

**HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON
WATER FOR AGRICULTURE AND ENERGY IN AFRICA:
THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE
Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, 15-17 December 2008**

**Second Steering Committee Meeting
7 October 2008 - 17:00-19:00 hrs
Meeting Room 4
Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Addis Ababa**

Agenda of the Meeting

- 1 Introductions and welcome
- 2 Progress made with the preparation of the Conference:
 - A. Preparation of the National Investment Briefs and the Regional Workshops
 - B. Structure and Agenda of the Conference including-High Level Segment
 - C. Process of the drafting Final Declaration
 - D. Communication strategy
 - E. Others
- 3 Reporting on:
 - a. Missions conducted by the Secretariat (AfDB and AU)
 - b. Communication with National Committee, Donors, Partners, and other Authorities
 - c. The Outcome of the meeting of the National Committee and the liaison with the Conference Secretariat
- 4 Discussion and guidance on:
 - i) The process of finalizing the Briefs, partners input and governments endorsement
 - ii) The Roundtable Discussions
 - iii) The Parallel Events
 - iv) The Technology Fair
- 5 Any other business

Meeting Report

The Second Steering Committee Meeting of the Conference on Water for Agriculture and Energy in Africa: The Challenges of Climate Change”, took place at UNECA Headquarters in Addis Ababa on 7th October at 17:00-19:00 hrs in the margin of the joint Meetings of the African Ministers’ Council On Water (AMCOW), African Development Bank (ADB), UN Water: Africa and partners on “Carrying forward the Sharm El Sheikh Declaration and Commitments on Water and Sanitation (adopted by the African Union Summit, Egypt, June 2008)”.

The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr Bruno Jean-Richard Itoua, the Minister for Energy and Water of the Republic of the Congo and the President of AMCOW and H.E. Ambassador Abdalla Zaied, the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to FAO and the United Nations Agencies in Rome. The list of the participants of the Steering Committee is enclosed.

In the opening of the meeting, H.E. Mr Itoua expressed his appreciation to the organizers and stated the AMCOW’s full support to the Conference and its preparation process as was presented by Mr Koohafkan, the Executive Secretary of the Conference, earlier at the Plenary of the AMCOW, ADB, and UN-Water-Africa joint meetings. He regretted that H.E. Mr Abu Baker Al-Mabrouk Al-Mansouri, Secretary of the General People’s Committee of the Authority for Agriculture, Animal Wealth and Marine Resources of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, could not attend the meeting and thanked the AU, ECA, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Secretariat for inviting him to Co-Chair the Second Steering Committee meeting of the Sirte Conference.

An introductory speech was given by the Commissioner of the African Union, Ms Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, reaffirming the commitment of the African Union to the preparation of the Conference. The progress made in the preparation of the National Investment Briefs was seen as fundamental and supportive to the decisions made by the African Heads of State in Sharm El Sheikh meeting. She pointed out, that the issues of adaptation to climate change, transboundary waters, capacity development and institutional advocacy are proposed to be integral component of the thematic focus of the Conference.

A short presentation by Mr Koohafkan, the Executive Secretary of the Conference, illustrated the progress made in the preparation of the Conference, particularly concentrating on the National Investment Briefs, the Regional Consultative Process to be conducted through the five Regional Workshops and on the draft Programme of the Conference. The related Power Point presentation by Mr Koohafkan is attached to this report.

The Chair then proposed to discuss the agenda of the meeting which was commonly endorsed by the members of the committee.

The first item considered by the plenum was the preparation process of the National Investment Briefs. The 53 Briefs have been prepared based on the information gathered on water, agriculture and energy. All the Briefs, compiled in close collaboration with the national governments, will have to be revised, finalized and endorsed by the governments. This process has already started and some of the Briefs have already been sent to the concerned national authorities seeking their revision and endorsement. Another occasion for the final adoption of the National Investment Briefs will be the Regional Workshops.

The President of AMCOW underlined the difficulties that will be faced in the process to endorse the National Investment Briefs by governments having three or four ministers involved in the consultations with the uncertainty of the leadership of the process. Therefore, only one ministry

should take the lead of the process, provided that close consultation with all the ministries involved will be maintained. In this respect, the **AMCOW Chair proposed to formally give the leadership to the Ministers of Water Resources, offering to send a formal letter to the Ministers members of AMCOW** inviting them to play this crucial role.

