

**Economic Commission for Africa****Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development**

Fourth session

Dakar, 2-4 May 2018

Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

**Parallel panel sessions on the subthemes of the session:****(d) Responsible consumption and production****Background paper on the subtheme “Responsible consumption and production in Africa”****I. Introduction**

1. Sustainable consumption and production are central to enabling countries to achieve sustained economic growth and poverty reduction. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002, the representatives of the people of the world encouraged and promoted the development of a 10-year framework of programmes in support of regional and national initiatives to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption patterns.<sup>1</sup> The resulting Marrakech Process was launched in 2003 as a global multi-stakeholder process to support the implementation of sustainable consumption patterns. In addition, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, as informed by the Marrakech Process, clearly declared the promotion of sustainable consumption patterns as an essential requirement of sustainable development.<sup>2</sup>

2. In 2015, the Heads of State and Governments of the African Union adopted Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want,<sup>3</sup> which sets out the aspirations for the region, with the first being to attain a “prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development”. In the Agenda 2063 framework, priority areas are identified to steer Africa towards attaining environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities. The priority areas include sustainable natural resource management; biodiversity conservation, genetic resources and ecosystems; water security; climate resilience and natural disaster preparedness and prevention; renewable energy; and sustainable consumption and production patterns.

3. African countries have been implementing the global 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns within the context of the African 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production, which was approved at the African

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\* ECA/RFSD/2018/1

<sup>1</sup> See *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

<sup>2</sup> See General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

<sup>3</sup> African Union Commission, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want* (Addis Ababa, 2015).

Ministerial Conference on the Environment in 2005.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, at its fourteenth session, held in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 10 to 14 September 2012, made a decision to adopt and implement the African regional flagship programmes, including the partnership for the Sustainable Cities Programme, as a means to ensure the effective implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and to regularly review the African 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes a specific goal on sustainable consumption patterns, namely, Sustainable Development Goal 12, which provides further impetus to the implementation of sustainable consumption patterns in all countries. In Africa, however, progress in implementing the targets relating to sustainable consumption patterns is mixed because momentum from the previous initiatives has been slow.

4. For example, the ecological footprint of all countries in the region is expected to double by 2040, largely because of the growing population and increased per capita consumption in a minority of countries.<sup>5</sup> Changing consumption patterns and rapid urbanization are also a growing source of concern because of, among other factors, their effect on natural resources, including water and energy, food production and waste management. Accordingly, the region cannot afford to ignore the warning signs of impending ecological problems that threaten to escalate the costs of and, ultimately, undermine and constrain consumption, production and overall development. Attaining the corresponding standardized data to track progress relating to the target indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 12 present a difficult challenge.<sup>6</sup> Notwithstanding data limitations, the objective of the present document is to synthesize the state of the progress in implementing Goal 12.

## **II. Key interlinkages with other goals and how they affect policymaking in relation to sustainable consumption patterns**

5. Africa is facing several megatrends, which will play a large role in determining whether the continent achieves the targets relating to sustainable consumption patterns and whether they are achieved in an integrated manner, as desired. By 2035, approximately 50 per cent of the population of Africa is projected to be living in urban areas, presenting considerable demands on food, employment, public services and infrastructure, including housing, water, energy, housing, roads and rail transport.<sup>7</sup>

6. Notwithstanding its extensive technical potential and diverse renewable energy sources, the region is not energy secure. More than 75 per cent of the African population is without electricity and 81 per cent depends on solid traditional biomass fuels for cooking. The unmet demand for energy has further resulted in a high dependence on unsustainably harvested traditional biomass energy in the form of charcoal and firewood as cooking fuels, which comes with associated environmental and health problems. The continent's main concern is

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<sup>4</sup> The 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns is an outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which intended to enhance international cooperation to accelerate a shift towards sustainable consumption patterns, with developed countries taking the lead.

<sup>5</sup> See World Wildlife Fund and African Development Bank, *Africa Ecological Footprint Report: Green Infrastructure for Africa's Ecological Security* (Gland, Switzerland, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> See United Nations Environment Programme, *Sustainable Consumption and Production Indicators for the Future SDGs* (Nairobi, March 2015).

<sup>7</sup> See Economic Commission for Africa, *Leveraging Urbanization for Africa's Structural Transformation: ECA's Contribution* (Addis Ababa, 2017).

therefore to extend access to sustainable energy, taking into account the opportunities offered by the energy potential of its own resource endowments and considering how this will promote growth, social and economic development and improved quality of life. Notably, Africa needs to add 250 GW of installed capacity by 2030, a 150 per cent rise from current capacity, to meet its growing demand.<sup>8</sup>

7. Coupled with a green economy, sustainable consumption production could revolutionize sustainable development in practice. Both concepts emphasize resource efficiency, but green economy is a broader concept, representing an economic system, which could enhance the structural transformation agenda of Africa by boosting environmental and social objectives. Given its low industrial base, Africa has the opportunity to advance green industrialization by leapfrogging dirty technologies as part of its industrial development strategy that responds to sustainable development challenges of the region. Investment in resource-efficient and cleaner production technologies could also contribute to efforts to achieve other Sustainable Development Goals, such as promoting sustainable industrialization (Goal 9), sustained and inclusive economic growth with decent jobs (Goal 8), sustainable production and consumption (Goal 12), the conservation of natural resources, such as water (Goal 6), energy (Goal 7) and terrestrial ecosystems (Goal 15), control of environmental pollution through reduced chemical consumption and improved environmental compliance, which would further help to improve occupational health and safety (Goal 3).

