

# Africa Environment Outlook – 2

## Chapter outline

*"The downward spiral of poverty and environmental degradation is a waste of opportunities and of resources. What is needed now is a new era of economic growth - growth that is forceful and at the same time socially and environmentally sustainable."* - Brundtland Commission, 1987

*"Integration of environment and development concerns and greater attention to them will lead to the fulfillment of basic needs, improved living standards for all, better protected and managed ecosystems and a safer, more prosperous future."* - Preamble to Agenda 21, 1992

### Background

AEO-2 will profile Africa's environmental resources as an asset for the continent's development. It will highlight the opportunities presented by the region's natural resource base to support the development agenda of NEPAD and the cost of its misuse. It will serve also as a monitoring and evaluation tool for the implementation of the programmes and activities contained in the Action Plan on the Environment Initiative of NEPAD.

### The proposed AEO-2 structure

The report will underscore the concept of sustainable livelihoods, and the importance of the environmental initiatives in supporting them. It will in essence place the human being at the center of sustainable development. The structure and design of the report will strive to bring out this message as clearly as possible. The emphasis will be put on *what should and can be done with existing (remaining) environmental assets*, in the context of identified *constraints (issues)*, rather than focusing on what has been (already) lost. The following will particularly be illustrated:

- *adding value* to the resource that still exists (or remains);
- *using natural resources efficiently* (and sustainably) to derive *maximum benefit* ;
- *mitigating* the constraints and negative effects;
- *maximizing the total value of Africa's natural asset*;
- making a case for *safeguarding and improving* the remaining asset; and
- *Converting* the current environmental threats into *opportunities for development*.

The report will have six chapters as outlined below.

### Chapter 1: People and livelihoods

Chapter 1 will provide the setting of the entire report. The main message to come out of this Chapter will be *"People and livelihoods are at the centre of concern for sustainable development. Human beings are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature"*. The Chapter will be divided into two sections

#### Section 1

This section will be further divided into the following parts:

- A) *An introduction*: This will explain the concept and range of “livelihoods” in the region. In this context, the range of opportunities for livelihoods in Africa will be considered to extend from those who are wholly dependent on natural resource systems, for subsistence, to those who are entirely dependent on wage earning, or trade or industries
- B) *Culture, natural resources and livelihoods*: This will examine the interaction between “culture” and the natural resources and the environment are managed. In many societies in Africa, not only are natural resources important, as “assets”, but they often are an important part of the identity of a group. In this sense, the issue of culture change as well as exploitation of natural resources has to be analyzed, and the concept of “sustainability” must be implemented with the context in mind.

An evaluation of the impact of literacy levels among the rural communities on coping capacities will also be examined.

### *Section 2*

This section will review different initiatives that are influencing the environmental agenda in the region and the way they are operating at the sub-regional, national and local levels. These initiatives will be compared, and an integrated assessment will be carried out on what would be required to achieve the goals and targets at the different levels. These include:

- Johannesburg plan of action
- NEPAD
- Barbados +10 (BPOA +10)
- AMCEN
- WTO
- MDG
- Key conventions (CBD, Algiers, Bamako, UNCCD, RAMSAR, UNFCCC, CITES, and other conventions).

The section will identify common points in the initiatives, to highlight areas of agreement on the priorities. It will then underscore the importance of the NEPAD Environment Initiative, and the various programme areas that form the structure for Chapter 2 of SOE report.

The chapter will end with a preview of the next chapters, and explain how the “opportunities” approach will be used to suggest, and emphasise the importance of keeping environmental issues on the development agenda in the region.

### ***Chapter 2: The State of Environment and Opportunities for Development***

Under this chapter a brief synthesis of the state of environment will be done using the main themes in AEO 1 as baseline but discussing them according to the NEPAD programme areas. Where appropriate, the general regional situation can be placed in the global context. The state of the resources endowment will be looked at in the context of opportunities for development. Maps and graphic representations will be utilised to highlight key changes in the state of environment using the 2002 report as the baseline.

### ***Thematic areas***

- Socio-economic issues
- Land
- Forests and Woodlands
- Atmosphere
- Freshwater
- Biodiversity
- Coastal and marine
- Human Settlements (including urban, peri-urban, rural and settlements of displaced people)

### ***Other themes***

- Health and environment (malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS, infant mortality)
- Energy
- Technology solutions (to be considered as cross-cutting)
- Natural disasters & environmental performance
- Gender disparities (to be discussed as cross-cutting under all the themes)

Under each theme, the focus will be on the identification of potential opportunities for reversing environmental degradation, focusing on adding value to what exists or remains by using it efficiently to derive maximum benefit to alleviate poverty. Economic evaluation of the resources will be made to emphasize the need for safeguarding and improving the remaining asset in terms of ecosystem and economic goods and services and social value/services at the national and community/household levels. Hot spot mapping will be done to draw attention to sites where immediate action is required. The issues to be highlighted using hotspot mapping should be addressed frankly and based on concrete facts.

Detailed guidelines for writing chapter 2 for the various themes will be provided by UNEP to ensure consistence in the treatment of the various themes.

### ***Chapter 3: Emerging issues***

Emerging issues may be old issues being looked at in a different light. They could also be completely new environmental phenomena.

