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**Third Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on
Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment**

21-25 October 2019

Addis Ababa

ETHIOPIA

STC3/ARDWE/MIN

REPORT

24-25 October 2019

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The Ministerial Segment of the Third Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (herein referred to as 'the STC') took place at the African Union Head Quarter in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 24-25 October 2019.

B. PARTICIPATION

2. Delegates from the following Member States participated in the STC: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Saharawi Republic, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

C. OPENING SESSION

3. The Opening Session was presided over by the Chair of the 2017 Bureau H.E Ouedraogo Salifou, Minister of Agriculture of Burkina Faso.

D. OBJECTIVES OF THE STC MEETING

4. The objective of the Third Ordinary Session of the STC was to review progress made in the implementation of previous AU and STC Decisions, provide policy guidance, adopt reports, frameworks and programmes, as well as recommendations that will be presented for consideration by the Executive Council of the African Union.

E. OPENING STATEMENTS

5. Her Excellency, **Amb. Josefa Sacko**, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, recalled that Specialized Technical Committees (STC) are an important organ of the African Union. The Commissioner called for the operation modalities of the sectoral committees to be developed and for clear guidance given in order to ensure that the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment functions optimally and makes the desired impact. Furthermore, Commissioner highlighted the key achievements of the Department reflected in various programmes, strategies, policies and action plans developed and or being implemented in agriculture, agricultural mechanization, Agro-Parks, Agribusiness, Land, Value Chain Development, Food Safety, Post-Harvest, Water and Sanitation, Forestry, Climate Services, Meteorology, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Climate Change. On the Inaugural Biennial Review (BR) Report and the African Agricultural Transformation Scorecard (AATS) endorsed during the 2017 STC meeting, Commissioner informed the meeting that it was presented to the African Union Assembly in January 2018 with great success. Likewise, the Second Biennial Review Report to be endorsed by the 3rd STC meeting was also to be

presented to the AU Assembly in February 2020. Regarding the on-going restructuring of the African Union Commission, Commissioner informed the 3rd STC that her department has been given an expanded mandate of overseeing Blue Economy in Africa. To this end, a Blue-print for Africa's Blue Economy had been formulated for consideration by the STC. In conclusion, she underscored the key challenges confronting Africa agriculture such as high population growth, rapid urbanization, climate change, changing food systems and conflicts, which justified the need to double food production in order to meet the increasing demand.

6. The representative of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Mrs. Firehwot Mekuria, the Deputy Commissioner of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change Commission, stated that the policy organs of the African Union considered mainstreaming of Ministerial Conferences in 2011 and the outcome is the Specialized Technical Committee meeting that was being held. She informed the meeting that Ethiopia had been involved in crafting sustainable development programmes. At the country level, they have been reviewing programmes, strategies and policies to address emerging challenges. Ethiopia has also been implementing the CAADP and the Malabo Commitments with considerable efforts, as well as the United Nation Framework Conventions on Climate Change. In conclusion, she wished the most rewarding outcome for the meeting.
7. The outgoing Chair of the 2nd STC, H.E. **Ouedraogo Salifou**, Minister of Agriculture of Burkina Faso welcomed delegates to the 3rd STC meeting. He then thanked the host government and the Commission for the warm hospitality accorded to all delegates. The Minister reported that the Burkina Faso chairmanship of the STC prioritised efforts to ensure implementation and efficient follow up of AU decisions and recommendations. In this regard, Burkina Faso in its capacity as Chair of the STC convened a Bureau meeting in August 2018 to take stock of the status of implementation of STC Decisions. In conclusion, Minister thanked, on behalf of the Government of Burkina Faso, the African Union Commission for having selected the town of Bobo-Dioulasso as the host for the forum on Reducing the Drudgery of Rural Women in Agriculture. He then thanked H.E. Commissioner Sacko for the successful ceremony to mark the International Day of Rural Women, which took place on 14-15 October in Bobo-Dioulasso. Furthermore, the Minister also reported that a monument has been put up at the AU Square in Bobo-Dioulasso to symbolize the AU's commitment to intensify the mechanization of African Agriculture
8. A short video on the Celebrations International Day of Rural Women which took place on 14-15 October 2019 in Bobo-Dioulasso was shown.

F. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU

9. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure governing STCs, the meeting elected the following Members of the Bureau:

Chair:	South Africa (Southern Africa)
1st Vice Chair:	Egypt (Northern Africa)
2nd Vice Chair:	South Sudan (Eastern Africa)

3rd Vice Chair: Chad (Central Africa)
Rapporteur: Burkina Faso (Western Africa)

10. On handing over to the new Bureau, the Outgoing Chair expressed appreciation to the members of the STC for having given an opportunity to Burkina Faso to serve for two years and wished the incoming bureau well in discharging their duties. The outgoing chair reaffirmed their commitment to provide support to the new Bureau.
11. Following her election as the Chair of the Bureau of the STC, H.E **Angela Thoko Didiza**, the South African Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development addressed the STC. In her remarks, the Minister stressed the need to enhance the capacity of the STC and adherence to the STC's statutory requirements. She further stated that the incoming Bureau would build on the work carried out by the STC since its inception. In conclusion, the Minister highlighted climate change and food insecurity as key challenges affecting the continent and called for redoubling of efforts in the implementation of the decisions of the STC.

G. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE STC

12. The meeting adopted the agenda of the STC with amendments.

PRESENTATION AND DELIBERATIONS

H. REPORT OF THE EXPERTS AND SENIOR OFFICIALS

13. The report of the Experts and Senior Officials was presented by the Chair of the Experts Session of the STC, **Mr. Mooketsa Ramasodi**, Deputy Director General, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, South Africa.

On the Report of the Experts and Senior Officials, the STC:

ENDORSED the report with amendments.

I. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

14. In the Ministerial Statements, Member States expressed appreciation to the Commission for convening the STC session, which cuts across several important sectors of their countries.

15. Most of the countries have **prioritized** agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, livestock and rural development in their national developmental plans. They also highlighted the important role played by agriculture in providing employment, contribution to poverty reduction, food security and socio-economic development, and as a main generator of foreign exchange for some countries and a driver of the industrial sector.