8. Access to technology is needed to enhance the resource efficiency of production and consumption. Green technologies in a green economy also contribute to reducing waste generated by manufacturing and industry and associated pollution, especially of air, land and water bodies. Embracing cleaner production technologies through innovation and developing new or upgrading existing technologies are important for enhancing the industrial output of Africa. Technology that improves the efficiency of energy use and inputs is, accordingly, key to the shift to sustainable consumption patterns and could improve the competitiveness of exports from Africa.<sup>9</sup> The region should therefore support the establishment of more national cleaner production centres in addition to the ones already established by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) through their joint Programme on Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production.

### **III. Implementation of each target of Sustainable Development Goal 12 relating to sustainable consumption pattern**

#### **Target 12.1: Implement the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns**

9. Target 12.1 tracks progress in the implementation of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns in “all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries”. To date, 71 countries globally have sustainable consumption patterns in their national action plans or have mainstreamed sustainable consumption patterns as a priority and target of national policies. In Africa,

<sup>8</sup> See International Renewable Energy Agency, *Prospects for the African Power Sector: Scenarios and Strategies for Africa Project* (Abu Dhabi, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> See Economic Commission for Africa, *Inclusive Green Economy Policies and Structural Transformation in Selected African Countries* (Addis Ababa, 2016).

several countries are implementing priority activities under the African regional road map for the 10-Year Framework. Those countries are investing in priority sectors, including water and sanitation, habitat and urban development, and in infrastructure and assets that facilitate reduced carbon emissions and pollution, enhance energy and resource efficiency and prevent the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

10. Developed countries have heeded the call to take the lead. For example, the Government of Germany has been primarily supporting the Marrakech Process Task Force on Cooperation with Africa.<sup>10</sup> In addition, the European Union has funded the SWITCH Africa Green programme, which supports countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable development by making the transition to an inclusive green economy on the basis of sustainable consumption and production patterns through policy support and green business development, targeting micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. The programme has established a networking facility, which serves as a one-stop knowledge and depository hub for resources and documents relating to sustainable consumption patterns. All stakeholders can contribute to and use the platform and dashboard.<sup>11</sup> The European Union also has funded the UNEP environment eco-innovation project, which supports small and medium-sized enterprises in integrating sustainability into their business operations and in the operations of their partners throughout their relevant value chains.

11. Although many African countries are implementing policies and strategies centred on the priority areas of the African 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production, a majority of them have failed to see the need to realign them with national sustainable consumption or green economy initiatives. The following countries have developed national sustainable consumption action plans: Algeria (2017), Burkina Faso (2010), Ghana (2014), Mauritius (2008), Rwanda (2014), Seychelles (2014), Uganda (2011), the United Republic of Tanzania (2007) and Zambia (2011). It is therefore recommended that countries boost their efforts to implement the regional road map for the 10-Year Framework Programme. In particular, countries should harness the synergies and interlinkages among the regional sustainable consumption pattern thematic priorities outlined in the 10-Year Framework Programme, including the cross-cutting areas, the Sustainable Development Goals targets and the Agenda 2063 goals and priorities.

12. It is important to note that sustainable consumption and production action plans have been implemented not only at the national level. Some countries, such as Egypt and Mozambique, are implementing local action plans relating to sustainable consumption and production. In addition, a few projects and initiatives are being implemented on the continent under the African 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (see table 1). Building on the concept of “cleaner production” coined by UNEP in 1989, 13 national cleaner production centres have been established with support from UNEP and UNIDO.<sup>12</sup> Those centres promote resource-efficient and cleaner production investment projects to facilitate the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to industries, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> See United Nations Environment Programme, *Sustainable Consumption and Production in Africa 2002-2012* (Nairobi, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> More details are available at <http://switchafricagreen.org>.

<sup>12</sup> They were set up in Cabo Verde (2010), Egypt (2004), Ethiopia (2000), Kenya (2000), Mauritius (2014), Morocco (2000), Mozambique (2000), Senegal (2011), South Africa (2002), Tunisia (1996), Uganda (2001), the United Republic of Tanzania (1995) and Zimbabwe (1995). Two countries also launched projects: Ghana in 2014 and Rwanda in 2009.

<sup>13</sup> See Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Environment Programme, *Enabling Measures for an Inclusive Green Economy in Africa* (Addis Ababa, 2017).

Table 1  
**Projects and activities implemented under the African 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns relating to sustainable consumption and progress**

<i>Activities, projects or programmes</i>	<i>Implementing countries</i>
Development and implementation of national and local sustainable consumption and production programmes	Specific sustainable consumption and production plans: Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia Mainstreaming sustainable consumption and production programmes into sustainable development plans: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mali, the Niger, South Africa and Togo Local-level: Cairo and Maputo
Demand-side management of energy and water uses	Uganda and Zambia
African beverage industries water savings initiative	Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe
Sustainable buildings policies for developing countries	Burkina Faso and Kenya
Promotion of the resource efficiency in small and medium-sized enterprises toolkit	Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, the Niger, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda
Development of integrated solid waste management plans	Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Lesotho and Zimbabwe
Household waste management	Burkina Faso
Development and implementation of sustainable public procurement policies	Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mauritius, the United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia and Uganda

*Source:* United Nations Environment Programme, *Sustainable Consumption and Production in Africa 2002-2012* (Nairobi, 2011); United Nations Environment Programme, *Global Outlook on Sustainable Consumption and Production Policies: Taking Action Together* (Nairobi, 2012); United Nations Environment Programme, *Sustainable Consumption and Production Indicators for the future SDGs* (Nairobi, March 2015); African Regional Roadmap for the 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production (2014).

