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Implementation of the Rio+20 Outcomes in Africa

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Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
Africa-RIM	Africa Regional Implementation Meeting
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
APRM	Africa Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CSD	Committee on Sustainable Development
CSD-20	Twentieth Session of the Committee on Sustainable Development
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
GDP	gross domestic product
HLPF	High Level Political Forum
IFSD	Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPCA	NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency
OSAA	Office of the Special Adviser on Africa
OWG	Open Working Group
RC	Regional Commission
RCM-Africa	African Regional Coordination Mechanism
REC	Regional Economic Community
RIM	Regional Implementation Meeting
Rio+20	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
RPF	Africa Regional Political Forum
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDRA	Sustainable Development Report on Africa
SID	Small Island Developing State
SRO	Subregional Office
UN-DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
WTO	World Trade Organization

Executive Summary

1. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (CSD), popularly known as Rio+20, was held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012. Rio+20 adopted an Outcome Document, entitled “The future we want”. It largely addressed and reflected Africa’s concerns and priorities, as articulated in its Consensus Statement to the conference. In addition to its objective and two themes, the conference deliberated on a number of thematic areas and cross-sectoral issues and highlighted key actions for implementation supported by adequate means of implementation.

2. Rio+20 set in motion key processes on important issues, including identifying the format and organizational aspects of the Universal Intergovernmental High-Level Forum meant to replace the CSD; development of global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and an intergovernmental process to prepare a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy.

3. This paper tables issues for consideration by Ministers in charge of finance, economy and planning, with a view to eliciting recommendations and guidance for fine-tuning/updating Africa’s position on critical elements of the Rio+20 outcomes, strengthening member State engagement in the global Rio+20 processes, and ensuring effective implementation of the outcomes in Africa.

Conclusion and key recommendations

4. Given the favourable outcome that Africa achieved at Rio+20, effective follow-up and implementation of the agreements should deliver results that are well aligned with the region’s sustainable development priorities and aspirations. Africa therefore needs to continue to act strategically and capitalize on the political momentum for sustainable development that Rio+20 has generated in order to ensure that the conference outcomes are translated into concrete programmes to accelerate progress towards sustainable development in the region. Given the multidimensional and cross-cutting nature of sustainable development, which embodies economic, social and environmental dimensions, it is important that:

(a) Ministries responsible for planning, economy and finance take the lead in implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes in order to ensure coherence in the implementation process;

(b) Ministries responsible for planning should promote the integration of the Rio+20 outcomes into national development policies, strategies and plans. In this regard, coordination mechanisms should be put in place or strengthened at all levels to ensure efficient and effective implementation;

(c) Ministers should ensure effective engagement in the global Rio+20 processes. Issues that merit particular attention include the institutional framework for sustainable development, the sustainable development goals (SDGs), including their linkages with the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and means of implementation (finance, technology, capacity-building);

(d) Countries should ensure effective coordination between Capitals, the African Permanent Representatives in New York who negotiate on behalf of the region at the global

level, as well as the Permanent Representatives in Addis Ababa that follow-up on African Union (AU) processes;

(e) As called for by the Africa-Regional Implementation Meeting (Africa-RIM), the need to expedite development of a Regional Action Plan for implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes in Africa has to be acknowledged. In this regard, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and other partners should as soon as possible, agree on the modalities for preparation of the Action Plan;

(f) As the Rio+20 outcomes address all aspects of development, it is crucial that at the regional level, all relevant AU sectoral ministerial bodies are actively engaged in implementation of the outcomes. In this regard, an effective coordination mechanism is required to avoid duplication and overlaps and ensure coherence.

A. Background and Introduction

5. The objective of Rio+20 was to secure renewed political commitment to sustainable development, assess the progress and implementation gaps and address new and emerging challenges. The conference focused on two themes: a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

6. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) called for efficient and effective preparations for Rio+20 at the local, national, regional and international levels by Governments and the United Nations system, and encouraged the active participation of all major groups at all stages of the preparatory process. In this context, it decided that Regional Implementation Meetings (RIMs) coordinated by Regional Commissions (RCs) in preparation for the CSD sessions, be converted to Regional Preparatory Meetings for Rio+20.

