies for sustainable development, and in 2011, 16 countries responded to the questionnaires on institutional and strategic frameworks on sustainable development.

Notwithstanding, the increasing support of the United Nations system to AU and its NEPAD programme, and of coordination between UNECA and NPCA within the framework of the RCM, remains challenging. According to NPCA, the lack of adequate coordination leaves the NEPAD organs unaware of some interventions that partners report within the framework.

In spite of the progress made, the United Nations system faces a number of challenges and constraints in providing support to NEPAD at the regional level. First, an increased financial commitment by the United Nations system for NEPAD programmes will depend on whether the agencies receive additional resources for these programmes. Second, if further progress is to be made, increased commitment and institutional leadership are essential to sustain the existing momentum and intensify support to AU and its NEPAD programme for maximum impact.

### **Recommendations**

There is need to strengthen the linkage among the various intergovernmental sectoral committees themselves, especially in cross-cutting areas such as gender mainstreaming, technology transfer, trade and regional integration, statistics, social and economic development as well as sustainable development.

RECs should be given the role of producing subregional reports, for more involvement and ownership.

The coordination arrangements currently in place for the regional preparations for Rio+20 could be leveraged to enhance implementation, monitoring and reporting on sustainable development at regional level.

There is need to examine how the Africa RCM of the United Nations agencies in support of AU and its NEPAD programme, could be effectively involved, to complement the CFSSD process.<sup>25</sup>

Stronger linkages should be forged between the CFSSD Bureau and the African representatives in the UNCSD Bureau with a view to enhancing coordination and information sharing. This issue will be included as an agenda item in the next meeting of the CFSSD.

There is the need to strengthen reporting by member States to facilitate the preparation of regional review reports as well as the need to enhance their participation in RIMs. Additionally, the coordination arrangements currently in place for the regional preparations for Rio+20 could be leveraged to enhance implementation and reporting.

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<sup>25</sup> UNECA, *Final Report of the Workshop on Institutional and Strategic Frameworks for Sustainable Development in Africa*. Addis Ababa, 2011,

There is a need to ensure effective linkage between the global, regional, subregional and national processes in advancing sustainable development. In this regard, resources should be mobilized to ensure that member States and other stakeholders can participate more meaningfully in the RIMs. Furthermore, African regional and subregional institutions, particularly RECs, should play an active role in the organization of RIMs.

Updated information on National Focal Points for Sustainable Development should be readily available to UNECA, as coordinator of the RIMs, to facilitate contact.

For SDRA to truly become an instrument and an authoritative source of information on progress towards sustainable development in Africa, it would be expected to provide relevant, robust and quality analyses of priority sustainable development issues, based on an agreed comprehensive and integrated sustainable development indicator framework. Therefore, it is deemed important to progressively develop a sustainable development indicator framework for Africa, to enable integrated assessment of the different dimensions, in a manner that is responsive to the continent's priorities and specificities.

Participating United Nations agencies and African regional and subregional organizations should make the mechanism sustainable, by showing more commitment to the process and ensuring that desirable outcomes and impacts are registered. Also, the smooth integration of NEPAD into AU structures and processes will ensure continuity and better coordination in the implementation of cluster activities. The mechanism and its clusters should play a role in facilitating the smooth transition.<sup>26</sup>

The RCM should also explore ways to have non-resident agencies take part in the process.

While some United Nations agencies consult with the NPCA regularly, a large number of them do not. It is therefore important that all the United Nations agencies consult regularly with NPCA.

### **United Nations Development Programme**

UNDP was established in 1965 as the development agency of the United Nations system. With a presence in some 177 countries, UNDP intervenes in various fields of development including its core focus areas: democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, environment and energy, and HIV/AIDS.<sup>27</sup>

Agenda 21 identified UNDP as one of the core agencies for delivering sustainable development at the global, regional, subregional and national levels, in collaboration with other United Nations bodies and specialized agencies.

Thus, UNDP has become a critical global institution for the implementation of sustainable development, partly because it focuses on issues that are highly relevant to all three pillars of sustainable development, but also because it has the capacity, budget and global reach to significantly advance sustainable development objectives.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.undp.org>.

### ***Progress made***

Though UNDP primarily represents the 'social' pillar of sustainable development, it also focuses heavily on the environmental pillar through its environment and energy programme, and plays a key role in integrating the three pillars of sustainable development at global, regional and national levels. An important aspect of the work of UNDP in Africa, for example, is to help national government and communities to secure the environmental conditions crucial to reducing poverty, achieving all the MDGs, integrating environment into development strategies, building partnerships, securing resources, and moving to sustainable low carbon, climate-resilient paths of development.

Through its Capacity 21 programme, UNDP supported a number of African countries in establishing their NCSDs and developed programmes to promote sustainability and address environmental concerns as guiding principles in the development process.<sup>28</sup> UNDP is represented in all African countries and allocates over 50 per cent of its global programming budget to Africa. As a result of this engagement, the partnership between the UNDP and other regional organizations such as UNECA, AU and NPCA is strategically important. It has used several initiatives such as the Territorial Approach to Climate Change in Ethiopia, to promote multi-stakeholder participation. It has also supported decentralization by helping regions in Ethiopia to prepare their own climate-resilient adaptation plans.

### ***Recommendations***

The evaluation of the United Nations 'Delivering as One' pilot phase in eight countries shows that it is indeed important that the United Nations should deliver as one.<sup>29</sup> The United Nations development system should therefore coordinate and collaborate closely to ensure synergy and coherence at the national level.

UNDP and the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) should deepen their support to the 33 LDCs in their preparation for Rio+20 and for implementation of the outcome of the Conference.

UNDP should scale-up its support to African countries to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner by mainstreaming sustainable development in their national planning processes. It should also help build reporting capacity at national and subnational levels.

UNDP should also engage in more catalytic use of ODA to unleash the power of all relevant development resources, to drive the transformation towards sustainability. African countries should ensure that Rio+20 helps to accelerate key transformations in the way the United Nations development system and the international financial institutions work.

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<sup>28</sup> UNDP, *Capacity 21 Evaluation Report 1993-2001*, March 2002. Available from [http://www.beta.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/capacity-development/cap21\\_global\\_evaluation\\_1993-2002](http://www.beta.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/capacity-development/cap21_global_evaluation_1993-2002).

<sup>29</sup> UNECA, *How Delivering as One Adds Value: Stories and Testimonies from Eight Programme Pilot Countries*, 2011; also available from [http://www.undg.org/docs/11313/DaO-Thematic-Report\\_final.pdf](http://www.undg.org/docs/11313/DaO-Thematic-Report_final.pdf); and see UNECA, *Annual Report 2010*, p.20, para. 116.



## United Nations Environment Programme

As the global environmental authority, UNEP sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. In addition to its MTS that focuses on six thematic cross-cutting areas, UNEP has adopted a Strategic Framework for Africa (RSFA) that provides strategic direction and defines modalities for the analysis of environment, development challenges and opportunities. It also identifies the delivery mechanisms for the region. The UNEP Regional Office for Africa (ROA) plays a central role in coordinating the programme of work in the region.<sup>30</sup>

### *Progress made*

The UNEP programme in Africa aims at assisting African Governments and major stakeholders in finding an integrated response to the challenges of climate change, the energy crisis, the persistent extreme poverty, food insecurity, inadequate health services, political and social crisis. UNEP delivery in Africa is done through a coordinated and multi-stakeholder process that involves UNEP and various partners, Governments, institutions and ministerial forums, non-governmental agencies, RECs, other United Nations sister agencies, major groups and other stakeholders, CSOs, the private sector, local authorities, and the regional centres of excellence.

Through the Africa regional programme, UNEP ensures that there is better coherence and coordination in the effective delivery of environmental capacity-building and technical support at all levels, in response to country needs and priorities. In this regard, UNEP has invested considerable effort in building the capacity of African States in the fields of compliance with and enforcement of environmental law, at the national level.

For UNEP, the biggest challenge facing Africa is poverty. Providing decent livelihoods must therefore be the main priority of the continent. This requires, inter alia, a balanced convergence of environmental and socio-economic policies which constitutes the main objective of the green economy concept that UNEP spearheads.

In each of the six programmatic areas, UNEP deals with multi-stakeholders, and its unit on major groups collates and processes the inputs of the major groups into the various focus areas.

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<sup>30</sup> <http://www.unep.org/roa/AboutROA/tabid/7000/Default.aspx>.

### **Box 9: Focus areas of the UNEP Medium-term Strategy 2010-2013**

The MTS provides vision and direction through the following six cross-cutting thematic priorities:

(a) climate change; (b) disasters and conflicts; (c) ecosystem management; (d) environmental governance; (e) harmful substances and hazardous waste; and (f) resource efficiency, sustainable consumption and production.

Objectives in the various areas include: for climate change, strengthening the ability of countries to integrate climate-change responses into national development processes; for disasters and conflicts, minimizing environmental threats to human well-being, arising from the environmental causes and consequences of conflicts and disasters; for ecosystem management, ensuring that countries utilize the ecosystem approach to enhance human well-being; for environmental governance, ensuring that environmental governance at country, regional and global levels is strengthened to address agreed environmental priorities; for harmful substances and hazardous waste, minimizing the impact of harmful substances and hazardous waste on the environment and human beings; and for resource efficiency, sustainable consumption and production, ensuring that natural resources are produced, processed and consumed in a more environmentally-sustainable way.

*Source:* <http://www.unep.org/documents.multilingual/default.asp>

#### ***Recommendations***

In order to ensure synergy, UNEP and partner organizations should streamline mandates, focus on commonalities, and create mechanisms to influence decision-making processes at all levels. There is much emphasis on the collaboration between UNDP and UNEP in the interest of resource efficiency. The Bali Strategic Plan for Capacity-Building and Technology Development agreed at the Governing Council meeting in 2005 involved the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNDP and UNEP to deliver capacity-building initiatives on environmental matters at the country level. This partnership should be strengthened.

According to UNEP, the balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development can be achieved through the strengthening of the environment pillar, as this is the weakest link at all levels.

#### **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

The FAO mandate is to raise levels of nutrition, enhance agricultural productivity, improve the lives of rural populations, and contribute to the growth of the world economy. In 1995, FAO established a Sustainable Development Department, in response to the need to take a more holistic and strategic approach to development support and poverty alleviation. It focused on four crucial elements of sustainability: people's participation and mainstreaming of women in development; agrarian transformation and institutional reform; research, extension and education; and natural resource monitoring and management.

This Department is charged, among other functions, with the responsibility of coordinating FAO follow-up to UNCED, post-UNCED conventions and the international summits on population, social development and women.

#### ***Progress made***

FAO promotes sustainability concepts, strategies and methods in its focus areas, and helps integrate them in the development programmes of both FAO member countries and its own

technical units. Its Sustainable Development Department serves as a global reference centre for knowledge and advice on the integration of the biophysical, biological, socio-economic and social dimensions of sustainable development.

FAO, as a technical agency of the United Nations, provides a neutral forum for discussion and policy formation on major food and agricultural issues. Through consultations with its governing bodies and regular contacts with member States, scientific bodies, and bodies or forums that involve civil society and the private sector, FAO brings global imperatives related to food and agriculture to the forefront of international attention.

The work of FAO with major groups on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD) has become an example of good practice on how regular multi-stakeholder dialogue can help to raise awareness, build broad consensus, and mobilize preliminary resources to achieve balanced integration of all aspects of sustainable development. FAO actively collaborated with NEPAD to develop the CAADP report, adoption of which was considered an important step towards ensuring agricultural stability and economic development in the region.