13. In 2004, the African Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production was established as a not-for-profit regional institution to promote sustainable consumption and production, under the auspices of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, UNIDO and UNEP. It has many other partners, including the European Union and other United Nations entities, such as the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the International Labour Organization, and serves as the regional platform for the development and implementation of the African 10-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production. The round table promotes the development of national and regional capacities for the implementation of sustainable consumption and production and promotes the application of related concepts and tools in African countries.

14. Some subregional activities relating to sustainable consumption and production have also been undertaken. For example, countries in North Africa joined with the Arab States to launch a regional strategy on sustainable consumption and production in 2009. East African countries joined forces to implement the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project, coordinated by the Lake Victoria Basin Commission, which focuses on the collaborative management of transboundary natural resources.<sup>14</sup> The Southern African Development Community has developed a subregional framework for

<sup>14</sup> See United Nations Environment Programme, *Global Outlook on Sustainable Consumption and Production Policies: Taking Action Together* (Nairobi, 2012).

renewable energy, with the ultimate objective to increase citizens' access to affordable energy services and promote sustainable development.<sup>15</sup>

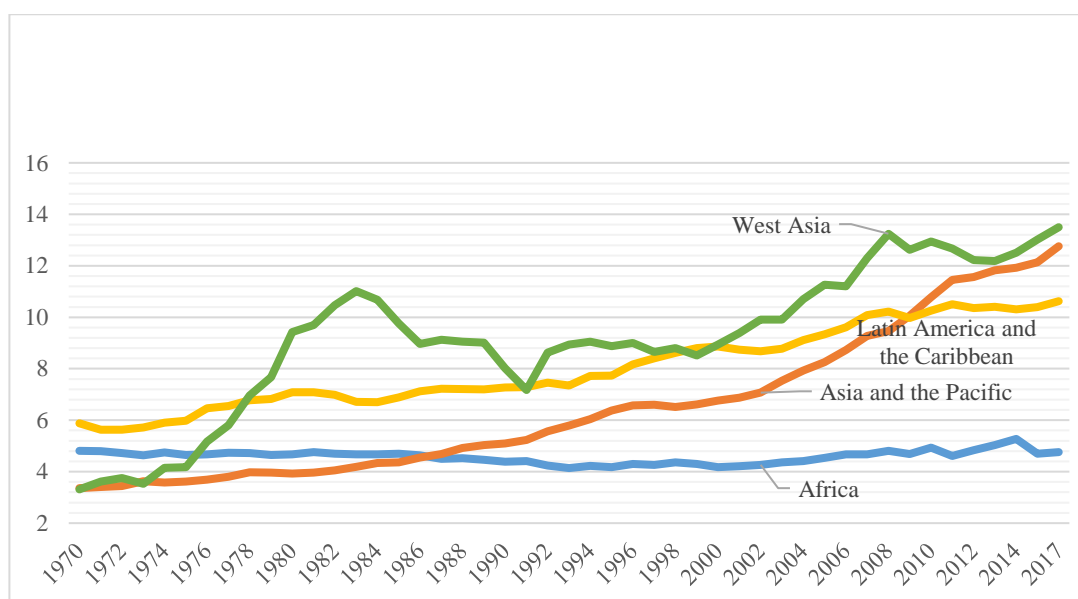
### Target 12.2: Sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources

15. Africa is endowed with considerable amounts of mineral resources, and, in 2012, the continent ranked first or second in terms of quantity of global reserves of many minerals.<sup>15</sup> In 24 African countries, mineral resource exports contribute to merchandise exports.<sup>16</sup> African countries, however, have experienced negative income when depletion and depreciation of natural assets and environmental damage from economic growth is accounted for. Negative adjusted net savings trends imply that economic growth patterns are unsustainable. Improving adjusted net savings values during the period 2000–2015 showed that many countries were actively implementing measures to sustainably manage and use their natural resources and to reduce environmental damage from economic activities.<sup>17</sup>

16. Compared with other regions, domestic material consumption per capita in Africa has held steady over the past 45 years (see figure I).<sup>18</sup> This does not mean that Africa has done enough in managing environmental pressure. Instead, it most likely indicates that, in terms of resource utilization for supporting economic growth, Africa has not been optimally using its resources. Domestic material consumption as a production side indicator cannot be independently used to fully capture the extent of the efficient use of natural resources.

Figure I

#### Domestic material consumption per capita (1970-2017)



Source: United Nations Environment Programme, “Environment live”. Available at <https://environmentlive.unep.org>.

<sup>15</sup> See United States Geological Survey, “Mineral commodity summaries 2013”. Available at <https://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/mcs/2013/mcs2013.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> See Economic Commission for Africa and others, *Mineral Resources for Africa's Development: Anchoring a New Vision* (Addis Ababa, 2012).

<sup>17</sup> See Economic Commission for Africa, *Macroeconomic Frameworks for an Inclusive Green Economy in Africa* (forthcoming).