7. Consequently, ECA spearheaded, jointly with AUC and AfDB, in strong partnership with Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a bottom-up, multi-stakeholder regional preparatory process for the conference. The process enjoyed support at the highest level – the AU Summit, which provided guidance on Africa's preparations for, and participation in Rio+20, mandated H.E. Denis Sassou N'Guesso, President of the Republic of the Congo, to coordinate Africa's preparations at the political level, supported at the technical level by ECA, AUC, AfDB and other partners.

8. The process facilitated Africa's effective participation in the conference and achievement of a favourable outcome. Activities supported by the collaborating partners included preparation of reports on the objective and themes of Rio+20; convening of the Africa Regional Preparatory Conference for Rio+20, which adopted the Africa Consensus Statement to Rio+20; establishment of a Steering Committee comprising the above-mentioned partners and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA); and continuous provision of technical support to the African Group of Negotiators in New York. The Eighteenth Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government of January 2012, subsequently approved the Consensus Statement as Africa's Common Position for Rio+20.

9. At Rio+20, Africa was well represented at both political and technical levels. The region negotiated with one strong voice based on its Common Position. In order to further promote and advocate for Africa's priorities and interests at the conference, the collaborating partners organized a number of side events, including a joint exhibition, as well as an *Africa Day*, sponsored by Republic of the Congo.

10. Following Rio+20, the Nineteenth Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government of July 2012 adopted a Decision commending the collaborating partners for their support to African countries and requesting them to support the effective implementation of the conference outcomes in Africa. The Fourteenth Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) convened in September 2012, and adopted decisions and declarations, including the elaboration of flagship programmes aimed at contributing to implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes in Africa. In addition, the thirteenth session of the United Nations Coordination Mechanism in Africa held in November 2012 recommended that all its clusters should integrate the Rio+20 outcomes into their business and annual plans, and promote synergistic implementation.

11. The Africa-RIM for the twentieth session of CSD (CSD-20) was held from 19 to 21 November 2012 under the auspices of the eighth session of the ECA Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD-8). The Africa-RIM, which focused on the main outcomes of Rio+20, was organized jointly by ECA, AUC, AfDB and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA). Representatives of 47 member States from Capitals, Addis Ababa and New York missions, as well as RECs attended the meeting. Major groups were also represented and engaged actively in the discussions. Observers from non-African countries, and United Nations agencies were also in attendance.

12. The Africa-RIM adopted its Outcome Document, which constituted Africa's collective input to CSD-20 and other post-Rio+20 follow-up processes. In adopting the Outcome Document, the meeting considered it a living document to be updated on the basis of new developments and information. In this regard, it called for its presentation at relevant regional forums, including the Joint Annual Meetings of the AUC Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. It also called for an Action Plan on the Rio+20 outcomes on the basis of the Outcome Document, to be prepared and implemented jointly by AUC, ECA and AfDB in collaboration with all stakeholders and other partners at regional, subregional, national and local levels.

Submission

13. Against the foregoing, the thrust of this paper is on the Africa-RIM Outcome Document. It is being submitted to the Sixth Joint Annual Meetings of the AUC Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to inform their deliberations and elicit guidance on its fine-tuning/updating and effective implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes in Africa. In this context, the paper provides an overview of the main outcomes of Rio+20 and the ongoing global follow-up processes. It also highlights the outcomes of the Africa-RIM, with a focus on the following elements of critical importance to the region: Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD); the SDGs; Green Economy/Growth; and

Means of Implementation (MOI), namely; financing, technology and capacity-building. It underscores the urgency of developing an Action Plan on the Rio+20 outcomes and provides an overview of priority activities that are currently under implementation. It concludes by putting forward policy recommendations for consideration by the Conference of Ministers.

