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**REPORT OF THE SECOND ORDINARY SESSION OF THE
SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (STC) ON AGRICULTURE,
RURAL DEVELOPMENT, WATER AND ENVIRONMENT
02 - 06 OCTOBER 2017, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

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**Second Ordinary Session of the Specialized
Technical Committee (STC) On Agriculture,
Rural Development, Water and
Environment (Ministers' Session)
05 - 06 October 2017
Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA**

STC2/ARDWE/MIN

REPORT

REPORT OF STC ON AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, WATER AND ENVIRONMENT

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The Ministerial Segment of the Second Ordinary Session of Specialized Technical Committee (STC¹) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (herein referred to as 'the STC') took place at the African Union Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 05 to 06 October 2017.

2. The STC was convened under the theme "Enhancing environmental sustainability and agricultural transformation to achieve food and nutrition security in advancing Agenda 2063"

B. OBJECTIVES OF THE STC MEETING

3. The main objective of the Second STC Meeting was to review progress made in implementing the AU decisions since the inaugural STC meeting that took place in October 2015, discuss and adopt reports and recommendations that will be presented for consideration by the Executive Council of the African Union in its next meeting in January 2018.

C. PARTICIPATION

4. The STC was attended by 49 Member States as follows: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Chad, Comoros, Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Kingdom of Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia.

5. Also in participation of the STC were representatives of Africa's Regional Economic Communities (ECOWAS and IGAD), sectoral ministerial committees (AMCEN, AMCOW and AMCOMET) and invited Development Partners (UNECA, FAO and AfDB).

D. OPENING SESSION

6. The Open Session was chaired by the Chairperson of the First Ordinary Session of the STC, Minister of State in Charge of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of the Republic of Congo, H.E. Henri Djombo.

7. The AUC Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, Her Excellency Mrs. Josefa Sacko, noted that African food security had been affected in the last two years by external shocks especially climate change-related ones, leading to

¹Acronyms are attached as Annex 1

unprecedented droughts, pests and diseases including the devastating Fall Armyworm. She stated that this meeting would be used to assess the progress made in the implementation of the Malabo Declaration. Mrs. Sacko further informed the meeting that the AUC and NEPAD Agency, working closely with the RECs and technical partners, developed the biennial review mechanism, trained country teams from 51 out of the 55 AU member states, adding that to date, 43 countries had submitted their reports which would be discussed during this meeting. She reported that after the endorsement by this meeting, the consolidated continental report and the African Agricultural Transformation Scorecard would be presented at the AU Assembly of January, 2018. She noted that Africa has succeeded in having a common position on the different Conferences of Parties (CoP) to the United Framework Convention on Climate Change which culminated in the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change. She called for concerted efforts at the national level to implement the nationally determined contributions through validation and integration into national development plans. She also proposed the establishment of an Africa-led monitoring and reporting mechanism on the implementation of the Paris Agreement. She expressed the hope that as priority is given to sustainable investments in agriculture, green and clean policies, Africa would be able to reach its continental and global commitments captured in the Malabo Declaration, the Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework, the Agenda 2063 and the SDG 2030.

8. In his statement, the Representative of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of **Ethiopia**, Mr. Dejene Abesha, noted that since the adoption of CAADP in 2003, CAADP has become the central focus of efforts by African governments, the African Union and NEPAD Agency to accelerate agriculture-led economic growth and poverty alleviation. He stated that Ethiopia has made significant progress in its implementation of CAADP. He informed the meeting that a lot is expected from the African Union in supporting member states to ably track reliable and accurate data against the set of indicators put forward for evaluating performance of Malabo commitments. He reminded delegates of the threat posed by the fall armyworm and called for collective action against the infestation of its control. He also mentioned the adverse effects of climate change on livelihoods and production systems and requested the African Union to measures against it through its member states. Concluding his statement, he expressed appreciation to the African Union Commission for its efforts in bringing together member states to discuss key agenda items on operationalizing CAADP-Malabo commitments.