<sup>18</sup> Domestic material consumption is defined as the total amount of materials used directly in the economy (used domestic extraction plus imports), minus the materials that are exported. Domestic material consumption per capita describes the average level of material use in an economy, an environmental pressure indicator. The material footprint is the attribution of global material extraction to domestic final demand of a country. The total material footprint is the sum of the material footprint for biomass, fossil fuels, metal ores and non-metal ores.

17. Alternatively, the material footprint provides the consumption-side perspective of natural management. In 2010, only Southern Africa was close to the world average material footprint of 1.3 kg (see table II), but, in general, all the subregions of Africa are beginning to reduce their material extractions owing to a renewed focus on natural resource management policies.

Table 2

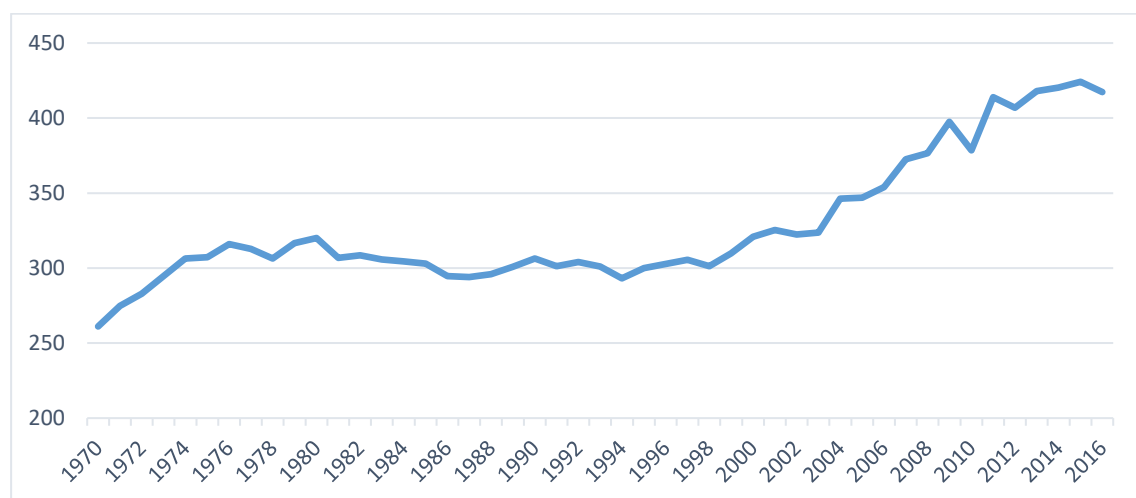
**Material footprint per unit of gross domestic product (Kilograms)**

Year	Eastern Africa	West Africa	Southern Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa
2000	4.2	2.4	2.0	2.5
2001	4.1	2.6	1.7	2.4
2002	4.1	2.2	1.7	2.3
2003	4.2	2.4	1.8	2.4
2004		2.2	1.8	2.3
2005	4.2	2.2	1.8	2.4
2006	4.1	2.3	1.7	2.3
2007	3.9	2.3	1.6	2.3
2008	3.7	2.2	1.5	2.2
2009	3.7	2.1	1.5	2.1
2010	3.5	2.1	1.5	2.1

Source: UNdata Data - Sustainable Development Goals Indicators (most recent data available).

18. The continent's resource productivity improved sharply during the economic boom that took place from the mid-2000s to the mid-2010s (see figure II). As gross domestic product (GDP) and domestic material consumption grew positively, at on average 3.3 per cent and 2.2 per cent, respectively, between 1970 and 2016, figure II shows that Africa has been experiencing a relative decoupling and dematerialization because its economies have grown more rapidly than the growth of its use of natural resources. Such an encouraging trend needs to be maintained by further mainstreaming sustainable consumption and production into national plans and strategies to sustainably manage the continent's natural resources.

Figure II

**Resource productivity, sub-Saharan Africa, 1970–2016 (Constant gross domestic product to domestic material consumption)**

Source: Calculations based on United Nations Environment Programme and World Development Indicators data.

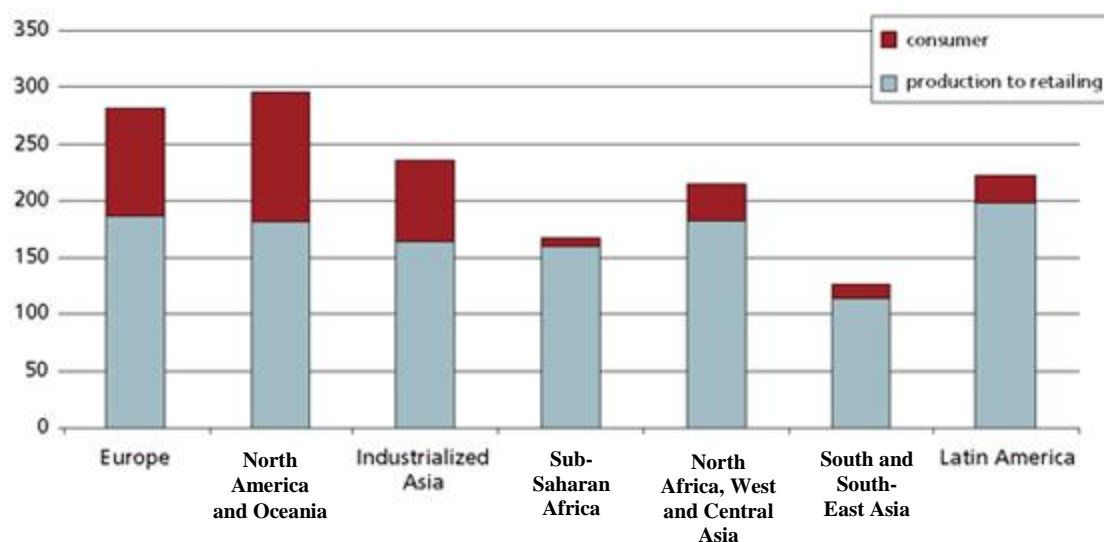
19. Although the abundance of natural resources provides opportunities to transform the primary sector into value addition secondary sectors and industrialization, volatile commodity prices have significant negative effects on countries that rely mainly on export earnings from raw or semi-processed commodities.<sup>19</sup> The risk is always for countries to increase resource extraction in a commodity slump to offset export-earning losses. Safeguarding the continent's natural resources on which most of the growth is predicated should, as a consequence, remain a priority.