B. The Main Outcomes of Rio+20

14. Rio+20 adopted an Outcome Document, entitled “*The future we want*”, which largely addresses and reflects Africa’s concerns and priorities as articulated in its Consensus Statement. Worthy of note is that Africa is the only region to which “*The future we want*” dedicates a specific section, calling on the international community to enhance support and fulfil commitments to advance sustainable development in the region, including effective implementation of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) programme. For a comparative analysis of key elements of the Rio+20 Outcome Document and the Africa Consensus Statement, reference is invited to the report entitled, “*Main Outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development: Implications for Africa*”¹. In addition to its objective and two themes, the conference deliberated on a number of thematic areas and cross-sectoral issues and highlighted key actions for implementation supported by adequate means of implementation. It also set in motion the following key processes:

- (a) Identifying the format and organizational aspects of the Universal, Intergovernmental High-Level Forum that will replace CSD;
- (b) Strengthening the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);
- (c) Constituting an open working group to develop the global (SDGs) to be agreed by UNGA;
- (d) Establishing an intergovernmental process under UNGA to prepare a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy;
- (e) Considering a set of recommendations from the Secretary-General for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies;
- (f) Launching of a programme of work on broader measures of progress to complement the gross domestic product (GDP); and
- (g) Designating a member State body to operationalize the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production.

C. Follow-up to the Rio+20 Outcomes at the Global Level

15. The sixty-seventh Session of UNGA considered various aspects of sustainable development, including Rio+20, and adopted a resolution on the same (A/67/437/Add.1) on 21 December 2012. The resolution reaffirmed the outcome document of Rio+20, and urged member States and other stakeholders to implement it in a speedy manner. The resolution also stressed the need for synergy, coherence and mutual support among the Rio+20 follow-

¹ The *Main Outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development: Implications for Africa* (E/ECA/CFSSD/8/18/Rev.1) can be found at: www.uneca.org.

up processes and other processes relevant for the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The following were the actions undertaken or called for by the sixty-seventh session of UNGA.

High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development

16. The resolution called for the negotiations to start as soon as possible, and to conclude by May 2013, in order to give enough time to prepare for convening the first meeting at the beginning of the sixty-eighth session of the Assembly. The first informal consultations of member States and permanent observers on the format and organizational modalities of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) were convened by the co-facilitators (the permanent representatives of Brazil and Italy) on 30 January 2013².

17. Key elements emerging from this initial round of consultations included:

- (a) The need for the HLPF to build on the experience and strengths of the CSD, and ensure a good transition between the CSD and the HLPF;
- (b) Ensuring that there is no overlap with other United Nations entities; and using existing structures in the Secretariat rather than creating new ones;
- (c) Involving and engaging all relevant United Nations entities, including Regional Commissions;
- (d) The need for Regional Commissions to report to the Forum based on regional modalities;
- (e) Ensuring participation of and coordination between representatives of the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental), as well as major groups, and for involving the international, regional and national levels; and
- (f) The need for the HLPF to:
 - (i) Follow-up on sustainable development and Rio+20 outcomes;
 - (ii) Have an action-oriented agenda and a flexible programme to respond to new and emerging issues;
 - (iii) Improve on the CSD and strengthen the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development;
 - (iv) Provide a basic framework for discussion while taking into account countries' challenges; and
 - (v) Review progress on sustainable development in the field.

18. The co-facilitators are expected to hold separate informal consultations with political groups and individual member States to deepen their understanding of the positions expressed by delegations. Consultations with Major Groups will also be held. The outcome of these separate consultations will be shared at the next open-ended informal meeting.

²<http://uncsd.iisd.org/news/un-member-states-begin-negotiations-on-hlpf/>.

Strengthening UNEP

19. UNGA adopted a resolution strengthening and upgrading UNEP, and establishing universal membership of its governing body. The landmark resolution aimed at increasing the role of UNEP as the leading environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda. It also called for UNEP to receive secure, stable and increased financial resources from the regular budget of the United Nations, and called for other UNEP donors to increase their voluntary funding.

Sustainable Development Goals

20. The decision reiterated the need for the Open Working Group (OWG) on the SDGs to submit its report to the sixty-eighth session of the Assembly. The OWG was established on 22nd January 2013. Member States have decided to use a constituency-based system of representation, implying that most of the seats are shared by several countries³. The African members of the working group are: Algeria/Egypt/Morocco/Tunisia; Ghana; Benin; Kenya; United Republic of Tanzania; Congo; Zambia/Zimbabwe.

21. As a next step, the President of the General Assembly was expected to convene an informal consultation on the OWG in February 2013, in order to pave the way for the Group to commence its work. The consultation was expected to address matters related to the leadership of the Group, its agenda, programme of work and methods of work, including modalities for the full involvement of relevant stakeholders.