9. The Chair of the Bureau of the 1st STC and the State Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of **Congo**, Honourable Henri Djombo, recalled that the inaugural STC was held in October 2015 in line with the decision of AU Heads of State and Government during which the bureau of the 1st STC was given the mandate to handle the affairs of the STC for two years. He then elaborated on the achievements made by the first bureau, such as the adoption of the Rules of Procedure of the STC and the establishment of five sub-committees. He added that additional sub-committees and adhoc working groups could be established as deemed necessary. He stated that the first STC discussed a number of issues such as land, ecological organic agriculture, climate change, meteorology, disaster risk reduction, water and sanitation. In addition, a number of recommendations were made, some of which are being implemented. After the inaugural session, the Bureau met on 29th February, 2016 and adopted the report of the 1st STC and forwarded it to the AU Executive Council for consideration. Unfortunately, the required procedure was not followed, so

the report could not be tabled as planned at the AU Assembly in July 2016. He reported that the Bureau of the 1st STC met again on 4th October, 2017 and revised sections of the report and unanimously agreed that the report should be forwarded for adoption by this meeting and later by the policy organs of the AU. He thanked delegates for their understanding and support during his tenure and requested that the same support should be extended to the new Bureau. In conclusion, he wished the meeting a successful outcome and declared the meeting formally opened.

E. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE STC

10. The STC considered and adopted the Report of the First Ordinary Session of the STC under the chairmanship of the Chairperson of the First Ordinary Session of the STC, held in October 2015.

F. REMARKS FROM THE OUT-GOING CHAIR OF THE STC

11. The Outgoing Chairperson of the STC stated in his closing remarks that the STC is a strategic decision making forum that brings together Ministers and experts from the agricultural, rural development, water and environment sectors. Because of logistical constraints on one hand that limit the number of Ministers that can attend, and the need for continuity and meaningful engagement, it would be prudent for Member States to designate a Ministry, based on the priorities of the country, to attend the STC.

12. The Ministerial meeting requires a quorum (two-thirds of Member States) for its recommendations to be binding: Member States should invest in ensuring Ministerial representation at Minister Level to strengthen the implementation of the outcomes of the STC.

G. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU OF THE SECOND STC

13. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure governing STCs, the Bureau of the STC was elected as follows:

Chairperson:	Burkina Faso
1st Vice Chair:	South Africa
2 nd Vice Chair:	Mauritania
3 rd Vice Chair:	Rwanda
Rapporteur:	Republic of Congo

H. STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SECOND ORDINARY SESSION OF THE STC

14. The Chairperson of the Bureau of the 2nd STC and the Minister of Agriculture of Burkina Faso, Hon. Jacob Ouedraogo, thanked delegates for the confidence reposed in Burkina Faso and electing him as the chair of the bureau for the next two years. He thanked the first Bureau for the commitment with which they discharged their duties and responsibilities. He used the platform to call upon all delegates to ensure that agriculture becomes the driver of economic development in their respective countries. He expressed the hope that he can count on the support of delegates during the next two years.

I. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND PROGRAM OF WORK

15. The STC considered and adopted the agenda and programme of work without modification.

J. GENERAL STATEMENTS BY MEMBER STATES

a) Key Messages by Member States

16. Ministerial Statements from Member States reiterated strong commitments to CAADP, and outlined national efforts to deliver against the national agricultural investment plans.

17. The scorecard approach to assessing the level of implementation of the CAADP was commended in terms of the framework, relevance of the indicators, analytical approach and the integration of governance aspects. It generated a quality report that provides a useful dashboard of the progress after 14 years of implementation since the Maputo Declaration. Comparability provides scope for motivation of Member States.

18. The key to the success of CAADP is financing: 10% was set as a target for public financing. Too few countries have achieved this target, and even for those which have, the results need interrogation. The Ministerial Meeting should offer relevant proposals for addressing financing of the CAADP. Increased public investment is imperative for stimulating private investment. A number of views were offered:

- a) After 14 years of CAADP implementation, fewer countries have succeeded to invest 10% of their budgets in agriculture;
- b) Review the structure of investment that can contribute to the 10% target: there are many other areas of the economy that impact on and have direct bearing on agriculture. For example rural roads and infrastructure such as markets, rural electrification which contributes to value addition.

19. The African agriculture transformation agenda is being implemented in the face of climate change challenges: COP 21 was successful in raising funds for fighting climate change, but it focused on mitigation, and yet Africa the priority is adaptation. Africa contributes only 4% of emissions, but is highly impacted due to the high dependence of African agriculture on natural resources and the environment. COP22 hosted by Morocco put back agriculture on the global climate change agenda. It was recommended that the Africa Agriculture Adaptation Initiative (Triple A) launched at COP 22 should be endorsed by the AU and supported to facilitate better cooperation in the fight against the impacts of climate change in agriculture.