**Target 12.3: Food waste at retail and consumer levels and food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses**

20. While the world food production level is potentially adequate to feed the entire human population, every year roughly one third of the food produced for human consumption, or approximately 1.3 billion tons, is lost or wasted. This translates to \$990 billion annually of lost or wasted food globally, of which \$310 billion is from developing countries. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that consumers in rich countries annually waste almost as much food (222 million tons) as the entire net food production of sub-Saharan Africa (230 million tons).<sup>20</sup> This translates to a per capita waste by consumers of between 95 and 115 kg annually in Europe and North America and only between 6 and 11 kg annually in sub-Saharan Africa and South and South-East Asia, respectively (see figure III).

Figure III

**Per capita food losses and waste (Kilograms per year)**



Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations “SAVE FOOD: Global Initiative on Food Loss and Waste Reduction”. Available at [www.fao.org/save-food/resources/keyfindings/en/](http://www.fao.org/save-food/resources/keyfindings/en/) (Accessed 13 April 2018).

21. Several factors account for the food losses and waste globally. According to FAO, 40 per cent of losses occur at the post-harvest and processing level in developing countries, while a similar proportion is lost at the retail and consumer levels in developed countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, post-harvest handling and storage dominates the loss incidences (see table 3). The deterioration of perishable produce, which is exacerbated in humid and warm

<sup>19</sup> See Economic Commission for Africa, *Economic Report on Africa 2015: Industrializing through Trade* (Addis Ababa, 2015).

<sup>20</sup> See Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, “Key facts on food loss and waste you should know!” Available at [www.fao.org/save-food/resources/keyfindings/en/](http://www.fao.org/save-food/resources/keyfindings/en/).



climates, is the main reason behind food losses in the post-harvest handling and storage stage. Meanwhile, produce mortality, including livestock mortality, contributes to food losses in the agricultural production stage of the food chain.

Table 3

**Estimated and assumed waste percentages for each commodity group, sub-Saharan Africa (Per cent)**

	Agricultural production	Postharvest handling and storage	Processing and packaging	Distribution	Consumption
Cereals	6	8	3.5	2	1
Roots and tubers	14	18	15	5	2
Oilseeds and pulses	12	8	8	2	1
Fruits and vegetables	10	9	25	17	5
Meat	15	0.7	5	7	2
Fish and seafood	5.7	6	9	15	2
Milk	6	11	0.1	10	0.1

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2011. *Global Food Losses and Food Waste: Extent, Causes and Prevention* (Rome, 2011).

22. The food lost in Africa could feed 300 million people, which is more than the 233 million people in sub-Saharan Africa who were hungry or malnourished during the period 2014-2016. Saving just 25 per cent of the food lost or wasted globally could feed 870 million hungry people in the world, more than the 795 million people who were hungry worldwide during the period 2014-2016.<sup>21</sup> Several interventions are needed at various levels of the food value chains, especially in the agricultural production and post-harvest handling stages. Small interventions, such as the provision of freezer and storages facilities, can have a significant impact. Governments need to conduct comprehensive evaluations, with the ultimate goal to reduce inefficiencies in the food supply chains.

23. Interventions that alter behaviour could be the best possible option to reduce food loss and waste, in particular at the retail and consumer levels. With the growing urban population and new middle class in Africa, the green growth opportunity from this category of “new consumers” in urban areas is large. Demanding processed materials is a niche policy area for influencing sustainable consumption. Accordingly, policies aimed at influencing the underlining behaviours that are the natural primary drivers of urbanization and industrial growth and the ancillary demand for raw and processed materials, including food that ends up being wasted, have been limited.

**Target 12.4: Management of hazardous chemicals and wastes**

24. Africa produces 1.9 million tonnes of waste annually, a figure that is very low for the population in the region.<sup>22</sup> Dumping hazardous chemicals and wastes poses a serious threat to coastal and inland countries. Since the adoption of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal in 1989, countries have intensified efforts to reduce the generation of hazardous waste and promote the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes. They have also sought to strengthen the restriction of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes in accordance with the principles of environmentally sound management and transparency in the regulatory systems permitting transboundary movements. Poor waste

<sup>21</sup> See Hunger Notes, “Africa hunger facts”. Available at [www.worldhunger.org/africa-hunger-poverty-facts/](http://www.worldhunger.org/africa-hunger-poverty-facts/). (Accessed on 13 April 2018).

