

**Africa Regional Statement to the 16th Session of UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-16) on Agriculture and Rural Development, Land, Drought and Desertification and “Africa.”
22-25 October 2007, UNCC, Addis Ababa**

List of Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
ACMAD	African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development
ACSD	Africa Committee on Sustainable Development
ADRAO	Association pour le Développement de la Riziculture en Afrique de l'Ouest
AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
AICC	African Institute of Corporate Citizenship
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMCOST	African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology
AMCOW	African Minister's Council on Water
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
APCI	Africa Productive Capacity Initiative
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AREED	Africa Rural Energy Enterprise Development
ASP	African obsolete pesticide Stockpile Project
AWF	Africa Wildlife Foundation
AWF	African Water Facility
AWTF	African Water Task Force
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism (under UNFCCC)
CDSF	Capacity Development Strategic Framework
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CILSS	Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CORAF	Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Développement Agricole
COMIFAC	Central African Forest Commission
COP	Conference of Parties
CPFP	Country Partnership Framework Papers
CRIC	Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
DIS	Desertification Information System
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EC	European Commission
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa

ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EFA	Education for all
EGM	Expert Group Meeting
EI	Environment Initiative
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ENR	Environment and Natural Resources
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EU	European Union
FAO	UN Food and Agricultural Organization
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FARRA-FAAP	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa-Framework for African Agriculture Productivity
FDI	Foreign Direct Investments
FINIDA	Finnish Department for International Development Cooperation
FOSICH	Food Security Information Clearing House
GCOS	Global Climate Observing System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDP-RD	Global Donor Platform for Rural Development
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEMP	Ghana Environmental Management Programme
GLADA	Global Land Degradation Assessment
GM	Global Mechanism
GSP	Global Support Programme
GPRS	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation Agency
HIPCs	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
ICARDA	International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas
ICRAF	World Agroforestry Centre
ICRISAT	International Crop Research Institute for Semi Arid Tropics
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
ICPAC	IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IDA	International Development Association
IDDP	Integrated Drylands Development Programme
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	The International Food Policy Research Institute
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
INSAH	Institut du Sahel
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
ISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
ISRIC	International Soil Reference and Information Centre
IUCN	World Conservation Union
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
LADA	Land Degradation Assessment Project

LDPs	Local Development Programmes
MAPP	Multi-country Agricultural Productivity Programme for Africa
MDAs	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEDREP	Mediterranean Renewable Energy Programme
MSMEs	Medium-Sized and Micro Enterprises
MTEF	Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
MVA	Manufactured Valued Added
NAP	National Action Programme to combat desertification
NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
NCBs	National Coordinating Bodies
NCCD	National Council for Combating Desertification
NCPCs	National Cleaner Production Centers
NCS	National Conservation Strategy
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NDFs	National Desertification Funds
NDPs	National Development Plans
NEAP	National Environmental Action Plan
NECSD	National Environment Council for Sustainable Development
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NEPSD	Niger National Environmental Plan for Sustainable Development
NERICA	New Rice for Africa
NFPs	National Forest Programmes
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NMHSs	National Meteorological and Hydrological Services
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NSSD	National Strategies for Sustainable Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OSS	Sahara and Sahel Observatory
PABRA	Pan-Africa Bean Research Alliance
PACI	Pan-African Cassava Initiative
PCRD	Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development
PFIA21	Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21
PPPs	Public Private Partnerships
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSC	Poverty Reduction Support Credit
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RAF	Resource Allocation Framework
RAP	Regional Action Programme on drought and desertification
RCs	Regional Commissions
RCMs	Regional Consultation Meetings
RCU	RAP Regional Coordination Unit
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
REED	Rural Energy Enterprise Development
RFSP	Regional Programmes for Food Security
RIM	Regional Implementation Meeting
RPID-FDH	Regional Programme for the Integrated Development of the Fouta Djallon Highlands
ROPFA	Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et des Producteurs Agricoles de l'Afrique de l'Ouest

RWSSI	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SARD	Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development
SCP/UNEP	Sustainable Consumption and Production/United Nations Environment Programme
SDD	Sustainable Development Division
SDP	Spatial Development Programme
SDRA	Sustainable Development Report on Africa
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SECAC	Sectoral Adjustment Credit
SFM	Sustainable forest management
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SIP	Strategic Investment Programme
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SRAP	Sub-Regional Action Programme on drought and desertification
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
STAP	Short-Term Action Plan
STI	Science Technology and Innovation
SWAPs	Sector-Wide Approaches
TIIP	Technology, Infrastructure, Institutions and Policies
TPNs	Thematic Programme Networks
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCSD	UN Commission on Sustainable Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP ROA	UNEP Regional Office for Africa
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNSO	United Nations Sahel Organization
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/OFDA	USAID Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
WFS	World Food Summit
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WSS	Water Supply and Sanitation
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Preamble

The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 58/218 mandates UN Regional Commissions (RCs) to provide regional input to the work of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) through organizing Regional Implementation Meetings (RIMs). In keeping with this mandate and in preparation for the 16th Session of the UNCSD (CSD-16), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), held a Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 22 to 25 October, 2007. The RIM reviewed implementation progress, reflected on and identified main challenges, constraints, opportunities, lessons learned and priority approaches for further implementation in Africa of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (PFIA21), and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

The RIM review focused on the CSD-16 thematic cluster of issues, namely: agriculture and rural development, land, drought and desertification and “Africa”. Under “Africa” section, RIM devoted attention to sustainable development governance in Africa; poverty alleviation and socially sustainable development; sustainable consumption and production; the natural resource base of economic and social development; means of implementation; and harnessing the interlinkages. To undertake the review, RIM had before it as background documents, review reports covering all the thematic cluster of issues. The review reports provide specific details on the issues covered by this statement.

RIM recalled commitments that have been made by African countries including in the United Nations Millennium Declaration; major United Nations conferences and summits in particular Agenda 21, PFIA21, and WSSD; and multilateral environment agreements and protocols. The meeting also recalled and expressed support for various initiatives undertaken by African countries at national and regional level including within the framework of AU as well as NEPAD, which the JPOI recognizes as providing a framework for sustainable development on the continent.

RIM reaffirmed that peace, security, good governance and poverty eradication are indispensable requirements for sustainable development and reiterated the need to address in a balanced way, all three components of sustainable development - namely economic growth and development, social development and environmental protection. The meeting called for enforcement of gender responsive policies as well as ensuring transparency in financial, monetary and trading systems, which also constitute central elements in achieving sustainable development.

The meeting expressed concern on Africa’s low annual growth rate of food production that is lower than the population growth rate, and which has led to high levels of food insecurity and famine in the region. The meeting therefore, welcomed the emerging increased political commitment and actions for agricultural and rural development in the region including through the development of the NEPAD/Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). RIM also recognized opportunities for fostering sustainable development presented by other AU and NEPAD programmes.

The meeting highlighted that land lies at the heart of social, political and economic life in Africa. It stressed that equitable access to land and security of tenure, especially for rural poor people are central to sustainable land management and poverty reduction in the region.

RIM expressed deep concern on the heavy and continuing impact of land degradation, desertification and drought on social, economic and environmental conditions in the region. In particular, the meeting highlighted the fact that efforts to reduce poverty, improve access to adequate water supply and to achieve food security are being severely undermined by land degradation and desertification which are steadily expanding, and by the droughts which have become more frequent, severe and wider in occurrence in the region.

RIM underlined the grossly inadequate capacity of the region to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and change. The meeting therefore expressed serious concern about the emerging evidence indicating that the region will face early and disproportionately devastating climate change impacts and in particular, the fact that climate change will: exacerbate drought and desertification, floods, undermine agricultural production and food security, and cause increased conflicts and insecurity.

RIM emphasized that responses to the challenges of climate change, drought, land degradation, desertification, agricultural and rural development are essential and integral elements in effectively tackling poverty and to propagating peace, stability and security in the region.

The review noted that while countries have undertaken a number of concrete actions and made some progress in various areas, a lot remained to be done to widen and deepened the reach in terms of poverty reduction, improved livelihoods and economic growth.

RIM expressed appreciation to bilateral and multilateral development partners for the support provided, that has enabled the region to develop and implement strategies and programmes in pursuit of development goals and targets agreed at global, regional and national levels.

The meeting acknowledged with appreciation, the vital role played by the business sector, the civil society, including women, indigenous people, and the youth, and the need to ensure their full participation in achieving sustainable development.

RIM identified concrete actions taken and progress made as well as main challenges and constraints; and recommended priority approaches and actions under each of the thematic cluster of issues as outlined below.