16. On **challenges**, Member States highlighted climate change as one of the threats to agriculture, livestock and biodiversity. Coastal erosion and shrinking of lakes such

as the Lake Chad were also attributed to climate change. Some countries highlighted prolonged drought and water scarcity impacting not only agriculture but also a source of conflict especially between farmers and pastoralists. Climate related disasters such as floods were highlighted as key challenges causing loss of lives, destruction of livelihoods and economic gains. In the fisheries sector overfishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) was highlighted a major concern.

17. Member States shared efforts and **responses** that their respective Governments were undertaking to address some of the challenges. These included programmes, policy frameworks and legislations such as:- national climate change policies and legislations; legal frameworks for preventing IUU; national strategies for the development of blue economy; community conservancy programmes for improved livelihoods and wildlife populations; laws on conservation of ecologically sensitive areas, increasing tree and forest cover through sustainable forest management frameworks; programmes for adaptation and building the resilience of farmers to climate and economic shocks including policies for climate smart agriculture; modernization of irrigation systems to more water efficient systems, policies to revitalize agriculture livestock and fisheries; value chain development; laws on post-harvest loss management, land and animal health; policies on fertilizers, veterinary medicine and food safety; legislation to curb land-grabbing and provision of land title deeds and programmes for revitalizing the rural areas.

18. Some of the **enablers** for policy implementation of the above mentioned frameworks included:- enhanced coordination through inter-ministerial coordination committees; regional collaboration; public-private partnerships; South-South collaboration and sharing of experiences and knowledge, development of gender and youth inclusive agriculture programmes; promotion of youth and women empowerment programmes in agriculture; and Early warning systems for weather.

19. On the **functioning of the STC**, Member States called for the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture to be well resourced to effectively carry out its functions. It was also proposed that self-financing ministerial conferences such as AMCEN, AMCOMET and AMCOW to be given consideration to serve as support mechanisms of the STC so that impactful results can be achieved in the sectors that they cover.

20. In conclusion Member States reaffirmed their **commitment** to the implementation of Africa's Agenda 2063, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

J. IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS OF THE 1ST AND 2ND STC ON ARDWE

21. The Director of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA) of the African Union Commission, Dr. Godfrey Bahigwa, gave a summarized presentation on the progress accomplished over the last four years (1st STC and 2nd STC). He informed the meeting that 21 decisions were taken at the 1st STC in October 2015, out of which implementation of 11 decisions had been completed (52 percent) and 10 are on-going. On the other hand, 24 decisions were made during the 2nd STC in October 2017, out which implementation of 14 had been completed (58 percent) and

10 are on-going. Dr. Bahiigwa presented the key achievements made by the department over the last 4 years and highlighted the challenges faced during the period under review. These challenges include insufficient financial resources and inadequate human resources.

On the report of the implementation of previous decisions and recommendations, the STC:

22. **ADOPTED** the report of the implementation of previous decisions and recommendations;

23 **SUPPORTED** the need to advocate for the increase of DREA's annual budget ceiling; and

24. **REQUESTED** the Commission to carry out an impact assessment of its programmes in the area of Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment.

K. RE-CONFIGURATION OF SECTORAL COMMITTEES OF MINISTERS

25. The 3rd STC recalled that in 2015, the 1st STC on ARDWE took a resolution to create Ministerial Sectoral Committees, while phasing out the Ministerial Conferences in line with the decision of the AU Assembly (Assembly/AU/Dec.526(XXIII) that abolished ministerial conferences.

26. The Ministerial Sectoral Committees established by the first STC in 2015 are:

- Agriculture, Rural Development, Livestock and Fisheries;
- Environment and Natural Resources;
- Meteorology, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction;
- Water and Sanitation; and
- Fauna and Flora.

27. The Commission presented the draft terms of reference for the above mentioned sectoral committees to the 3rd STC.

On Re-Configuration of Ministerial Sectoral Committees, the STC:

28. **AGREED** that existing Ministerial Conferences be considered as support mechanisms for the STC; and

29. **DECIDED** to strengthen the STC Secretariat by recruiting additional staff for the Department;

K PRESENTATION ON THE SECOND BIENNIAL REPORT AND COUNTRY SCORECARD

30. Dr. Godfrey Bahigwa, Director of DREA presented the Second CAADP Biennial Review Report and Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard

The 2019 CAADP Biennial Review Report

The presentation highlighted that the report was the second on the implementation of the CAADP Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods and would be presented to the African Union Assembly in February 2020. The presentation indicated that 49 Member States reported in 2019 while 6 did not report. These include Algeria, Comoros, Egypt, Sao Tome and Principe, Libya and Saharawi Arab Republic. Forty-seven (47) indicators were tracked and country progress was assessed based on the 2019 benchmark of **6.66 out of 10**. The report revealed that only four countries (Rwanda, Morocco, Mali and Ghana) were on track towards achieving the Malabo Commitments by 2025. Forty-five (45) countries were not on track, but out of these 36 countries made positive progress between 2017 and 2019.

31. The Director also presented two biennial review communication tools meant to improve understanding and utilization of the findings in the report by Member States and Regional Economic Communities. The tools are the CAADP Biennial Review Dashboard: 2019 Highlight Indicators, and the CAADP Biennial Review Toolkit. The Dashboard has 22 highlight indicators across the seven Malabo commitments and allows countries to compare their performance against their peers and is meant to stimulate debate and cross-country lesson-learning. The toolkit, on the other hand, is an online interactive platform for the biennial review report that gives the user more flexibility to compare performance by region, country or indicators.

32. The presentation had four key *calls for action* to member states and these include (i) Integrate the Malabo Commitments into well designed National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIPS) (ii) Build capacity for evidence-based agricultural policy-making and programming (iii) Prioritize initiatives to end hunger, and (iv) Accelerate progress towards building the climate resilience of Africa's food systems. He also informed the meeting that three countries, namely Rwanda, Morocco and Mali would be recognized and given awards during the AU Assembly in February 2020 in line with the Malabo Declaration that called for recognizing, through awards, the best performers.