### ***Recommendations***

As the main United Nations body dealing with agriculture, the support given by FAO to African agriculture and food security is crucial. The organization should support agriculture policies that take into account the balanced integration of the social, economic and environmental aspects of agriculture. In particular, it should ensure that policies and investments fully integrate agricultural development, sustainable use of natural resources and enhanced food security. In this regard, FAO, in partnership with other relevant bodies, should support African countries in putting policies in place that best address development, food security, poverty reduction and natural resource use in an integrated manner and should identify how aid and public expenditures can ensure balance between socio-economic development and environmental protection.

As an organization that operates at all levels in countries, FAO should also promote multi-stakeholder participation in agricultural policymaking and implementation, as well as ensure that policies are long-term and broad-based to address intergenerational and intra-generational equity needs. On account of the importance of agriculture to African economies, the organization should play an active part in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UN-DAF) to ensure programmatic linkages and trade-offs at the various levels within the countries.

## 2.3 Institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development at the subregional level

The RECs constitute the main institutional frameworks at the subregional level. Established mostly between the 1970s and the end of the 1990s, the RECs have a lot in common. They are all intergovernmental bodies and purport to respond to the provisions of the 1991 Abuja Treaty that provided for establishment of the RECs as building blocks of the African Economic Community (AEC). However, only the following eight have been recognized as such by the AU since 2006: SADC, ECOWAS, EAC, COMESA, AMU, the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States, ECCAS, and IGAD.

Structurally, the RECs are similar, with Heads of State forming the supreme decision-making authority. Their councils of ministers, made up essentially of national ministers responsible for integration or foreign affairs, report to the Heads of State. The executive secretariats are responsible for the daily management of community affairs.

Over the years, the RECs have put various programmes in place on the environment, agriculture, natural resources, energy, peace and security, governance and socio-economic development. Invariably, these individual programmes are anchored in long-term strategies that constitute the main regional development framework.

In SADC, the main instruments for sustainable development are the RISDP and the SIPO which provide the frameworks for the SADC regional integration and programme of long-term economic and social policies.<sup>31</sup>

The RISDP seeks to provide strategic direction for SADC programmes and activities, and to align the strategic objectives and priorities of SADC with the policies and strategies for achieving its long-term goals. It constitutes the regional expression of the NEPAD programme and vehicle for achieving the ideals NEPAD espouses.

As a sustainable development instrument, RISDP focuses on poverty eradication, HIV and AIDS, gender equality and development, science and technology, environment and sustainable development, private sector development, and trade and economic development. It also focuses on tourism development, sustainable food security, human and social development, climate change, wildlife conservation, forestry and trans-frontier conservation areas. Its overall objectives are to deepen regional integration, integrate SADC into the world economy, and promote equitable and balanced development including poverty eradication and gender equality.

In ECOWAS, the main frameworks are the PRS-WA, Vision 2020, the CDP, and the ECOWAS Strategic Plans 2007-2010 and 2010-2015. Both the CDP and ECOWAS strategic plans have been developed as implementation mechanisms of the vision.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> SADC. *30 Years of Progress*. Available from [http://www.sadc.int/index/browser\\_page\\_106](http://www.sadc.int/index/browser_page_106); SADC, *Consolidated Text of the Treaty of the Southern African Development Community as Amended* in 2003.

<sup>32</sup> UNECA SRO-WA. *Report of the Thirteenth Session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts From West Africa, March 2006*, Available from <http://www.uneca.org/wa/documents/Rapport/final-eng.pdf>; *Regional Integration for Growth and Poverty Reduction in West Africa: Strategies and Plan of Action, Regional Strategy*, Paper prepared for

The PRS-WA is a response to the fragmented approaches to poverty reduction within the region. It offers an integrated framework that seeks to strengthen national strategies and regional programmes in various sectors in order to deepen integration and poverty reduction.<sup>33</sup>

The strategic plans are steering tools for ensuring that the priorities defined by member States are those that are effectively and efficiently implemented by the Commission. They draw their basis from the Constituent Treaty of ECOWAS, Protocols, Rules and subsequent Decisions.<sup>34</sup>

Launched in 2007, the CDP aims at translating the long-term development vision of the subregion into coherent and concrete programme of actions. It focuses on ten strategic axes that are meant to serve as the coordinating and convergence framework for regional action programmes.

### **Box 10: ECOWAS Vision 2020 objectives**

- Moving from an “ECOWAS of States” to an “ECOWAS of People”.
- Creating conducive environment where people live in dignity and in a peaceful environment where rule of law and good governance prevail.
- Achieving a borderless West African subregion.
- Establishing a subregion well integrated into the global village and deriving maximum benefits from globalization.

**Source:** ECOWAS Commission

In Central Africa, the subregional frameworks are the ECCAS Vision 2025 and the CEMAC-REP. These two instruments are mutually consistent and complementary and both are geared towards rationalizing the two RECs. They are based on sector programmes and plans in five key areas: (a) capacity-building, especially for the management bodies of ECCAS and CEMAC, (b) regional transport infrastructure development, (c) the promotion of preferential agreements within ECCAS and establishment of a common market in CEMAC, (d) free movement of people and goods, and (e) management of the Congo Basin, environmental protection and natural resource management. In addition to Vision 2025 and the REP, the region’s sustainable development strategies include the operationalization of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX).<sup>35</sup>

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the West African Economic and Monetary Union Commission and Economic Community of West African States Executive Secretariat, 2006. Available from <http://ecowascdp.org/cdp>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> ECOWAS Commission, *Strategic Plan 2007-2010 and Strategy 2011-2015*, Available from <http://www.spu.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/REGIONAL-STRATEGIC-PLAN-RFV-in-English.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Damien Come and Georges Anoumou, *ECCAS or CEMAC: Which Regional Economic Community for Central Africa?* Monograph 115, Institute of Security Studies, 2011.

### **Box 11: Structure of the Peace and Security Council (COPAX) of Central Africa**

The idea of COPAX was mooted during a summit conference of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, which took place in Yaoundé, Cameroon, 25–26 February 1999. Its objectives included the promotion, maintenance and consolidation of peace and security in Central Africa. It has the following organs:

- The **Central African Early Warning System**, which collects and analyses data for the early detection and prevention of crises.
- The **Defence and Security Commission**, which is the meeting of chiefs of staff of national armies and commanders-in-chief of police and security forces from the different members. Its role is to plan, organize and provide advice to the decision-making bodies of the Community in order to initiate military operations if needed.
- The **Multinational Force of Central Africa**, which is a non-permanent force consisting of military contingents from member States, whose purpose is to accomplish missions of peace, security and humanitarian relief.

**Source:** <http://www.ceeac-eccas.org>

In East Africa, the main regional framework is the EAC five-year development strategy 2006-2010. The strategy document spells out the policy guidelines, implementation schedules and priority programmes on environment and natural resources management, wildlife conservation, sustainable development of the Lake Victoria Basin, integrated water, mineral and energy resources management and health.

For IGAD, the regional programme is the environment and natural resources strategy which aims at assisting and complementing the efforts of member States in environment and natural resources management.<sup>36</sup>

In COMESA, the main framework is the 2011-2015 strategic plan that focuses on six priorities: removal of barriers to factor mobility; building competitive productive capacity; addressing supply-side constraints related to infrastructure; peace and security; institutional development; and integration of cross-cutting issues including gender, youth, socio-environmental health, climate change, knowledge society, statistics, and aid for trade.<sup>37</sup> Agriculture has been given special attention in the plan.

Although AMU has yet to develop a full regional programme, there are a number of sectoral plans on agriculture, the environment, food security, natural resources and desertification. In addition, UNECA has initiated action to spur subregional activities in the area of sustainable development through the Intergovernmental Committees of Experts (ICEs) that meet at regular intervals.

<sup>36</sup> Intergovernmental Authority for Development, *Environment and Natural Resources Strategy*, 2008. Available from [http://igad.int/attachments/159\\_IGAD\\_ENR\\_Strategy.Pdf](http://igad.int/attachments/159_IGAD_ENR_Strategy.Pdf).

<sup>37</sup> UNECA, *Role of COMESA in Advancing Africa's Sustainable Development Agenda*. Available from [http://www.uneca.org/eca\\_programmes/sdd/events/Rio20/Workshop-Institutional-StrategicFrameworks/Day%20Two/COMESA-Presentation.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/eca_programmes/sdd/events/Rio20/Workshop-Institutional-StrategicFrameworks/Day%20Two/COMESA-Presentation.pdf).

### ***Progress made***

The conclusion that can be drawn from assessment of the progress and constraints of RECs could be situated at two levels, one specific and the other more general. At the specific level, the following observations sum up the findings at the regional level.

#### ***Southern African Development Community***

The mid-term review of the RISDP shows that some progress has been made in the past five years with regard to institutional linkages and multi-stakeholder participation in the implementation process.<sup>38</sup> Accordingly, for the implementation of the programme, the Summit of Heads of State exercises continuous oversight using progress reports from the Secretariat. At the technical level, the Secretariat coordinates and monitors implementation through an integrated monitoring system and the SADC National Committees coordinate and monitor implementation at the national level with regular feedback from the Secretariat. In addition, a stakeholders forum that comprises members of the civil society, private sector and major groups reviews and contributes to annual progress and evaluation reports, before they are considered by the ICM, the Council and the Summit. The Summit, the Council, the Secretariat, SADC National Committees and the Stakeholders Forum are all involved in programme evaluation on a regular basis.

The SADC Industrial Upgrading and Modernization Programme is inspired by and linked to the African Union Accelerated Industrial Development in Africa Programme, which has an in-built environmental protection programme. Horizontally, this programme is also linked to the Department of Social Affairs that deals with issues such as social security. SADC has also been working with NEPAD on the PIDA master-plan.

The SADC regional agriculture policy is the regional CAADP Compact. In addition, the agriculture policy constitutes an integrating strategy that addresses environmental, economic and social concerns simultaneously. The subregion has also moved from a linear approach to an innovative systems approach which is multi-stakeholder in nature and links farmers to the market through value chain analysis.

Furthermore, although consultations on the Community's industrial and ICT policies are not sufficient, there is always an EIA of proposed interventions. In recent years, SADC has adopted an integrated approach to health issues such as HIV/AIDS in recognition of the challenges such diseases pose to sustainable development. Until recently, the Community treated HIV/AIDS in isolation, and interventions were dependent on donor funding. Moreover, HIV was never mainstreamed at the planning stage. The approach currently is to see HIV/AIDS in the context of development, human rights and gender mainstreaming, and there are plans to make everybody "AIDS competent", as is the case in Uganda. One example of the mainstreaming exercise that is underway is the Gazungula bridge project that entails establishment of an HIV clinic on site.

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<sup>38</sup> SADC, *Desk Assessment of the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2005-2010*.

### *Economic Community of West African States*

ECOWAS is considered one of the most advanced RECs on the continent in terms of the integration of community markets and free movement of the factors of production.<sup>39</sup> An assessment of the Community's Vision 2020, the CDP and other sectoral programmes reveals some progress with respect to multi-stakeholder participation, intergenerational equity and vertical and programmatic linkages with other institutions such as NEPAD and UNECA.<sup>40</sup>

The CDP formulation process was carried out on the basis of subsidiarity, collegiality and coherence. The process also involved multi-stakeholder participation including the ECOWAS Commission, other intergovernmental organizations, member States, CSOs, the private sector, research and academic institutions.

Within the ECOWAS Commission, the CDP is under the supervision of the Commissioner for Macroeconomic Policy. It is being headed by a Coordinator, who ensures information flow among all stakeholders. There is also the Internal Technical Committee (ITC) chaired by the Director of Cabinet of the President and responsible for making technical proposals during the formulation of the CDP. Parallel to these is a regional consultation body comprising all major regional actors, which ensures that all activities within the subregion are undertaken from a common standpoint. At the national level, there is the National Committee on CDP that serves as the institutional anchor of the CDP in each of the countries. Members include sectoral ministries, the civil society, private sector, research institutions, and other major groups.