I. Agriculture and rural development

Concrete actions taken and progress made

The Regional Implementation Meeting identified the following main concrete actions taken and progress made:

(a) *Agricultural productivity and food security enhancement and poverty Reduction*

- i) The Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDP-RD) is collaborating with NEPAD in supporting CAADP and provides joint support to the harmonization of procedures and practices in rural development.
- ii) Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have benefited from Regional Programmes for Food Security (RFSP) aimed at promoting collective action and to strengthen national food security programmes.
- iii) A revised African Regional Nutritional Strategy (2005-2015) has been produced, among others to increase awareness among policy makers on nutrition problems, and to advocate and stimulate actions at the national and regional level that lead to improved nutrition outcomes.
- iv) Productivity of livestock and some crops including cassava, rice and beans has been boosted through promoting high yielding, disease and pest resistant breeds and varieties.
- v) A Programme for a Green Revolution in Africa (ProGRA) has been launched and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) is providing support to help develop improved crop varieties, train scientists, ensure that improved seeds reach smallholder farmers, and develop a network of dealers to ease access of small scale farmers to agricultural inputs.
- vi) With support of country technology transfer projects in over 15 countries in the region, maize and wheat yields have been boosted in some countries.

(b) *Investment in agriculture, including agricultural research*

- i) There is increased recognition by African leaders of the importance of increasing public investment in agriculture as reflected in among others, the adoption in the Maputo Declaration (2003), the target to allocate 10 per cent or more of national budgets to agriculture/rural development by 2008.

- ii) Countries are benefiting from programmes aimed at sustained agricultural growth through strengthened agricultural knowledge systems and the delivery of profitable and sustainable technologies.
- iii) Innovative mechanisms for funding AR&D such as competitive funds have been initiated in several countries.

(c) *Sustainable Land Management (SLM)*

- i) Land reforms have been carried out or are underway in several African countries to increase land tenure security and stability in order to encourage investments in SLM and to modernize agriculture. In addition, a Land Policy Initiative is under implementation to develop an Africa-wide land policy framework and guidelines to facilitate and provide further support to upscale land policy reforms.
- ii) Regional and subregional cooperation and programmes on SLM have been stimulated through the development of the NEPAD/Environment Action Plan and NEPAD/CAADP.
- iii) TerrAfrica has been established as a partnership mechanism to support countries to mobilize resources and to scale-up coordinated investments in SLM for SARD and poverty reduction.
- iv) Several countries are carrying out SLM related activities as part of the efforts and measures to implement the UNCCD/NAP.
- v) Political commitment and support has been achieved in support of increased fertilizer use in the region. The 2006 Abuja Summit on Fertilizers reached an agreement to increase fertilizer use to at least 50 kg/ha by the year 2015, and to establish an “African Fertilizer Financing Mechanism (AFFM)” to finance fertilizer investments.

(d) *Integrated water resources management (IWRM)*

- i) There has been increased and strong political commitment by the African leaders to confront the water challenges in the region as demonstrated by the establishment of the African Minister’s Council on Water (AMCOW), the African Water Task Force, and the African Water Facility. Initiatives such as the Medium to Long-term Strategic Framework (MLTSF) and a Short-Term Action Plan (STAP), which address water supply, sanitation and IWRM, have been launched.
- ii) A strong effort is being exerted to establish new or strengthen existing water basin organizations in Africa. In this connection, the African Network of Basin Organizations (ANBO) has been formed.
- iii) Thirteen countries are already benefiting from AMCOW/AfDB Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (RWSSI) funded through the AfDB-housed RWSSI Trust Fund.

(e) *Development of holistic policies for SARD in Africa*

- i) The NEPAD/CAADP has been developed and adopted as the framework to address Africa's issues and priorities in agricultural and rural development in a coordinated and integrated manner.
- ii) Many commitments and targets that provide strong political support for CAADP have been agreed upon. These include the 2003 Maputo Declaration calling for 10 per cent of total public expenditure to be spent on agriculture and rural development; the 2006 Abuja Declaration on Fertilizers calling for an increase in fertilizer use from eight to 50 kg per hectare by 2015; and the 2004 Sirte Declaration on the Challenges of Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development on Agriculture and Water in Africa.
- iii) Several countries and subregional organizations have developed and have embarked on the implementation of comprehensive and realistic policies and plans for rural development and agricultural modernization which are aligned with the CAADP principles and linked directly with national growth and poverty reduction strategies.
- iv) Some subregions, such as SADC have already started implementing some of the CAADP priority activities.

(f) *Decentralization and capacity strengthening in support of SARD*

- i) Many African countries have adopted and are implementing decentralization policies as a result of which many local governments are increasingly being integrated into public expenditure systems and there is increased participatory planning and transfer of development resources to local government and communities.
- ii) The capacity of rural farmers and their organizations to voice their needs and participate in the agricultural policy dialogue has been enhanced.
- iii) Through the review of their cooperatives policies, some African states are also undertaking legislative and institutional reforms granting greater autonomy to cooperatives and limiting the government role in their development.

(g) *Integrated pest management (IPM)*

- i) Some West African countries have benefited from an IPM research projects and have developed and are implementing a regional pest management system for whitefly pests, tomato viral diseases, information on the influence of agroecosystem biodiversity on plant virus levels, a regional quality assurance programme addressing pesticide safety education and pesticide residue chemistry training.
- ii) Some countries in the region have been assisted to develop national IPM strategies and to train farmers.

- iii) Delivery and access to IPM information is being promoted.
- iv) Countries in the region are being supported to clean up and dispose of existing pesticide stockpiles through the Africa Stockpiles Programme (ASP).

(h) *Rural energy*

Initiatives have emerged that are supporting countries in the region to increase energy production and to expand access to clean and productive energy in rural areas.

Major constraints and challenges to SARD in Africa

The meeting identified the following major challenges and constraints:

- i) Poverty is the single most influential factor and impediment in achieving food and energy security and for the sustainable provision of basic water and sanitation services.
- ii) Climate variability and the projected impacts of climate change in the region pose serious constraints and challenges for SARD given the associated high magnitude and occurrence of natural disasters such as drought, floods and earthquakes.
- iii) Land degradation, desertification and unsustainable agricultural practices remain major challenges to SARD.
- iv) Heavily subsidized agricultural products in developed countries present a major obstacle to African agricultural export growth and competitiveness.
- v) Inadequate investment and funding, including the steady fall in ODA for SARD, and the low prioritization of SARD agricultural research and extension in national development plans, including PRSPs.
- vi) Inadequate investment in infrastructure.
- vii) Limited access to markets by small-scale farmers.
- viii) The inadequate budget and institutional capacity among decentralized systems to plan and deliver SARD services. For example, reforms of extension services have left an “institutional void” which could hinder access to agricultural innovation. The producers’ organizations and private sector actors do not yet have sufficient human and financial capacity to take over.
- ix) Lack of data and poor access to SARD information, which impedes effective tracking of progress, policy development and planning for SARD. This includes the paucity of data on water resources, which is key factor constraining effective water resources development.

- x) Lack of necessary and enabling environment for private sector participation in SARD.
- xi) Sub-optimal policy and regulatory frameworks, lack of energy access strategies in national development plans, including PRSPs and limited central government funding for the sector which undermine energy development, particularly for farming and other productive activities in rural and peri-urban areas.
- xii) The low level of development of water resources, which is grossly inadequate to meet the growing demand for water in response to population growth, agricultural development and other economic activities.
- xiii) The slow pace in the adoption by multilateral and bilateral agencies of NEPAD/CAADP principles and frameworks in their development assistance.
- xiv) Farmers' needs and those of agri-business do not sufficiently drive the orientation of agricultural research and extension services, causing lack of relevance, ineffective transfer of technologies and low impact of research on agricultural development.
- xv) The high incidence of HIV/AIDS in some countries, which constitutes a major burden for the SARD.
- xvi) Political instability and human-induced disasters, including conflicts occurring in many countries and between countries constitute a big threat to rural poverty reduction, food security and sustainable rural development.
- xvii) High skewed income distribution that inhibits economic growth.
- xviii) High rates of population growth, urbanization and poor natural resource management that put enormous pressure on land, freshwater and other natural resources which are consequently getting degraded and depleted.

Lessons learned and recommended priority approaches and actions

The main lessons learned and recommended priority actions identified by the meeting are as follows:

- i) There is need to align development assistance with the CAADP objectives and principles to secure partners commitment to work with national governments and the private sector to meet the required level of investments in agriculture and rural development. In this connection, there is a need to avoid setting up new processes and build on ongoing efforts at national level, align national efforts with the CAADP growth, budgetary, food and nutrition security objectives, and add value to national efforts where needed.
- ii) There is a need to define the core areas for the 10 per cent budget allocation agreed in the Maputo declaration and to establish a comprehensive mechanism for monitoring progress

towards the target. In this connection, national and regional capacity should be built to track expenditure on agriculture.

