

**COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND
SOUTHERN AFRICA**



**NAIROBI DECLARATION ON
CLIMATE CHANGE
OF THE
MEETING OF THE
COMESA MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE AND
ENVIRONMENT HELD IN
NAIROBI, KENYA**

7 NOVEMBER, 2008

WE, the COMESA Ministers of Agriculture and Environment meeting in Nairobi, Kenya on 7th November 2008, to deliberate on how the region should address challenges of Climatic Change;

RECALLING the decision of the last COMESA Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture held in March 2008 in Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles on the need for the member States to work closely with the COMESA Secretariat and development partners in the implementation of the Climate Change initiative and, in particular, on climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives;

RECOGNIZING that, in the case of Africa, agricultural practices are intrinsically connected with the effort to reduce deforestation, encourage forest conservation and enhance forest carbon stocks through sustainable management;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING the need for research and data collection to ensure the accurate accounting of climate benefits from sustainable agriculture and forestry;

RECALLING the objective of the UNFCCC to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, ensure that food production is not threatened, and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner;¹

FURTHER RECALLING that specific needs and special circumstances of developing country Parties, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change should be given full consideration²;

RECOGNIZING the commitment of Parties to promote sustainable agriculture and other land uses, to promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of all greenhouse gases

¹ UNFCCC Article 2

² UNFCCC Article 3.2

not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, including biomass, forests and oceans as well as other terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems;³

APPRECIATING the support which Norway, the United States of America, Sweden, the United Kingdom, World Wide Fund, Rockefeller Foundation, Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, and other partners are providing in the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) and the Environmental Action Plan (EAP) in the Southern and Eastern African region;

DO HEREBY DECLARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Advocate the expansion of eligible categories to benefit from carbon credits and other international incentives in the post-2012 treaty to include sustainable land management, including sustainable agriculture, sustainable forest management, afforestation and reforestation, reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, thereby enabling “greener agriculture” and promote agricultural productivity in a way that improves resilience and adaptation to climate change.
2. Request Heads of State of COMESA countries and other prominent and eminent personalities to promote the African Biocarbon Initiative by championing it throughout Africa, the international fora and in leading carbon emission markets;
3. Engage regional and international organizations to assist in developing methodologies for measuring and monitoring carbon sequestration in agricultural and agroforestry systems which are simple enough to allow wide participation in the carbon trading business by communities in the region while at the same time accounting methods should be applied conservatively to ensure that claimed benefits are real;

³ UNFCCC Article 4.1(d)

4. Urge the international community to provide additional resources to African countries to build capacity to participate in bio-carbon markets and thus lay the foundation for successful adaptation to climate change;
5. Member States should support establishment of financial mechanisms based on a mix of market and non-market based approaches that facilitate the access of local communities to the adopted mechanisms. Carbon markets and other financial mechanisms should aim to provide benefits to the rural poor and vulnerable communities;
6. COMESA, EAC and SADC working with the regional experts should further the knowledge about carbon sequestration in above and below-ground biomass of agricultural systems;
7. Member States should implement activities that enhance the carbon storage capacity of or reduce further emissions from agricultural and forest ecosystems and implement early, quick win activities such as Conservation Farming, Afforestation and improved rangeland management;.
8. COMESA shall engage with all regional economic communities and other relevant organisations in Africa, specifically with the Congo Basin Initiative members, through the Commission of Forest Ministers of Central Africa (COMIFAC), in developing a coordinated policy position inclusive of the full spectrum of bio-carbon linking conservation agriculture, afforestation and reforestation, and reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation;
9. Direct COMESA Secretariat to communicate this initiative and declaration to the Africa Union Commission and AMCEN for their urgent consideration, including their meeting in Algiers;

10. Urge member States and development partners to work in collaboration with the COMESA Secretariat to implement the decisions of this Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change.

Adopted, this 7th day of November, 2008, in Nairobi, Kenya