Expert Committee on a Sustainable Development Financing Strategy

22. The resolution called for the work of the intergovernmental committee, comprising 30 experts nominated by regional groups, with equitable geographical representation, to start in January 2013 with a view to concluding its work by 2014. The resolution further requested the committee to update UNGA on the progress of its work before the beginning of the sixty-eighth session of the Assembly. The President of the General Assembly appointed the Permanent Representatives of Kazakhstan and Norway to facilitate the process of establishing the committee.

Report of the Secretary-General on options for a technology facilitation mechanism

23. UNGA considered the report of the Secretary-General and invited the President of UNGA to organize four one-day workshops on the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies and the connection between these technologies and sustainable development.

24. The workshops will discuss, *inter alia*: the technology needs of developing countries, options to address those needs, capacity-building and options for a technology facilitation mechanism, taking into account existing mechanisms. UNGA further requested the Secretary-General to submit a report for consideration by the sixty-ninth session of UNGA on the

³ The full list of members of the OWG as well as updates on its progress can be found at: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549>.

discussions, options and recommendations from the workshops, including on the way forward, as well as on additional inputs from member States and the United Nations system.

D. Outcomes of the Africa Regional Implementation Meeting

25. The Outcome Document of the Africa RIM focused on the main outcomes of Rio+20. The Document provides a framework for Africa's engagement in the global processes and implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes at regional, subregional and national levels. In this regard, Ministers may wish to consider key elements of the Outcome Document, taking into account the ongoing global-level processes indicated in section 3 of this paper, with a view to providing recommendations and guidance on the fine-tuning/updating of the Document, strengthening member State engagement in the ongoing Rio+20 follow-up processes, and ensuring effective implementation of the outcomes in Africa.

Institutional framework for sustainable development

26. Africa underlines the need for the IFSD to promote sustainable development and the balanced integration of its three dimensions. It further emphasizes that the reformed IFSD should avoid overlaps in institutional mandates, the role and importance of having effective institutions and strategies, as well as multi-stakeholder participation.

27. At the global level, Africa considers the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) as a forum for policy and decision-making on sustainable development matters, tasked with, *inter alia*: providing political leadership, guidance and recommendations for sustainable development; enhancing the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development; providing a dynamic platform for agenda setting; appropriately considering new and emerging sustainable development opportunities and challenges; and follow-up and review progress in the implementation of internationally agreed sustainable development commitments. The operational modalities of the forum should ensure effective linkages with related bodies from the regional to local levels, based on the principle of subsidiarity.

28. On format and organizational matters, Africa proposes that the HLPF should have the following format and organizational aspects: Be composed of the Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives; Convene for two days at the beginning of the sessions of the General Assembly every three years; Be preceded by preparatory meetings of technical experts for three days, and to be supported by inputs and reports by relevant stakeholders; Have a strong Secretariat that would, *inter alia*, support its function of ensuring a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development; Be chaired by the President of the General Assembly, and its outcomes shall be a declaration adopted by the General Assembly; and Benefit from the contribution and inputs of all relevant stakeholders.

29. At the regional and subregional levels, Africa calls for the RIMs to be upgraded to Regional High Level Political Forums (RPFs) for Sustainable Development, to constitute the Africa chapter of the HLPF. The Africa RPF, to be convened by ECA, jointly with the AUC and AfDB, in collaboration with relevant partners, should provide a strengthened platform to ensure an enhanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. To inform the Africa RPF, the ECA Subregional Offices (SROs) and RECs, in collaboration with other bodies and United Nations agencies operating at the subregional level, are called upon to organize review meetings informed by subregional review reports.

30. Africa further calls for concrete actions to strengthen ECA and its SROs to enhance their support to African countries in furthering their sustainable development objectives, including building capacity to facilitate mainstreaming, integrated assessments, monitoring and evaluation and the provision of platforms to promote experience-sharing and knowledge networking.

31. Africa calls on the United Nations Coordination Mechanism in Africa and its subregional chapters to enhance their role in supporting a coordinated and coherent approach to support Africa in the implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes.