- iii) There is need for donors and central governments to pull together. The development partners therefore need to adopt harmonized approaches and flexibility on, funding disbursement procedures, conditionality and deliver SARD assistance within the countries' strategic frameworks rather than in fragmented project-by-project approach. At the same time, the domestic resources base for investments in SARD needs to be expanded by enhancing national SARD policy coherence, commitment and prioritization in national development programmes including PRSPs.
- iv) Financing opportunities such as microcredit facilities, cooperatives, carbon financing (e.g through CDM opportunities) need to be explored and/or widened.
- v) Enhancing access to markets for small-scale farmers is identified as an important element of SARD in Africa.
- vi) Human and institutional capacity, particularly among decentralized systems, civil society, farmer organizations and the private sector should be strengthened as a critical component of SARD in the region.
- vii) There is a need to develop and promote adequate access to rural infrastructure and agricultural inputs in order to strengthen growth in agriculture as well as growth in non-farm economy and rural towns.
- viii) Energy access for agriculture and rural development need to be a clear priority in the countries' macro and sectoral policies. Capacity for planning and implementation of energy projects needs to be enhanced. Countries also need to act regionally to optimize energy resources use and expand investment in the energy sector.
- ix) SARD decentralization process should be embedded in a permanent institutional structure with stronger, more inclusive civil society and community empowerment, direct resource transfer and stronger and more accountable local governments.
- x) A conducive environment should be created and promoted for private sector participation and to increase investment in SARD.
- xi) Distortions in prices of agricultural products need to be removed to provide incentives for farmers to invest and produce.
- xii) Agricultural research and extension services and access to appropriate and affordable technologies including agricultural inputs and technologies to harness water for SLM should be significantly expanded and promoted in order to increase agricultural productivity.

- xiii) Higher public and private sector investments in rural infrastructure, communications and marketing and improved provision of health and education services are essential in raising farmers' productivity.
- xiv) Improve and/or promote trade opportunities through fair global trade and regional trade integration as key and integral elements of SARD in Africa.
- xv) Upscale policy reforms on land and other natural resources to guarantee secure and equitable access to and sustainable use of land, water and other natural resources. Bringing land and other natural resources policies and the performance of related institutions within the framework of the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) could be a useful way of reinforcing the momentum for reform.

II. Land

Concrete actions taken and progress made to address land issues in Africa

The meeting identified the following main concrete actions taken and progress made:

- i) Many African countries have embarked on land and land tenure reforms. As such, some countries have enacted land legislation and have put in place and adopted land policies or land policy frameworks.
- ii) Most countries of southern Africa have undertaken agrarian reforms to address the problems of continuing racial inequalities in land holding as a potential source of conflict and instability; land degradation affecting the communal areas where African populations were concentrated; and the development of viable systems of land administration for communal lands.
- iii) SADC has established a Land Reform Technical Support Facility, intended to provide access to advice, expertise, training and technical support on different aspects of land reform to member states from within the region, also drawing on international expertise where required. In addition, there are a number of national and regional civil society network organizations addressing land and natural resource rights and policies in the region.
- iv) Civil Society Land Alliances or LandNet chapters, as well as CSOs concerned with gender and land have been established in some countries and subregions for advocacy, dialogue and partnership with government, and coming together periodically to exchange lessons and address common issues.
- v) Many of the francophone countries in West Africa have introduced *Gestion de Terroir* programmes to improve the management of village lands and natural resources.

- vi) Local conventions at different territorial scales, involving different social groups, village communities, alongside local governments and development agencies have been introduced in some countries in West Africa to regulate inter-group utilization of land resources. Some countries in the subregion have also developed Pastoral Codes – framework laws which enable pastoral communities to establish jurisdiction over home territories, obtain freedom of movement in cattle corridors and to negotiate access to more extensive grazing and water resources under the primary jurisdiction of other groups, on which they rely in the dry season.
- vii) In the Sahelian countries, farmers’ organizations are also active players in land debates, and the intergovernmental and lesson learning and convergent land policies are being fostered.
- viii) Some North African countries have undertaken major land reforms, thus achieving significant benefits in favour of peasant farmers, landless workers and pastoral nomads; and substantially improving access to European export markets, and reducing high rates of malnutrition, illiteracy and landlessness which had prevailed in the low income traditional rain fed agricultural sector.
- ix) The state-interventionist approaches adopted (supported by high levels of capital investment) by the land reforms included: recovery of foreign-owned lands; ceilings on maximum land ownership in Algeria and Egypt; and provision of subsidized modern agro-inputs, irrigation, free extension services and primary education.
- x) Development assistance is being provided for technical and human resource capacity-building in the land sector in Africa.
- xi) A Land Initiative for Africa has been launched and is being implemented to put in place a pan-African framework for land policy and land reform in the region. The framework will among others, provide a basis for political commitment by African nations developing clear guidelines and benchmarking of good practice for land policy reforms and the performance of land institutions and serve to promote land policy to underpin agricultural transformation, promotion of programmes for tenure upgrading to secure urban land rights.
- xii) Land related human capacity-building activities focusing on the region are underway. Various training packages on transparency in land administration, gendered land tools, grassroots participation mechanisms, good land governance and Islamic are being rolled out or developed.

Challenges and constraints

The following major challenges and constraints to addressing land issues were identified:

- i) The capacity of state land institutions is generally weak and restricted to the administration of formal property rights, which are usually only a very small fraction of the full range of interests in land.
- ii) Under-funding of land reform programmes.
- iii) The inadequate land use planning leading to allocation, development and encroachment of real estate investments on fertile land, which hampers development of sustainable agriculture.
- iv) The ability of African governments to deal with land policy processes is hampered by shortage of appropriate skills for the coordination of these processes, which entail complex, cross-sectoral and potentially controversial issues.
- v) External technical assistance provided is sometimes poorly integrated into the national context and may involve attempts to introduce inappropriate and unsustainable technical systems and procedures.
- vi) Capacity in civil society is highly variable across African countries and often weak. Even where civil society is quite well developed, and engaged in matters of governance and access to justice, activity does not necessarily extend to land issues. The existence of NGO capacity at national level does not necessarily reach down and give voice to concerns at the community level.
- vii) There is inadequate knowledge management and information sharing on land issues. As such there is poor documentation and inadequate dissemination of information on what has worked elsewhere and lack of empirical knowledge of national and local circumstances and country and context-specific analysis of policy options and the implications of policy choice.

Lessons learned and priority recommended approaches and actions

The following are the main lessons learned and recommended priority actions to address land issues in the region.

- i) There is overwhelming presence of the state in land matters and this is one of the impediments to efficient and sustainable use of land. There is therefore need to explore and establish systems of divestiture and privatization of land services delivery, the strengthening of community land governance systems and the revesting of radical title to land in citizens or local community organs at large.

- ii) Formal land titling programmes have proved slow, expensive, difficult to keep up to date, and hard for poor farmers to access. There is need to explore further alternative systems of land rights documentation.
- iii) Although customary land rights differ from statutory rights in their origins and forms of documentation, they can be equally secure and they should be recognized in law. The effort to recognize and perhaps codify customary tenure has to go further and look into and address its negative aspects including gender and inter-generational exclusions.
- iv) It is necessary to overcome the dualistic legacies of colonial rule through equitable, consensual policies and coherent new legal frameworks incorporating a plurality of forms of tenure that secure property rights for rich and poor alike, recognize secondary and collective rights and avoid the pitfalls of drives for comprehensive individual titling.
- v) Progressive institutional change in land sector agencies needs to be integrated and carried out within the wider processes of public sector reform. In this respect, land administration institutions should be professionalized so that they can among others provide business like, customer oriented services, with the flexibility to recover their own administrative and technical costs from those users able to pay, and to determine appropriate staff incentive packages.
- vi) Land governance needs to be decentralized and appropriate capacity-building and technical assistance provided to countries and local authorities in the region. There should be clear definition of roles and responsibilities amongst land actors.
- vii) The Commons including forests, wetlands, water resources in lakes and river basins should be safeguarded through land policy reforms and programmes that include practical strategies to ensure secure access and sustainable use of these resources.
- viii) Effective strategies and policies for management of pastoral lands should be adopted to ensure harmony with sedentary farming and to achieve sustainability.
- ix) Widespread land litigation, and large backlogs of land cases in the courts are significant barriers to investment and land development. There is therefore a need to explore and establish appropriate alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms that are able to deliver settlements rapidly.
- x) Appropriate and secure land tenure systems should be promoted to facilitate access to adequate housing, shelter and basic social amenities, in order to combat rural poverty and improve living conditions of the poor.
- xi) Market assisted land reform remains problematic.
- xii) New approaches to the resolution of land issues in post-conflict situations need to be tested and put in place to help rebuild social cohesion in countries recovering from and at risk of conflict.

- xiii) African governments and donors alike need to devise mechanisms to support land policy reform and implementation in line with the centrality of land issues in strategies for sustainable economic growth.
- xiv) Stakeholders must be effectively engaged at all levels of land policy development and implementation.
- xv) Capacity-building for land reform is crucial and should be undertaken. There is need to build and re-orient capacity and expertise so as to develop appropriate land administration systems to meet the needs of land users as a whole and assist with national development. Importantly, capacity needs to be built at the local level, not only for government institutions but also customary, community based and private sector organizations, to assume growing responsibilities for land management in partnership with the state. Secure institutional bases and mechanisms for shared learning are needed.
- xvi) There are fundamental needs to extend the coverage of cadastral systems and accessible land registration and documentation procedures.
- xvii) Africa will need to develop its own centers of excellence in land policy, tenure and management in order to supply the knowledge and expertise necessary for the implementation of new land policies and development of land institutions to support African economic development and renewal of governance systems in the 21st Century.
- xviii) The development and implementation of a pan-African framework for land policy and land reform should be pursued to promote and up scale land reform in the region.