Similarly, a number of programmatic and institutional linkages have been identified. For example, the ECOWAS agriculture policy (ECOWARP) is the subregional expression of CAADP. ECOWAS is also linked to UNECA through the Multi-Year Programme. Furthermore, the regional liaison officers accredited to the AUC are meant to enhance programme harmonization within the Commission, although existing evidence is insufficient to assess the impact of this new arrangement.

In general, sectoral programmes are planned for short and medium terms. Therefore, the comprehensive and long-term nature of CDP has the potential to promote coherence and build synergies between sector programmes within the ECOWAS Commission, thereby ensuring intergenerational equity.

CDP also seeks to integrate various regional and sectoral programmes, including national poverty reduction policies, and strategies developed to achieve the MDGs and the overall objectives of NEPAD, the REP for UEMOA, the Economic Partnership Agreement Development Programme and the Regional Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

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39 ECOWAS, *Deepening Regional Integration in Response to the Global Economic Crisis*. ECOWAS Commission Annual Report 2009.

40 *Driving a People Centred Regional Integration*, Address by James Victor Gbeho, President of the ECOWAS Commission on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of ECOWAS, May. Available from <http://www.ecowas.int/publications/en/speech/PresidentGbehoAdressatECOWAS36thAnniversaryPressConfab27052011.pdf>



### ***Economic Community of Central African States***

Central African States recognize the peace and security challenges they face, and the risks that these constitute for balanced and integrated development. The peace and security architecture put in place in response to these challenges constitutes the most important sustainable development strategy for the subregion.<sup>41</sup>

Therefore, international support for ECCAS Vision 2025, the CEMAC REP and various sectoral programmes must run parallel in support for COPAX and other peace and security initiatives. In the context of subsidiarity, the linkage between the AU peace and security architecture and COPAX must be strengthened through effective capacity-building.

### ***Arab Maghreb Union***

Among all the RECs, AMU seems to be the least active with regard to joint programme implementation. Although a number of regional frameworks exist,<sup>42</sup> they remain largely expressions of intentions. Individual countries in North Africa have put effective sustainable development strategies in place, anchored at the highest level. However, AMU as a regional institution requires capacity-building in order to promote balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development and enhanced intraregional coordination.

### ***Intergovernmental Authority on Development***

The IGAD strategy is a product of a multi-stakeholder participatory process. Such multi-stakeholder participation is meant not only to boost ownership but also to facilitate programme and sectoral integration. The fact that the majority of IGAD member States are also members of COMESA makes programme coordination and harmonization between the two institutions imperative.

The participation of IGAD in the African monitoring of the environment for sustainable development project as well as the tripartite agreement that exists among COMESA, IGAD and EAC since 2007 also has the potential to foster programmatic linkages among the institutions.

### ***Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa***

According to official sources of COMESA, planning for sustainable development in the subregion has been a deliberate option. Indeed, a review of the strategies shows that the preparatory stages involve extensive multi-stakeholder participation. The medium-term strategic plan, for example, involves a rigorous consultative process with Secretariat staff, several regional institutions, the private sector and CSOs. What is not clear is how far these multi-stakeholder activities have gone down to the implementation level.

The agricultural policy of the subregion has also been aligned with CAADP, focusing on incentives, inputs, institutions and infrastructure. To make agriculture and indeed the industrial development associated with it sustainable, COMESA has adopted a holistic approach that integrates environmental and climate-change management.

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41 See ECCAS and the EU Ministerial Troika, Brussels, “*Final Communiqué*”, 10 November 2008. Available from [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/er/103981.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/er/103981.pdf).

42 See UNECA and Bureau pour L’Afrique du Nord. “*Developpement durable en Afrique du Nord: Etat des lieux et perspectives.*”

Though concentrating for now on trade liberalization, the tripartite agreement between COMESA, IGAD and EAC, since 2007, has the potential to promote programmatic coordination and harmonization in other areas, especially in agriculture, as all three institutions link their agriculture programmes to CAADP.

### **Challenges**

At a more general level, the assessment reveals that the RECs have all established sustainable development programmes that are at varying levels of implementation. What is common among them is the difficulty of integrating all three dimensions of sustainable development. Like their member States, the RECs are confronted with the challenge of achieving balanced integration of the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development in planning, budgeting and implementation of plans and programmes.

The challenges in promoting sustainable development also include the complexity of the concept, and the lack of synergy between the institutions at different levels. Limited financing is another persistent constraint in integrating the various dimensions of sustainable development subregional programmes.

More specifically, the SADC Secretariat faces inadequate capacity, uneven level of implementation in member States, lack of reliable baseline data, and inadequate financial resources. Sustainability of the subregion's strategies is being equally threatened by several risk factors. There is inadequate commitment, which makes consensus difficult to attain on a number of issues. There is also insufficient economic commitment as the subregion continues to rely on external resources for financing the bulk of the regional programmes.

The principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member States is equally inimical to sustainable development on account of the ramifying effects of conflicts.

Although EIA is routinely done, it is not done in a comprehensive and integrated manner. The regional EIA focuses on fauna and flora alone. It does not look at social issues such as the impact of roads and similar projects on alcoholism and teenage pregnancy in villages through which the infrastructure projects run.

When SADC Secretariat was centralized in 2001, environment was left out, and nobody was in charge of the sector up to 2009, when a unit was set up in the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Department. Given its extensive mandate, the late start and the fact that the unit has only one professional staff, a lot needs to be done with respect to integration of environmental concerns in policy planning and implementation at Secretariat level.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, the current institutions within SADC are inadequate for addressing sustainable development.<sup>44</sup>

Additional challenges that SADC faces include: the lack of functional national institutions to effectively coordinate issues of a regional nature; difficulties in harmonization of regulatory and policy frameworks, including integration of national and regional plans; and inadequate funding for both project development and implementation.

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<sup>43</sup> Southern African Development Community and Forestry and Natural Resources, *Directorate Annual Report 2008-2009*.

<sup>44</sup> UNECA and SADC, *Review Report on Progress towards Sustainable Development in Southern Africa*, p.47.

Similarly, the challenges that ECOWAS faces relate to the difficulty of horizontal integration and interdepartmental coordination. For example, within the Commission, sustainable development is handled by several Commissioners. The Commissioner for Agriculture, Environment and Water Resources handles agriculture and deals with environmental issues such as climate change and desertification. The Commissioner for Human Development and Gender deals with social issues such as education, women's right, health matters and non-conflict humanitarian issues. Mining falls under the purview of the Commissioner for Macroeconomic Policy. Major projects that fall under the purview of the Commissioner for Infrastructure include projects that aim at providing modern fuel.<sup>45</sup>

Although the Commission meets regularly, there is little evidence of coordination at the programme level. ECOWAS itself admits that there appears to be poor linkages within and between the ECOWAS institutions.<sup>46</sup> During consultation with the Director of Strategic Planning within the context of this report, the need for a coordinating mechanism was identified.

Another major challenge is how to involve the private sector and civil society in regional integration efforts in a meaningful way, even though ECOWAS is working on ways to link private sector actors across the community, and to strengthen their commitment to developing a regional market.

199. A recent regional review has shown that in East Africa there is lack of integration of the pillars of sustainable development in the subregion, which implies that the legal, policy and institutional landscape has remained incoherent, fragmented, inefficient, ineffective and lacking in synergy.<sup>47</sup>

Central African States recognize the peace and security challenges that they face, and the risks that these constitute for the balanced and integrated development of the subregion. The peace and security architecture put in place in response to these challenges constitute the most important sustainable development strategies.

201. In the context of subsidiarity, the linkage between the AU peace and security architecture and COPAX must be strengthened through effective capacity-building. Furthermore, in Central Africa, one of the main challenges is that institutional frameworks focus largely on issues relating to the forest. These include the Central African Forest Commission; Conference of the Ecosystems of Dense and Humid Forests in Central Africa; Observatory of Forests in Central Africa; Central Africa Regional Programme on the Environment and the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.<sup>48</sup>

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45 Oxford Business Group, *The Report: ECOWAS*.

46 ECOWAS, *Regional Strategic Plan 2011-2015*. Available from <http://www.spu.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/REGIONAL-STRATEGIC-PLAN-RFV-in-English.pdf>, p.11.

47 UNECA, *Draft Eastern African Review Report on Progress towards Sustainable Development*.

48 UNECA and Economic Community of Central African States, "*Rapport d'évaluation des progrès de mise en oeuvre du développement durable en Afrique Central*", 25 January 2012. Available from [http://www.uneca.org/eca\\_programmes/sdd/events/Rio20/cfssd7/Subregional/3aCentral%20Africa%20Review%20Report%20-%20FR.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/eca_programmes/sdd/events/Rio20/cfssd7/Subregional/3aCentral%20Africa%20Review%20Report%20-%20FR.pdf)

## **Recommendations**

202. Regional integration has a critical role to play in promoting institutional and programmatic linkages as well as the balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development. There is therefore the need to deepen and accelerate regional integration across the continent.

203. In view of the challenges that RECs face, the AUC in collaboration with UNECA, UNEP and AfDB should develop and implement a comprehensive capacity-building programme to strengthen the capacity of RECs and member States in the application of integration tools. For example, natural resources accounting, economic valuation of environmental and natural resources, environmental and social impact assessment, strategic environmental assessment and other integration tools.

204. Development partners, including non-traditional donors, should ensure that capacity and institutional development is accorded the necessary priority, both as a cross-cutting issue in all development cooperation, and through targeted intervention, aligned with nationally-identified needs and priorities. In this regard, the strengthening of existing networks and centres of excellence in Africa is crucial to enable the countries to effectively address the new and emerging issues and challenges. A key priority should be to strengthen networking among institutions in Africa, and between African and non-African capacity development institutions.<sup>49</sup>

205. AUC and UNECA, with the support of AfDB, should analyse and elaborate possible mechanisms for financing sustainable development programmes, taking into account the region's specificities and priorities. Moreover, national, subregional and regional parliaments should be actively engaged in the formulation of plans and programmes to enhance policy-level ownership and commitment to funding.

UNECA, AU, AfDB, NPCA and other partners should collaborate and coordinate actions to assist RECs in strengthening and resourcing, to translate regional policies into visible national action plans.

207. Like the United Nations, the RECs must establish a permanent commission for sustainable development and centres of excellence for training that will also undertake research on sustainable development. They should also promote the organization of NCSDD forums for experience sharing, information exchange and networking. More efforts should be made to incorporate the private sector and CSOs in policy formulation to gain their acceptance.<sup>50</sup>

208. Sustainable development indicator frameworks are crucial to promoting sustainable development and in particular, articulating the linkages among the different sectors. AUC in collaboration with UNECA, AfDB and UNEP should step up programmes to promote the development and use of sustainable development indicator frameworks at regional, subregional and national levels. Similarly, subregional research groups and networks on sustainable development should be created.<sup>51</sup>

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49 Ibid.

50 UNECA and ECOWAS, *Review Report on Progress towards Sustainable Development in West Africa*. p.24.

51 UNECA and ECCAS, "Rapport d'évaluation des progrès de mise en œuvre du développement durable en Afrique Centrale". 25 January 2011. Available from [http://www.uneca.org/eca\\_programmes/sdd/events/Rio20/cfssd7/Subregional/3aCentral%20Africa%20Review%20Report%20-%20FR.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/eca_programmes/sdd/events/Rio20/cfssd7/Subregional/3aCentral%20Africa%20Review%20Report%20-%20FR.pdf)

The RECs can play an important role in spurring the establishment and development of institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development, as well as in ensuring their effective operationalization and implementation. They should, therefore, be supported to enhance institutional coherence and harmonize relevant development policies, plans and programmes among their member States.