32. At the national and local levels, Africa calls for the establishment/strengthening of coordinating bodies for sustainable development, allowing for horizontal and vertical linkages, and ensuring that the three dimensions of sustainable development are addressed in an integrated manner. The modus operandi of such coordinating bodies should ensure the involvement of all relevant ministries, government entities and other stakeholders to enable them to exercise their full responsibilities in sustainable development. Such coordinating bodies should guide the development and implementation of policies, strategies and plans in order to ensure synergies and avoid overlaps and duplication of efforts, as well as promote the adoption of approaches and tools including integrated assessments to promote the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

33. Africa emphasizes the need to ensure effective linkages among global, regional, subregional and national-level institutional processes based on the principle of subsidiarity and, in this regard, calls on UN-DESA to work with ECA to ensure that such processes and linkages are realized. It further calls for international support in this regard, and requests regional and subregional organizations to provide capacity-building support and promote the exchange of experiences and knowledge networking. In light of this, Ministers may wish to deliberate on the following:

(a) What should be the operational modalities of the proposed High Level Regional Forum for Sustainable Development? Should they mirror the functioning of the HLPF? What should be its composition and level of representation?

(b) How could the high-level political forums at global and regional levels, best address the interlinkages among the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental)? In this regard, how could participation in the Forum promote such balanced integration?

(c) How could strong vertical linkages across governance levels be ensured in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity? In this regard, what is needed to ensure that the High Level RPF effectively bridges the gap between national and global levels, and meaningfully contributes to the deliberations of the Global HLPF?

(d) What should be the role of African regional and subregional organizations in effectively operationalizing the High Level RPF?

(e) What should be the role of the Ministries of planning, economy and finance in operationalizing sustainable development at the national level?

(f) How could inter-ministerial coordination be enhanced to promote balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and the implementation of sustainable development commitments?

(g) How could effective linkages between Capitals, Addis Ababa and New York be fostered to ensure the same level of understanding and appreciation of the issues, and consistency in the messages and positions being conveyed?

(h) Any other matters deriving from the paper or deemed necessary.

Sustainable Development Goals

34. Africa emphasizes the need for the SDGs to complement rather than substitute for the MDGs, and for convergence on the SDGs and Post-2015 Development agenda to promote coherence in policymaking and synergistic implementation of internationally agreed goals. It considers the following as the guiding principles for development of the SDGs. The SDGs should:

(a) Be based on the Rio Principles particularly the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, taking into account different national circumstances, capacities and priorities;

(b) Embody the three dimensions of sustainable development, as well as issues pertaining to governance for sustainable development;

(c) Be action-oriented and allow for tracking of the progress towards sustainable development;

(d) Be universal in nature and flexible enough to cater for different national priorities;

(e) Build on and complement the MDGs;

(f) Be accompanied by adequate means of implementation;

(g) Promote equitable and inclusive human-centred development; and

(h) Be developed in the context of One United Nations Development Agenda.

35. The Africa-RIM Outcome Document identifies priority areas that the SDGs must address, with the overarching goal of eradicating poverty. These include:

- Combating hunger, ensuring food security and nutrition
- Access to safe water supply and adequate sanitation facilities
- Access to quality education and health services
- Promoting gender equality and empowerment of women
- Equitable and universal access to social services and social protection
- Sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- Reducing vulnerability and promoting resilience, including to the impacts of climate change
- Creating decent employment opportunities
- Enhancing infrastructure development

- Ensuring access to affordable and sustainable energy
- Combating land degradation and desertification, drought and deforestation
- Addressing climate-change challenges, including through adaptation and mitigation
- Promoting sustainable water-resource management
- Ensuring favourable access to, and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, including for climate-change adaptation and mitigation; and
- Fostering peace and security.

36. Africa considers that the goals, targets and indicators should be informed by the Post-2015 Development Agenda, as well as the *Sustainable Development Report on Africa (SDRA)*, in the context of which sustainable development indicator set for Africa has been established. The SDRA should constitute the regional chapter of the proposed *Global Sustainable Development Report*, and adequate support to this end should be ensured. In this regard, Africa calls for the domestication of the SDGs at the regional, subregional and national levels.

