



UNEP

AEO-for-Youth

W O R K B O O K



AFRICA

The future is in our hands



CONTENTS

Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) for Youth	1
The Africa Environment Outlook	1
The Global Environment Outlook (GEO).....	1
The need for AEO-for-Youth	1
The AEO-for-Youth participatory process.....	2
The main themes in the AEO-for-Youth	2
Taking action!	3
How can you contribute	4
Environmental tidbits	6
Contacts	7

Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) for Youth

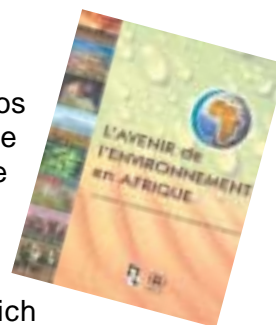
During the Global Youth Retreat (GYR) 2003, held at the UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi, the African caucus endorsed a proposal to develop a youth version of the Africa Environment Outlook (AEO). AEO-for-Youth is aimed at young people between the ages of 16 and 30. It updates and highlights the AEO environmental themes in a way that is interesting, attractive and appealing to youth in Africa. Its primary product, a report of about 50 pages, will be launched in late 2004. ■

The Africa Environment Outlook

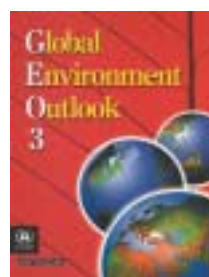


The first AEO report was published in 2002 and it integrates the analysis of the status and trends of the environment in Africa, and the impacts of policies, laws and regional agreements. The AEO report also provides an outlook, which

highlights various scenarios and proposes alternative policy options for the future at different levels national and sub-regional and regional. The AEO assessment process, which was launched in 2000 at the request of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), is modelled along the Global Environment Outlook (GEO). ■



The Global Environment Outlook (GEO)



GEO is a global environmental assessment process that is cross sectoral, participatory and consultative at different levels. It produces, among others, a report series that addresses one of the important objectives of Agenda 21, which emphasizes the role of information in sustainable development. The GEO reports are scientifically accurate and policy relevant to users in different parts of the world, including those in Africa. Three GEO reports have been published since 1997. ■

The need for AEO-for-Youth

The youth constitute over 50 per cent of the population in Africa, and have a crucial role in environmental management. However, the youth are generally not actively involved in environmental policy and decision-making. The AEO-for-Youth is, therefore, an opportunity to enhance the participation of the youth in Africa in environmental decision-making. AMCEN plans to publish an AEO-for-Youth report with technical assistance from UNEP. The report, which will be based on the AEO report, will be more appropriate as an important source of information on the environment for the youth in Africa. One of its objectives is to encourage environmental youth activism. The publication will target the youth as well as environmental educators, environmental and youth groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs). ■

The AEO-for-Youth participatory process

The AEO-for-Youth process is by youth for youth. It will bring together individuals and youth organizations from different parts of the region, creating an opportunity for different stakeholders to share and exchange views while working together. In doing this, AEO-for-Youth will create a network of individuals and organizations in Africa interested in the environment. The process aims to increase awareness on environmental issues in Africa by communicating young peoples' concerns, experiences, and even suggesting solutions, to help protect the regional environment.

While the AEO-for-Youth will highlight environmental themes presented in the AEO report, young people will also identify key issues and their root causes, describing their impacts on local communities, countries or the region and proposing solutions or action plans.

The main themes in the AEO-for-Youth

The AEO-for-Youth will focus on several environmental issues that are of importance in Africa, and the youth in Africa are encouraged to share their experiences, within the context of the AEO environmental themes highlighted below.

1 Atmosphere:

Africa is vulnerable to climate change. Variations in rainfall patterns have led to increasing drought and flooding conditions often with disastrous consequences for both people and the environment. Air quality is also an emerging issue of concern in many parts of Africa, especially in expanding urban areas where concentrations of industry and vehicles are increasing air pollution. **Have you had any experiences related to these issues? If so, we would like you to share them with us.** ►



3 Coastal and Marine Environments:

Coastal and marine habitats and resources in Africa are under threat from pollution (particularly oil pollution), overharvesting, inappropriate development in the coastal zone, and poor inland management. **Please tell us about your experiences regarding coastal and marine environments in your area.** ►



4 Forests:

Africa has the fastest rate of deforestation anywhere in the world. In addition to its ecological impacts, deforestation is a major threat to the livelihoods of many communities and their vital energy sources. **Do you know of any group or person involved in protecting forests in your region? What experiences of deforestation in your area do you have?** ►



2 Biodiversity:

Africa is rich in biodiversity that is important not only to the region's social and economic systems, but to the world as a whole. These biological resources are declining as a result of habitat loss, overharvesting, and illegal activities. **Are you aware of threats to Africa's biodiversity and actions that are being taken to reduce such threats? Please share your experiences with us.** ►





5 Freshwater:

Less than 3 per cent of the Earth's surface is freshwater and Africa's share of this global total is about 9 per cent.