For the subregions to remain focused in the fight against poverty, all matters relating to human and social development as well as science, technology and innovation must be addressed in a balanced manner.

In spite of improvements in the food availability and security situation in the subregions, more effort is needed in the areas of research, extension services and information dissemination. In this regard, climate change needs to be integrated in formulation of agricultural and food security programmes and policies.

The EIA should be comprehensive to include social dimensions of interventions, in addition to the environmental impacts that are routinely examined.

There is need for a systemic institutional review at all levels, with a view to coming up with effective and appropriate institutional mechanisms for sustainable development within a subregion. This kind of review requires bold and decisive leadership.<sup>52</sup>

To address the problems of integration, regional and national governments must develop medium- to long-term strategies for green growth in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. The strategies should envisage various objectives, including dealing effectively with climate change and attaining energy independence. The energy objective calls for actions such as setting mid- to long-term mitigation goals, increasing the use of new and renewable energy sources and efficient side management for energy and other input sectors.<sup>53</sup>

It is important that partners, including UNECA, support the ECOWAS Commission to put a mechanism in place that will ensure greater programme integration and institutional cohesion. In this regard, ECOWAS institutions should equip themselves with appropriate communication, liaison and networking mechanisms internally among them, and externally between them and member State organizations.<sup>54</sup>

In order to deepen the involvement of the private sector, the ECOWAS Commission should: strengthen existing initiatives such as the Commission's sponsorship of periodic ECOWAS Business Forums; fast-track establishment of the ECOWAS Business Council as a body to advise Heads of State and Government; and scale up support to regional business organizations such as the Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Federation of West African Manufacturers Association.<sup>55</sup>

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52 UNECA and SADC, *Review Report on Progress towards Sustainable Development in Southern Africa*, p.47.

53 UNECA, *Draft Eastern African Review Report on Progress Towards Sustainable Development*.

54 ECOWAS, *Regional Strategic Plan 2011-2015*. Available from [http://www.spu.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/ REGIONAL-STRATEGIC-PLAN-RFV-in-English.pdf](http://www.spu.ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/REGIONAL-STRATEGIC-PLAN-RFV-in-English.pdf), p.11.

55 African Development Bank, *Regional Integration Strategy Paper 2011-2015*. Available from <http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Policy-Documents/RISP>.

While the importance of forests to the economies of Central Africa accounts for the concentration of institutional frameworks on forestry and forest-related issues, the subregion should integrate social and economic aspects of sustainable development into the work of various organizations dealing with forestry issues.

In view of the specific constraints that AMU faces, the following recommendations are relevant, although they are equally valid for the other regional bodies. The institution should be supported to:

- a) Institutionalize the integration of sustainable development in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE);
- b) Define a concrete framework including data and precise indicators for assessing progress on sustainable development;
- c) Strengthen integrated analysis of the economic, social and environmental pillars in policy development and implementation;
- d) Put in place a mechanism to follow up the progress or remaining gaps towards sustainable development in the subregion;
- e) Encourage multi-stakeholder participation, institutional linkages, and ensure synergy between the environmental conventions and economic and social development plans; and
- f) Establish an observatory for drought and desertification control and climate change mitigation.<sup>56</sup>

## ***2.4 Institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development at the national level***

### ***Institutional frameworks at the national level***

Agenda 21 and JPOI recommend that countries establish NCSDs to ensure systematic and effective implementation of sustainable development agreements. NCSDs should have a clear mandate that takes into account the three dimensions of sustainable development, as well as the broad and cross-cutting nature of issues in a holistic and integrated manner. This mandate should be reviewed on a regular basis to take the emerging issues of sustainable development into consideration. Furthermore, NCSDs should be located at an appropriate level within the government administrative structure in order to promote consensus-building and integration. In keeping with the subsidiarity principle, NCSDs should be decentralized to levels that provide the appropriate setting for addressing sustainable development issues.

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<sup>56</sup> UNECA and the Arab Maghreb Union, "Rapport d'évaluation des progrès réalisés en faveur du développement durable en Afrique du Nord (Rio+20)".

## *Progress made*

### *National Councils for Sustainable Development*

A UNECA study conducted in 2005<sup>57</sup> found that the majority of African countries had established NCSDs. A survey of 16 countries in 2011 also showed that all 16 countries had structures that dealt with sustainable development at the national level. Of the 16 countries, nine had established distinct NCSDs or structures that mirrored that name. Two countries (Uganda and Zimbabwe) named the ministry responsible for finance, economic affairs and planning as the main sustainable development body at the national level. In Ethiopia and Mauritania, sustainable development issues were coordinated respectively through the Ethiopian Environment Protection Authority, and the Ministry of State for the Environment and Sustainable Development located in the Office of the Prime Minister of Mauritania.

Both the 2005 and 2011 surveys indicated that NCSDs were established between 1995 (for Senegal) and 2010 (for Republic of the Congo). This showed that not only Rio Conference in 1992 but also the WSSD in 2002 provided a major impetus to the establishment of NCSDs, as four countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon and Republic of the Congo) all established their NCSDs after 2002.

Both surveys found that the mandates of the NCSDs and bodies responsible for sustainable development at the national level covered a broad range of issues but that policy coordination, development and/or implementation as they relate to Agenda 21 and environmental issues were themes common to all.

The 2005 study showed that about 36 per cent of the bodies were multi-stakeholder. Similarly, the majority of the 16 countries surveyed in 2011 indicated that their bodies were also multi-stakeholder, with the active participation of all government departments, the private sector, CSOs and other major groups. The 2011 survey further confirmed the findings of the earlier study, that none of the bodies had a broad mandate with corresponding broad-based activities that address all three dimensions of sustainable development.

Approximately 36 per cent of the survey countries have environment-related mandates and execute corresponding environment-related activities. About 32 per cent of the countries indicated that the mandates of their NCSDs were revised periodically (or had been revised) to take emerging issues of environment and sustainable development into account, broaden scope and provide a clear direction for effective functioning. All countries, including those whose bodies had environment-related functions, affirmed that their mandates were adequate.

The location of the NCSD within the administrative structure of government is used as an indication of the political clout that could be exercised by the body in order to influence decisions and actions on sustainable development issues. By extension, the location could be an indication of the political will of the Government to address these issues effectively. It could also be an indication of the level of appreciation and understanding of the broad and cross-cutting nature of sustainable development issues and the need to establish an appropriate coordinating mechanism to address them in a holistic and integrated manner.

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57 UNECA, *National Councils for Sustainable Development in Africa: A Review of Institutions and their Functioning*, 2005.

The 2011 survey showed that apart from the NCSO for Cameroon, which is located in the Office of the Prime Minister, all the countries covered had their bodies located in a ministry, although the Ministry responsible for sustainable development in Mauritania is located in the Office of the Prime Minister. These findings confirmed the conclusion of the 2005 report that in the majority of countries, the NCSO was located within a ministry or agency.

Decentralization ensures participation at the appropriate level and, in the right context, allows a community to take charge of their development priorities and claim ownership of initiatives. It also assures effective information dissemination, a bottom-up approach to planning and decision-making and is one of the embodiments of good governance.

Of the 16 countries surveyed in 2011, only four countries (Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal) reported that their structures had been decentralized. This number represented 20 per cent of the countries surveyed and was far lower than the proportion of countries that were found to have decentralized their NCSOs in 2005. The 2005 report also found that only 45 per cent of countries did not have decentralized bodies.

Decentralization was mainly in two forms, namely, by establishment of subnational bodies, and by virtue of local government decentralized structures. Among those that had decentralized, this was mostly done through establishment of subnational bodies.

### **Challenges**

Institutional frameworks in most countries are weak, and therefore unable to deliver on the sustainable development agenda. In many countries, the fact that environmental issues are governed by various ministries and/or departments is a major challenge. For example, in Southern Africa, there are no mechanisms to ensure that the Ministry of Trade, which issues mining licenses, works with the Ministry of Environment, which deals with EIAs. Such institutional set-ups also promote duplication and institutional rivalry and hinder implementation.<sup>58</sup>

Other challenges identified in the regional review reports include: inadequate human capacity; poor governance, political and policy inconsistencies; low level of awareness among the populace and policymakers; lack of harmony between national and subregional policies; and lack of capacity to monitor and evaluate the process with the view to learning lessons. They also include a low level of donor commitment to meeting their development assistance pledges; insufficient understanding of the concept of sustainable development and integration tool by different stakeholders; insufficient synergy and communication between the different ministries, departments and agencies; and political interference.<sup>59</sup>

Another challenge to balanced integration is the relatively weak involvement of planning and finance ministries in sustainable development issues. In most African countries, sustainable development is still in the domain of environment ministries.

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<sup>58</sup> UNECA and SADC, *Review Report on Progress towards Sustainable Development in Southern Africa*.

<sup>59</sup> UNECA and ECOWAS, *Review Report on Progress towards Sustainable Development in West Africa*, p.24.



## **Recommendations**

Countries should establish and strengthen national coordinating bodies for sustainable development, taking into account the national development planning process and country specificities. In doing so, the following should be borne in mind:

- a) The membership composition (multi-stakeholder and multidisciplinary) and the need for clear mandates which are consistent with the recognized roles and responsibilities of an effective NCSD; and
- b) The need to equip the body with sustainable development indicator frameworks to form a basis for integrative planning, monitoring and evaluation of progress with sustainable development.

Given the key role of ministries of finance, planning and economic affairs in national development planning processes, they should play the lead role in pursuing sustainable development. Social sector ministries also need to be better integrated into the mainstream sustainable development agenda. While African countries need to improve domestic resource mobilization, including innovative mechanisms and increased use of PPPs, they alone cannot meet the sustainable development challenge of effective institutional frameworks, especially in the face of new and emerging issues such as climate change, and the global financial and economic crises. The international community should therefore strive to meet its commitments in terms of transfer of financial and technological resources, skills development and capacity- building. In this regard, development effectiveness should be made a key priority to which non-traditional donors should also adhere.

Development partners and non-traditional donors should make more use of country-owned systems to strengthen national institutional structures and to include sustainable development criteria within the programmes and projects of international financial institutions, in order to facilitate investment in sustainable development.

African States should deepen their efforts to improve the national governance environment, ensuring full accountability of institutions and transparent and inclusive planning and budgetary processes. In this respect, the international community should step up efforts to support the strengthening of institutions and planning capabilities on the continent.

There is need to develop comprehensive national capacity development strategies, including the three facets of capacity development, namely, human resource development, organizational development, and institutional development, in order to help minimize migration of skilled labour.

Similarly, it is critical that African Governments elaborate national capacity development strategies that not only address the issues of education, capacity development and institutional strengthening but also take a broader perspective, for embodying all aspects of capacity development including human resource development, and organizational and institutional development. Sustainable development should be at the heart of this process.<sup>60</sup>

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60 UNECA, *Means of Development: Bridging the Gap*, Document E/ECA/CFSSD/7/13/ 29 July 2011.

### ***National strategies for sustainable development***

UNCED, Rio+5 and the WSSD called on countries to elaborate and implement NSSDs. In order to build capacity and provide guidance on the elaboration and development of such strategies, a series of initiatives was undertaken. These included the UNDP Capacity 21 programme, publication of NSSD guidance documents by OECD and UNDESA and the resource document jointly produced by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), OECD and UNDP.

Sustainable development policies constitute statements of intent guiding the interventions and actions of governments, and are a measure of political commitment to addressing issues of concern in the field of sustainable development. Statements should be clear and embody the principles of sustainable development, and should be accompanied by strategies and action plans that provide a clear road map on implementation approaches and requirements. It is important to regularly review, update and revise these policies and strategies to ensure that they are responsive to emerging needs and issues. Decentralization is necessary to bring the decisions and actions to the doorstep of those that are most concerned.