III. Drought and Desertification

Concrete actions taken and progress made

RIM identified the following main concrete actions taken and progress made in mitigating drought impacts and combating desertification:

- (a) *Preventing and combating desertification and mitigating effects of drought within the framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)*
 - i) All African countries are parties to the UNCCD of 1994 and are carrying out various activities to fulfil their obligations under the convention.
 - ii) Many African countries with support from development partners are at different stages in developing their National Action Programmes to combat desertification (NAPs).
 - iii) Implementation of NAPs although slow, has commenced in some countries.

- iv) Countries have set up National Desertification Funds (NDFs), which serve as local and easily accessible sources of funding for the implementation of NAP priorities.
 - v) Some countries are also establishing National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs), which are charged with coordination, guidance and leadership in order to ensure cross-sectoral and integrated planning of desertification control programmes.
 - vi) Some countries have embarked on integrating NAPs into National Development Plans (NDPs), especially the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs). A few have already succeeded in mainstreaming the NAPs and other SLM priorities into these NDPS and PRSs.
 - vii) Subregional Action Programmes (SRAPs) to combat desertification have been developed for all the five subregions in Africa. The implementation of some of these SRAPs has commenced under the auspices of subregional institutions.
 - viii) A Regional Action Programme (RAP) to combat the desertification and mitigate impacts of drought is being developed through six thematic programme networks under the auspices of the Regional Coordination Unit (RCU) hosted by the African Development Bank (AfDB).
- (b) *Combating desertification, mitigating and adapting to drought impacts through other strategies and programmes in agriculture and natural resources management sectors***
- i) Many African countries have formulated and are implementing national environmental policies, strategies and plans which provide broad policy framework for activities to combat desertification. These include, National Environmental Action Plans (NEAPs) and National environmental policies adopted in some countries in the region.
 - ii) Several countries have put in place or updated their legal frameworks in the area of agriculture and natural resource management to address drought and desertification.
 - iii) Two-thirds of African countries are at different stages of implementing National Forest Programmes (NFPs) to combat deforestation and ensure sustainable forest management (SFM).
 - iv) Policies and plans on land and spatial planning have been formulated by some countries to address the problems in land use planning.
 - v) Some countries have developed agricultural sector policies and strategies with increased emphasis on sustainable agriculture that promote SLM.
 - vi) In the water sector, strategies developed by some countries of the region place emphasis on the conservation and rational management of water resources.

- vii) Some countries are implementing rural development strategies that contribute to the rational exploitation and management of natural resources, sustainable agricultural production and diversification of activities of rural incomes.
- viii) Some countries have achieved increase in afforestation and land restoration from specific projects and innovative community initiatives.
- ix) At the regional level, a number of programmes pertinent to combating desertification mitigating drought impacts have been developed. These include, NEPAD/CAADP; the NEPAD Environment Initiative (EI), which includes combating desertification as an integral and priority programme area; the AU spearheaded-Green Wall for the Sahara Initiative; and the AU-ECA-AfDB Initiative on Land policy in Africa.
- x) At the subregional level, the area under irrigation in the SADC subregion has grown from 1.63 Million hectares in 1985 to an estimated 1.96 million hectares in 2005; the Regional Programme for the Integrated Development of the Fouta Djallon Highlands (RPID-FDH) initiated by OAU within the framework of a Plan of Action on the medium-and long-term to control desertification, drought and other natural calamities in Africa has been under implementation; and a New Environment and Natural Resources Strategy has been developed and endorsed in the IGAD Region.

(c) *Monitoring, early warning and adaptation to drought and desertification*

- i) Some countries have established Desertification Information System (DIS) as part of the NAP process to assist in monitoring interventions to combat desertification and mitigate drought impacts.
- ii) A Long-Term Ecological Monitoring and Observatory Network has been established in the Sahel subregion and has facilitated observatories in 11 countries to gather information on the evolution of natural resources and the effectiveness of management systems.
- iii) The Land Degradation Assessment (LADA) project has developed and tested effective assessment tools for land degradation in drylands through pilot projects and studies undertaken in selected countries in the region.
- iv) Regional Climate Outlook Forums are convened annually in the Greater Horn of Africa, in South Africa and in West Africa, to elaborate and ensure appropriate dissemination of consensual regional outlooks, bulletins and products about the next rainy season.
- v) Climate for Development in Africa Programme is being developed to guide the effective integration of climate information and services into development planning for Africa.
- vi) Some centres charged with timely monitoring of drought and its impact on agricultural production, and issuing early warnings have been established. These include the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) in Nairobi, the SADC Drought

Monitoring Centre in Harare and the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD).

- vii) More than 30 countries have put in place platforms for disaster risk reduction (DRR) as a way of shifting from disaster response to mainstreaming disaster risk. Some of these countries have succeeded in linking DRR to poverty reduction related strategies.
- viii) Some countries have embarked on innovative market schemes such as index-based weather insurance for managing risks associated with drought.
- ix) At the subregional level, IGAD has developed a subregional strategy for disaster reduction; ECOWAS has approved a subregional Common Policy and mechanisms for DRR; SADC has revised its subregional strategy factoring in DRR; and ECCAS has established a subregional centre for DRR.
- x) The Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and programme of action for its implementation (2006-2010) have been adopted to facilitate the integration of disaster risk reduction into development programmes.
- xi) The African Drought Risk and Development Network (Drought Forum) has been established to promote the development of coordinated strategies for enhanced and effective drought management at the national level.
- (d) ***Support for the implementation of programmes to combat desertification and mitigate effects of drought***
 - i) Through national budgets, countries of the region are making provisions to fund directly or indirectly some projects and activities to address drought impacts and tackle desertification.
 - ii) Under its Operational Programme 15 (OP 15) - Sustainable Land Management (SLM), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is providing some support for programmes and activities to combat desertification and mitigate drought impacts including NAPs.
 - iii) TerrAfrica has been initiated as a special catalytic partnership effort that aims to scale-up harmonized support for effective and efficient country-driven SLM practices in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).
 - iv) The UNCCD Global Mechanism (GM) is carrying out a number of programmes at the national and subregional level to enhance the flow of financial resources for UNCCD implementation.
 - v) *Chef de files* have been instituted under the UNCCD as innovative mechanisms for the mobilization and provision of financial and technical support for combating desertification.

- vi) The National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) have been undertaken and have enabled countries in the region to review their capacity needs to address priority national and global environmental issues, and to prepare national capacity development strategies and plans of critical actions related to the UNCCD, UNFCCC and CBD.
- vii) The Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building provides a means for assisting countries to address their capacity-building and technology needs in the field of environment. A pilot project on implementation of the plan has been implemented in the six selected countries in the region.
- viii) Many countries in the region have benefited from capacity-building programmes aimed at assisting them to integrate NAPs into national economic frameworks and move from strategy development to effective implementation of the UNCCD, while some countries have received support to increase the capacity of governments to mainstream environment and disaster risk reduction into national development processes.
- ix) Some countries have strengthened lead research institutions and established joint research activities with international research centres in order to develop and promote technologies, including high yielding and drought resistant crop varieties.
- x) In the energy sector, programmes have been initiated to increase access to clean, renewable and alternative sources of energy.
- xi) There is increased photovoltaic (PV) market, and successful improved cook stoves programmes in urban areas.

Challenges and constraints

The meeting identified the following main challenges and constraints to combating desertification and mitigating the impacts of drought:

- i) The high level of poverty, particularly in the rural areas, continues to be the overarching challenge and constraint to investments and implementation of measures to address drought and desertification in the region.
- ii) Climate variability has been a major impediment to SLM activities. This will be exacerbated by climate change that is projected to have devastating impacts in the region.
- iii) Poor coordination and collaboration among actors, insufficient political will, lack of in-depth understanding and appreciation of drought and desertification issues, especially in their links and benefits to poverty reduction.
- iv) Weak institutional capacity, including poor set ups, lack of legislative backing and inadequate human resources which constrain effectiveness of organs such as National Coordinating Bodies (NCBs) for desertification control programmes.

