PROGRESS REPORT ON REVIEW OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE OF NEPAD
Progress Report on Review of the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (Decision 14/3)

1. The Action Plan of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD was adopted at the Summit of the African Union in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2003 through Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.5. The action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) was prepared in response to the call by NEPAD for the development and adoption of an initiative to address Africa’s environmental challenges while at the same time combating poverty and promoting socio-economic development. The action plan was prepared through a consultative and participatory process under the leadership of AMCEN.

2. Following a decade of implementation, a review of EAP was undertaken in 2012 by the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), the African Union Commission and AMCEN with the support of UNEP. The aim of the review exercise was to assess the progress made in operationalizing the action plan, as well as to address some emerging environmental issues in Africa.

3. The review concluded that implementation of the EAP was characterized by notable achievements, and some glaring challenges. Significant progress was made in achieving the priority objectives under each of EAP’s thematic areas, and at the different levels (continental, regional and national). However, “the quantitative propensity of projects implemented differed across the thematic areas and across the different levels”. For instance, there were disproportionally more actions implemented under programmes to Combat land degradation, drought and desertification; and on Combating climate change in Africa; than in the other thematic programme areas, namely: Wetlands conservation; Alien invasive species; Trans-boundary management of natural resources; and cross-cutting issues.

4. The challenges to the implementation of EAP were categorized into four clusters, namely: challenges in institutional coordination between coordinating and implementing organizations at continental, regional and national levels; inadequate resources (financial, human and technical); unclear role and scope of Regional Economic Communities (RECs); and lack of enabling policy, regulatory and institutional framework. Overall, inadequate strategic planning affected the effectiveness of evaluating the impact of EAP during the review period.

5. A number of recommendations were also made in the review of the EAP which included facilitating regional EAP coordination effective institutional synergies with existing global and regional process for successful implementation.

6. The review recommended mainstreaming of environmental issues (especially the EAP thematic programme areas) into national developmental plans and linkages between with national development objectives. The revised EAP also addresses the gaps identified by the review exercise and places significant focus on issues such as gender and resource mobilization.
Revised and updated Environment Action Plan

7. The 14th AMCEN Session therefore requested the finalization of the update of the action plan. AMCEN Decision 14/3 called for development of key priorities, including emerging and persistent thematic areas for implementation in the updated action plan within the context of Africa’s sustainable development and poverty reduction.

8. In addition, the 14th Session of AMCEN, held in September 2012 in Arusha, Tanzania decided to develop and implement Regional Flagship Programmes (RFPs) as a means to ensure the effective implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

9. The updated EAP has captured the salient elements of RFPs, and illustrates how the RFP feeds into EAP which guides the implementation of the same while contributing to the implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes since the activities, to the extent possible, will be drawn from the EAP. There are strong linkages and complementarities between the programme areas and main issues addressed in EAP and the objectives of the RFPs. A commonality between EPA and the RFPs is that they all seek to address environmental challenges, poverty alleviation and socio-economic development simultaneously.

10. The RFP are viable channels to overcome the challenges to the implementation of the EAP. In essence, the RFPs provide a framework to accelerate the implementation of the EAP.