On The 2019 CAADP Biennial Review Report, the STC:-

33. ENDORSED the 2019 CAADP Biennial Review Report and its Africa Agriculture Transformation Scorecard;

34. AGREED that the Report will not be opened to include new submissions of country data or reports;

35. URGED Member States to commit to meeting deadlines for submitting data and country biennial review reports; and

36. **REQUESTED** the Bureau and AUC to hold consultations with regional economic communities (RECs) on the two communication and advocacy tools (the CAADP Biennial Review Dashboard and the CAADP Biennial Review Toolkit) to generate broader consensus and ownership.

Africa Biennial Report on Disaster Risk Reduction:

37. A presentation on the Africa Biennial Report on Disaster Risk Reduction was made by Mr. Harsen Nyambe Nyambe, Head of Environment Division. The Africa Biennial report provides a status on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030 and the Africa Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction.

38. The outcome of the report will be used to:- Increase knowledge, inform, lobby and enhance understanding of disaster risks to inform DRR policy and programmes; Track progress against targets and indicators and provide future benchmark against which DRR progress can be measured; Identify best practices to share learning among member states; Inform development of DRR measures, including capacity development for future reporting.

39. Key challenges include:- difficulties to generate and report disaster losses and other data by member States; Losses are recorded across sectors with very little coordination; Member States are committed to DRR funding but multi-sectoral nature makes reporting very problematic (money in sectors); Inadequate technical expertise (in DRR); and institutional weaknesses in data management, especially within national DRR structures; Limited and weak reporting on the Sendai Framework Monitor (and DesInventar).

On the Africa Biennial Report on Disaster Risk Reduction; the STC:

40. **WELCOMED** the development of inaugural Biennial Report on Disaster Risk Reduction;

41. **APPLAUDED** the RECs and Member States for availing data for the Africa Biennial Report on Disaster Risk Reduction;

42. **ENDORSED** the inaugural Biennial Report on Disaster Risk Reduction;

43. **REQUESTED** the AU member states who have not submitted their data to do so by 10th November 2019;

44. **ENTRUSTED** the Secretariat with finalization of the report once the data from missing countries is received;

45. **REQUESTED** Member States to respect deadlines for future submissions and assignments;

46. REQUESTED AUC, RECs and MS to finalize and prepare the report for launching at the AU Summit in February 2020;

47. URGED the AUC to work with RECs, AU agencies, UNDRR and partners to strengthen capacity of member states in data collection and analysis on DRR;

48. URGED RECs, Member States and partners to continue supporting the AUC in the development of subsequent Biennial Reports; and

49. COMMENDED the European Union for providing financial support for the development of the Africa Biennial Report on Disaster Risk Reduction through Africa Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Secretariat.

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Draft Strategy for Environment, Climate Change, Water and Land Management Division (ECCWLM) 2019-2023

50. This Strategy is anchored on Agenda 2063 *“an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena”*. It is to facilitate implementation of a component of Agenda 2063 over 5 years (i.e 2018-2023) – as per the Medium Term Plan of the African Union. Among the key milestones to be achieved in 2023 are the following:

- Sustainable Forest Management Framework endorsed;
- Tools and Guidelines on integration of Biodiversity adopted;
- Illegal exploitation and trade in wildlife and forest resources reduced by 10%;
- Reduced open defecation;
- Increased usage of wastewater through recycling and reuse;
- Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology (Climate Services and Weather) adopted;
- Regular production of continental climate outlook;
- Natural Hazards Early Warning Systems (EWS) into the existing Continental Situation Room;
- overarching Strategy on Environmental Issues / African Environmental Charter;
- Circular economy framework in place and single use plastics banned in 40% of African countries;
- African Drought Strategy adopted;
- 20% of pledged land restored by Member States with support of AUC and Partners;
- Africa’s voice in multilateral environmental agreements strengthened; and
- Production of biennial reports institutionalised for all sub-sectors.

On the Draft Strategy for ECCWLM Division, the STC:

51. TOOK NOTE of the Strategy; and

52. APPEALED to Member States and Partners to support the implementation of this strategy in order to realise the goals of Agenda 2063.

Disaster Risk Reduction

53. Disasters have been increasing over the past 20 years in Africa. The underlying factors that create vulnerability are poverty and under development, make Africa one of the most vulnerable to natural hazards. To better implement the frameworks, there is a need to better strengthen risk knowledge and governance.

Africa Regional Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction

54. The Africa Regional Platform brings together African Ministers responsible for Disaster Risk Reduction. They meet biennially to provide guidance on Disaster Risk Reduction agenda in Africa. The Ministerial meeting also provides roadmap on Africa positions to the Global discussion on DRR. The Ministers met on 13 October 2018, in Tunis, Tunisia where they adopted the Tunis Declaration on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction.

On the Africa Regional Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction the STC:

55. ADOPTED the Tunis Declaration on accelerating the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction;

56. URGED AUC to accelerate establishment of continental system for multi-hazard, impact-based and inclusive early warning and preparedness for natural hazards;

57. CALLED UPON development partners to support implementation of the Tunis Declaration and Africa Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030; and

58. CONGRATULATED the Government of Tunisia for successfully hosting the Africa Regional Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Establishment of an African Centre of Excellence for Disaster Risk Reduction

59. The need for the centre stemmed from growing the threats of natural hazards. The increase in frequency and intensity of disasters call for strong Disaster Risk Management institutions on the continent to mitigate, prevent and build resilience of African States to natural hazards. The centre shall contribute to strengthening of the disaster risk reduction institutions of RECs and Member States. Among others. The centre shall undertake inter-disciplinary policy and applied research in disaster risk reduction.

60. The centre is planned to be operational in 2022. The cost of running the centre is to be divided among the hosting country and the AU Commission. The Commission is to contribute US\$ 750,000 for operationalization of the centre in the first year. The amount will cover cost of five (5) staff at the initial stage, hosting arrangements, and

equipment. Once the centre becomes fully operational, in addition to cost related to the venue, which is to be covered by the hosting member states, the average annual cost of the centre is estimated at USD 7,000,000, including the programme and operation cost. The host government is to provide the venue and other costs as per AU hosting obligations.

