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Economic Commission for Africa
Committee on Sustainable Development
Tenth session
Addis Ababa, 17 May 2017**Aide memoire****I. Background**

1. Since the restructuring of the subprogrammes of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and their subsequent endorsement by the sixth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in March 2013, ECA has continued to generate knowledge and build consensus on key themes of sustainable development in the region. In particular, the subprogramme on innovations, technologies and management of Africa's natural resources focused on strengthening:

(a) Research, policy development and analytical work to support member States in their efforts to promote the use of social, economic and environmental innovations and technological systems as engines of economic growth;

(b) Research and analytical work on mineral resources and development in the context of the Africa Mining Vision;

(c) Support for African countries in their efforts to realize inclusive green transformation and development;

(d) Support for member States in tackling the effects of climate change in key sectors and in putting in place appropriate plans and mechanisms to reflect national development priorities, policies, strategies and programmes.

2. The Committee on Sustainable Development was established as one of the functional and sectoral subsidiary organs of ECA. As stated in the ECA approved programme budget for 2014–2015, the Committee “serves as a forum of experts that provides advice to the Commission in integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development” in line with the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, and other major conferences on sustainable development. The members of the Committee comprise experts and policymakers representing three constituencies: economic, social and environmental, consistent with the mandate of the Commission in promoting integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

3. The Committee retains the format of its predecessor, the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development, as both a technical and a legislative organ, composed of high-level experts from governments, universities, research and development institutions, the private sector and the civil society of ECA member States. It meets on a biennial basis and serves as a forum for the promotion of

cooperation, exchange of information and sharing of experiences in the thematic areas under the purview of the subprogramme.

4. The Committee also provides a platform for advocacy and for the assessment of follow-up activities by African governments in response to global agendas. In this regard, previous sessions of the Committee were instrumental in providing platforms for the Africa regional implementation meetings to review progress in the implementation of commitments set out in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, the outcomes of the Committee on Sustainable Development have informed deliberations of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, which meets to follow up on and review implementation in the Africa region, as part of the process initiated by the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

5. At its tenth session, the Committee on Sustainable Development will build on the achievements of its previous sessions and play its mandated role in reviewing implementation of the 2016–2017 work programme of the ECA subprogramme on innovations, technologies and the management of Africa’s natural resources. It will also provide guidance on work for the 2018–2019 biennium in the context of the proposed programme budget of the ECA strategic framework for 2018–2019, with a view to ensuring that the continent’s key priorities and concerns are adequately reflected in the work programme.

II. Format of the session

6. The session will be conducted under the guidance of the Bureau of the tenth session of the Committee. A representative of Senegal, Chair of the outgoing Bureau of the ninth session of the Committee on Sustainable Development, and the Director of the Special Initiatives Division of ECA will address participants at the opening of the session.

7. In all, there will be six presentations aimed at facilitating discussions on the parliamentary and background documents of the session. During the presentations, the secretariat will present its report on progress in the implementation of the 2016–2017 work programme of the ECA subprogramme on innovations, technologies and the management of Africa’s natural resources and the priorities for the 2018–2019 strategic framework.

8. The presentation will be in six parts: first, an introduction to the ECA subprogramme on innovations, technologies and the management of Africa’s natural resources, and an overview of the implementation of the 2016–2017 work programme; second, new technologies and innovations; third, the green economy and natural resources; fourth, mineral resources development; fifth, climate change and development; and, sixth, lessons learned and the way forward: priority areas for the 2018–2019 strategic framework of the subprogramme on innovations, technologies and the management of Africa’s natural resources.

9. These presentations are intended to elicit guidance from the Committee on modalities to ensure that the strategic orientation of the subprogramme adequately responds to the continent’s development priorities on technology and innovation, the green economy and natural resources, mineral resources development, and climate change and development.

III. Documentation

10. The working document of the session is the parliamentary report on progress in the implementation of the 2016–2017 work programme of the ECA subprogramme on innovations, technologies and the management of Africa’s natural resources and priority areas for the 2018–2019 work programme.

IV. Expected outcomes

11. The expected outcomes of the session include the following:

(a) Guidance and direction on the implementation of the 2016–2017 work programme and the 2018–2019 strategic orientation of the subprogramme on innovations, technologies and the management of Africa’s natural resources;

(b) Set of practical and action-oriented recommendations on the different thematic areas in relation to advancing the sustainable development agenda in the region.

V. Participants

12. This session will, first and foremost, bring together high-level experts from government ministries in charge of economic planning and finance, environmental and social affairs, mining and mineral resources, and science and technology from all 54 member States of ECA. They will be joined at the session by experts representing major groups and other stakeholders, including civil society, business and industry organizations, universities and research institutions. In addition, partner institutions, such as the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency, the regional economic communities and United Nations agencies and organizations will be invited to send representatives to the session.

VI. Working languages

13. The session will be conducted in English and French, with simultaneous interpretation in both languages.

VII. Dates and venue

14. The session will be held at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, on 17 May 2017.

VIII. Administrative arrangements

15. The necessary administrative arrangements will be detailed in a separate information note.