<sup>22</sup> See United Nations Environment Programme, *Twenty Years of the Bamako Convention: A Time for More Effective Implementation* (Nairobi, 2018).

management practices and the indiscriminate dumping of waste in waterways, water bodies, drains and land, however, remain a concern in Africa where, as a result of inadequate infrastructure and rapid urbanization, countries are not coping with the waste generated.<sup>23</sup>

25. Most countries in the region have signed the Rio Conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and are also party to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. While these conventions have worked to protect the environment, including marine resources, several African countries are of the view that gaps remain in pursuit of this. The need for a dynamic approach led to the negotiation, in 1991, by 12 States members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) of the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa. Among the gaps was the inadequate preparedness of importing developing countries, and the general lack of protection from industrial and nuclear wastes offered by the other conventions.<sup>24</sup>

26. The Bamako Convention came into force in 1998 and is supported by several OAU ministerial resolutions, including the condemnation of the import of industrial and nuclear wastes into Africa as “a crime against Africa and the African people”.<sup>24</sup> Some of the objectives of the Convention include ensuring effective protection of human health and the environment from the dangers posed by such wastes through the reduction of the generation of them to a minimum in terms of quantity or hazard potential or both and ensuring that the source of hazardous wastes should transport and dispose them in a manner that is consistent with the protection of human health and environment, whatever the place of disposal.<sup>24</sup>

27. Countries should strengthen their scientific capacity to ascertain the hazardous potential of wastes and materials that are transferred or exchanged within their jurisdictions. There is also a need for them to accelerate the incorporation of the Bamako Convention, given that the success of the African and the global conventions on the control of the transboundary movement and management of hazardous wastes depends on the concerted efforts and collaboration of all States, not merely those adversely affected by hazardous wastes. Accordingly, countries should adopt national policies and strategies for dealing with hazardous wastes and for engaging with other States on this issue.

**Target 12.5: Reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse**

28. Massive pollution and the accumulation of waste are responsible for the loss or destruction of many ecosystems. The focus on sustainable cities and towns is providing hope that countries will strive for well-run, compact and efficient urban spaces that deliver essential services to their residents, while using the natural resources available efficiently and sustainably.

29. Globally, municipal waste generation levels are approximately 1.3 billion tons annually and are expected to increase to approximately 2.2 billion tons

<sup>23</sup> See Economic Commission for Africa, *Integrated Assessment of Present Status of Environmentally Sound Management of Wastes in Africa* (Addis Ababa, 2009).

<sup>24</sup> See Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, *Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa*. Available at [www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/related-international-agreements/toxic-chemicals-and-the-environment/bamako-convention/](http://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention/related-international-agreements/toxic-chemicals-and-the-environment/bamako-convention/).

annually by 2025. A report published in 2012 showed that, in Africa, 169,119 tons of waste are generated in urban areas every day and that, by 2025, the amount is projected to rise to 441,840 tons.<sup>25</sup> Although this figure is low, compared with other regions of the world, limited capacity to manage municipal waste is a serious threat to human health and ecological integrity. It should also be noted that, while the available data show that Africa generates less waste than East and Central Asia, the projection for 2025 indicates that this will be reversed.

30. Sustainable human settlements, the built environment and green buildings and integrated waste management entailing transforming waste into a resource for energy generation or other usable materials (i.e., recycling and reuse) are some of the options available to countries to reduce and manage waste. Other policies include an eco-tax on packaging and sales of plastic to develop a plastic waste recycling industry and a total ban on plastics and other measures to reduce municipal waste generation and associated pollution, especially of air, land and water bodies by industry. To be effective, those policies must include behavioural policy levers.

#### **Target 12.6: Corporate sustainability information and reporting**

31. The objective of target 12.6 is to ensure that financial and capital markets are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. The level of sustainability reporting among listed companies in the region, excluding South Africa, is very low, with only 13 companies (15 per cent) of them reporting on sustainability, either through a sustainability report or integrated report. Some stock exchanges, such as the Ghana Stock Exchange, the Stock Exchange of Mauritius, the Nigerian Stock Exchange and the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange, are putting in place environmental and social governance reporting requirements. Most of the requirements, however, are voluntary.<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, stock exchanges are in a position to influence sustainability reporting, for example, by extending the sustainable stock market initiatives involving sustainability-related disclosures, indexes and associated tracker funds that have already been rolled out in Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa.<sup>18</sup>

32. Private sector-led initiatives are filling the glaring gap in regulating corporate sustainability information reporting. For example, in 2004, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange was the first stock exchange in emerging markets to create a socially responsible investment index. By 2012, 70 per cent of the listed companies on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange met the base requirements of the Socially Responsible Index. In the following year, it became obligatory for all listed companies that form the FTSE/JSE All Share Index to meet the requirements of the Index. Governments need to do more to redirect private and public investment flows and innovations throughout and within sectors. Requiring regular sustainable corporate reporting could be an indispensable policy in that regard.