On the Establishment of an African Centre of Excellence for Disaster Risk Reduction the STC made the following recommendations: -

61. NOTED the report and **REQUESTED** the Commission to present a detailed roadmap at their next meeting.

Report on Africa Risk Capacity

62. The Africa Risk Capacity (ARC) is a specialised agency of the African Union, established in 2012 and is governed by a Conference of the Parties, a Governing Board and a Secretariat. ARC was established by the AU to help Member States to improve their capacities to better plan, prepare and respond to extreme weather events and natural disasters. The ARC Agency's first financial affiliate, ARC Insurance Company Limited, was established in early 2014 hosted by Bermuda.

63. ARC brings together three critical elements to create a powerful value proposition for it Members and partners: (1) Early Warning: *Africa RiskView* (2) Preparedness: Contingency Planning; (3) Insurance: Index-based insurance and risk pooling; and (4) Accountability: Evaluation of the response delivery. To date 33 countries have signed the ARC Treaty and eight have ratified.

64. Key challenges include:- Difficulties for Government to keep up with the payment of the premiums; high turnover in governments; limited regulatory framework for DRR in the countries; limited insurance culture in member states; varying understanding of parametric insurance by member states policy makers; Competition with other instruments supported by some key partners; ratification by Member States.

On the Report on Africa Risk Capacity, the STC:

65. REQUESTED the African Risk Capacity to report regularly to the STC; and

66. ENCOURAGED Member States to sign and ratify the ARC Treaty and to actively participate in the ARC risk pool.

Meteorology

The Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) Programme and Meteorology

67. Key achievements highlighted in the report included the support provided to member states on the development of their National Strategic and Action Plans, review of the Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology (Weather and Climate Services), mobilization of resources from the European Union for the implementation of the Climate Services Program in Africa, and the need for National Meteorological and

Hydrological Services (NMHSs) to prepare for transition to the use of Meteosat Third Generation Satellites meteorological products and data.

On the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) Programme and Meteorology the STC:

68. URGED member States to expedite the development and implementation of their National Strategic and Action Plans on Meteorology;

69. REQUESTED the AU Commission in collaboration with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to facilitate accelerated Member States' preparedness for transition from the use of products from the Meteosat Second Generation (MSG) to the Meteosat Third Generation (MTG) Satellites;

70. URGED the AU Commission, RECs, and Member States, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to establish/strengthen sector-specific climate services user interface platforms (e.g. climate-agriculture, climate-disaster risk reduction, climate-forestry, climate-health, climate-water, etc.) in order to ensure generation of relevant, tailored, and timely climate information services; and

71. ENCOURAGED Member States to provide the legislative framework for National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) and financial resources to support the delivery of timely and accurate early warning, weather and climate services.

Fourth Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET)

72. The 4th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), was held in Cairo, Egypt on 21 February 2019 at the kind invitation of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the current Chair of AMCOMET.

73. The Ministers adopted a Declaration which, among others, notes with concern the findings of the World Economic Forum 2019 Global Risk Report which states that the top three global risks the world is facing are weather, climate and water related. It further recognizes the central role of observational data in enabling the generation of fit-for-purpose weather and climate products and services, and the need to improve the acquisition of data.

On the Fourth Session of AMCOMET the STC:-

74. COMMENDED the Government and People of the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting the 4th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology;

75. APPLAUDED the African ministers responsible for meteorology for their commitment to the development of meteorology and its applications for socio-economic benefits in Africa; and

76. ENDORSED the Cairo Ministerial Declaration on Meteorology.

Adopting the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD) as a Technical Arm of the AUC on Weather and Climate

77. The AMCOMET Ministers recognized the pan-African role which ACMAD plays in the generation and delivery of focused high-resolution climate data as well as training and capacity development for enhanced decision making by member States on weather and climate action. The Ministers then requested the AMCOMET Secretariat, in collaboration with the AUC and WMO, to prepare the necessary documentation outlining the financial, legal and structural implications of adopting ACMAD as a technical arm of the AU for meteorological and climate issues in order to enable AU organs to make an informed decision on the matter.

78. An assessment was conducted and it concluded that there would be no structural, financial, or legal implications to the Commission as the centre will remain autonomous and has sufficient financial resources which it gets from member States and partners. An agreement governing the relationship between the AUC and ACMAD would further detail and clarify the legal issues.

On Adopting the ACMAD as a Technical Arm of the AUC on Weather and Climate the STC:

79. REFERRED the matter to the Bureau of the 3rd STC for appropriate recommendations.

Report on Climate Change

80. It is now widely accepted that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, a burden to all countries, most in particular the developing countries. In October 2018, the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways. Among its findings, the report notes that we are already seeing the consequences of 1 °C of global warming through more extreme weather and rising sea levels among other changes. The report concludes that Africa will continue to experience increased temperatures and variable rainfall with yield losses of staple crops. The challenge facing countries in the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Nationally Determined Contributions is means of implementation – Technology, Capacity Building and Finance.

On the Climate Change Report, the STC:

81. ENCOURAGED Member States to invest in innovative blended finance as a vehicle for green development;

82. URGED countries to adopt measures that encourage the private sector to pursue pro-climate investments;

83. CALLED UPON the Commission to go beyond climate change negotiations and support Member States in the implementation of NDCs, climate change adaptation and mitigation;

84. REQUESTED the Commission to continue to support regional and continental initiatives on climate change, including the Climate Commissions established at

COP22, (Congo Basin Climate Commission, Sahel Climate Commission and the Small Islands Commission), as well as the Africa Adaptation Initiative (AAI) and the Adaptation to African Agriculture (AAA Initiative);

85. INVITED Member States to the Africa Day side event tentatively scheduled for 10 December 2019 on the margins of the COP25; and

86. CALLED UPON Member States to include youth in country delegations to Climate Conferences, including at the COP25 sessions.

Reports on Environment and Natural Resources

Report on Plastic Waste

87. Plastics have valuable uses, however they are toxic when consumed. It is estimated that plastics account for about 10 percent of the global total waste that humans generate as modern lifestyles prefer easily disposable products such as bottles of water, plastic bags during shopping in the markets or super stores. The accumulation of plastic products has led to increasing amounts of environmental pollution around the world, including Africa. Plastic material is composed of major toxic pollutants that have the potential to cause pollution in the environment, in the form of air pollution, water and land pollution, because it is not biodegradable.