20. Member States highlighted the role of AMCOMET in providing political leadership, policy direction and advocacy in the provision of accurate and timely weather, water and climate information and services for informed decision-making, in

planning and preparedness to reduce disaster impacts and in key development sectors. Member States were called on to invest in enhancing the capabilities of national hydrological and meteorological services and increase cooperation between African countries and regions.

21. More attention is needed in prioritizing and rationalizing water resource development and utilization if Africa is to improve production and reduce vulnerability to rainfall variability and other impacts of climate change. Given the limited water sources, emphasis should be placed on alternative technologies in water harvesting, including use of grey water and waste water. It was recommended that Irrigation be a key focal area of the STC, and a committee should be established to address water for agriculture and climate smart agriculture.

22. The STC is a platform that generates recommendations and decisions to transform African agriculture, it should be backed by rigorous research. It was recommended that a research for development committee should be established.

23. Efforts in the agricultural, rural development, water, environment sectors is fragmented with duplication and lack of synergy among public and private sector, development partners and non-state actors. The STC should provide a common platform for reporting, reviewing, and consolidation. The Regional Economic Communities (RECs) should form an integral part of the structure in order to consolidate the continental, regional and national outlook of the STC.

24. Many of Africa's interventions have been project oriented, an approach that is inherently constrained in scope, geographic coverage, and sustainability. A more strategic approach was recommended with Programme development led by African Union.

25. Youth are a significant resource for agriculture and strategies for their retention and gainful employment in the sector would also contribute significantly to curbing illegal migration. It was recommended that CAADP should focus more on youth employment.

26. Desertification, land degradation and drought require an integrated and sustained effort including the implementation of actions proposed in the Windhoek Declaration.

27. Countries called for an integrated approach in dealing with issues of illicit trade of wild fauna and flora, and called for a more deliberate coordinated effort to address the issues.

b) Key Messages by Development:

28. Representatives of Development Partners in attendance of the STC, namely; the Representative of the FAO: Assistant Director-General for Africa; and the Representative of the African Development Bank, delivered statements to the STC. A summary of their key messages is as follows:

- a) The relevance of the STC cannot be overemphasized because of the issues that it gives guidance on are of importance to development partners like FAO. The SDGs and Malabo goals converge;
- b) The STC in its work should keep three priority areas high on its agenda: eradicating hunger, decreasing vulnerability to shocks and poverty reduction;
- c) Africa's import bill is estimated at US \$35.4 billion annually, value chain development should focus on import substitution;
- d) Resources are scarce for financing agricultural initiatives: Ministries of agriculture should invest in development of bankable projects to rationalize borrowing for the sector;
- e) Over 320 million children suffer malnutrition, and many are born underweight: the STC should give more attention to nutrition.

K. PRESENTATION ON THE BIENNIAL REPORT AND COUNTRY SCORECARD

29. The AUC Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture made a presentation on the Draft Biennial Report by Member States and African Agricultural Transformation Scorecard on the implementation of the Malabo Declaration. The report will be submitted to the AU Policy Organs after the endorsement by the STC.

30. There were lengthy deliberations following the AUC presentation and the following comments were made by Member States:

- a) That scores in the presented Biennial Review Report did not capture Members States that submitted incomplete reports;
- b) That the score of zero (0) is not a true reflection of the achievement status of those Member States;
- c) That there is need for Members States to be given ample time to compile their reports, considering that the process is iterative and involves collation of data from different government sectorial institutions;
- d) That the Biennial Review Report should not be regarded as a competitive process, but rather a political commitment by Member States.

31. The Ministers, after protracted deliberations on the said report, made the following recommendations:

- a) That the deadline for submission by Member States be extended to end of October 2017;
- b) That the AUC finds and alternative criterion for reflecting the score based on i) Member States that submitted incomplete reports; and ii) Member

States that have not submitted any report, taking into account that the score of zero (0) gives a negative connotation.

L. PRESENTATION OF THE SENIOR OFFICIALS / EXPERTS REPORT

32. The Chairperson of the Senior Officials/ Experts Session of the STC read through the draft report of the proceedings of their two-day Session that took place from 2nd to 3rd October 2017. Ministerial Delegates deliberated and proposed changes to report.