#### **Target 12.7: Sustainable procurement practices**

33. Sustainable public procurement measures are being used in developed countries to pursue social and environmental goals. Only a few African countries, however, have adopted sustainable public procurement policies (Mauritius and Tunisia) with support from UNEP, while Ghana and South Africa have adopted such policies with support from the International Institute for Sustainable Development.<sup>18</sup> Other countries are sporadically implementing sustainable procurement practices, depending on the nature of a transaction or source of funding.

<sup>25</sup> See World Bank, *What a Waste: A Global Review of Solid Waste Management* (Washington, D.C., March 2012).

<sup>26</sup> See Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, *Stock Exchanges in sub-Saharan Africa: Capturing Intent towards ESG Requirements* (London, 2014).

### Target 12.8: Information and awareness pertaining to sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature

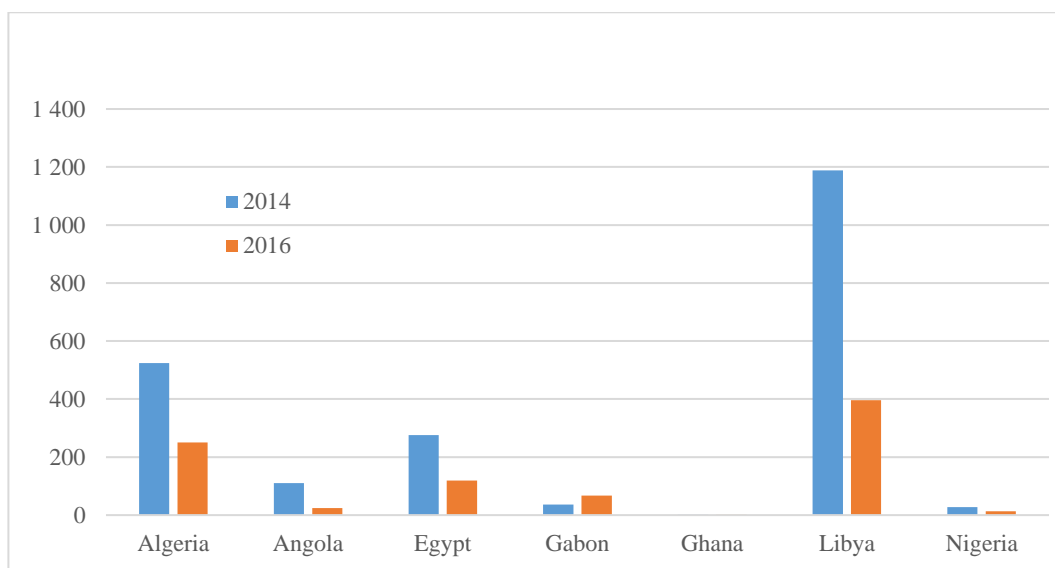
34. Target 12.8 is aimed at ensuring that people everywhere have relevant information and awareness pertaining to sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature. In the case of Africa, capacity development is important in supporting the development of new trade regulations, including green or low carbon certification, eco-labelling, development and the harmonization of product and service standards and greening trade-related investment.<sup>9</sup> The African Eco-Labelling Mechanism, for example, is backed by a political structure and technical framework through which Eco Mark Africa administers the label on the basis of a clear set of sustainability criteria. With the support of UNEP, the institutionalization of the mechanism between 2010 and 2011 culminated in the creation of the Eco Mark Africa label, which covers four priority sectors: agriculture, fisheries, forestry and tourism. The objective of the Mechanism is to promote African products in intra-African and international trade through the inclusion of ecological parameters into product standards.<sup>27</sup>

### Target 12.c: Rationalization of inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies

35. Inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies encourage wasteful consumption and create market distortions. Accordingly, the phasing out of fossil-fuel subsidies is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals relating to sustainable consumption and production. As indicated in figure IV, the fossil-fuel subsidies offered by African countries is declining, which is an encouraging trend.

Figure IV

**Fossil-fuel subsidy per capita, select African countries, 2014-2016 (United States dollars per person)**



Source: International Energy Agency data.

36. Some countries have been able to reduce the rate of subsidization and the ratio of fossil-fuel subsidies to GDP (see table 4). This positive trend needs to be maintained, given that not only does it lead to a healthier fiscal balance, greater fiscal capacity and better fiscal allocation, but also it paves the way for Governments to devise the appropriate institutional mechanism and incentives for renewable energy to develop and flourish.

<sup>27</sup> See United Nations Environment Programme, *Sustainable Consumption and Production in Africa 2002-2012* (Nairobi, 2011); United Nations Environment Programme, *Global Outlook on Sustainable Consumption and Production Policies: Taking Action Together* (Nairobi, 2012).

Table 4  
**Average subsidization rate and total subsidy as share of gross domestic product (Per cent)**

Country	Year	Average subsidization rate	Total subsidy as share of gross domestic product
Algeria	2014	77.8	9.4
	2016	63.0	6.1
Angola	2014	39.0	1.9
	2016	17.0	0.7
Egypt	2014	54.7	8.0
	2016	37.0	3.3
Gabon	2014	7.0	0.4
	2016	20.0	0.8
Ghana	2014	0.4	0.0
	2016	1.0	0.1
Libya	2014	77.9	18.0
	2016	71.0	7.6
Nigeria	2014	25.4	0.9
	2016	38.0	0.6

Source: International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook 2017*.