- v) Inadequate reform and enforcement of policies and legislation to guarantee clear legal ownership and access rights to land, water and other natural resources.
- vi) Lack of financial resources which is a systemic and one of the most pressing constraints to most countries and regional programmes in the implementation of desertification control plans.
- vii) Resource users, especially the local people do not have access to affordable credit facilities to acquire funding, which they could profitably invest, both in tackling land degradation and to sustain their livelihoods.
- viii) Inadequate awareness programmes and information on drought, desertification and drylands and the difficulties encountered in accessing and sharing this information continue to hamper activities and progress.
- ix) The development, management and implementation of processes that are responsive to local community priorities, and are genuinely participatory, and cross-sectoral is still a challenge.
- x) Limited development of economic and social infrastructure and services in drylands as result of low levels of investments, hampers access to drylands and does not provide enough incentives to attract and sustain other investments needed for SLM in these areas.
- xi) Technology options that empower communities for SLM remain largely inaccessible and unaffordable to a majority of rural populations and the urban poor.
- xii) The high rates of prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other diseases such as malaria, in some countries of the region pose both human and capital resource challenges to addressing drought and desertification in the affected countries.
- xiii) Political instability and conflicts faced by some countries in the region breed conditions such as displacement and concentration of populations, destruction of natural resources and infrastructure, which favour land degradation and/or hamper implementation of programmes to reduce poverty and address drought and desertification.
- xiv) Lack of synergies and coordination in the implementation of desert and drought related convention namely; the UNCCD, CBD and UNFCCC.
- xv) Integration of both conventional and indigenous knowledge systems in sustainable land management.
- xvi) Lack of coherent trade and trade development patterns in drylands and hence the lack of capacity to explore opportunities of marketing of products of drylands.

Lessons learned and recommended priority approaches and actions

The meeting identified the following lessons learnt and recommended priority approaches and actions necessary to tackle drought impacts and to combat desertification in Africa:

- i) Need to ensure adequate commitment for the implementation of the 10-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to enhance the implementation of the UNCCD and the related decisions adopted at UNCCD COP8, which encompass important guidance as regards to UNCCD implementation for the period 2008-2018.
- ii) NDPs, including PRSPs can be important platforms for securing attention and resources to address impacts of drought and combat desertification. Therefore, there is the need to intensify efforts to systematically integrate priorities identified in the NAPs and other SLM processes into NDPs such as PRSPs as one of the means to mobilize implementation resources, and to foster medium- and long-term political commitment for drought mitigation and desertification control programmes.
- iii) There is need to increase support and up-scale the implementation of NAPs and other SLM plans with a special focus on concrete ground community programmes and activities with the objective of achieving measurable results on SLM and poverty reduction.
- iv) Establish accessible and innovative mechanisms for channelling increased levels of support, particularly financing to farmers and other frontline natural resources managers.
- v) Mobilize and empower local authorities, civil society, non-governmental organizations, including youth and women organizations, private sector, local communities and other stakeholders, through increased SLM capacity-building that is linked to tangible results on poverty reduction, and integrative natural resources management.
- vi) Establish and promote incentives for and address barriers to sustainable agriculture development, and sustainable land and other natural resources management by: (i) providing dryland areas with increased access to appropriate and affordable agricultural technologies, affordable credit facilities and links to markets; (ii) processing and value addition, developing physical, economic and social infrastructure; (iii) enhancing accesses to electricity and other alternative sources renewable energy other firewood for the rural populations; and (iv) carrying out reform and/or effective enforcement of land and other natural resources regulatory frameworks to promote secure tenure and/or access rights to land, water and other natural resources.
- vii) There is need to develop and improve the information base on drought and desertification and enhance both scientific and indigenous knowledge application through programmes to strengthen the collection of information through targeted research; established comprehensive databases and information systems, including gender disaggregate data; develop and apply benchmarks, indicators and methodologies for monitoring land degradation; and promote networking and centres of excellence.

- viii) Public awareness and education programmes, including formal education programmes on sustainable use and management of forest and other land resources should be designed and conducted, with the involvement of CSOs, for local communities and resource users directly affected by drought and desertification.
- ix) Link and coordinate measures for combating drought and desertification with those measures aimed at adapting to climate change and biodiversity conservation so as to enhance synergy, diversify resources available for implementation of NAPs and related programmes to scale-up SLM programmes. In particular, land rehabilitation should be undertaken as a means to adapt to climate change.
- x) Strengthen management and adaptation to drought and desertification impacts, especially in the face of climate change and the high vulnerability of the region to climate change impacts, through *inter alia*, programmes to enhance capacity for systematic climate observations; and timely climate information exchange, outreach and application.
- xi) Strengthen institutional arrangements and human resources capacity to provide effective leadership for coordination, planning, monitoring and championing of drought and desertification programmes at the regional, subregional and national levels.
- xii) Promote and support knowledge management, and access to appropriate affordable technology for improved agricultural production and SLM.
- xiii) Strengthen capacity for mobilization of financial resources, and provide increased funding for implementation of national, subregional and regional programmes by integrating and prioritizing SLM programmes within development assistance policies and programming; strengthening SLM resources mobilization and financing mechanisms at the global, regional and subregional levels; and developing and implementing a clear agenda and fundraising strategies for funding SLM from local sources, including from the private sector and emerging schemes such as payment for ecosystem services.
- xiv) The international community, particularly the developed countries should increase the level of GEF funding allocated to Operational Programme 15 (SLM), in light of the funding levels allocated to other GEF focal areas.
- xv) Strengthen capacity for developing integrated programmes aimed at promoting synergies between the UNCCD, CBD and UNFCCC.

IV. “Africa”

Concrete actions taken and progress made

The regional implementation meeting identified the following main concrete actions taken and progress made:

(a) *Sustainable development governance in Africa*

Sustainable development framework

- i) The eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) recognized by the African Union and ECA, as the implementing bodies of NEPAD, have been involved in the design and implementation of NEPAD programmes and subregional projects. Capacity-building needs of the RECs is being assessed.
- ii) Many African countries have taken steps to create NEPAD focal points for the integration of NEPAD programmes into national development plans. These steps include designating ministers or setting up ministries as focal points for NEPAD.
- iii) The Partnership approach embedded in NEPAD has elicited significant international support for Africa. In this connection, Regional Consultation Meetings (RCMs) of UN agencies working in Africa have been established to coordinate and ensure effective support to NEPAD.

Peace and security

- iv) The AU Peace and Security Council has been established and AU's capacity to intervene and mediate in conflicts has been strengthened by the establishment of the African Peace Facility and support provided towards operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture.
- v) The AU Policy Framework for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) has been developed and adopted.
- vi) Peace and stability is also being promoted through international bodies such as the UN Peace Building Commission, as well as through regional mechanisms.
- vii) The UN-AU Framework for the 10-year Capacity-Building Programme has been developed and it includes the establishment of effective early-warning and crisis response systems.

Human rights

- viii) African leaders have affirmed commitments to human rights and rule of law through the Constitutive Act of AU, NEPAD Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), among others.
- ix) African countries have overwhelmingly subscribed to most international and regional human rights norms and standards, ratified numerous major human rights treaties and enshrined these norms and standards in their constitutions and national legislation.

- x) Progress has been made on human rights, and the principle of rule of law is respected in most countries.

Political Governance and administration

- xi) Africa has benefited from democratic politics and practices, and has taken a significant step in the last two decades. Competitive multiparty democracy has been enthroned in many African countries.
- xii) The APRM has been adopted and some 25 countries have acceded to this mechanism aimed at promoting policies, standards and best practices that will lead to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development and accelerated regional and economic integration.
- xiii) Electoral institutions are gaining more credibility and legitimacy with the move to relatively free and fair elections in many countries.
- xiv) Most countries have created watchdog institutions and some are trying to build effective anticorruption commissions.

Economic and corporate governance and private sector development

- xv) A NEPAD Economic and Corporate Governance Initiative has been launched to promote programmes aimed at enhancing the quality of economic and public financial management, as well as corporate governance.
- xvi) Several African countries have made progress in economic governance, public financial management and accountability and the integrity of the monetary and financial systems.
- xvii) Countries have made efforts to promote private sector-led growth and development.
- xviii) African governments have continued efforts to expand and develop physical infrastructure to attract private investment and make it more profitable and efficient.

(b) Poverty eradication and socially sustainable development

Income poverty

- i) Although, the real GDP growth rate for Africa continues to grow, the number of people living in extreme poverty in sub-Saharan Africa has reduced marginally from 46.8 per cent in 1990 to 41.1 percent in 2004. The poverty gap ratio declined from 19.5 to 17.5 per cent in SSA during the same period. The incidence of poverty in North African countries has remained constant at 2 per cent for the same period.
- ii) Countries have developed national development plans that incorporate poverty reduction strategies.

- iii) Knowledge-sharing between countries on poverty and national development strategies is being enhanced through knowledge-sharing networks.

Gender equality for sustainable development

- iv) The Constitutive Act of AU recognizes the key role that women have played in development and calls for AU to adopt a gender parity principle. NEPAD Secretariat has commenced gender mainstreaming and CSO mobilization at the regional and national levels through RECs.
- v) RECs have adopted gender policies, declarations and guidelines for the promotion and protection of the human rights of women.
- vi) The African Gender and Development Index has been developed, and the African Women Rights Observatory set-up to monitor the status of women and women's rights at the regional level.
- vii) African countries have ratified and in some cases aligned their national legislation to the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women; and some have signed the Optional Protocol.
- viii) Some countries have also signed and have begun ratifying the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa.
- ix) Some governments have enacted or amended legislation on women's human rights and some have adopted constitutions that take on board gender equality.
- x) Several countries have significantly increased the level of women's representation in parliament; and women have also been elected and/or appointed into powerful decision-making positions in the civil and public services.
- xi) African governments have established various mechanisms to mainstream gender in the formulation of policies, plans and programmes. Between 1995-2005, 48 African countries PRSs and action plans included gender concerns. Some countries have managed to reduce gender differentials in education through affirmative action and gender-aware policies.