33. The Ministers acknowledged the outcome of the Senior Officials'/Experts' work.

M. RECOMMENDATIONS

34. The Ministers deliberated on the Senior Officials'/Experts' Report and made the following recommendations.

AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY, FOOD SAFETY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

AU CAADP Malabo Business Plan and Country Agribusiness Partnership Framework

35. The Meeting recognized the efforts exerted by the AUC in developing the AU CAADP Malabo Business Plan (2017-2021) and took note of the existence of (a) a business plan that harmonizes AUC, NEPAD and RECs interventions in supporting member states to implement the Malabo Declaration; (b) tools and guidelines to help member states to refresh their National Agriculture Investment Plans; and (c) tools to support member states to attract private sector investments in Agriculture (Country Agribusiness Partners Framework). The meeting, therefore, recommends as follows.

36. The meeting resolved that the AUC, NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) and RECs should harmonize their interventions in support of Member States informed by the AU Malabo Business Plan.

37. The meeting encouraged Member States to make use of the tools and guidelines developed for improving implementation of their National Agriculture Investment Plans; thus resulting into achievement of objectives and targets as elaborated in the AU Malabo Business Plan.

38. The African Union to strongly advocate for investments for the Malabo Declaration first by Member States themselves, development partners and private sector to allow the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Development Program (CAADP).

39. Call upon the African Union Commission to support the Adaptation of the African Agriculture (AAA) Initiative as an advocacy tool for the adaptation of the African agriculture to climate change and to catalyse financing and facilitation of capacity building for the adaptation of the African agriculture projects.

CAADP Continental Biennial Review Report and the Africa Agricultural Transformation Scorecard

40. The STC took note of the efforts made during an iterative process for developing reporting tools, orienting Member States and RECs on the different tools and mutual accountability processes leading to production of the Biennial Review Report and Africa Agricultural Transformation Scorecard (AATS) for Member States' reporting against the Malabo Commitment., The Meeting recommended as follows:

- Urged Member States that have not yet submitted or with incomplete submissions to submit their reports by October 31, 2017;
- Endorsed the draft Inaugural Biennial Review Report and the Africa Agricultural Transformation Scorecard of the Commission on the implementation of the June 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, for submission to the 30th Assembly of the Union in January 2018;
- Member States requested African Union and NPCA to mobilize technical and financial resources aiming at strengthening country data systems, evidence based planning and mutual accountability mechanisms through capacity building programs and knowledge sharing among countries.

Framework for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Africa

41. The Meeting took note of the presentation on the Framework for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Africa (SAMA), which is aimed at responding to the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. The Meeting recommends as follows:

- Endorsed the Framework for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Africa as an integral part of Africa's rural and agricultural transformation;
- Urged Member States to enhance implementation of agricultural mechanization and be guided by the menu of the priority elements, in the process of developing and implementing their national strategies for sustainable agricultural mechanization;
- Requested the AUC-DREA to continue its collaboration with FAO and other partners to support Member States to develop and implement their national sustainable agricultural mechanization strategies and report on progress accordingly.

Implementation of the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges:

42. A presentation on AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges informed participants on the progress made in the implementation of the AU Declaration on Land issues and challenges in Africa and the way forward. It highlighted AU decisions taken relating to land such as Agenda 2063, Malabo declaration on agriculture. The Meeting, therefore, made the following recommendations:

- Endorsed the Guidelines for Curricula Development in Africa and called on Member States to promote their use and provide resources in this regard;
- Requested AUC together with ECA and AfDB to capacitate the AUC/Africa Land Policy Center (ALPC) by institutionalizing it to ensure financial sustainability, operational efficiency and ownership;
- Requested AUC/Africa Land Policy Center to develop guidelines to mitigate land and ethnic based conflicts for use by Member States in reviewing policies and institutions;
- Encouraged RECs to institutionalize land governance programs to ensure sustainable funding;
- Urged Member States to review land policies and programs to achieve 30% target for women's land rights by 2025;
- Requested AUC/ALPC, RECs, Member States to mobilise resources (including internally) for integrating land governance in National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) and Regional Agricultural Investment Plans (RAIPs) and other sectors.

Continental Geographic Indications Strategy for Africa:

43. The meeting took note of the presentation on the Continental Geographic Indications Strategy for Africa that underscored Africa's rich natural resources and bio-cultural diversity representing so many assets to combat food insecurity and poverty, in the context of climate change. The presentation made the case for the relevance of a Continental Strategy for the development of geographical indications (GIs) in Africa as a key tool for sustainable development. The Meeting, therefore, recommended as follows:

- Endorsed an elaborate continental strategy for the development of Geographic Indications in Africa and the Action Plan for its implementation;
- Requested for popularization of the Strategy in respective Member States as a tool for marketing and Africa's transformation;

- Requested the AUC to mobilise resources for supporting Member States in its implementation.