One of the functions of AEO, as a monitoring tool, is to keep track of environmental problems (or solutions) that can suddenly become important, and bring them to the attention of policy makers.

Some of the issues to be dealt with in AEO-2 are:

#### ***1) Conflict and environment:***

This will look at some of the linkages between environment, population, and security, particularly the issues of scarcity, or distribution of and access to environmental resources and conflicts.

#### ***2) Human vulnerability to extreme environmental events and natural disasters:***

“Extreme” events in this case will be those considered to have happened suddenly, or those that may have taken time to build up, for example climate change, loss of species and alien species invasion. Events that may be recurrent, at various degrees of severity at unpredictable times will also be discussed. The question of why people in Africa are becoming more vulnerable to extreme environmental events will be investigated, and how this is related to the ability to cope.

*3) Vulnerability of small island states:*

The main vulnerability issues of small island states will be discussed, and what is being done to mitigate this vulnerability by the island states.

*4) Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and the environment:*

The impact of GMOs will be the main focus of this section, particularly examining how Africa is different from other regions in needs and opportunities inherent in the development and introduction of GMOs.

*5) Changing demography:*

The section will examine the unique dynamics of Africa's demography focusing on what is driving change, and what are the environmental causes and impacts.

*6) Non timber forest products extraction:*

This is an increasing problem, with a huge impact on the fauna and flora in the region. The section will examine the links to exploitation of forests and how commercialization of some of the non-timber products like bushmeat has in some areas led to local extinction of species.

*7) Emergence of new and re emergence of old diseases:*

The section will examine this phenomenon in the context of environmental change and the impact on human vulnerability.

*8) Ecosystem services:*

An examination of the intrinsic values of the ecosystems will be made in the context of international trade and strategic investment. For example the value of Africa's tropical rain forests in carbon trading, or strategic investments in catchment forest to improve water quality.

*9) Trade and Environment:*

An evaluation of global trade policies on Africa's environment will be made, including market access, impact of subsidies, protectionism etc. The impact of these policies will be evaluated in the context of their contribution to poverty and how this impacts the environment and human vulnerability.

*10) The effect of non-environmental agreements on environmental issues in Africa:*

This will review physical policies being advanced in the global context as well as socio-economic strategies, which are being implemented by national governments in response to global agenda. For example the issues of structural adjustment, clean development mechanisms etc. The section will use case studies as much as possible.

*11) Transboundary resources use, especially ground water:*

Cases where diminishing quality and quantity is or is likely to affect the international relations scene will be discussed in the context of regional stability and human vulnerability. This will include an analysis of how shared resources are being managed in the region, the good and bad practices that we can draw lessons from and the emerging issues that are likely to change the way things have been done.

#### ***Chapter 4: The Outlook***

This chapter will focus on strategic partnerships, policies and early warning or other systems to achieve NEPAD goals. The role of science and technology will be highlighted. Different development paths towards achieving MDGs will also be examined, based on selected scenarios. The time horizon for the outlook will be the year 2025 in order to be in harmony with the national development visions and poverty reduction strategies, which have already been developed by a number of countries in the region.

Specific attention will be paid to harmonising scenarios being developed by different sectors, for example energy, health and biodiversity.

The same scenarios as those dealt with in the first AEO will be used. The thematic areas to be focused on in scenario development will be selected by the collaborating centres.

#### ***Chapter 5: Strengthening implementation & policy***

This chapter will look at ways of strengthening implementation of activities and policy development in the context of global and emerging issues, including those described in Chapter 3. Special focus will be on the opportunities available. Some of the areas to be dealt with include the following:

- *Analyzing the costs and benefits of priority policies and how these impact on the local communities. Case studies drawn from the poverty mapping initiative of UNDP and the World Bank will be used to support the analysis.*
- *Governance and capacity building for compliance with MEAs and national policies and laws, looking at improvements that can be seen in environmental governance in recent years, and suggestions to help countries come up with stronger policies and institutions to support this. Also look at the agreements which created sub-regional organizations and see if environmental issues are adequately addressed, including structures in place to address the issues of shared resources. Where governments are implementing decentralization program such as Uganda, Namibia, Senegal etc, strategies for incorporating environmental management in the local government structures should be reviewed.*
- *The priorities for research and development that are needed to improve policy development.*
- *Steps that can be taken to improve management of environmental information to support enforcement of laws, create awareness, and educate people on the issues.*
- *Partnerships focusing on issue surrounding the empowerment of the private sector, communities and civil society to achieve NEPAD goals.*

#### ***Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations***

This will be the final chapter in the report and will draw conclusions from the information and analysis contained in other chapters. The following are some of the issues that will be highlighted in the conclusion:

- An analysis of the overall environmental performance. Are things improving or getting worse?
- Whether the responses, policy and action, are the most appropriate or things could have been done otherwise.
- The main messages coming out of the analysis.

The recommendations will be formulated with the principle that people are central in the context of sustainable development. The following will be some of the areas to consider:

- Some success stories highlighted in the analysis will be used to form a basis for recommending action.
- Specific recommendations will be made for African SIDS in the context of BPOA +10 meeting in Mauritius and its outcome.
- Recommendations on the next sets of priorities for Africa will also be made.

The recommendations will be drawn in close consultation with AMCEN and the Secretariat for NEPAD Environment Programme.