88. The Commission organized a High Level side event for African First Ladies on 10 February 2019 on the margins of the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Governments in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the Theme: '**Banning Plastics Towards A Pollution Free Africa Campaign**' the High-level side event provided a space for Advocacy and increased awareness on impacts of Plastics in Africa; share experiences on strategies and measures being undertaken at national level to address the menace posed by plastics and to deliberate on modalities and partnership for taking the process forward.

On Plastic Waste, the STC:

89. CONGRATULATED the African First Ladies from Angola; Botswana; Congo; Gabon; Gambia; Ghana; and Kenya for acceptance to be Champions on 'Banning Single Use Plastics Towards a Pollution Free Africa Campaign'; -

90. COMMENDED the efforts of the Commission and UNEP for the organization of the two High-level side events on banning of single use plastics in Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Yokohama, Japan; and

91. REQUESTED the Commission to broaden the scope of this work and focus on circular economy due to its environmental and economic benefits.

Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural resources

92. Natural Resources are critical for the realization of the aspirations of Agenda 2063 and including financing our development in Africa. Sustainable management of these resources is also a pre-requisite for sustainable development as they are the backbone of most economies on the continent. It is for this reason that on September 15, 1968, the Organisation of African Unity recognized the need to protect and conserve natural resources adopted in Algiers. This is what gave birth to the Revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources was adopted on 11 July 2003 in Maputo, Mozambique. The Convention aims to: Enhance environmental protection; Foster the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources; and harmonise and coordinate policies in these fields. The convention entered into force on 23 July 2016. Since its signature on 17 July 2018, it has received 44 of ratifications.

On the revised African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural resources, the STC: -

93. REQUESTED the Commission to collaborate with RECs and Member States to convene the First Conference of the Parties (COP 1) of the Maputo Convention;

94. URGED Member States to indicate interest to host COP 1; and

95. ENCOURAGED the Commission and Partners to mobilize resources and support the convening of COP 1 of Maputo Convention.

Report on the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative

96. The report on the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative highlighted key achievements which included the expansion of the Initiative to Southern African countries and the involvement of civil society and the private sector in the implementation of the initiative. The STC was also informed about the on-going impact study of the Great Green Wall after 10 years of implementation. Furthermore, the report also highlighted the need for land restoration including efforts of the Afra100 and other initiatives.

On the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative, the STC made the following recommendations: -

97. ENCOURAGED Member States to support Sustainable Land Management and Restoration initiatives

98. REQUESTED the AUC and Partners to allocate more resources to enhance the implementation of projects under this initiative.

Report on the Windhoek Declaration on Enhancing Resilience to Drought and the Strategic Framework for Drought risk Management and enhancing Resilience in Africa

99. This Strategic Framework for Drought Risk Management and Enhancing Resilience in Africa, aims to enable the continent to become Drought Resilient and Prepared at the national level guided by the following six elements:

- Drought policy and governance for Drought Risk Management;
- Drought monitoring and early warning;
- Drought vulnerability and impact assessment;
- Drought mitigation, preparedness, and response;
- Knowledge management and drought awareness; and
- Reducing underlying factors of drought risk.

100. CONGRATULATED the Government of the Republic of Namibia, the AU Commission and the Secretariat of the UNCCD for the African Drought Framework;

101. ENDORSED the Windhoek Declaration on Enhancing Resilience to Drought and the Strategic Framework for Drought Risk Management and Enhancing Resilience in Africa; and

102. REQUESTED the Commission and Partners to mobilize financial and technical resources to support Member States in the implementation of the Framework and report on the progress accordingly.

Report on Water and Sanitation

103. Water is vital for survival of life and key to sustainable development and pertinent for human capital development. African leaders in recognition of importance of water and sanitation for social, economic and environmental development of the continent:- Committed to promote cooperation and integration among member States with a view to raising the living standards of the population and the wellbeing of the future generations; and made commitment to promote achievement of African Water Vision 2025; 2030 SDGs Goal 6 and Agenda 2063 – ‘Africa we want’.

On the Water and Sanitation Report, the STC:

104. ENDORSED the Partners Coordination Platform on Water and Sanitation Programme in Africa to support work of the Commission and AMCOW to facilitate effective reporting of progress to the AU Summits;

105. URGED Member States to support the Republic of Senegal on the planned 9 World Water Forum by actively participating in it; and

106. ENDORSED the proposal to convene an AU Summit on Water and Sanitation on the margins of the 9th World Water Forum in Senegal.

Reports on Biodiversity, Forestry, Wild Fauna and Flora

Wild Fauna and Flora Conservation

107. The AU Experts Group on Wildlife meets at least once a year and is made up of at least two focal points from AU Member States to represent it in deliberations regarding implementation of the AU Wildlife Strategy. The focal points are drawn from the CITES Management Authority of the country concerned; the most appropriate national agency responsible for wildlife law enforcement and representative from the

policy departments. Countries also nominate representatives outside these institutions based on their national circumstances.

108. The objectives of the 2018 and 2019 Expert Group meetings were to deliberate on implementation of key recommendations on wildlife from the 2017 STC on ARDWE with focus on the implementation of the Wildlife Strategy. Key outcomes from the meetings included: - (i) a validated Monitoring and Reporting Framework for the implementation of the Wildlife Strategy; (ii) an implementation plan on shaping a Common African Position on Wildlife and Wildlife products in global fora on wildlife (including CITES); and (iv) A resource mobilization plan for the implementation of the strategy at regional and national levels.