Education for sustainable development

- xii) African countries have subscribed to the goal of achieving Education for All (EFA) by 2015 and many have undertaken education sector reforms.
- xiii) Enrolment in primary education has increased, but the number of out-of-school children remains high.

- xiv) A Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015) has been launched and the Framework for Action endorsed, under the auspices of AU.
- xv) A detailed Action Plan has been formulated under the auspices of NEPAD to enable African countries achieve the MDG of Universal Primary Education (UPE) and to promote centers of excellence.

Health for sustainable development

- xvi) The AU/NEPAD Health Strategy which offers a comprehensive integrated approach to addressing disease, as well as the Africa Health Strategy 2007-2015 to *inter lia*, strengthening health systems, have been adopted.
- xvii) AU has adopted the Brazzaville Commitment, which sets the direction for HIV and AIDS policy and defines the universal access targets for Africa until 2010 and the Abuja Call for Accelerated Action Towards Universal Access to HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Services in Africa.
- xviii) HIV/AIDS has been mainstreamed into all NEPAD programmes, and the provision of antiretroviral treatment on the continent is expanding.
- xix) African countries are successfully responding to the HIV epidemic. Political support and willingness to address HIV/AIDS and its repercussion is now a reality in many countries.

Sustainable human settlements

- xx) Urban centres in the region have benefited through global urban management programmes such as the Safer Cities, Good Urban Governance, and Secure Tenure programmes and campaigns.
- xxi) Countries, have undertaken initiatives such as review and reform of national policies and legislation on housing and access to land and secure tenure.
- xxii) Countries, as part of their poverty reduction policies and strategies have introduced programmes on the provision of basic urban services and slum upgrading and prevention policies; and social housing schemes.

Water supply and sanitation

- xxiii) The African Minister's Council on Water has been established and is actively engaged in policy coordination and advocacy, taking into account among others, the African Water Vision 2025 which has been developed and adopted.
- xxiv) African Water Facility to provide support and funding to water related programmes has been established and operational.

- xxv) The NEPAD Short-Term Action Plan (STAP) on infrastructure, which includes projects on Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS), is under implementation.
- xxvi) In order to improve the status of WSS, countries have undertaken initiatives such as the development and/or updating national strategies and plans on WSS within the context of PRSs, increasing funding to the WSS, and carrying out policy and reforms.
- xxvii) Some countries in Africa are on track to meeting the MDGs on water and sanitation. However, more needs to be done to ensure that all countries meet these MDGs.

(c) *Sustainable consumption and production (SCP)*

Ten-Year framework of programmes on SCP

- i) The African Ten-Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production (African 10-YFP) has been developed, and Regional Steering Committee for this programme has been launched.
- ii) An eco-labelling project is being implemented within the framework of the programme and aims to develop an Africa eco-labelling scheme.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

- iii) The African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC), a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) has been set up to promote the role of business in building sustainable communities.
- iv) African business associations and several stakeholders from civil society and academia are participating in the Global Compact Initiatives, and the UNEP Financial Initiative. The African Task Force has been launched to support and expand sustainable financial practice in Africa.
- v) Several companies in Africa have become members of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development.

Sustainable tourism development

- vi) The NEPAD Tourism Action Plan has been developed and approved.
- vii) Most African governments have now included tourism in their national development strategies and some countries have started to adopt policies that unlock opportunities for the poor within tourism.
- viii) The establishment of Trans Frontier Conservation Areas unlock socio-economic opportunities for local communities living around these areas.

- ix) Additionally, countries have also adopted the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and reporting on implementation progress.

Sustainable industrial development

- x) The Africa Productive Capacity Initiative (APCI) has been endorsed by the AU Assembly as the NEPAD Sustainable Industrial Development Strategy. The African Productive Capacity Facility (APCF) has been established as a financial mechanism to support it.
- xi) Through APCI, selected industrial sectors in Africa's five subregions are benefiting from technical assistance to increase Manufactured Value Added (MVA).
- xii) Many countries in the region have been assisted in developing and implementing programmes to improve the competitiveness of selected industries and, wherever possible, identify new market opportunities.
- xiii) Cleaner production in the region is being promoted, including the establishment and collaboration among National Cleaner Production Centers (NCPCs).
- xiv) Countries have also established agro-processing ventures and Medium-Sized and Micro-Enterprises (MSMEs), and are gradually accessing finance, technology transfer and capacity-building for growth-oriented and competitive MSMEs, with increased focus on women.

Energy for sustainable development

- xv) Several regional energy projects have been prepared through the multi-donor NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility housed by African Development Bank (AfDB).
- xvi) Energy planners in some countries are benefiting from technical assistance to enhance their capacity to effectively use integrated resource planning for mainstreaming sustainable development in the planning of investments in the electricity supply industry at the regional and national levels.
- xvii) New energy supply schemes integrating energy services to the development of productive and income generation activities, entrepreneurship, and the promotion of indigenous energy resources have been designed.

Chemicals and hazardous wastes management

- xviii) Many African countries have ratified major chemicals and wastes-related Conventions, including the Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel Convention and its amendment. Additionally, all but one of the countries that have ratified the Basel Protocol on Liability and Compensation are African countries.

- xix) Some countries have also ratified regional agreements including the Bamako Convention on the ban of the import into Africa and the control of transboundary movement and management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa adopted in 1991.
- xx) A number of projects are under way to implement a regional action plan for implementation of the AMCEN-adopted Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) in the Africa region.
- xxi) Many African countries have adopted policies and legislation on wastes, including hazardous wastes management and are implementing activities on environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes.
- xxii) African countries have established three subregional centers and one regional coordinating center to address specific subregional and regional chemicals and hazardous wastes management needs.
- xxiii) The African obsolete pesticide Stockpile Project (ASP) has been established to clean up stockpiled obsolete pesticides, catalyze development of prevention measures and build capacity for chemicals-related issues.

(d) Natural resource base of economic and social development

Sustainable mineral resources development

- i) A number of initiatives such as the African Mining Partnership (AMP), Communities and Small-Scale Mining – Africa, the Africa Mining Network, NEPAD Spatial Development Programme (SDP), and the Southern and Eastern Africa Minerals Center have been put in place to promote sustainable minerals development.
- ii) Efforts are underway to improve harmonization of mineral policies, standards, and regulatory and legislative environments at the national and subregional levels.

Freshwater resources

- iii) The Africa Ministerial Council on Water and the Africa Water Task Force have been established to enhance cooperation and coordination to promote the development and implementation of coherent policies and strategies for water resources management.
- iv) The water resources management component of the NEPAD short-Term Action Plan (STAP) has been developed and focuses on seven river basins, namely; Niger and Senegal in West Africa, Congo and Lake Chad in Central Africa, Nile in East Africa, and Zambezi and Okavango in Southern Africa.
- v) At the subregional level, the SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses, and the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) have been developed and are operational.

- vi) The Lake Chad Basin Commission has made significant contributions in the area of agriculture, fisheries and livestock.
- vii) An increasing number of countries are undertaking policy, legal and institutional reforms and developing strategies for water resources development and management, based on the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approach.

Coastal and marine resources

- viii) Most coastal countries in Africa are signatories to one or more multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) that deal with marine and coastal management issues. These MEAs include the Barcelona Convention (1976), the Jeddah Convention (1982), the Nairobi Convention (1985) and the Abidjan Convention (1981), as well as the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (1973) and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982).
- ix) Many African governments have put in place policies and legislation to put in effect the principle of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM).
- x) The Coastal and Marine Resources programme of NEPAD has been put in place to support the implementation of the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions, to contribute to the implementation of the African Process and to assist African countries to implement the relevant provisions of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Activities.
- xi) A number of initiatives have been undertaken in the fisheries sector. These include the establishment of the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission; implementation of the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihood Programme in which 25 countries in West and Central Africa are participating.

Sustainable forest management

- xii) A forest programme has been developed as part of the NEPAD Environment Initiative.
- xiii) Regional and subregional agreements, partnerships and programmes to promote Sustainable Forestry Management (SFM) have been established.
- xiv) Substantial effort has been made mostly by North African countries to establish planted forests.
- xv) Two-thirds of African countries have developed and are at different stages of implementing National Forest Programmes.
- xvi) Regional eco-certification schemes on timber production have also been initiated as part of the strategies to promote SFM in the region.