### ***Progress made***

The 2005 report, the data collected in 2006 (report published in 2011) and the survey data of 2011, have both indicated that the majority of countries have national development plans addressing sustainable development issues.<sup>61</sup> Of the 16 countries surveyed in 2006, three highlighted the environmental dimension (Algeria, Mozambique and Tunisia); two highlighted the economic dimension (Kenya and Mauritius); and three were poverty reduction strategies (PRs) (Cameroon, Ghana and Uganda). The three remaining countries had a national development plan (Zambia), a national long-term vision document (the Gambia), and a NSSD (Benin, Malawi and Senegal), respectively. These plans included national visions, poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) and framework environment legislation, which were seen as both a sustainable development strategy and a national development plan for many countries. The 2011 survey also showed that three countries (Chad, Ethiopia and Mauritania) emphasized the environment dimension, four countries (Mauritania, Swaziland, Uganda and Zimbabwe) used national development plans and six countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Republic of the Congo and Senegal) adopted NSSDs.<sup>62</sup>

NSSDs ought to take intergenerational equity issues into account by linking the short- to medium- and long-term plans. As the 2006 survey showed, the time frames of the different NSSDs ranged from 3 to 25 years. The 16-country survey in 2011 indicated similar results, with the timespan of the plans reported ranging from 5 to 25 years.

Among the countries that responded to the policy-related questions in 2005, eight stated that their policies and plans had not been revised, while some indicated that their policies and plans were subjected to regular review and revised as necessary. In the 2011 survey, five of the 16 countries indicated that their strategies had not been revised. Gabon, Ethiopia and Mauritania gave no information, while five other countries reported that their strategies had been revised. Reasons given for the revision included: the need to ensure that the strategy adequately integrated the three pillars of sustainable development (Burkina Faso); the need to take into account the

<sup>61</sup> UNECA, *National Strategies for Sustainable Development in Africa: A Sixteen Country Assessment*.

<sup>62</sup> UNECA, *Questionnaires on sustainable development analysed for this report*.

question of decentralization (Benin); merger of two ministries (Uganda); and the need to expand the mandate and scope of the strategy as well as reorganize the organizational frameworks in order to reflect the inter-sectoral character of the body adequately (Senegal).

The majority of the countries in both surveys indicated their framework environmental legislation as providing the legal basis for sustainable development, while others indicated many pieces of environment-related legislation. Most bodies (64 per cent) were also established by the framework environmental legislation. This was further evidence that the environment dimension dominated the country-level sustainable development agenda.

Multi-stakeholder participation was ensured through the participation of various stakeholders including all major national groups. Of the 16 countries surveyed in 2011, six countries indicated that they did not have any strategy for the involvement of major groups, while another six (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Uganda and Zimbabwe) indicated that they had strategies for the participation of the major groups in the development and implementation of their national strategies. Different participation modalities were reported, including participation in the clusters (Zimbabwe), in policy reviews (Uganda), pre-budget review workshops, and review and evaluation processes (Senegal). Senegal also indicated that the participation of women was ensured by the national strategy on gender equality.

On the question of funding and adequate institutional capacity, only three countries (Benin, Chad, and Republic of the Congo) indicated that institutional capacity was adequate in terms of human resources. However, all 15 countries indicated that funding was inadequate.<sup>63</sup>

### **Challenges**

Balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development is critical for success, ownership and commitment. Countries do not necessarily have to develop new strategies and programmes. What is important is to regularly review and revise existing strategies and programmes to achieve better integration and to incorporate lessons learnt as well as new and emerging issues, in line with the principle of continuous learning and improvement. Some countries have registered good practices and useful lessons have been learned in the implementation process. Challenges include multiple planning processes and duplication of efforts and resources. Similarly, capacity (institutional, financial, human and technological) is a major constraining factor to the effective functioning of NSSDs as well as to implementation of policies, strategies and plans.

The West Africa regional report on sustainable development also indicated that only five out of 15 member States of ECOWAS showed integration of the three pillars, while the other countries concentrated on different pillars with little room for integration.<sup>64</sup>

### **Recommendations**

While no single strategy can be prescribed for all the countries, individual strategies should ensure integration of sustainability principles in strategy development and implementation. In this regard, ministries responsible for planning should take a leadership role in the NSSD process and ensure balanced integration of the different dimensions of sustainable development in strategy development and implementation.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> UNECA and ECOWAS, *Review Report on Progress towards Sustainable Development in West Africa*, p.24

The time frame and coherence of development frameworks are important. Additionally, NSSDs should address both intra- and intergenerational aspects, and should be embedded in national long-term visions or strategies.

Countries should avoid multiplicity, duplication and fragmentation of development strategies, and must ensure coherence and effective linkages between local, sectoral, medium-term and long-term development strategies. The NSSD should, as much as possible, be linked to the budget process.

Monitoring and evaluation are key components of an NSSD. Countries should develop a clear and actionable indicator framework for sustainable development in order to enhance understanding, guide integration modalities and identify the type of linkages that should exist among different sectors. Similarly, new reference indicators should be developed to assess the economic, social, and environmental performances of national economies, alongside GDP and HDI in order to ensure better understanding of the state of the economy and of preservation of the natural environment and a more sustainable development. These should include mechanisms that reflect the true environmental costs of production and consumption in the accounting models, in order to address the causes rather than the symptoms of environmental loss.

UNECA and partners should support member States in rethinking and re-aligning their development strategies with sustainable development objectives. In doing so, there is a need to be sensitive to the political dimensions of national development plans, as they can influence the objectives of sustainable development. The governance dimension of sustainable development should be adequately addressed in all processes, decisions and actions aimed at advancing sustainable development in the region.

Partnership among countries must be strengthened. Countries should be provided with a platform for information and experience sharing on NSSDs to enhance the learning process. National Governments should open the political space and encourage multi-stakeholder participation in both the design and implementation phases of programmes in order to ensure greater ownership and relevance. In this regard, the capacity-building of relevant stakeholders should be undertaken in order to enhance their effectiveness in programme formulation and implementation.

### III. Sustainable development governance

One main issue that has dominated the sustainable development debate is sustainable development governance. The attention given to it in the various preparatory processes suggests that the subject will be high on the RIO+ 20 Agenda.

While there is neither a single definition of the term nor a common understanding of the concept, sustainable development governance generally refers to the sum of institutions, concepts, norms, principles and processes that govern sustainable development at global, regional, sub-regional and national levels. This chapter provides an overview of the ongoing debate on the subject that revolves around the following avenues for reform:

- a) Strengthening existing institutions;
- b) Merging institutions;
- c) Improving coordination among existing institutions;
- d) Establishing new institutions;
- e) Changing mandate(s) of institution(s); and
- f) Streamlining institutions.

#### 3.1 Governance of sustainable development at the global level

##### 3.1.1 The United Nations General Assembly

The General Assembly, as the highest inter-governmental body, is expected to promote sustainable development as an overarching framework for United Nations development activities. It gives overall political direction to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the WSSD, and ensures that their implementation are regularly reviewed. In order to carry out this mandate effectively, a number of proposals for reform have been made.

##### *Reform proposals*

There is a proposal for the General Assembly to consider moving social issues covered under the “Copenhagen Agenda” from its Third Committee to the Second Committee as a step towards making the Second Committee a sustainable development committee.

Another suggestion is the creation of a *Council of the General Assembly*. Such a council could play two roles.<sup>65</sup>

##### *Review and policymaking*

The first is to continue the review of implementation and policy development of UNCSDD, JPOI and Agenda 21. This could be done by recreating the present Commission at a United Nations

<sup>65</sup> *Progress to date and remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits in the area of sustainable development, as well as an analysis of the themes of the Conference*. Report of the Secretary-General, Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, May 2010; Discussion Paper: High-Level Dialogue on Strengthening the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development, Solo, Indonesia, July 2011.

General Assembly that would be attended by Heads of State and by ministers other than just the environment ministers. This will ensure greater political commitment to sustainable development at the global level.

### ***Mainstreaming emerging issues***

At present, there is no venue for discussing new and emerging issues. UNCED during its last cycle was not able to address issues such as water, climate and energy security. Even though the United Nations Security Council recommended in 2007 that UNCED should address energy security, this has not happened.

A Council at the highest level that addresses not only issues such as climate, energy, and water security, ecosystem and biodiversity security, green economy, increased migration, natural disasters and urbanization, but also the interlinkages among them, could represent meaningful progress.

## **3.1.2 The Economic and Social Council**

ECOSOC consists of 54 United Nations Member States, elected by the General Assembly. Its function is to restructure and revitalize United Nations activities in economic, social and related fields, and to manage sustainable development coordination within the system by integrating environmental and developmental issues within United Nations policies and programmes. ECOSOC reports to the General Assembly and its activities in the area of sustainable development are carried out through the Commission on Sustainable Development whose members are elected by ECOSOC. It also organizes regular reviews of UNCED activities and promotes integration of environment and development issues.

### ***Challenges***

ECOSOC has the potential to be an effective body for addressing sustainable development in an integrated manner and for formulating policy recommendations for Member States and the United Nations system. However, the increasing number of organizations that deal with different aspects of sustainable development, has made policy coordination at the intergovernmental level and collaboration between United Nations secretariats, a major challenge for ECOSOC. This has led to questioning the effectiveness of ECOSOC and a number of reform measures are being put forward.

### ***Reform proposals***

One suggestion is to transform ECOSOC into a *Council on Sustainable Development*, combining the activities of all its various Commissions, including the Commission on Social Development, Status of Women, Sustainable Development, and Population and Development. Through combining all the functions of ECOSOC and other commissions into one Council on Sustainable Development, sustainable development could be addressed in a more complete and cohesive manner.

As part of the various options outlined by the Consultative Group of Ministers on IEG reform, it has also been suggested that the UNEP Governing Council and Global Ministerial Environment Forum could be transformed into a functional commission of the reformed ECOSOC/Council on Sustainable Development. It is proposed that this kind of consolidation and streamlining can

enhance coherence on the multiple pillars of sustainable development across the UN system, and would help to make ECOSOC more effective.

Another proposal is to ensure that the ECOSOC 'high-level segments' which involve participation of development/finance ministers or ministers responsible for specific issues under consideration, take due account of broader sustainable development objectives, inter alia, through periodic consideration of major cross-cutting sustainable development themes.

For the opponents of this proposal, ECOSOC is viewed by many as needing to reform itself and although a high-level segment of the Council could be seen as part of this, it does not make sustainable development as overarching as the JPOI suggests it should be.

### 3.1.3 The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

UNCSD is a functioning Committee of ECOSOC. Among other duties, it monitors progress towards sustainable development goals, especially balanced integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development. It reviews and regularly monitors progress towards the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of the GNP of developed countries committed to ODA. It also facilitates dialogue among Governments, NGOs, United Nations agencies and other stakeholders. UNCSD reports to the General Assembly through ECOSOC.

#### **Challenges**

UNCSD faces a number of challenges. There is the view that rather than mainstreaming environmental concerns, UNCSD actually bring about more fragmentation by causing environmental issues to be further isolated from economic and social discussions.<sup>66</sup> Another challenge is that the roles of UNCSD and other organizations and processes, such as UNEP and the Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF), often overlap. NCSDs also lack capability to enforce its decisions. Further, the two-year cycle agreed upon in the JPOI, dilute rather than sharpen UNCSD. Unlike other United Nations agencies, UNCSD does not report directly to the General Assembly and does not have sufficient financial resources.