Challenges of Agricultural Commodity Value Chains Development towards Improving the Competitiveness on the Continent:

44. The meeting took note of the presentation by AU SAFGRAD on the challenges of commodity value chains development towards improving the competitiveness of agricultural commodity in Africa. The Meeting noted that the presentation sought to address the need to boost the competitiveness of agricultural commodities so as to fast track intra-Africa trade. Therefore, the meeting came out with the following recommendations:

- Encouraged Member States to incentivize business schemes along the chains to attract investors;
- Requested RECs to prioritize regional commodities upon which to concentrate development efforts to improve competitive advantage.

The 2017 AU theme “Harnessing the demographic Dividend through investments in Youth”

45. Africa’s population is projected to double by 2050, and a narrow and closing window of opportunity still exists for the region to harness the ‘demographic dividend’ as the continent’s youthful workforce grows in relation to its number of dependents (children and elderly).

46. If African leaders invest now, the continent’s youth can drive growth and job creation that will benefit everyone. Africa could add \$15 trillion to its economy over the next 30 years. Translating this potential will require investments in education, employment and empowerment, particularly for women and young people.

47. The meeting recommended as follows:

- Employ youth in agribusiness and public works programs that directly benefit them, including power, transportation, post-harvest processing, water, and other infrastructure projects in rural, poor communities;
- Scale-up microcredit and SME financing programs, financial literacy training and value chain training to enable youth to adequately meet the needs of identified agricultural markets;
- Address unequal access to productive inputs for youth, especially girls, and devote funding to tailored extension services.

Prioritizing Food Safety in Africa

48. A presentation by AUC-DREA underlined the negative effects mycotoxins, metals and other contaminants pose on human and animal health. It then

underscored the need to establish a Pan African Food Safety Laboratory. Accordingly, the following recommendations were made:

- Requested the AUC to conduct a situation analysis of existing food safety laboratory infrastructure on the continent in order to inform the proposal for the establishment of the Pan African Food Safety Laboratory;
- Urged the AUC to develop a continental Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Policy Framework and a full proposal for the establishment of the Pan African Food Safety Laboratory.

Need to Scale Up Emerging Initiative for Improving Nutrition within the Agricultural Transformation Agenda

49. Bio-fortification is the process of breeding and delivering critical vitamins and minerals into staple crops that are naturally enriched with micronutrients. It complements commercial fortification, supplementation and dietary diversity. It therefore, has great potential to contribute significantly to the Malabo Goal of reducing stunting to 10% and underweight to 5% by 2025. Biofortification is rapidly gaining international acclaim and nine AU Member States are already implementing biofortification projects with support of international research organizations. However, the initiative lacks high level political backing from the AU. In this regards, the Meeting made the following recommendations:

- Encouraged the AUC, NPCA and Development and Technical Partners to work together to develop policy briefs leading to a Declaration on scaling up of bio-fortification in Africa within the context of development of sustainable food systems;
- Requested AUC-DREA to initiate a process for developing a framework for guiding the scale up of bio-fortification to cover more Member States, especially those with potential for adopting the programme and mainstreaming it into their agribusiness and value chain development interventions.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON LIVESTOCK RELATED ISSUES

Pan-African Strategy and Programme for the Control and Eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants (2017-2021)

50. The Meeting noted the presentation by AU-IBAR of its first 5-year Pan-African PPR programme developed for the period 2017-2021, which aims to:

- a) Reduce the prevalence of PPR in endemic countries and maintain the absence of PPR in non-infected countries;

- b) Reinforce the Critical Competencies of Veterinary Services to enhance the control and eradication of PPR and other priority small ruminant diseases;
- c) Mitigate NR based and other conflicts in key small ruminants production areas; and
- d) Promote investments in livestock based business models to enhance access to markets.

51. The Meeting made the following recommendations:

- Endorsed the revised Pan African Strategy for the Control and Eradication of PPR from Africa by 2030 and the revised Pan-African Programme for the Control and Eradication of PPR for the period 2017 – 2021;
- Requested AU-IBAR, RECs and Member States to intensify efforts to mobilize resources for implementation of the Pan African Strategy for the Control and Eradication of PPR.