On the report on the Conservation of Africa's Wild Fauna and Flora, the STC:

109. ENDORSED the Monitoring and Reporting Tool developed to track the implementation of the AU Wildlife Strategy;

110. CALLED UPON Member States and Regional Economic Communities to provide data for the monitoring and reporting tool, in December 2019, following which a status report will be produced;

111. REQUESTED the Commission to continue facilitating Member States to pursue cooperation on sustainable wildlife management and work towards a stronger and united global front on wildlife and in the lead up to the CITES COP 19;and

112. REQUESTED the Commission and partners to mobilise resources for supporting the implementation of the Strategy.

African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity, 13 November 2018, Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt

113. Africa is one of the most bio diverse regions in the world. It is also a continent that is challenged by the tensions between socio economic development and the preservation of nature, on which development depends. The world is currently facing an alarming loss of nature. The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services released early this year *reports that around 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction, many within decades, more than ever before in human history.*

114. According to this report, the five direct drivers of change in nature with the largest relative global impacts so far, in descending order include: (1) changes in land and sea use; (2) direct exploitation of organisms; (3) climate change; (4) pollution and (5) invasive alien species. Africa can and should play a crucial role in delivering the post-2020 biodiversity framework. It has huge potential for the leadership which is needed for its success in reversing loss of nature loss and to protect and restore nature.

On the presentation on the African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity, the STC:

115. ADOPTED the African Ministerial Declaration on Biodiversity;

116. ENDORSED the Pan-African Action Agenda on Ecosystem Restoration as Africa's response to addressing the loss of biodiversity and the continental implementation framework for the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2020-2030;

117. URGED Member States, the AUC and Regional Economic Communities to develop country and regional implementation and monitoring plans;

118. REQUESTED the Commission and the Secretariats of the CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC, GEF, GCF, UN agencies, development partners, the civil society and the private sector to support implementation of the declaration; and

119. COMMENDED Egypt, as President of the CBD CoP 14, for hosting the Africa Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity on 13 November 2018 and the 14th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity.

Sustainable Forest Management Framework

120. Forests underpin key sectors of many African countries, including energy, forestry, agriculture, tourism and water, and support the livelihoods of millions of people. They provide important ecosystem services, such as the protection of water and soil resources, biodiversity conservation and climate-change adaptation and mitigation. If well managed, forests can contribute significantly to attaining the objectives of African Union 2063 Agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

121. The draft Sustainable Forest Management Framework (SFMF) was developed following the Summit Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.538(XXIII) on the High-Level Work Programme on Climate Change Action in Africa (WPCCAA) and Preparations for the Global Climate Change Events in 2014, adopted during the 23rd Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in June 2014

122. The Decision requested the Commission in collaboration with African ministers responsible for forestry and energy to put in place a Sustainable Forest Management Programme (SFMP) to assist AU member states and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to sustainably manage and develop their forest sectors for socio-economic development and environmental protection,

On the Sustainable Forest Management Framework, the STC:

123. ADOPTED the African Union Sustainable Forest Management Framework; and

124. ENDORSED the creation of an Experts Group on Forestry to support the implementation, monitoring and reporting on the Sustainable Forest Management Framework.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LIVESTOCK AND FISHERIES**AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY****Report and Declaration on Bio-fortification**

12. Bio-fortification, the process of conventionally breeding staple food crops that are naturally enriched with micronutrients, is one element of nutrition-sensitive agriculture together with industrial food fortification, supplementation and dietary diversification. To date, Africa has played a strong leadership role with 37 countries testing and/or growing biofortified staples (cassava, maize, sweet potato, beans and pearl millet) and 14 countries have included biofortification in their policies and programmes. In the quest to respond to Agenda 2063 target of reducing the incidences of hunger and malnutrition by at least 80%; the Malabo Goal of reducing stunting to 10% and underweight to 5% by 2025; as well as SDG 2; the Second STC on ARDWE in October 2017 called on DREA to submit a draft Declaration on Biofortification in Africa and to this effect produce policy briefs on biofortification and a framework to inform upscaling of biofortification in Africa. Policy Briefs were produced and disseminated during the February 2019 Summit and the consultative process for advancing biofortification in Africa gained momentum.

On the Report and Declaration on Bio-fortification the STC:-

126. ENDORSED the draft Declaration for onward submission for endorsement by the AU Summit in 2020; and

127. RECOMMENDED that bio-fortification in Africa be included or linked to bio-fertilization.

Report of the Framework for Irrigation Development and Agricultural Water Management (IDAWM) In Africa

128. Reliable access to water is essential to increase crop production and mitigate drought across Africa. The African Union, through a number of decisions and declarations made by the Head of States and Government, has always prioritized water resource management (WRM) and irrigation in its development agenda. Irrigation development and agricultural water management is high on the Africa political agenda. The Framework for Irrigation Development and Agricultural Water Management (IDAWM) in Africa aims to support regional and national strategies and project implementation to achieve continental targets, by promoting country-level initiatives in AWM. The framework is structured around four strategic AWM areas or agricultural water developmental pathways and includes: AWM in rain-fed farming; farmer-led irrigation; scheme development and modernisation; and waste-water recovery and reuse. Each development pathway highlights the interventions needed implementation and sustainability. The cross-cutting issues address themes and actionable areas that should be emphasized and supported to reap the benefits of AWM as well as to promote its expansion and sustainability.

On the Report of the Framework for Irrigation Development and Agricultural Water Management (IDAWM) In Africa, the STC:

129. ENDORSED the adoption of the framework for irrigation development and agricultural water management (IDAWM) in Africa;

130. REQUESTED the African Union Commission and development partners to support RECs and MS in the domestication, integration and implementation of the IDAWM framework; and,

131. REQUESTED the African Union Commission and development partners to mobilize financial and technical resources to support AU-SAFGRAD to coordinate the implementation of the Framework and report on progress accordingly.

Report on the Decade of Implementation of the African Seed and Biotechnology Programme (ASBP)

132. The Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 29-30 January 2007 endorsed the African Seed and Biotechnology (ASBP) as a strategic framework for the development of the seed sector in Africa. An assessment of the decade of its implementation reveals limited concerted efforts and collective action in establishing effective and efficient seed systems as well as enhancing application of biotechnologies and methodologies within the seed sector at national, regional and continental levels.

133. The stakes to effectively implement the ASBP cannot be overemphasized. Moving forward, it is imperative that the AUC and the AUDA-NEPAD take lead in the development of an action plan for the implementation of the ASBP, including an institutional framework and accountability model with clear targets and milestones.