Biodiversity

- xvii) AU has adopted the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources which commits African countries to development that is based on the achievement of ecologically rational, economically sound, and socially acceptable policies and programmes, which recognize the human right to a satisfactory environment, as well as the right to development.
- xviii) The NEPAD Environment Initiative encompasses programmes on conserving wetlands; preventing, controlling and managing invasive alien species; and cross-border conservation or management of natural resources, including forests and biodiversity.
- xix) Most African countries have ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (1992), the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2000), the Ramsar Convention (1971) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (1973).
- xx) Countries are translating provisions of the CBD into action through the development of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.
- xxi) Countries have designated forests to be managed primarily for conservation of biological diversity.

Climate Change

- xxii) A programme on climate change has been developed as part of the NEPAD Environment Initiative.
- xxiii) Capacity-building for monitoring, prediction and timely early warning in the region is being carried out by Drought Monitoring Centres including ICPAC, ACMAD and SADC located in Nairobi, Kenya and sub-centres in Niamey, Niger and Harare, Zimbabwe respectively.
- xxiv) African countries have ratified and are at different stages in implementing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) of 1992.
- xxv) Several African countries have completed their first communication and have begun their second.
- xxvi) African countries are also at different stages of preparing their National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs).
- xxvii) Forty-six countries have ratified or acceded to the Kyoto Protocol (1997) and are engaged in its implementation.
- xxviii) Some countries are being supported to develop projects for funding within the framework of the Clean Development Mechanism.

Natural Disaster risk reduction

- xxix) The African Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and a Programme of Action for its implementation. National Disaster Management Organizations have been established, legislation is in place, a number of policy statements have been articulated both in disaster and non-disaster periods, and political commitment towards DRR has been gradually increasing in SSA.
- xxx) Countries have incorporated aspects of natural disasters in their poverty reduction strategies.
- xxxi) Arrangements within most North Africa countries exist for emergency management and are organized and coordinated at a national level but do not deal with DRR holistically and hence the conclusion that DRR in the region is under-developed.

(e) Means of implementation

Domestic resources

- i) In order to reduce poverty, most African countries have adopted comprehensive national development plans, encompassing poverty reduction and wealth creation strategies. These are being funded through national budgets. Further, in their quest to attain the MDGs, many African countries are adopting MDG-based PRSs as their national development planning frameworks.

External resources

- ii) The external capital flows in addition to domestic capital are very small compared to the developmental needs of African countries. Despite the recent increase in Official Development Assistance (ODA), very few countries account for the larger share of the continent's receipt.
- iii) Attempts aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of aid are being made through initiatives such as The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the ECA-OECD-DAC mutual review on development effectiveness.
- iv) Several actions such as enacting attractive and liberal investment codes for in-coming investments and the creation in 2005 of an Investment Climate Facility have been undertaken by African countries to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).
- v) Although the bulk of FDI flows into the natural resource sector in many African countries, FDI flows to the service sector, in general, and the electricity, wholesale and retail sub-sectors in particular, have been on the rise in recent years.
- vi) There has been some diversification of sources of flow of FDI with the increasing Asian investments in Africa.

- vii) HIPC initiative has delivered debt relief to 15 African countries.
- viii) Under the Bilateral Debt Relief Initiatives, individual donors have extended significant debt write-off to some African countries.

South-South cooperation

- ix) South to south cooperation including Africa –Africa, China-Africa, Africa-Latin America, India-Africa, and Asia-African cooperation are being strengthened.
- x) Under the Sino-African economic and trade cooperation achievements have been made in the implementation of NEPAD programmes.
- xi) India has created a line of credit of \$200 million for cooperation on NEPAD projects and has separately allocated \$500 million out of which agreements amounting to \$282 million have been signed under the Techno-Economic Approach for Africa-India Movement.

Globalization and trade

- xii) African countries have become more engaged in World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations, and significant technical support by many institutions has been provided to the political process spearheaded by AU.
- xiii) CSOs have been active in advocating for African priorities in the trade negotiations.
- xiv) Several African countries and RECs are involved in bilateral trade negotiations in order to diversify their export markets and enhance their integration into the global economic system.

Regional integration

- xv) Africa is making some progress in its attempts to integrate particularly in the areas of trade, communications, macroeconomic policies, and transportation.
- xvi) Knowledge sharing on best practices among RECs is ongoing in the context of regional integration.
- xvii) ECOWAS and the EAC have made significant progress on free mobility of people.
- xviii) ECOWAS, COMESA and SADC have had success in the area of peace and security.
- xix) Some RECs have established institutions to support regional financial cooperation in order to advance economic integration.

Transport for sustainable development

- xx) African countries have adopted the successor arrangement of UNTACDA II with a view to developing integrated transport and communication systems to provide the continent with safe, reliable, efficient and affordable infrastructure and services.
- xxi) African countries and RECs have undertaken many policy reforms to attract the private sector and to establish road funds.
- xxii) A number of transport corridors have been identified for development in landlocked countries many of which have developed bilateral and multilateral agreements and programmes of action with their coastal neighbours, to facilitate the movement of goods and people.
- xxiii) The SSA Transport Policy, the Regional Economic Communities Transport Coordination Committee and the NEPAD Infrastructure Programme Short-Term Action Plan have been put in place.
- xxiv) A matrix of transport targets and indicators for the realization of the MDGs has been adopted through AU Summit in Sirte, Libya in 2005.
- xxv) The NEPAD-Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility has been established and is operational as a multi-donor facility.
- xxvi) The air transport sub-sector has received a major breakthrough since the adoption of the Yamoussoukro Decision in 1999.

Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development

- xxvii) The NEPAD Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) and the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST) of AU have been established.
- xxviii) Subregional cooperation in STI is strengthening, particularly in Southern Africa with the development of protocols for cooperation.
- xxix) The use of ICT is being encouraged through such initiatives such as the Technology in Government Award launched in 2005.
- xxx) Some African countries are in the process of establishing policies and institutions on STI for sustainable development.
- xxxi) Communities of practice are getting strengthened in some countries and also regionally, to generate data and give policy advice for science-based decision-making.
- xxxii) Most African countries have developed National Information and Communication

Infrastructure policies and plans within the framework of the African Information Society Initiative.

Capacity-building

- xxxiii) African countries have partnered with many institutions in an effort to address the challenges of capacity-building in Africa.
- xxxiv) African institutions, such as the African Capacity-Building Foundation and the African Economic Research Consortium have added value to capacity-building in Africa.
- xxxv) Under the IMF, three African Regional Technical Assistance Centers have been established to support poverty reduction strategy processes.
- xxxvi) AU/NEPAD has recently developed a Capacity Development Strategic Framework (CDSF), which will guide capacity-building activities on the continent.

Challenges and constraints

RIM identified the following main challenges and constraints:

(a) Sustainable development governance

- i) Inadequate integration of NEPAD and AUC activities.
- ii) African countries have established regional mechanisms for promoting and enforcing human rights agreements. The international community should assist these regional mechanisms in relation to peace and security and human rights.
- iii) More work needs to be done to improve on sound public financial management and private sector development.

(b) Poverty eradication and socially sustainable development

- i) Unstable macroeconomic conditions.
- ii) Sustaining high levels of growth and ensuring that growth provides employment opportunities are key challenges to reducing income poverty.
- iii) Income poverty and uneven distribution of wealth.
- iv) Persistent gender inequality in agriculture and rural development continue to undermine agricultural productivity and overall economic growth.
- v) Weak institutional capacity.

vi) Insufficient investment in infrastructure.

vii) Natural disasters.

(c) Sustainable consumption and production

i) High levels of poverty in Africa.

ii) Inadequate awareness and lack of capacity.

iii) Inadequate policies, legislative frameworks and strategies, as well as insufficient harmonization of laws, regulations, codes and standards, and poor enforcement.

iv) Lack of business incentives, low skills levels and limited capacities.

v) Political instability, wars and terrorist attacks; leakages and limited linkages to the local economy are specific constraints to sustainable tourism development.

(d) Natural resource base of economic and social development

i) The creation, investment, distribution, governance and macroeconomic, as well as capacity challenges are major concerns to the sustainable development of mineral resources.

ii) Poverty, weak national institutions with poor technical and financial capacity and in some cases, fragmented or overlapping functions and actions.

iii) Low levels of research and scientific capacity.

iv) Low access to appropriate and efficient technology.

v) Poor understanding and appreciation of natural resources issues, especially their links with, and benefits to poverty reduction.

vi) Lack of capacity for natural resources valuation, accounting and use of appropriate economic instruments and the design of indicators for sustainable development.

vii) Lack of adequate political and financial support.

(e) Means of implementation

i) Inadequate integration of employment creation into macroeconomic policy frameworks.

ii) Low saving rates and low and unpredictable ODA flows.

iii) Insufficient debt forgiveness and external trade barriers.

- iv) Low supply capacity.
- v) Lack of capacity, appropriate and adequate policy coordination and implementation and harmonization of national laws in the transport sector.
- vi) Inadequate government initiatives and investment in proper STI strategies, systems, policies, capacities and institutions.
- vii) High licensing fees, lack of national standards and high infrastructure costs in the ICT sub-sector.
- viii) Poor coordination and inadequate integration of efforts in capacity-building.
- ix) High dependence on external capacity.