## IV. Conclusion

37. Sustainable consumption and production are central to enabling countries to achieve sustained economic growth and poverty reduction. With the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in full swing, African countries should be making the transition to sustainable consumption and production by adopting inclusive, resource-efficient and climate-resilient consumption and production patterns in all sectors of their economies. The transformation has two dimensions, namely, changing patterns of production and consumption without reducing the level to cut the resource load through the type of goods and services consumed or changing the level without changing the pattern through more efficient methods. In that regard, mainstreaming sustainable consumption and production strategies and action plans into national development plans should be a top priority.

38. Other elements required to make the transition are the scaling up of green investment in priority sectors, including agriculture and industry; greening industrialization, buildings and infrastructure; research and development in green technologies; factor reallocation and innovation and the emergence of new dynamic green activities; and an increase in the relative importance of green sectors, such as organic agriculture, renewable energy and ecotourism within national economies.<sup>28</sup>

39. The imperative for sustainable consumption and production in Africa is to be consistent with the overarching objective of poverty reduction and improving the welfare and quality of life of people. In that regard, an increase in consumption is necessary, for example, through changes in patterns of consumption, given that food, shelter, energy and water are necessary to meet other development goals, including eradicating poverty and ending hunger.

<sup>28</sup> See United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Economic Development in Africa, Report 2012: Structural Transformation and Sustainable Development in Africa*. (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.12.11.D.10.).

Other sources of inclusive growth under sustainable consumption and production are investment in priority sectors of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, as indicated above, and in infrastructure and assets that result in reduced carbon emissions and pollution, enhanced energy and resource efficiency, and that prevent the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

40. Given that Africa has the youngest population in the world, human capital investment is necessary to reap demographic dividends and to prevent the continent from becoming both a “market” and “consumer”. Human capital is needed throughout the technology innovation value chain from the conception of ideas to commercialization and to “smart consumers”. To safeguard jobs and to ensure that economic growth and meeting other Sustainable Development Goals are not compromised, Governments must have a clear vision or programme for skills development at all levels of education and training, including on-the-job training, that meets the needs of the job market. If properly designed, sustainable consumption and production can be used to respond to key development challenges and opportunities, such as natural capital depletion, poverty and inequality, climate change impacts on the economy, society and the environment, closing the infrastructure gap (e.g., transport, energy and water), technological and industrial upgrading, strengthening value chain linkages and structural transformation.

## **V. Recommendations and key messages**

41. Member States should strengthen the implementation of their sustainable consumption strategies, in particular in the thematic areas not yet exploited or that are currently underexploited, including resource efficiency and cleaner production, sustainable lifestyles, strategic investment in resource-efficient cities, sustainable public procurement and sustainable tourism. There is a need to strengthen the existing institutional frameworks for these avenues at the national and supra-national levels.

42. Safeguarding the natural resources of Africa on which most of the growth is predicated should remain a priority. Resource efficiency to reduce wastage in production and consumption patterns and maintaining the structure and functions of ecosystems should be at the core of a shift to sustainable public procurement. A green economy policy framework would impose costs on inefficient production and consumption practices and provide incentives for the private sector to change their operations in ways that contribute to sustainable development.

43. The food lost in Africa could feed the millions of people who are hungry or malnourished. Saving just 25 per cent of the food lost or wasted globally could also end hunger in the world. To achieve this target, several interventions are needed at various levels, especially in the agricultural production and post-harvest handling stages. Governments need to conduct comprehensive evaluations, with the ultimate goal to reduce inefficiencies in the food supply chains. Governments should also be proactive in bridging the large policy deficiency in terms of influencing the underlining behaviours that are the natural primary drivers of unsustainable consumption and production.

44. Many countries have intensified efforts to reduce the generation of hazardous waste and to promote the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes and have sought to strengthen the restriction of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes in accordance with the principles of environmentally sound management and transparency in the regulatory systems permitting transboundary movements. Countries should, however, strengthen their scientific capacity to ascertain the hazardous potential of wastes and materials that are transferred or exchanged within their jurisdictions. There is

also a need to accelerate the incorporation of the Bamako Convention, given that the success of the African and the global conventions on the control of transboundary movement and management of hazardous wastes depends on the concerted efforts and collaboration of all States and not only those adversely affected by hazardous wastes. Accordingly, countries should adopt national policies and strategies for dealing with hazardous wastes and for engaging with other member States on that matter.

45. Interlinking sustainable consumption and production patterns with most of the other Sustainable Development Goals, as highlighted above, requires that emphasis be placed on national capacity development on data generation and data utilization to adequately highlight the various benefits that African countries can gain in mainstreaming sustainable consumption and production into their national statistic and reporting frameworks. Specific focus needs to be placed on environmental data, given that the availability of environmental disaggregated data will allow member States to substantively report on and advocate ways to reframe economic policies and practices on sustainable consumption production at the macroeconomic and sectoral levels, as well as make decisions pertaining to them.

46. The shift to sustainable consumption and production requires the extensive use by member States of an integrated approach, which necessitates, for example, the involvement of non-traditional actors, in particular key development planning decision-makers who set policy and budgetary priorities, mainly ministries of planning, economy and finance. This would make it possible to translate the multifaceted dimension of sustainable consumption and production into relevant national development outcomes by carrying out strategic activities that support sustainable consumption and production on various fronts. Those actors need to gain a better understanding of how sustainability can contribute to achieving development goals so that they could propose the required budgetary and national policy support that would make it possible to implement sustainable consumption and production throughout government sectors and ministries.

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