On the Report on the Decade of Implementation of The African Seed and Biotechnology Programme (ASBP) the STC:-

134. URGED Member States and Regional Economic Communities to domesticate the ASBP in their national and regional seed development initiatives;

135. REQUESTED the AUC and the AUDA-NEPAD to put in place an institutional framework that will facilitate the implementation of the ASBP at national, regional and continental levels including the full operationalization of the Forum for African Seed Testing;

136. REQUESTED the AUC and the AUDA-NEPAD to lead the development of an action plan for the implementation of the ASBP with clear targets and milestones and development partners to support its implementation;

137. REQUESTED the MS to fast track the implementation of the Assembly Decision (Doc. Assembly/AU/7 (V)) Add.6 of June 2005 related to the establishment of genetic resource banks for identification and preservation of indigenous plant genetic resources that can be used for the production of improved seeds that are adaptable to local environmental conditions and to prevent the deterioration of plant bio-diversity that the African Continent is experiencing; and

138. REQUESTED AUC and the AUDA-NEPAD to review the ASBP Framework to encompass animal seed and wildlife seed.

Report on Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative in Africa

139. The Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative in Africa was established in 2012 with the goal of mainstreaming EOA into National Agricultural Production Systems by 2025. The initiative covers all the 55 Member States of the Africa and it came into being as a result of African Union Decision on Organic Farming (EXCL/Dec. 621 (XVIII)). Various strategies, projects and policy work, as well as institutional development, are being undertaken under this initiative.

On the Report on Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative in Africa, the STC:

140. URGED Member States to mainstream Ecological Organic Agriculture into their National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) and allocate adequate resources for its growth and development;

141. ENDORSED the Bio-vision Africa Trust (BvAT) as the host of the Secretariat of the EOA-I and requested AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and partners to strengthen and support its functioning;

142. URGED Member States, and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to formulate and implement EOA policies and legal frameworks targeting inputs (fertilizers, seeds, pesticides, herbicides, feeds, drugs and additives), certification, market development, academic curricula, research and access to finance; and

143. REQUESTED the AUC to develop indicators to monitor progress in implementation of the EOA and report regularly to MS through the Biannual Review Reporting Mechanism.

The Bobo-Dioulasso Declaration on Reducing the Drudgery of Rural Women in Agriculture Within the Framework of the Launch of the Campaign On ‘*Sending the Hand-held Hoe to the Museum*’

On the Bobo-Dioulasso Declaration on Reducing the Drudgery of Rural Women in Agriculture within the Framework of the Launch of the Campaign on “Sending the Hand-held Hoe to the Museum”, the STC:-

144. ADOPTED the Bobo-Dioulasso Declaration.

Reports on Agribusiness, Land and Value Chain Development

Programme for Establishing the Common African Agro-Parks (CAAPS)

145. The Programme for establishing the Common African Agro-Parks (CAAPs) is meant to create a policy environment for boosting regional trade in agricultural commodities by increasing local processing of key agricultural products and their respective value chains. Members agreed to adopt crops or agricultural products to be grown in the agro parks as listed in the Abuja Declaration and urged the Commission to undertake feasibility studies of the initiative including existing agro parks and related strategies that were being implemented in AU member states and regions. Members further suggested that the private sector should actively be involved in the implementation of the CAAPs through Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) so as to ensure sustainability of the programme. Notwithstanding the above, members observed the importance of addressing challenges related to infrastructure such as roads. Members noted the importance of involving youths in the programme. Members requested the African Union Commission to build capacity of member states on CAAPs.

On the programme for establishing the CAAPs, the STC:

146. ADOPTED the CAAP as a programme contributing to the implementation of the AfCFTA;

147. COMMITTED to support the AU Commission in implementing the First Phase of the Preliminary Study, Planning and Design of the CAAP;

148. ADOPTED rice, maize, cassava and yam, livestock (cattle, sheep, goat, pig, poultry) fisheries and horticulture as key strategic agricultural commodities for the implementation of the CAAP;

149. REQUESTED the Commission to identify key partners who can collaborate and jointly mobilise necessary financial and technical resources for the implementation of the CAAP.

Report on the Status of Implementation of Decision to Institutionalize the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC)

150. The meeting considered the Inaugural ordinary session of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment held in October 2015 and resolved to establish and capacitate the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC) to provide leadership, coordination, build partnerships and promote policy advocacy in support of Member States (STC1/ARDWE/MIN). The meeting further acknowledged the 2nd Ordinary Session of the STC held in October 2017 that requested the AUC together with ECA and AfDB to capacitate the AUC/Africa Land Policy Centre by institutionalizing it to ensure financial sustainability, operational efficiency and ownership (STC2/ARDWE/MIN).

On the report on the Status of Implementation of Decision to Institutionalize the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC), the STC:

151. REQUESTED the Executive Council to consider and adopt the recommendation to establish and capacitate the African Land Policy Centre (ALPC);

152. SUPPORTED the process undertaken by the AUC to commission a consultant to assess and report on possible options of institutionalization of the ALPC as well as the legal, structural and financial implications;

153. ADOPTED the transitional arrangements for the interim ALPC pending its formal establishment and capacitation by the Executive Council and Assembly; and

154. REQUESTED the AUC, ECA and AfDB to continue to provide technical, human, financial and operational support to the interim ALPC pending the formal establishment of the ALPC by the AU policy organs.

Report on Implementation of the African Union Commitments on Women's Land Tenure Security

155. The meeting recalled the Declaration on land issues and challenges in Africa by Heads of State in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, from 1 to 3 July 2009. Through the Declaration, Member States committed to review their land policies and strengthen institutions, with a view to providing equitable access to land for all land users and to strengthen the land tenure security of women, noting that the latter requires special attention. The meeting further acknowledged that the 2nd Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment which was held in October 2017, urged Member States to review land policies and programs to achieve 30% target for women's land rights by 2025. In this regard, the meeting:

On the Report on Implementation of the African Union Commitments on Women's Land Tenure Security the STC:-

156. CALLED UPON Member States to collect both sex-disaggregated data and specific data on women's land tenure security to better understand variables affecting women's land tenure security and inform policies, laws, and strategies for strengthening women's land tenure security;

157. URGED Member States to harmonize legal framework in favour of women's land and property rights with a focus on gender-responsive inheritance laws. ;

158. URGED that land reform of any type must ensure that women have equal opportunity to exercise and enforce their rights; and

159. CALLED UPON the AUC to take lead in the development of a continental strategy and guidelines on integrating gender in the land sector in Africa.