Animal Welfare Strategy in Africa (AWSA):

52. The STC noted that animal welfare is an issue of growing concern globally, with compliance to animal welfare standards increasingly an integral part of trade agreements. Africa is lagging in compliance to good animal welfare practice. At the political level, there is yet inadequate attention to promotion of animal welfare principles in the development of the continent's animal resources. This has ramifications for both Africa's goals of intensifying animal production, of tripling inter and intra-African regional trade in livestock and for Africa's participation in global trade of livestock. It is in this regard that the meeting:

- Endorsed the Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa (AWSA), the African Platform for Animal Welfare (APAW) and the 4-year action plan;
- Requested AU-IBAR and partners to mobilise the resources required to implement the Strategy.

Report and Recommendation of the 34th Conference of the International Scientific Council for Trypanosomiasis Research and Control (ISCTRC):

53. The STC observed that Trypanosomiasis commonly called Sleeping sickness in human and Nagana in Cattle is a parasitic disease with serious impacts on human and animal health, sustainability of livelihoods in rural communities and a cause of poverty and underdevelopment on the continent. The 34th ISCTRC Conference and the 16th PATTEC Coordinators' meeting was held on 11th to 15th September 2017 in Livingstone, Zambia and made recommendations that require immediate implementation. The meeting, therefore:

- Endorsed the recommendations of the 34th ISCTRC General Conference and the 16th PATTEC Coordinators' Meeting for immediate implementation by Member States and partners;
- Requested AU-IBAR/ISCTRC, AU-PATTEC and partners, to formulate integrated joint regional and continental programmes and mobilise resources for their implementation.

ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES, WATER & SANITATION, DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Report of the 6th Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN), Cairo, Egypt (16-19 April 2016):

54. The Meeting took note of a presentation made by Egypt that highlighted the important role of environment and sustainable development in the global agenda and the important role played by AMCEN in global environmental negotiations including in the Climate Negotiations and the Nagoya Protocol. The Meeting, therefore:

- Endorsed the report, decisions and the Cairo Declaration of the 6th Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN).

Report of the 16th Regular Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment in Libreville, Gabon (12-16th June 2017):

55. The Chair of the Experts Group of AMCEN made a presentation on the above-mentioned report. The STC recognized that the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the UN Convention on Desertification and Cities would facilitate the implementation of Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals and Africa Agenda 2063. The Meeting, therefore:

- Endorsed the Report, Decisions of the Libreville Declaration of the 16th Regular Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment.

Implementation of the Sharm el Sheikh Declaration on Achieving Water and Sanitation Goals in Africa:

56. The Meeting recalled the commitments of the Sharm el Sheikh Declaration on Achieving Water and Sanitation Goals in Africa. It recognized the efforts made to implement this Declaration. It, therefore, calls for fast-tracking implementation of this Declaration. The STC:

- Endorsed the report and Decisions of the 10th Ordinary Session of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) held in Dar es Salam, Tanzania in July 2016;

- Also endorsed the Dar es Salaam Roadmap for Achieving the N’Gor Declaration on Water Security and Sanitation in Africa towards the realisation of the Africa Water Vision 2025;
- Urged Member States to commit to mobilise domestic resources for bridging the financing gap for the water and sanitation, and further commit to the establishment of the Africa Blue Fund to fast track implementation of (i) the African Water Resources Management Priority Action Programme 2016 – 2025; (ii) the African Programme for Monitoring and reporting on Sharm el Sheikh Commitments; (iii) the Kigali Action Plan; (iv) the Programme for Universal Access to Water Supply and Sanitation in Africa (Operation 2M4M); (v) the African Clean Villages Programme; (vi) the Programme for Productive Sanitation in Africa; and (vii) the Human Capacity Development Programme for increasing capacity in the water sector.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Common African Position to the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Cancun, Mexico (22-26 May 2016):

57. The African Union Commission made a presentation on the Africa Common Position which was finalised in Cancun by Regional Economic Communities and Member States during the World Global Forum on Disaster Risk Reduction held in 22-26 May in Cancun Mexico. In this regard, the meeting:

- Took note of the Africa Position on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) to the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction;
- Requested Member States to accelerate the allocation of resources for the implementation of the commitments made at the 2017 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

African Architecture for Disaster Risk Reduction:

- Requested the AUC and the Republic of Cameroon to continue working together on the development of a roadmap for the establishment of a centre of excellence for Disaster Risk Reduction, of which the Republic of Cameroon has requested to host the Head Quarters, which will be processed in accordance with the AU established procedures for hosting institutions and report to the policy organs

Implementation of Monitoring of Environment and Security in Africa (MESA):

58. The AUC presented its report on the implementation of the Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa (MESA) project. The Meeting noted that the MESA project has registered important achievements at national, regional and continental levels. “Environmental Security” in the context of this report refers to “Environmental Protection”. The Meeting, therefore:

- Endorsed the GFCS programme, which will improve and expand the scope of climate services in Africa;
- Urged the AUC to continue taking its leadership role of ensuring coordinated and coherent implementation of the GFCS programme in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.