Water is a precious resource. It can be a matter of life and death, and can also be both an instrument and a limiting factor in poverty alleviation and development. Scarcity and low quality of freshwater are the two most limiting factors for development in Africa, constraining food production and industrial activities, and contributing significantly to the burden of disease. **Has the availability of water impacted your life in some way? ►**



6 Land:

Degradation of soil and vegetation resources is largely a result of increasing

population pressures, inequitable land access and tenure policies, poor land

management and widespread poverty. The results are declining agricultural yields, affecting economies and food security, desertification of arid areas, raising competition for remaining resources, and increasing potential for conflict. **If you or people you know have been affected by land degradation, please send a contribution expressing what happened. ►**

7 Urbanization:

Although most people in Africa currently live in rural areas, the region's rate of urbanization is among the highest in the world. Poor economic growth and low investment in infrastructure have left provision of housing and basic services in urban areas lagging far behind rates of inward migration. This has resulted in a proliferation of slums in urban Africa. **Please tell us about urbanization where you live! ►**



Taking action!

It is crucial that young people begin to take action now! We therefore invite you to work with us to create the AEO-for-Youth. If you haven't already enrolled in the process, please do so as the more inputs we receive, the more representative of African youth our publication will be. Contributions may include illustrations, short case studies, poems, photos, quotes, and opinions on environmental issues in your community or country. These may be in either the English, French or Arabic languages. We want to hear all about things that are happening to the environment, both positive and negative, where you live!



How you can contribute

Your contributions do not have to be limited to the environmental themes highlighted above. You can also contribute material related to the history of environment and development in Africa. Or perhaps you know of a person or a group that is doing something really great for the environment that you would like all of us to know about. Or maybe you want your contribution to be about what you would like Africa to look like in the future... The possibilities are endless!

Below are some additional ideas for contributions:



1. CASE STUDIES

Case studies identify and illustrate specific problems or specific success stories. They portray real situations and their effects on specific places or groups of people. Build on existing information by adding first hand accounts. For example, you can write about the impact of floods in the region and other impacts that come with it. Proceed by collecting information on how it impacted the community by actually interviewing people involved. You can add your opinions, observations and conclusions.

TIP: Remember that in order to analyse a problem effectively, you'll need to base it on a scientific methodology. This is simple and practical: first define the problem, and then formulate a hypothesis, list observations and draw conclusions.



3. PERSONAL NARRATIVES

Here you have the freedom to express personal experiences in prose or in poetry in your own words. Write a story about the state of the environment. Tell us about your community and how you wish it were different, why it is so important, what the youth are doing to change and better the environment, and how our future will differ from our present.



4. PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Your contribution may also come in the form of images. Photographs, illustrations and paintings should be reflective of the youth, youth activities, and/ or the environment of the region. If the contribution is a photograph or illustration, attach a brief description to the image stating what it is, where it was taken or done and what it represents. Ensure that entries you submit are clear and sharp enough to

be reproduced for the final publication. Pictures are most vividly remembered because they could be worth a thousand words.

**Please note that neither the illustrations nor the photos will be returned and all submissions will become property of UNEP. Make them good; make them expressive; your illustration or photo may also be selected as the cover design of the publication. While no payment will be made for photos and illustrations used in the publication, due credit will be given.*



5. WORKSHOPS

Another way to contribute to the project is to organize a meeting, workshop or round table discussion, where youth from your school, university or organization can discuss a special theme of interest. These discussions can range from flora or fauna to air, water, pollution or policies among others. Contributing in this fashion may be especially attractive to groups who have important activities to share with other youth. Such contributions will be highlighted in AEO-for-Youth newsletter.



6. OTHER

Your contribution can be a combination of any of the above. For example, you could complement your personal narratives with some photos/ illustrations or you could research views and perspectives that support your personal ideas.

Be creative... you may even have an idea that is unique to Africa!