Lessons learned and the recommended priority approaches and actions

(a) Sustainable development governance in Africa

- i) It is important to integrate NEPAD into AU structures and processes and provide greater support for the private sector and promote more outreach to civil society.
- ii) Expand capacity-building, including technical and financial assistance to AU, RECs and countries.
- iii) The trend towards peace, stability and democratization should be supported and consolidated.
- iv) Build on the emerging structures and practices and consolidate progress recorded in the area of political governance and administration.
- v) In the area of economic and corporate governance and private sector development, there is need to ensure that the capacity to implement well conceived reforms are available.
- vi) Adopt a holistic approach to addressing the problem of governance and to improve public financial systems and management.

(b) Poverty eradication and socially sustainable development

- i) Sustain high growth rates to financially empower countries to alleviate poverty.
- ii) Adopt holistic multiple strategic interventions in a wide range of areas.
- iii) Within the agriculture sector, including livestock, provide additional resources, enhance adoption of better farming practices and improved technology, create the right conditions

for investment and for effective market functioning, and undertake reforms that promote structural transformation of agriculture and rural economy.

- iv) Mainstream gender issues into economic analyses and poverty reduction strategies and actions and provide technical training for women and girls in operation and maintenance.
- v) Institutionalize policies that guarantee gender equality and replicate the AU principle of 50/50 gender parity.
- vi) Intensify efforts to build upon success so far achieved in the education sector, including implementing policies that enhance access, quality, and equal opportunities to boys and girls, rich and poor.
- vii) Health interventions should be adequately designed and implemented in order to achieve immediate results and improve survival of infants, children and women.
- viii) Activities aimed at promoting sustainable human settlements and urbanisation must include access to land and security of tenure along with adequate mechanism for financing housing and shelter for the poor. There is need for slum prevention and upgrading using local resources and technology, and promoting employment creation.
- ix) Sustainable water supply and sanitation calls for user-friendly, long-term strategies and plans for investments and the development of urban and rural water and sanitation infrastructures, as well as undertaking institutional and legislative reforms.

(c) *Sustainable consumption and production*

- i) Political momentum and commitment for the effective implementation of the African 10-YFP should be maintained.
- ii) Sound corporate governance and risk management systems to successfully implement policies and measures to address environmental and social challenge should be promoted.
- iii) Sustainable tourism development should take into account risk factors; ensure effective market price value, quality of products and meaningful community-private-public partnerships, supported by policies that influence flows to the poor.
- iv) Interventions in sustainable industrial development should improve productivity and investment with a focus on structural issues, prominent among which is the need for domestic capacity-building, the strengthening of domestic factor markets and the supply of public goods.
- v) The problem of access to modern energy in rural and peri-urban areas should be addressed in national development strategies, including PRSs and National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs).

- vi) Furthermore, policies, strategies, legal and regulatory frameworks that are conducive to an attractive national investments climate should be established.
- vii) Countries should target analysis at understanding the concrete impacts of chemicals and hazardous wastes on key development issues to help in effectively mainstreaming chemicals management into national development strategies, including PRSs.
- viii) Synergies between chemicals and hazardous wastes related MEAs should be enhanced at all levels.

(d) Natural resource base of economic and social development

- i) Countries should strengthen natural resources governance systems at all levels; reinforce institutional capacity, including human, technical and financial; adopt and implement effective policies and legislation; and foster stakeholder ownership and local participation in natural resources management and development.
- ii) Regional and subregional initiatives should be linked and coordinated with national development processes, in order to achieve greater impact.
- iii) Appropriate incentives should also be provided to encourage all stakeholders to become involved in sustainable natural resources management and development.
- iv) Enhancing adaptive capacity and increasing resilience through approaches that foster sustainable development should be key climate change interventions.
- v) Enhance and promote policy coherence and integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation concerns into priority development policies and programmes.
- vi) Countries should increase political support to natural resources management and development, climate change and disaster risk reduction programmes.
- vii) Promote environment and natural resource economics to ensure equitable growth and sustainable development.
- viii) Countries also need to effectively integrate strategies and action plans of all natural resources sectors into national development plans, including poverty reduction strategies.

(e) Means of implementation

- i) Countries should promote pro-poor and equitable growth, if growth is to have a significant positive impact on poverty and institute broad policy measures to sustain growth.

- ii) There is need to better integrate capital flows policies into national economic development policies by providing incentives for investments that promote both domestic and foreign investments that are export-oriented and have large positive impacts on wealth and employment creation.
- iii) In addition to mobilizing domestic resources, there is need to advocate for external aid in order to achieve and sustain higher levels of GDP growth rates and to accelerate poverty reduction, as well as to ensure that new aid is in the form of grants and not loans, to prevent a new round of external payment crisis.
- iv) Development partners should extend debt cancellation to all African countries.
- v) There is need to further coordinate and harmonize policies and positions for success in the global trading system and to combine trade reforms with complementary adjustment support measures.
- vi) On regional integration, it is crucial to promote collective efforts, with dynamic political commitment to integration, and expand opportunities for investment that increase African incomes and tap unexploited resources.
- vii) There is need to increase the financing of the infrastructure sector and adjust policies in order to build physical and human capacities, modernize management, attract the private sector and improve transport facilitation.
- viii) African countries should invest in the youth and children in the area of basic education, science and technology and also ensure a political setting, which prepares them well for future leadership responsibilities.
- ix) Promote awareness, policy analysis and advocacy on STI.
- x) In the ICT sub-sector, African countries should better position themselves, especially in the areas of infrastructure, outsourcing and external employment opportunities to absorb excess skilled human resources.
- xi) Various African countries stand to benefit through the possible establishment of regional satellite facilities as part of the square kilometre array (SKA) initiative, thereby creating the possibility of enhancing local economies and scientific innovations.
- xii) Adequate and appropriate capacity in Africa requires governments to ensure that capacity-building programmes clearly tie in with, and take forward the developmental agenda; and that capacity-building strategies are well coordinated and integrated.

V. Conclusion

RIM acknowledged that some progress has been made in meeting some of the commitments and targets under the cluster of issues considered. However, it concluded that many challenges remain and efforts must be intensified if the objectives of poverty reduction and positioning countries in the region, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development are to be achieved, in a balanced manner, in urban and rural areas.

The meeting emphasized that the challenges faced and the desired development outcomes are all inter-linked. It underscored the need to avoid compartmentalizing the issues and to go beyond piecemeal solutions in addressing challenges and therefore implementing measures to attain the MDGs and achieve sustainable development. The meeting therefore called for increased vigour in promoting the balanced integration of the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development, and putting in place institutional and strategic frameworks that adequately respond to the requirements of sustainable development. The meeting further called for the synergistic implementation of the Rio and other multilateral agreements.

The meeting called for partnership approaches among development partners, governments, the private sector and civil society in order to optimize the outcomes of their mutually supportive roles. The need for programmes with a sharper livelihood focus on local people and that seek to meaningfully engage them in addressing problems and challenges at the local level was underscored as one of the major avenues that can yield tangible benefits including agricultural transformation, sustainable land management, and improved livelihoods.

The meeting also called for specific partnership approaches to enhanced national sustainable development consultations, PRSPs, and Development Assistance Frameworks, land use planning and other similar processes are needed. Emphasis on private sector and civil society participation that links resources earmarked for these processes with the objective to increase rural peoples' inclusion and voice would benefit from mechanisms to track government requests and a common format for sharing the outcomes of consultations across the African continent.

While expressing deep appreciation for the support provided, the meeting called on development partners to increase their support including through meeting their pledges for development financing as agreed particularly in Rio (1992), WSSD (2002), Monterey (2002), the World Summit on Development (2005) and various G-8 Summits. In this respect it underscored the need for rationalized donor procedures and conditionalities to enable easy access and faster processing of funding request, particularly for rural development actors and farmers.

The meeting also stressed that expansion of markets, particularly for agricultural products is an essential and key requirement for achieving SARD and sustainable growth in the region. Further, it pointed out that clearer structures of property rights can provide a foundation for structural transformation of Africa's economies, which in most cases is led primarily by agriculture. In addition, where land has been inequitably distributed since colonial times, more equitable patterns of land ownership can generate higher levels and broader based patterns of economic growth.

RIM highlighted the need for reinvigoration of commitment of the international community to combating land degradation and desertification. The meeting therefore called for, on an urgent basis, increased and stable investments in sustainable agricultural practices, including sustainable land management; and implementation drought risk management strategies.

The meeting emphasized the need for increased political will and overall stronger commitments from policy makers at all levels if the goals and targets agreed upon at various levels are to be realized. The meeting also emphasized creation of job opportunities for the young and future generations, as well as stressed the non-violation of human rights.

The participants endorsed the outcome of RIM for presentation as Africa's contribution to the 16th Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-16), which will be held in New York from 5 to 16 May 2008.