WILD FLORA AND FAUNA, CLIMATE CHANGE, METEOROLOGY AND DESERTIFICATION

The Report of the First Experts Group Meeting on the Implementation of the African Strategy on Combatting Illegal Exploitation and Illicit Trade in Wild Flora and Fauna in Africa:

59. The Meeting took note of the Report of the 1st Experts Group meeting on the Implementation of the African strategy on combatting illegal exploitation and illegal trade in wild fauna and flora in Africa. The STC:

- Endorsed the report and recommendations of the 1st Experts Group Meeting on the Implementation of the African Strategy on combatting illegal exploitation and illicit trade in wild flora and fauna in Africa;
- Agreed that that the African Ministers responsible for environment and wildlife provide political oversight for the implementation of the strategy through AMCEN, supported by a coordination mechanism under the auspices of the AUC;
- Requested the AUC to include issues of wildlife in the agenda of the STC meeting on defence and security;
- Urged Member States to enhance cooperation on combatting illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products. The meeting also re-iterated its full support for Zero Tolerance Approach to wildlife crime including through mobilizing and enhancing resources and capacity for a cohesive strategic response, recognizing different mandates and responsibilities at country level, as well as cross-border co-operation. The STC further supports the development of a Common African Position on Wildlife.

Report of the Meeting of CAHOSCC Gender and Youth Programme on Climate Change:

60. The Meeting took note of the presentation of the African Union Commission on the Report of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) Meeting on Gender and Youth in Climate Change Programme. The Meeting accordingly took the following resolutions:

- Endorsed the Report of the CAHOSCC Women and Gender and Youth Programmes and adopt the two Action Plans on the CAHOSCC Women

and Gender Program on Climate Change (CWGPCC) and the CAHOSCC Youth Program on Climate Change (CYPCC);

- Urged Member States and RECs to support participation of women and youth in activities in the implementation of the Paris Agreement of the 23rd Conference of Parties (COP23) and future CoPs.

The Report on the 3rd Bureau Meeting of AMCOMET and Report of the AMCOMET Africa Hydromet Forum:

61. The STC took note of the evident commitment of Member States to the AMCOMET process, in particular through Member States' ratification of the AMCOMET Constitution and the financial support provided for the AMCOMET Secretariat. The meeting further appreciated AMCOMET achievements since the Third Session of AMCOMET in February 2015. The STC:

- Endorsed the report and decisions of the third AMCOMET Session held in Praia, Cabo Verde in February 2015, the decisions of the AMCOMET ministers present during the AMCOMET Bureau Meeting, and the Communique of the AMCOMET Africa Hydromet Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in September 2017;
- Called upon Member States to increase their investments in generation and mainstreaming of weather and climate information and services into their national transformation agenda.

Combating Desertification in Africa

The Windhoek Declaration on Enhancing Resilience to Droughts in Africa

62. The STC noted the background of the severe drought affecting many parts of the continent which has negative impacts on livelihoods, food security and economies. It is against this background that the Government of the Republic of Namibia, with support from the African Union Commission and the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification organized the first African Conference on Drought in Windhoek, in August 2016. The objective of the Conference was to develop an Africa-wide strategic framework aimed at building resilience to drought on the continent. Given the magnitude of the number of countries susceptible to drought in Africa, the Declaration is important to the realisation of Agenda 2063.

63. The STC endorsed the Windhoek Declaration on Enhancing Resilience to Droughts in Africa and requested the AUC to support Member States in its implementation.

64. Requested the AU Commission to:

- a) provide capacity building in the field of land degradation and neutrality on targets and indicators, as well as the drafting reports for the year 2018 for the implementation of the strategic plan 2018-2030;

- b) organize a meeting for LCD focal points to put in place a plan for to implement the 2018-2030 strategic framework for Africa;
- c) establish an early warning system for drought for Africa.

Strengthening the Role of Science and Technology Approaches in Combating Desertification in Africa

65. The meeting took note of a presentation by AU-SAFGRAD on “follow-up on the 1st STC decision on tackling desertification and land degradation issues”.