37. Against this backdrop, Ministers are invited to consider the following:

- (a) Are the principles and priorities identified in the Africa-RIM outcome document adequate in relation to Africa's needs and expectations from the SDGs?
- (b) What is required in terms of domesticating the SDGs that would eventually be adopted?
- (c) ECA and partners are already producing the SDRA, which is envisaged to constitute the Africa chapter of the *Global Sustainable Development Report*. What are the views of the Ministers regarding the production of subregional and national sustainable development reports?
- (d) What actions/steps are needed to ensure convergence in the SDG and Post-2015 Development Agenda processes in Africa, particularly in light of the need for a 'One UN' development agenda?
- (e) Any other matters deriving from the paper or deemed necessary.

A green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication

38. Africa reiterates that the green economy is but one tool/pathway for achieving sustainable development, and should be rooted in national priorities and plans, while not being used as aid conditionality or a barrier to trade. The transition should be enabled by adequate means of implementation and should take into account the region's level of development.

39. However, in view of the concerns expressed regarding the transition to a green economy, Africa calls for the adoption of a step-wise approach, focusing on selected sectors of the economy where targeted investments with accompanying enabling measures could spur inclusive green growth, while continuing to deliberate on the green-economy paradigm

with a view to better understanding its implications for the region. African countries should endeavour to put in place an enabling environment that strengthens partnerships with civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders, and that enables business and industry, to contribute to sustainable development.

40. Africa calls upon the international community to mobilize and provide additional financial resources to support African countries to develop and implement inclusive green-growth strategies and plans that are aligned with national priorities and development strategies. In this context, internationally agreed commitments on appropriate technology development, transfer and diffusion and corresponding know-how on favourable terms should be honoured.

41. In order to support African countries in fostering green growth in selected sectors, ECA, AUC, AfDB, UNEP, UNDP and other regional partners should undertake a thorough assessment of the challenges and opportunities of pursuing inclusive green growth in the region, while developing and applying methodologies for assessing policies relevant to such growth. Moreover, support in the development of inclusive green-growth policies and strategies are also needed, together with mechanisms for sharing toolboxes and best practices in applying policies on green economy/green growth.

42. Ministers may wish to consider the following:

(a) The Africa-RIM adopted a step-wise approach to green economy, focusing initial efforts of the promotion of inclusive green growth in selected sectors. What should be the priority sectors and interventions to promote inclusive green growth in Africa?

(b) What kind of support do African countries require to deepen understanding of green-economy/growth concept and to ensure that it contributes to sustainable growth and development?

(c) Any other matters deriving from the paper or deemed necessary.

Means of implementation

43. On *financing*, African countries have made significant progress in mobilizing domestic resources for sustainable development, and remain committed to continue to mobilize domestic resources (both public and private), improving the national governance environment, harmonizing national, regional and international efforts, pursuing policy coherence, and establishing or strengthening national policies that promote investment to implement sustainable development commitments. This notwithstanding, Africa requires external support to complement its efforts, particularly in the face of new and emerging challenges. In this context, the fulfilment of previous commitments and pledges on means of implementation is deemed critical.

44. A rough estimate of the level of sources required to finance sustainable development in Africa carried out in the build-up to Rio+20 indicated that the region would require close to \$200 billion annually to implement sustainable development commitments under the social, economic and environmental dimensions. This includes close to \$100 billion to

achieve the MDGs, when taking into account the need to adapt to climate change⁴; investment in infrastructure to the tune of \$93 billion, and \$5.4 billion for cross-cutting capacity development activities. This is likely to be an underestimation of the real needs to fully implement internationally agreed sustainable development goals, including the Rio+20 outcomes.

45. Africa calls for support from regional organizations to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the sustainable development financing requirements for the region; consolidate existing funds for sustainable development related matters with the aim of providing an overall picture of the financial resources available, creating synergies, assessing gaps and developing a strategy for mobilizing additional resources; and exploring the possibility of establishing an Africa Sustainable Development Fund for priority sustainable development areas.