#### **Reform proposals**

The need to strengthen UNCSD was emphasized in the JPOI, which states as follows:

*The Commission on Sustainable Development should continue to be the high-level commission on sustainable development within the United Nations system and serve as a forum for consideration of issues related to integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. Although the role, functions and mandate of the Commission as set out in relevant parts of Agenda 21 and adopted in General Assembly resolution 47/191 continue to be relevant, the Commission needs to be strengthened, taking into account the role of relevant institutions and organizations. An enhanced role of the Commission should include reviewing and monitoring progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and fostering coherence of implementation, initiatives and partnerships.*

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<sup>66</sup> Hannah Stoddart, ed., *A Pocket Guide to Sustainable Development Governance*, (London, Stakeholders Forum and the Commonwealth Secretariat, 2011)

The current phase of UNCSD (2003 to 2011) has been its most difficult, with two of its sessions (2007 and 2011) failing to agree on any outcome. This has served to strengthen calls for change. Suggestions include an incremental change and an overhaul.<sup>67</sup>

Incremental change entails the following:

- a) Instituting a standing agenda item on 'Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development', which would allow Governments to review direction and change path;
- b) Balancing normative and non-normative outcomes;
- c) Addressing politically sensitive issues such as energy security;
- d) Ensuring continuity and momentum between the review and policy years through an integrated two-year cycle;
- e) Identifying champions (to lead within the two-year process);
- f) Establishing linkages with other meetings and international bodies;
- g) Strengthening the role of the bureau as a management body, and that of the chair as a facilitator;
- h) Enhancing the contribution of major groups;
- i) Strengthening the role of the secretariat; and
- j) Building partnerships that focus on delivering UNCSD decisions.

In addition to the incremental changes in UNCSD mentioned above, consideration may also be given to the following overhaul measures:

- a) Returning to the one-year cycle;
- b) Restoring 4 to 5 weeks of annual meeting space for UNCSD;
- c) Ensuring that the UNCSD mandate includes reviewing the means of implementation to ensure that development ministries are engaged;
- d) Reviewing partnerships and how they might play a more significant and impacting role in implementing decisions;
- e) Reviewing national reporting through peer-group review within the meeting (similar to phase 1 of UNCSD and now the United Nations Annual Ministerial Review); and
- f) Creating a high-level segment to deal with new and emerging issues.

The Stakeholder Forum found that the United Nations system had several instruments or mechanisms to keep the ideas, thoughts and decisions made on sustainable development alive over the years. By strengthening the Council and sustainable development governance, some of these institutions might be revitalized and also modernized. One of these mechanisms is the Task Manager system that was created in the 1990s to enhance involvement of the United Nations family in the implementation of Agenda 21. Within this framework, FAO was the task manager for agriculture, and the World Health Organization (WHO) was responsible for health. The Task Manager system will be revitalized to hold relevant United Nations bodies accountable for specific sustainable development policies and programmes.

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<sup>67</sup> High-Level Dialogue on Strengthening the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development, Discussion Paper, Solo, Indonesia, July 2011.



From 1993 to 1998, the United Nations established the Inter-agency Committee on Sustainable Development to coordinate implementation of Agenda 21 throughout its system. Since the abolition of the Committee in 1998 as part of the United Nations reforms, there has been no inter-agency coordination on sustainable development. Therefore, re-establishing the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development would revitalize sustainable development issues. The Board of Chief Executives of the various United Nations bodies could play such a role.

Other options include revisiting old ideas such as the Sustainable Development Board that was originally proposed by the United Nations High-Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence. The idea being to establish a joint meeting of the executive boards of World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNDP and possibly United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, now part of UN-Women) and UNEP.

Those opposed to drastic reforms suggest that the UNCSD should remain the body at the global level, responsible for coordinating and following-up on the implementation of the outcomes of sustainable development summits. However, the work of the body should be reviewed in light of the need to ensure a balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development. Currently, its work is skewed towards the environmental pillar, which may not enable it to effectively deliver on its mandate. In addition, this might not convey the right meaning of sustainable development, as well as the composition and functions of institutions established at national level to ensure the same. Further, UNCSD should ensure effective coordination with relevant bodies at the global level to leverage upon their respective comparative advantages, and maximize synergies with a view to enhancing coherence in sustainable development actions. It should systematically draw upon the resources of United Nations funds and programmes and ensure useful linkages with regional processes. In terms of linkages, an optimum approach would take into account the role that regional processes can play in bridging the gap between global level and national level processes, bearing in mind the subsidiarity principle and the need for bottom-up processes i.e. local, national, regional, global.

### 3.1.4 The United Nations Environment Programme

The functions of the Governing Council include the promotion of international cooperation on the environment, coordination of environmental programmes within the United Nations system, and providing policy guidance and direction to UNEP.

UNEP has seen some remarkable successes over the years. It initiated several landmark agreements and conventions on the environment. It spearheaded and championed international collective response to toxic pollutants and chemicals, the depletion of the ozone layer and global biodiversity loss.

#### **Challenges**

The UNEP profile and mandate has grown over the years, even though it is still widely perceived as needing more authority and a strengthened role in global governance. Though it has established some well-regarded 'on-the-ground' partnerships, its operational capacity is limited by comparison to its 'sister' agency UNDP, which has an extensive country presence. It also lacks the authority to enforce global environmental legislation or to manage environmental strategy

across the United Nations system. Furthermore, UNEP seriously lacks the financial resources to address a global environmental agenda that is constantly expanding. It has a very small budget compared to other agencies governing the social and economic pillars of sustainable development, including UNDP and the World Bank. Finally, UNEP is perceived by some as being disconnected from the United Nations system by being located far from major United Nations decision-making centres. This prevents it from fulfilling its catalytic and coordinating function.

Another major challenge is the multiplicity of actors on the environment. At the moment, there are some 20 organizations dealing with the environment at the global and regional levels, and their actions appear fragmented rather than complementary. According to UNEP, this is symptomatic of the weakness of the environment pillar, which is compounded by lack of resources.

Although all three pillars of sustainable development must be strengthened, action must begin with the environmental pillar, which is the weakest at all levels on account of the limited resources allocated to the environment. The environmental pillar should be strengthened not least because natural resources constitute the base of the economy of most countries, especially African, but it will also strengthen the other pillars.

### ***Reform proposal***

The proposal to upgrade UNEP into a Specialized Agency, or to establish a UNEO was first proposed by France in 2003, and endorsed by 46 countries, including Algeria, Burundi, Cambodia, Ecuador, the European Union, Gabon, Seychelles and Vanuatu.<sup>68</sup>

The upgrading of UNEP to a Specialized Agency of the United Nations would make it similar in function to the WHO and the World Trade Organization (WTO), though without the authority to adjudicate on international environmental disputes. UNEO would enhance coordination on the environment across responsible United Nations agencies, guarantee funding for environment in the United Nations system through assessed contributions rather than voluntary donations, and provide an 'umbrella organization' for the multitude of existing MEAs.

It would be an independent legal entity, enjoying considerable autonomy from the system by contrast to UNEP, which is effectively a subsidiary organ of the United Nations. An institution such as UNEO would also be able to engage in operational activities and 'on the ground' implementation, which is currently beyond the main focus of the UNEP normative and policy work. UNEO would therefore ensure better coordination across the United Nations system in implementing environmental norms due to its increased authority.

Whilst the idea of UNEO has received substantial support, it has also engendered disagreement among States as to whether it is the appropriate model for upgrading UNEP. The United States has traditionally been sceptical about the establishment of a new institution, arguing that the current system of MEAs, combined with strategic policy reform within UNEP, provides the balance of coordination and decentralization that is needed.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Hannah Stoddart, ed., *Pocket Guide to Sustainable Development Governance*, London, Stakeholders Forum and Commonwealth Secretariat, 2011).

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

The Group of 77 (G-77), though supportive of a more coherent global framework for the environment, has expressed concern that too strong a focus on the environment through an UNEO could compromise global efforts towards sustainable development, which should place equal emphasis on the social and economic pillars of development.<sup>70</sup>

In reviewing IEG, the consultative group of Ministers and high-level representatives has also proposed the establishment of a WEO as an option for reform. This proposal is similar to that for UNEO, as both call for upgrading of UNEP to a specialized agency with a considerably enhanced mandate and authority.<sup>71</sup>

The debate on WEO/UNEO has a breadth of viewpoints ranging from a stronger science-based organization to one which would appear similar to the committee structure of WTO. The latter would entail clustering the present conventions into themes, such as chemicals, biodiversity, atmosphere, oceans and fisheries, freshwater and land-related conventions.<sup>72</sup>

One problem that the idea of clustering raises is how to deal with the various MEAs that are under the purview of other United Nations agencies such as IMO, ILO, UNESCO and FAO. Options include:

- a) Reviewing mandates of United Nations agencies to consider simplifying areas of common interest;
- b) Establishing a joint secretariat role between a WEO and another United Nations agency; and
- c) Changing the secretariat from one United Nations agency to another.

Another approach might be to consider placing a unit in the Office of the Secretary-General in charge of coherence and coordination of conventions. This could be established as an interim measure, perhaps initially for five years. This unit would look at and support the further clustering of chemicals and biodiversity conventions.<sup>73</sup>

### 3.1.5 Position of the African Ministers of Environment on international environment governance

While African countries have taken part in the debate on international environmental governance at all levels, the African collective voice has become louder in recent months. At the eighteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in June 2011, a decision was taken concerning the revision of institutional frameworks for sustainable development. This decision took into consideration the need to strengthen, consolidate and transform UNEP into an international specialized institution for the environment, still based in Nairobi.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> "Discussion Paper: High-Level Dialogue on Strengthening the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development", Solo, Indonesia, July 2011.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Assembly/AU/Dec.381(XVII).

During the fourth Special Session of AMCEN in Bamako, Mali, in September 2011, the African Environment Ministers did not only support the Assembly decision, but went further to indicate what the proposed body should look like. Accordingly, an international specialized institution for environment based in Nairobi should emerge from the Rio+20 and should have the following key characteristics:

- a) Be universal in its membership and decision-making, with each member State allocated one vote, and decisions taken by consensus;
- b) Be an autonomous body that could set the global policy agenda for environment and provide guidance for environmental financing;
- c) Have secure, stable, additional and predictable financing to fulfil its mandate;
- d) Have increased authority to bring coordination and coherence to the range of multi-lateral environmental agreements by promoting synergies, while respecting the legal autonomy of the conferences of the parties to those agreements;
- e) Have a strengthened regional presence and improved implementation at the national level through the development of operational capacity;
- f) Have the authority to lead a process of United Nations system-wide strategic planning for the environment and to coordinate the inputs of the many agencies with environmental mandates in the international system;
- g) Promote the science-policy interface to deal with pressing environmental sustainability concerns, and to support national and regional scientific networks and scientists; and
- h) Have the ability to enhance capacity and technology support, especially for Africa, monitor the effectiveness of implementation, and facilitate access to technology and technology transfer.

The Ministers further stressed that a new specialized institution does not imply the establishment of an environment inspection body, compliance mechanism for developing countries, or the putting in place of green conditionalities or trade barriers, and should not lead to additional financial burdens for Africa.<sup>75</sup>

The position of AMCEN Ministers is based on the following arguments:

- a) Ensuring an effective institutional framework for sustainable development at all levels and giving full consideration to each of the three pillars: economic, social, and environmental, is key to the realization of the goals of sustainable development. An international governance system involves: (i) the institutions and mechanisms responsible for the entire process, integrating all the aspects of sustainable development; and at the same time; (ii) institutions specializing in the three key areas. Making progress towards sustainability necessitates both strengthening the overall structure and enhancing the individual components;
- b) As it stands, the environment pillar is weak, and the international environmental governance framework is fragmented to a point where African countries have become

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<sup>75</sup> Outcome of the Meeting “Strengthening the Institutional Frameworks for Sustainable Development· The Environment Pillar”, Bamako, September 2011; and decision SS4/4. “Strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development· The Environment Pillar” of the Fourth Special Session of AMCEN, Bamako, September 2011.

disenfranchised from the system as a result of its heavy demands on countries' limited human, institutional and financial resources;

- c) The fragmentation of international environmental financing mechanisms, each with their own administrative processes and access criteria, has led to the diffusion of limited resources among multiple players, and created significant hurdles for African countries when it comes to gaining access to funds;
- d) Environmental commitments have not been sufficiently implemented at all levels. A major challenge faced by African countries at the national level is inadequate implementation arising from limited institutional, human and financial resources;
- e) The current system of international environmental governance has failed in supporting the continent's sustainable development aspirations; and
- f) Strengthening the environment dimension or pillar would strengthen the institutional framework for sustainable development overall.