66. The STC:

- Observed that reporting to the Committee of Science and Technology should be a combined effort between African Scientific and Technical Correspondence and National Focal Points;
- Urged Member States, RECs, AU SAFGRAD and Development Partners to contribute to strengthening of Scientific and Technical Correspondent capacity in order to bring substantive inputs to Scientific and Technical Correspondent discussions that could be used by National Focal Points;
- Requested REC and AUC to organise annual meetings to include National Focal Points and Scientific and Technical Correspondent and continentally every two years, for the preparation of the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD in the same year.

Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI):

67. In recognition of the significance of the Great Green Wall for Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI) in reversing land degradation and desertification in the Sahel and Sahara, boosting food security and support local communities to adapt to climate change, the Meeting recommended as follows:

68. The AU Commission and Member States to commemorate the Africa Drylands Week as a formal work programme to serve as a platform for raising awareness on drylands and drought matters, and be organized on regional basis every biennium;

69. Member States, international, regional and sub-regional organizations to consider Land Degradation Neutrality as a means of achieving synergy in the implementation of the Africa Vision 2063, the MEAs, and SDGs;

70. Reinforce South-South Cooperation among GGWSSI Member States through knowledge and experience sharing, collaborative research and in establishing a knowledge platform.

The Fall Armyworm (FAW) in Africa:

71. The meeting recognized and acknowledged the two presentations made by the AU-Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (IAPSC) and FAO on the menace occasioned by infestation of the Fall Armyworm in most African countries in 2016 and 2017. The meeting, therefore:

- Endorsed the Framework for the Coordinated Management of Fall Armyworm (FAW) in Africa and requested the AUC, in collaboration with FAO, to follow up and support its implementation;
- Requested Member States to commit to an effective implementation of the programme of work on Fall Armyworm;
- Requested the AUC to establish and implement a Fund for Responding to Emerging Pests in Africa;
- Encouraged the AU Inter-African Phytosanitary Council to work with FAO and other relevant partners to establish an information system for monitoring and early warning of the Fall Armyworm;
- Endorse the continental harmonized framework for the regulation and registration of pesticides in Africa.

N. ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

72. The STC reviewed the preparations and logistical arrangements for the 2015 and 2017 STCs, and proposed the following as measures for improvement:

73. Requested the AUC to ensure that all relevant documents are made available to the Bureau before the next plenary session is organized, and have to be in all the four working languages of the Union within the deadlines;

74. Requested the AUC to facilitate and support the bureau of the 2nd STC to draw up a plan of action and a roadmap for the period 2017-2019 and communicate the progress in implementation of the recommendations at every beginning of STC;

75. Called upon all Member States to participate and use efficiently the STC for Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment as a platform to shape continental policies, and follow up on progress in the implementation of the Heads of State declarations in order to achieve the transformation agenda for the continent;

- AUC to develop a monitoring framework on the implementation of executive decisions covering all relevant sectors of the STC.

O. ADOPTION OF THE MINISTERS' REPORT

76. The report of the Second Session of the STC at Ministerial level on Agriculture, Rural Development Water and Environment was adopted as amended and said report shall be submitted to the policy organs of the Union for consideration in the January 2018 Assembly.

Annex 1: ACRONYMS

AfDB	African Development Bank
ALPC	Africa Land Policy Center
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on Environment
AMCOMET	African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AU-IAPSC	AU Inter-African Phytosanitary Council
AU-IBAR	AU Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources
AU-SAFGRAD	AU Semi-Arid Food Grains Research and Development
AWSA	Animal welfare Strategy for Africa
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Plan
COMESA	Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa
CoP	Conference of Parties
CST	Committee on Science and Technology of the UNCCD
DREA	Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of the Western African States
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FAW	Fall Armyworm
GGWSSI	Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative
GGWSSI	Great Green Wall for Sahara and the Sahel Initiative
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
ISCTRC	International Scientific Council for Trypanosomiasis Research and Control
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MEAs	Monitoring of the Environment Agreements
MESA	Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa
NAIP	National Agricultural Investment Plans
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NFP	National Focal Point
PANAAC	Pan African Agribusiness and Agroindustry Consortium
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign
PPR	Peste des Petits Ruminants
REC	Regional Economic Community
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAFGRAD	Semi-Arid Food Grains Research and Development
SAMA	Framework for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Africa
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
STC	Specialized Technical Committee
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