46. On *technology development and transfer*, most African countries do not have adequate access to safe, clean and environmentally sustainable technologies adapted to local needs and circumstances, as they lack the technological know-how, skills, resources, infrastructure, including institutions and the business environment necessary to stimulate technology development. In order to bridge the increasing technology gap, Africa considers that the technology facilitation mechanism to be developed in line with the Rio+20 outcomes, to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean technologies should address all steps involved in the process of transfer of technology, notably: (a) identification of the need and the technology of interest; (b) the potential sources, costs and negotiations to gain access; (c) the actual transfer of technology; (d) adaptation and learning to operate and maintain the technology; and (e) use and further upgrade of the acquired technologies.

47. At the global level, Africa calls for the coordination and synergistic implementation of the various technology transfer initiatives and establishment of technology mechanisms and technology networks, which should be leveraged for the development, diffusion and transfer of broader green technologies for sustainable development. Furthermore, Africa calls on the United Nations to consider establishing an independent advisory board to provide different perspectives on technology development, transfer and use.

48. At the regional level, Africa calls for the establishment of regional network of centres of excellence and hubs, leveraging existing networks and institutional arrangements to assess the needs and to identify, develop, adapt and transfer clean technologies. This should be complemented by strategies to promote and strengthen regional, subregional and national institutions in technology innovation through increased financial resources, as well as partnerships within and outside the region for technology development, including the promotion of industry-academia-government partnerships.

49. The region calls on the international community to support the establishment of a technology development and transfer mechanism in Africa, in particular for those technologies that can help the continent to better exploit its rich natural resource base without undermining its sustainability.

⁴Africa Progress Panel (2010). From Adaptation to Climate-Resilient Development: The Cost of Climate-Proofing the Millennium Development Goals on Africa, Policy Paper, February.

50. On *capacity development*, Africa reiterates that capacity development in its three facets – human resources, organizational and institutional – is crucial for the implementation of sustainable development commitments in the region. There is therefore a need to develop and implement comprehensive national capacity-development strategies to further implementation of the sustainable development agenda. In this context, Africa endeavours to strengthen partnerships with non-traditional actors and the private sector, both within and outside the continent, to leverage resources and capacities for sustainable development. Moreover, Africa reiterates the urgent need to fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building, as well as to promote coherence and synergy among various capacity-development initiatives and international agreements in the economic, social and environmental spheres.

51. Africa calls for the international community to support the revision of the AU-NEPAD Capacity Development Strategic Framework to enhance the building of capacity for implementing sustainable development commitments, as well as national efforts to elaborate national capacity-development strategies, and the reform of Africa's educational curricula to provide for the development of knowledge and skills for sustainable development at all levels.

52. With regard to *voluntary commitments*, Africa underlines the importance of voluntary commitments, which could help the region to translate the various outcomes of Rio+20 into concrete programmes and actions. Priority areas for the region that remain underrepresented include: poverty eradication; sustainable development economics, finance and trade; measuring sustainable development progress; natural disaster preparedness; land degradation and desertification control; gender equality; and sustainable consumption and production.

53. To ensure that the region fully benefits from the voluntary commitments, African countries will endeavour to work with the committing organizations to better define target countries/beneficiaries, mechanisms for accessing and activating the financing and technical support, and to ensure coordinated and integrated approaches in implementation. Furthermore, in order to fully benefit from the voluntary commitments, short, medium or long-term monitoring and evaluation strategies are needed.

54. Ministers may wish to consider the following:

(a) What actions should African countries and the international community take to ensure the full exploitation of existing synergies among the different means of implementation (financing, technology and capacity development)?

(b) How could regional institutions best support African countries that are members of the Expert Committee on a Sustainable Development Financing Strategy to ensure that their inputs to the work of the committee are well informed by the region's priorities and concerns?

(c) What issues need to be considered in assessing the sustainable development financing needs of the region?

(d) What are the views of the conference regarding the possible establishment of a sustainable development fund?

(e) What are the main issues for Africa regarding the development, transfer and dissemination of clean technologies?

(f) What are the other pertinent issues that the proposed technology facilitation mechanism should consider to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean technologies?

(g) What are the key constraints and challenges to integrated capacity development in Africa and how could these be overcome?