The involvement of the Ministers of Finance was proposed but not endorsed by the members of the Steering Committee due to the considerable number of ministries already involved and to the fact that each ministry would be perfectly aware of the financial needs and projected plans and strategies in the fields under its domain.

The structure of the five Regional Workshops was illustrated and endorsed by the plenum: a presentation will set the scene and a moderator will then guide the discussion amongst participants. A Regional overview will then be produced, aggregating the inputs provided in the National Investment Briefs and as the result of discussions.

The Programme of the Conference was then discussed. The AU Commissioner pointed out that the AU is planning to organize a High-Level meeting on rising food prices that would fall the same time as the Sirte Conference and expressed interest, as discussed with the Director General of FAO, to present this theme and the outcomes of the meeting at the Sirte Conference. It was, however, underlined that if such an initiative and its outcomes had to be reflected in the Final Declaration and Action Plan of the Sirte Conference, it should have been planned well in advance. **A parallel event on rising food prices during the Sirte Conference seemed to be a solution. In such case the promotional materials and the presentation note should reflect the proposed event on rising food prices.**

The process of drafting the Final Declaration was then discussed. FAO proposed the establishment of a Drafting Committee which could work prior and in parallel with the main sessions of the Conference in order to finalize the Declaration. It was decided to **communicate through an e-mail Conference an early version of the Declaration to all the members of the Steering Committee in order to receive comments and further inputs.** The enhanced version should then be **officially presented and revised at the Third Steering Committee meeting.** The Minister of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the co-conveners could convene a meeting of the “friends of the chair” to work out the Final draft Declaration.

The Conference communication strategy was discussed and some of the promotional materials already produced were distributed amongst the members and the exposure to the media has been done and can be found on the Conference Website. It was indicated that a direct link between the Sirte Conference Secretariat and AMCOW is necessary and the FAO Representatives in countries could also act as intermediaries to meet with Ministers and promote the Conference and its preparation. **A request by the AU Commissioner was made to have a copy of the communication strategy.** It was also pointed out that the **presence of journalists at Sirte** will be fundamental and should be adequately ensured by the local authorities.

The plenum agreed on the proposed structure for the **Roundtable Discussions:**

- A roundtable discussion on “saving Lake Chad” to be coordinated by the Lake Chad Basin Commission with the support of Sirte Conference Secretariat;
- A roundtable discussion on “partnership for financing water for agriculture and energy in Africa” to be coordinated by African Development Bank with the support of Sirte Conference Secretariat.

It was found insufficient to limit the space for “partnership agreements” to one of the roundtables and it was proposed to **include other opportunities for bilateral or multilateral partnership agreements amongst partners, donors, and private sector during the Conference.**

The agenda item on Water Technology Fair was then discussed. The importance of presenting, besides advanced developed countries technologies for large scale water control, local small or micro scale irrigation technologies was stressed. It was, therefore, proposed to **invite also representatives from developing countries that deal with technologies - particularly small-scale and low-cost - in the water sector**. It was proposed to **involve CREPA (Burkina Faso)** that operates in the sector of low-cost water technologies in several countries of Africa.

Other organizational matters were also discussed as follows:

- The importance of **involving all stakeholders, including members of the civil society and the private sector** was highlighted.
- The need to **clarify the list of invitees to the various sessions of the Conference**.
- Importance of the UN-Water Africa in the Conference, particularly in its follow-up activities was highlighted.
- **The logo of AMCOW** should appear in all the promotional materials of the Conference.

Mr Koohafkan, the Executive Secretary of the Conference, reported that several meetings with the representatives of Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and other partners have been held and countries have been involved in the preparation of the Briefs and officially invited to attend the Conference. **Soon, letters of invitation from the Leader of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya will be sent to African Heads of State**. A question by the AU Commissioner was made on whether the letters of invitation to the Heads of State have been already sent by the Leader of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya or not. Mr Zaied, the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to FAO and the United Nations Agencies in Rome, did not specify, instead, stressed that invitations are on their way.

The African Union accepted to send letters to the Ministers of the African countries reinforcing the invitation already sent by the Director General of FAO.

Mr Zaied, the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to FAO and the United Nations Agencies in Rome, finally concluded reaffirming the enthusiastic support of the Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the Sirte Conference and proposed to hold the next **Steering Committee meeting in Tripoli around mid-November 2008**.