You have until February 2004 to send contributions

Tips for good contributions

1. *Choose topics that interest you.*
2. *Decide on the format for presentation of your work.*
3. *Remember to keep your submissions short, clear and precise.*
4. *Originality and creativity should be portrayed in the work.*
5. *Identify all sources of reference and quotes.*
6. *To make it eye-catching, photos and illustrations should be reflective and expressive. They should include a brief description.*
7. *The photos should be clear and sharp enough to be reproduced for the final publication.*

Unfortunately, we will not be able to use all contributions in the AEO-for-Youth publication. However, everyone who provides input will be acknowledged in the publication. Youth providing inputs will also receive an official acknowledgement of their contribution, a copy of the publication, and contributions may also be used in exhibitions and presentations to increase awareness about AEO-for-Youth.

Disclaimer

The contents of this volume do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of UNEP and contributory organizations. The designations employed and the presentations do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNEP or contributory organizations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or areas or its authority, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Ecosystem- is a dynamic and complex system of plant, animal, and microorganism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit within a defined physical location.

Desertification- describes an extreme form of degradation in dryland areas, caused by climatic and management factors, where the land is no longer productive.

Biodiversity or biological diversity means the variety of plant and animal life at the ecosystem, community or species level, and at the genetic level.

Did you know ... Africa is the second largest continent in the world, accounting for 20 per cent of the world's landmass?

Much of the land is vulnerable to land degradation, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, atmosphere pollution, water scarcity and degradation of coastal areas.

Did you know ... 28 per cent of the African population live in urban areas?

Unplanned urbanization is generally generating much pressure on the region's environment. It has led to the mushrooming of city slums with unhealthy living conditions, and therefore extreme overcrowding and poor disposal of waste.

Did you know ... Africa has 40 000km of coastline?

The narrow, low-lying coastal belt of marine and coastal systems around Africa supports a complex interaction of distinct ecosystems with an enormous diversity of habitats or resources. These coastlines provide wildlife habitat and contribute significantly to national economies. However, these highly attractive and diverse resources are experiencing erosion, impacts of climate change, overharvesting and pollution. A total of 38 per cent of Africa's coastal ecosystems are under severe threat from development-related activities.

Did you know ... Africa has the fastest rate of deforestation in the world?

Despite the fact that the total forest cover in Africa was estimated to be slightly less than 650 million hectares in 2000, factors such as logging, mining, grazing, further clearance, resource extraction, forest fragmentation, landslides, and fires are contributing to the loss of forests and woodlands.

Key facts:

◆ In Africa, 500 million hectares of land have been affected by soil erosion.

◆ Over the last 30 years, Lake Chad has shrunk to one-twentieth of its original size.

◆ Eastern Africa is home to the world's only remaining population of mountain gorillas.

◆ A one-metre rise in sea level could submerge 70 per cent of Seychelles Islands.



Sub-regional Focal Points

For more information contact DEWA and/or your sub regional focal point:

AEO-for-Youth Officer

Division of Early Warning and Assessment
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
P.O. Box 30552, Nairobi 00100, Kenya
Tel: +254-(0) 20-623463
Fax: +254-(0) 20-623944
Email: aeo.youth@unep.org

Sub-regional Officers

Northern Africa
Mr Medhat Nagi
P.O Box 2
Magles El Shaab
Cairo, Egypt
Mobile: (+202) 106827681
Tel: (+202) 5161245
Fax: (+202) 5162961
E-mail: aoye@link.net
medhat_nagi@yahoo.com
medhat_nagi@hotmail.com

Western Africa
Mr Emmanuel K. Edudzie
P.O.Box HO 688
Ho-Volta Region,
Ghana.
Tel: (+233) 24 201 389
E-mail: edudzie@hotmail.com

Central Africa
Mr Charles Elie Doumambila
Technical Coordinator
Association Pour le Developpement de
l'Information Environnementale
Programme Regional de Gestion de
l'Information Environnementale (ADIE/PRGIE)
B.P. 4080, Libreville, Gabon
Tel (+241) 763 040/763032/763019
Fax (+241) 774 261
Email: cdoumambila@adie-ergie.org

Eastern Africa
Ms Neema Mbeyu
P.O Box 59667
City Square 00200
Nairobi, Kenya
Mobile: (+254) 722 458 607
E-mail: mbeyu2001@yahoo.com

Western Indian Ocean States
Mr Sarjoo Gooroochurn
Services Sans Frontieres
Dunputh Lane
Lamarie, Vacoas
Republic of Mauritius
Tel: 6846596
E-mail: ssfenyouth@hotmail.com

Southern Africa
Ms Uneysa Ayair
P.O Box 10739
Umkomaas
4170
South Africa
Tel: +27 39 979 4889
E-mail: uneysa@ananzi.co.za

Relevant web sites :

AEO-for-Youth web site: www.unep.org/roa/aeo/youth
The AEO report is available at: www.unep.org/roa/aeo