E. Action Plan for Implementation of the Rio+20 Outcomes in Africa

55. The Africa-RIM Outcome Document outlines several areas in which countries need support to effectively implement the Rio+20 outcomes. In this regard, member States called for the development of an Action Plan on the Rio+20 outcomes, to be prepared and implemented jointly by the AUC, ECA and AfDB and in collaboration with relevant partners and all stakeholders. The Action Plan is to be developed taking into account ongoing initiatives, including the elaboration of the AMCEN flagship programmes. Pending the development of the Action Plan, and guided by the Africa-RIM Outcome Document, the following key priority activities have been identified to support member States in effective engagement in the Rio+20 follow-up processes:

(a) Facilitation of a bottom up consultative process to enable the effective engagement of African countries in the global SDGs process. This involves the preparation of five subregional reports on key priority sustainable development issues and possible SDGs for each subregion; a regional report drawing on the key findings of the subregional reports and proposing SDGs for the region; and the organization of subregional and regional consultative meetings. The process is expected to result in adoption of the Africa Common Position on the SDGs.

(b) Strengthening of RCM-Africa and its subregional chapters to promote United Nations system-wide coherence and coordination in supporting African countries to implement the Rio+20 outcomes. In this context, one inter-cluster meeting on the implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes in the region will be organized, with a view to coordinating the mainstreaming of the outcomes of Rio+20 in the business plans of the different clusters, and thus further strengthening the role of RCM-Africa in advancing the sustainable development agenda on the continent.

(c) Undertaking analytical studies on: financing sustainable development in Africa; technology development, transfer and deployment: needs and mechanisms; and capacity strengthening for sustainable development in Africa.

(d) Development of integrated assessment tools to strengthen the integrated analysis required to assess progress towards sustainable development, building on existing approaches, tools and methodologies.

56. Ministers are invited to consider the following:

(a) What are the most efficient modalities for the development of the Africa Action Plan on the Rio+20 outcomes?

(b) What other priority activities should be considered in developing the Action Plan?

(c) How could RCM-Africa support the development and implementation of the Action Plan?

F. Conclusion, Policy Recommendations and Way Forward

57. The overall positive outcome that Africa achieved at Rio+20 presents the region with the opportunity to continue to shape international commitments and steer support towards attainment of its sustainable development priorities and aspirations. Africa therefore needs to continue to act strategically and capitalize on the political momentum for sustainable development that Rio+20 has generated in order to ensure that the conference outcomes are translated into concrete programmes to accelerate progress towards sustainable development in the region:

(a) Given the multidimensional and cross-cutting nature of sustainable development, which embodies economic, social and environmental dimensions, it is important that Ministries responsible for planning, economy and finance take the lead in implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes in order to ensure coherence in the implementation process;

(b) Ministries responsible for planning should ensure the domestication of the Rio+20 outcomes through effective integration of these outcomes into national development policies, strategies and plans. In this regard, Ministries should take the lead in bringing together sectoral ministries, civil society and the private sector, and ensuring that effective coordination mechanisms are put in place or strengthened for concerted actions at all levels that yield the desired sustainable development dividends;

(c) Ministries responsible for planning, economy and finance should be actively engaged, and participate effectively in the global processes on the follow-up to the Rio+20 outcomes. Of particular relevance are the following processes:

- (i) Identifying the format and organizational aspects of the Universal, Intergovernmental High-Level Forum that will replace the Commission on Sustainable Development;
- (ii) The open working group to develop global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be agreed by UNGA;
- (iii) The intergovernmental process under UNGA to prepare a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy; and

(iv) Launching of a programme of work on broader measures of progress to complement the gross domestic product (GDP).

(d) Countries should ensure effective coordination among Capitals, the African Permanent Representatives in New York who negotiate on behalf of the region at the global level, as well as the Permanent Representatives in Addis Ababa that follow-up on African Union Processes;

(e) As called for by the Africa-RIM, there is need to expedite the development of a Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes in Africa. In this regard, ECA, AUC, AfDB and other partners should as soon as possible work on the modalities for preparation of the Action Plan;

(f) As the Rio+20 outcomes address all aspects of development, it is crucial that at the regional level, all relevant AU sectoral ministerial bodies are actively engaged in implementation of the outcomes. In this regard, an effective coordination mechanism is required to avoid duplication and overlaps and ensure coherence.