### ***3.2 Governance of sustainable development at the regional and subregional levels***

Paragraphs 158-161 of the JPOI address the regional dimension of sustainable development and provides for a range of measures for strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development at the regional level. These measures include pursuing the implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of WSSD at the regional and subregional levels, through Regional Commissions and other regional and subregional institutions and bodies.

The JPOI also called for improving intraregional coordination and cooperation among Regional Commissions, the United Nations system, regional development banks and other regional bodies and institutions. The JPOI further called for the Regional Commissions to promote the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development into their work in a balanced way; facilitate and promote balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in member States.

At the subregional level, the RECs take the lead in planning for regional integration and policy harmonization, which are important preconditions for promoting balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development.

#### ***Reform proposals***

The review of AU, NEPAD and AfDB shows some of the progress made and the challenges that exist with respect to sustainable development governance at the regional level. To enhance sustainable development governance at the regional level, there is need to: strengthen the capacity of the regional institutions, including UNECA; support the multi-stakeholder and multidisciplinary forums such as ADF, the Regional Coordination Mechanism of United Nations agencies working in Africa, in support of the AU and its NEPAD Programme; the joint meetings of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance; the UNECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; the UNECA Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development and the associated RIMs.

RECs can play an important role in spurring establishment and development of institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development, as well as in ensuring their effective operationalization and implementation. They should, therefore, be supported in enhancing institutional coherence and harmonizing relevant development policies, plans and programmes among their member States.

### **3.3 Governance of sustainable development at the national level**

Over the years, the NCSDs have achieved a number of successes. They have proven to be a very effective way for governments to consult with stakeholders and sectors of society. By doing so, they have helped to build support for potentially difficult legislation. They have also produced important strategies and national policies on sustainable development which have advanced parts of Agenda 21 and the JPOI of WSSD.

#### **Challenges**

Review of sustainable development governance at the national level shows the principal challenge to be the relatively weak involvement of planning and finance ministries in sustainable development issues. In many countries, sustainable development is still in the domain of environment ministries as national authorities tend to view the concept as dealing mostly with environment, rather than viewing environment as one of three equally important pillars of sustainable development.

In many countries, the National Councils have ceased to function.<sup>76</sup> Where they exist, they are weak and lack human and financial resources.

As the United Nations Secretary-General indicated, a significant component of the challenge of integrating economic, social and environmental goals pertains to the national level.<sup>77</sup> Thus, reviving and strengthening NSDCs will address the challenge of integrating economic, social and environmental goals by engaging a broader range of ministries and stakeholders from each country. This would require dedicated financial support and capacity-building which could be advanced through existing United Nations channels, for example, the United Nations Development Group. This Group could provide guidance at the country level not only on sectoral issues (as at present) but on the integrated agenda of sustainable development.<sup>78</sup>

#### **Recommendations**

It is important that Africa harness its resources at Rio+20 to secure a reformed governance architecture at the global level. This architecture should promote coordination and synergies across various sectors and actors, through which the voice of developing countries is adequately reflected, and that is likely to promote integration at all levels.

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<sup>76</sup> *Progress to date and remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits in the area of sustainable development, as well as an analysis of the themes of the Conference.* Report of the Secretary-General. Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, May 2010.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p23.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

Such a regime should address the fragmentation that characterizes the current IEG framework and the international environment-financing facilities. This fragmentation puts heavy demands on the limited human, institutional and financial resources of African countries, which face an increasing number of hurdles in accessing financing facilities.

At the regional and subregional levels, governance should be strengthened by leveraging the comparative advantages of existing institutions to ensure useful vertical linkages, as well as efficiency and effectiveness in sustainable development actions. More specifically, the leading role of the Regional Commissions in coordinating regional and subregional activities, in accordance with chapter 38 of Agenda 21, must be preserved and strengthened to foster balanced integration through, inter alia, promoting experience sharing and cooperation among countries with similar experiences, circumstances, and levels of development. Within the context of strengthening regional institutions, UNEP Regional Offices should be further strengthened to support the growing number of regional-based intergovernmental plans of actions, such as the environment initiative of NEPAD.

At the national level, Rio+20 could reactivate and reinvigorate the NCSDs, to follow up UNCSD 2012, with mandates for:

- a) Outreach, for consultation and feedback, to their constituencies in the country;
- b) Development of guidelines on strategy implementation within a country;
- c) Preparation of national reports; and
- d) Development of national targets for policies, strategies and future implementation activities.

The revival of NCSDs would require dedicated financial support and capacity-building which could be advanced through the existing United Nations Development Group which could provide guidance at the country level not only on sectoral issues but on the integrated agenda of sustainable development.<sup>79</sup>

### ***3.4 Good governance as an essential element for sustainable development***

The link between governance and sustainable development has not only been recognized, it has also been demonstrated by several studies. The UNECA *Sustainable Development Report on Africa* cited studies that estimate that when governance is improved by one standard deviation, incomes rise three-fold in the long run and infant mortality declines by two-thirds. Donor agencies have also realized that development assistance is more effective in countries with good governance. An increasing number of international financial institutions and some bilateral donor agencies that subscribe to evidence-based policy and decision-making, have explicitly tied aid transfers to governance outcomes. All these considerations account for the attention that has been increasingly given to governance at various levels in Africa.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

## *Progress made*

### **Regional level**

Efforts at the continental level include new governance parameters and benchmarks that the AU and NEPAD have defined. Both the *Constitutive Act of the African Union* and the *African Charter on Democracy Election and Governance* bind member States to uphold a number of democratic principles, among them, the condemnation and rejection of unconstitutional changes of government, and the application of sanctions against regimes in violation. African leaders have also adopted the APRM as the continent's own means of monitoring compliance with national, regional and international norms of political, economic and corporate governance.

### **National level**

At the national level, democratic politics and practices have progressed significantly with the establishment of competitive multiparty democracy in many countries. The political space has been gradually liberalized, and CSOs have been contributing to the development process and influencing policies in various aspects of public life. Ethno-regional diversities have also been given political expression and accommodation. Marginalized groups of women, youth, children and the disabled are progressively getting their views on the policy agenda. Furthermore, electoral institutions are gaining more credibility and legitimacy with the move to relatively free and fair elections in many countries.<sup>80</sup>

The country reports of the UNECA governance study found a trend of relative decline of executive dominance in Africa. However, the degree of consultation and public participation varied from country to country. Many African countries have adopted constitutional measures and put administrative mechanisms in place, including the introduction of decentralization and local government reforms to strengthen checks and balances. Similarly, some African countries have implemented appropriate reform measures to strengthen the capacity of the judiciary to check and balance executive power and discretionary authority. Some countries have also enhanced the effectiveness and integrity of the judiciary in the performance of its duties and responsibilities, ensuring observance of the constitution, rule of law and due process of law.<sup>81</sup>

The creation in most African countries of watchdog institutions, such as an ombudsman, a human rights commission, an anti-corruption commission, an auditor-general, an inspector of governance and a minister for good governance, present perhaps the most significant examples of these initiatives. Parliaments have also performed with increasing responsibility and effectiveness towards improving standards of transparency and accountability, although a number of them have been found to be relatively weak. On the whole, the performance of the judiciary is improving but its effectiveness in many African countries is still restricted. Further, with regard to civil society and media effectiveness, their capacity to influence policy was found to be contingent on the degree of independence that they enjoyed, and the willingness of the executive to permit non-State actors a voice in the democratic process.

### **Challenges**

Despite progress made, challenges to political governance remain in many African countries. The democratic process is still fragile. The emerging structures of governance- political parties, CSOs, elected institutions of the legislature and the executive, remain weak and not adequately insti-

<sup>80</sup> UNECA, *Sustainable Development Report on Africa 2008*.

<sup>81</sup> See also UNECA, *Africa Governance Report II, 2009*.



tutionalized. Political parties are generally weak and not well institutionalized in many African countries. They lack adequate funding and are therefore susceptible to outside influence.

In many African countries, the lack of independence from executive dominance has reduced the effectiveness of watchdog and advocacy agents in performing their functions. Although the numbers are growing slowly, there are very few African CSOs, including those in the media and private sector that enjoy independence from the executive, commensurate with their goals and objectives.

To effectively check and balance the executive, the legislature needs capacity, competence and independence. However, many legislatures in Africa are deficient in these capacities. They generally lack members who are well informed and able to introduce issues that are relevant to the needs and aspirations of their constituencies or their country.

The capacity of the judiciary to review laws is a crucial check on the executive. The greatest single impediment to this capacity is insufficient resources. Most judiciaries lack the financial means to engage staff in research, documentation and analysis of briefs, which can enhance judges' understanding of the development and the changing rule of law in a continent that is rapidly transforming. Other institutional deficiencies of the judiciary in many countries include the absence of law review commissions, the existence of "executive-minded" judges, the use of foreign languages in court proceedings, and ineffective judicial service commissions.<sup>82</sup>

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82 UNECA, *Sustainable Development Report on Africa 2008*.

### *Recommendations*

Conscious efforts are needed to build on the emerging structures and practices and to consolidate the modest progress recorded so far.

The plural nature of most African countries makes it imperative for them to recognize and accommodate diversity in political systems. In this regard, political and governance bodies must institutionalize policies that guarantee gender equality. The AU should create and enforce a minimum standard for countries with respect to the level of women's political representation in elected institutions and decision-making organs.

As the democratic process grows and is consolidating, electoral laws will have to be reformed in many African countries to reflect new realities and to meet the challenges of political modernization. To imbue confidence in the electoral mechanism, efforts must be strengthened to ensure that elections, as well as their preparations, including campaigning, voter registration and candidature eligibility, are free and fair and are also recognized as such by key stakeholders. Further, the structures that manage post-election conflicts must be invigorated. Autonomy, professional competence to handle election disputes, and adequate resources (finance, infrastructure and logistics) are needed.

African countries must begin to devise ways to finance their elections, as donor funding of elections is not sustainable. Options include setting up an African Elections Fund at the continental level by the AU, to which countries can subscribe, and from which they can benefit when preparing for elections. Africa will have to look inward more in terms of planning and financing of elections. At the national level, there must be a mix between State and private sources of funding for political parties in order to provide the financial base necessary for carrying out their activities.

## IV. Conclusion and recommendations

The interdependent and mutually reinforcing nature of the three dimensions of sustainable development requires a balanced integration of its three pillars - economic, social and environmental - by institutions and strategies that promote holistic and integrated approaches. The region has responded to this requirement with varying degrees of success.

Institutional reforms have been undertaken and sustainable development strategies developed and implemented at all levels. To a large extent, multi-stakeholder participation has improved, and institutional and programmatic linkages have been established. The various long-term visions, plans and strategies developed have also catered for intergenerational and intra-generational equity.

NEPAD continues to serve as the regional strategy for sustainable development in Africa. However, in order to enhance its effectiveness, NEPAD frameworks should be revitalized and implemented actively. Consequently, Rio+20 should result in a strengthened governance framework that leverages the comparative advantages of existing regional and subregional institutions to ensure useful vertical and horizontal linkages, as well as efficiency in supporting the implementation of NEPAD programmes. In this regard, AUC, NEPAD and UNECA should be strengthened to promote the balanced integration of all the pillars of sustainable development.

Regional and subregional institutions have a significant role to play in spurring the establishment and development of institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development, as well as in ensuring their effective operationalization and implementation. There is therefore an urgent need to support these institutions and facilitate institutional coherence and harmonization of relevant development policies, plans and programmes among the member States. In this regard, stronger collaboration should be fostered among regional and subregional institutions such as AUC, UNECA, AfDB, UNEP-ROA, RECs and the NPCA. Rio+20 should therefore provide strong impetus for enhanced cooperation.

Valuable linkages among global, regional, subregional and national processes should be ensured in order to advance sustainable development, based on the principle of subsidiarity.

Countries should consider reviving and further strengthening NCSDs, with a mandate to address the challenge of integrating economic, social and environmental goals, by engaging a broader range of ministries and stakeholders at country level. Rio+20 should explore the possibility of reactivating and reinvigorating the NCSDs, which should be adequately capacitated to play a more active role. In this connection, the international community should assist in developing effective and responsive institutional frameworks for sustainable development in the region.

The inadequate involvement of the ministries of finance, economic affairs and planning and the ministries for social affairs in sustainable development is a serious concern, as this constitutes a major impediment to successful integration of all pillars at the national level. It feeds the erroneous impression that sustainable development is simply about environment. Rio+20 should therefore decisively address this shortcoming, so that all ministries exercise their rightful responsibilities for sustainable development.

Sustainable development is still unclear to some countries and stakeholders. Platforms for dialogue on sustainable development should thus be encouraged among stakeholders at the regional, subregional and national levels, to promote a common understanding of what the concept means in the African context. In this regard, it is important to promote and support these stakeholders to share experiences and lessons learned on how best to implement sustainable development commitments, and determine what works, what does not work and why.

A common challenge that persists is balancing the integration of the pillars in planning, budgeting and implementation of plans and programmes, due to the lack of synergy among the institutions dealing with the different pillars. There is need for a clear and actionable indicator framework for sustainable development, to enhance understanding, guide integration modalities and identify the type of linkages that should exist among different sectors. In this connection, global and regional institutions should promote the development and application of sustainable development indicator frameworks at all levels.

UNECA should enhance its work in promoting balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development in the region, and lead other regional institutions in: developing and applying monitoring and evaluation frameworks for sustainable development; developing a database to facilitate performance tracking; and providing country technical support on sustainable development strategies, policies and programmes.

UNECA, AUC and AfDB should continue to lead consultative meetings and processes to monitor and evaluate progress in implementation of the region's sustainable development commitments.

## **Annex 1: List of officials interviewed**

### **ECOWAS Commission**

1. Bertrand Zida
2. Bougounou K Djeri-Alassani
3. Dr Johnson Boanoh
4. Earnest Aubee
5. Essien Abel Essien
6. Moussa Leko
7. Samuel Medu

### **AMCOW Secretariat**

8. Bai Mass Taal

### **UNECA**

9. Adam B Elhiraika
10. Aida Opoku Mensha
11. Alessandra Sgobbi
12. Charles Akol
13. Fatma Ben Fadhl
14. George Ogboro
15. Hassan Musa Yousif
16. Isatou Gaye
17. Jala Abdel Latif
18. Jennifer Kargbo
19. Josué Dioné
20. Keiso Matashane Marile
21. Wilfred Lombe
22. Xiaoning Gong

### **UNECA SRO North Africa**

23. Mariame Bekaye

### **AUC**

24. Dr Abebe Haile Gabriel

### **NEPAD (NPCA)**

25. Estherine Fotabong

## **UNEP**

26. Desta Mebratu
27. Getrude Ngenda
28. Robert Wabunoha
29. Sarge Bounda

## **UNDP Ethiopia Country Office**

30. Ababu Anage
31. Shimelis Fekadu
32. Tekele Teshome
33. Wubua Mekonen

## **AfDB**

34. Adnan Checham
35. Al Hamido Dorsouma
36. Modibo Traore
37. Negeye Thiam
38. Paxina Chileshe
39. Tarek Ahmed
40. Vinaye Ancharz

## **SADC Secretariat**

41. Ackim Jere
42. Alisoa R Vololonaina
43. Arnold Chitambo
44. Bentry Chaura
45. Brebner Mhango
46. Cicliah Mamelodi Onyadile
47. Duncan Samikwa
48. Freddy Motlhatlhedhi
49. Habib Gallus Kampanga
50. Inonge Mweene
51. Kabelo Tlhapi
52. Keowagile Molapong
53. Lomthandazo Mavimbela
54. Margaret Nyirenda
55. Martin Muchero
56. Phera Ramoeli
57. Sadwick Limbikani Mtonakutha
58. Thembi Langa
59. Vitalis Chipfakacha
60. Willie Shumba

## Annex 2. Data-gathering questionnaire

The Africa Report on Institutional and Strategic Frameworks for Sustainable Development is being prepared on the basis of information gathered through desk research and direct consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the African Union, NEPAD Programme Coordination Agency, UNECA, UNEP, UNDP and various RECs. The objective of the present questionnaire is to obtain additional information on the subject from these institutions. The generic questions are meant solely to guide the discussion and the information-gathering process. They are neither exhaustive nor intended to preclude any topic that might be deemed relevant to the subject. Respondents are therefore invited to discuss any other issues in addition to those covered by the questionnaire.

### *General*

- What is the understanding of sustainable development within the organization?
- At what level are issues of sustainable development dealt with within the organization?
- What is the level of importance accorded to sustainable development issues in the organization?
- How is the organization engaged in the Rio process?

### *Strategic frameworks*

#### **Ownership and strong political commitment**

- What is your understanding of and view on National Strategies for Sustainable Development? What role has your organization played in fostering the development and implementation of NSSDs?
- What are the main strategies and programmes that your organization/institution has put in place to foster sustainable development in the region?
- Please tell me about the genesis of these programmes and how they were formulated.
- What are the concerns that the strategy seeks to address and at what level?
- Who are the key players in the implementation of the programmes?
- Where is the programme implementation unit located and who oversees the implementation of the programmes?

#### **Integrating economic, social and environmental objectives**

- How is due attention accorded to the different pillars of sustainable development in the formulation and implementation of your programmes and strategies?
- Are there imbalances in the treatment of the pillars and how could such imbalances be addressed?
- Tell me about the actors and the sectors involved and their roles in the formulation process of the various programmes.
- Tell me the levels at which the strategies are formulated and implemented.

- ✦ Describe how the central governments in member States participate in strategy formulation and implementation.
- ✦ Describe how the local authorities in member States participate in strategy formulation and implementation.
- ✦ Tell me how you address different positions and interests during formulation and implementation of the strategy.

## Broad participation and effective partnerships

- ✦ Who are the main participants and partners in this strategy?
- ✦ What results has the participation of these groups enabled your organization to achieve?
- ✦ How are the various partners represented?

## Development of capacity and enabling environment

- ✦ How do you rate the human and institutional capacity in the region?
- ✦ Please describe how your organization uses traditional knowledge and indigenous wisdom in this process.

## Outcomes and means of implementation

- ✦ How successful has the organization been in mobilizing the various means of implementation: finance, technology and technical support and capacity-building?
- ✦ What are the major implementation gaps?
- ✦ In light of the (organization/subregion and region's) sustainable development priorities including new and emerging challenges, how could delivery of the means of implementation be improved? And what are the priority needs in terms of means of implementation?
- ✦ What role could the different actors play in this process?
- ✦ Can you describe the targets that you intend to meet with this strategy?
- ✦ Please explain how you have arrived at these particular targets.
- ✦ What makes you believe that you can attain these targets?
- ✦ Are there other options that you may wish to pursue in case this particular set of targets cannot be attained fully?
- ✦ Please indicate the resources you have earmarked for this strategy, and the proportion of the resources that have already been mobilized. What is your main source of funding for your programmes?
- ✦ How do you assess progress and performance during and after the implementation?
- ✦ How does your programme relate to other programmes already in place in the region and in member States?
- ✦ What roles do you think the African Union and other continental bodies should play and what collaborative strategy should be fostered among the various institutions at regional and subregional levels?
- ✦ What synergies exist between this programme and similar programmes that the African Union and other continental bodies have put in place at the continental level?



## *Institutional framework*

### **Experiences**

- ✦ What is your view of NEPAD programme as a framework for sustainable development in Africa?
- ✦ What is your understanding and experience of NCSDs? In your assessment, how effective have NCSDs been in promoting integrated decision-making?
- ✦ What role has your organization played in supporting the creation and work of NCSDs (or equivalent)?
- ✦ What institutional arrangements exist within the organization to enhance integration, coordination and synergy in programme planning/development, implementation and monitoring? Please explain how these function.
- ✦ How does/can your organization ensure effective coordination among different agencies and organizations responsible for aspects of sustainable development at subregional and regional levels?
- ✦ How can better synergies be ensured among the various institutions at national, subregional, regional and international levels?
- ✦ What platforms or forums have been established in the organization or in the subregion to foster multi-stakeholder participation in decision-making including formulation and implementation of sustainable development policies, strategies and programmes? How are the linkages ensured between these forums/platforms and similar ones at national and regional levels?
- ✦ What roles have national and local governments played in implementing sustainable development since Rio?
- ✦ Please indicate which of the following forms of engagement of major groups in decision-making is commonly used in your organization's processes: (ranking in order of importance with 1 = most important)
  - ◇ Participation in policy development
  - ◇ Public hearings
  - ◇ Multi-stakeholder dialogues
  - ◇ Multi-stakeholder partnerships
  - ◇ Scientific panels
  - ◇ Multi-stakeholder consultations for international meetings
  - ◇ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- ✦ Name the major groups with which your organization has had the closest collaboration? For each, briefly describe the main features of the collaboration.
  - ◇ Women
  - ◇ Children and Youth
  - ◇ Indigenous Peoples
  - ◇ Non-governmental Organizations
  - ◇ Local Authorities
  - ◇ Workers and Trade Unions
  - ◇ Business and Industry
  - ◇ Scientific and Technological Communities

- ◇ Farmers

## Success factors

- Please give me an example of the achievements that your organization has made since the inception of the various programmes.
- How can the lessons from such successes be used to enhance the effectiveness of your institution in other sustainable development related activities? How relevant are these lessons for other organizations at subregional, regional, and international levels?
- What in your experience have been the most effective means of strengthening the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders in your institution's sustainable development efforts?

## Challenges

- What are the most significant challenges your institution faces in the promotion of sustainable development?
- What are the most significant challenges facing national institutions charged with promoting sustainable development in your member States?
- What have been the main challenges and constraints in ensuring better synergies among the various institutions at national, subregional, regional and international levels?

## Risks

- What position should Africa take with respect to institutional framework for sustainable development at the international level?
- Various changes in the global institutional framework for sustainable development have been discussed. In your experience, what is the importance of the following avenues for reform?
  - ◇ Strengthen existing institutions
  - ◇ Merge institutions
  - ◇ Improve coordination among existing institutions
  - ◇ Establish new institutions
  - ◇ Change mandate(s) of institution(s)
  - ◇ Streamline institutions
- Kindly explain your choices, indicating what concrete measures could be considered in this regard.
- What are the main risks threatening a successful UNCSD outcome on the institutional framework for sustainable development?

## Governance

- What is your understanding and views on IEG systems? If applicable, how could these IEG systems be strengthened within the context of fostering sustainable development?
- What is your view of the effectiveness of governance systems at various levels in fostering sustainable development? How could governance systems at national, subregional and regional levels be strengthened to better promote sustainable development?

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