Guidelines on Prevention and Addressing Land Based Conflicts in Africa

160. The STC recalled the request to the AUC and the Africa Land Policy Centre to develop guidelines to mitigate land and ethnic based conflicts for use by Member States in reviewing policies and institutions during the 2nd Session of the STC in October, 2017.

On the Guidelines on Prevention and Addressing Land Based Conflicts in Africa the STC:-

161. ADOPTED the Guidelines on Prevention and Addressing Land-based Conflicts in Africa;

162. URGED National governments to put in place mechanisms for inclusive growth for minimisation of inequalities through fair resource distribution;

163. CALLED UPON Regional Economic Communities to adopt and utilize the Guidelines on Prevention and Addressing Land-based Conflicts in Africa to minimize interstate tensions, trans-boundary conflicts and insurgencies;

164. ADOPTED the Monitoring and Evaluation of Land Governance in Africa (MELA) as the Framework to track and report progress on commitments related to land by AU member states: and

165. REQUESTED AUC to report regularly on the status of implementation of this decision.

Continental framework for Boosting Intra-African trade in Agricultural Commodities

166. The Meeting recognized the Continental Framework for Boosting intra-African Trade in Agricultural Commodities and Services, and the associated Guidelines for Development of Regional Agricultural Value Chains as multi-sectoral guiding frameworks that respond to new market opportunities for African agriculture, created by the establishment of the AfCFTA.

On the Continental framework for Boosting Intra-African trade in Agricultural Commodities the STC:

167. ADOPTED the Continental Framework for Boosting intra-African Trade in Agricultural Commodities and Services, and the associated Guidelines for the development of Regional Agricultural Value Chains (RAVCs);

168. REQUESTED the Commission (AUC-DREA) to continue collaboration with FAO, UNECA and other relevant partners to support AU Member States and RECs to develop and implement their national and regional agricultural trade policies, strategies and programmes, informed by the Continental Framework on BIAT in Agriculture, and associated Guidelines on RAVCs;

169. CALLED UPON Member States to fast track implementation of the Continental Framework for Boosting intra-African Trade in Agricultural Commodities and Services, and be guided by the principles in the Guidelines for RAVCs accordingly, as instruments to achieve the AfCFTA requirements on intra-African agricultural trade and services; and

170. REQUESTED AUC to support efforts to mobilise and strengthen pan-African Agribusiness Private Sector Apex Bodies for implementation of the Framework and Guidelines.

Continental Post-Harvest Loss Management Strategy

171. The meeting acknowledged that at its 23rd Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in June 2014, Heads of State and Government adopted eight commitments that now make up the 'Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods'. Among the many targets that the African Union Commission was mandated to report on in the Agricultural Review Process is the target to halve the current levels of Post-Harvest Losses by the year 2025 under Malabo Declaration commitment to ending hunger in Africa by 2025. The meeting noted the progress made in the development of the African Union Postharvest Loss Management Strategy as a continental framework for implementation of the Malabo declaration on reducing postharvest losses by 50% by 2025. The meeting further note the progress made in institutionalising the All Africa Postharvest Congress and Exhibition as African Union biennial event.

On the Continental Post-harvest Loss Management Strategy, the STC:

172. CALLED UPON member States to adopt the AU Post-harvest Loss Management Strategy as a Continental framework to guide the development of their national Post-harvest Loss Management Strategies for the implementation of the postharvest loss reduction requirements of the Malabo Declaration;

173. URGED AU Member States with best practices to share;

174. ENDORSED the institutionalisation of the congress as a biennial continental platform for mutual accountability, knowledge and experience sharing, and reporting on progress made on food loss and waste reduction efforts on the continent;

175. REQUESTED AUC to support Member States to include measures to reduce food loss and waste in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. These measures include policies, programs, practices, and technologies that reduce food losses on the farm, during storage and distribution, at market and in the home;and

176. REQUESTED the Commission to identify Centres of Excellence relating to post-harvest loss management.

Animal Health Strategy for Africa (AHSA) 2020-2035

177. The STC noted that animal disease burden in Africa is responsible for huge annual losses. The noted that diseases that are transmitted from animal to human (Zoonotic diseases) such as Ebola have widespread ramifications with long-term devastating impacts on human health and on the economies of countries and the continent. STC was concerned that Africa's animal health service delivery systems are generally weak as measured against international standards. The situation limits the competitiveness of animal resources value chains and increases the risk of emerging and re-emerging zoonotic diseases. The meeting noted the presentation by AU-IBAR on the Animal Health Strategy for Africa (AHSA) 2020-2035 that aims to improve the capacity at all levels (continental, Regional and National) to anticipate and mitigate the negative impacts of animal diseases and zoonosis.

On the Animal Health Strategy for Africa (AHSA) 2020-2035 the STC:

178. ENDORSED the Animal Health Strategy for Africa (AHSA) for immediate implementation by the respective countries and regions and by other partners;

179. REQUESTED African Union institutions, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Member States and partners to pursue partnerships necessary for effective, efficient and sustainable implementation of this strategy and mobilise resources required for the implementation of the strategy at all levels.

The International Scientific Council for Trypanosomiasis Research and Control (ISCTRC) Abuja Declaration on Renewed Commitment for Accelerated Progress Towards Research, Control and Eradication of Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Constraint on the African Continent

180. Sleeping sickness in humans and Nagana in cattle pose a threat to health and welfare of humans and animals with negative impacts on the socio-economic development. The 35th ISCTRC General Conference and the 18th PATTEC Coordinators meeting were held in Abuja Nigeria, 23rd to 27th September 2019. The meeting adopted

the ISCTRC Abuja Declaration, on renewed commitment for accelerated progress towards research, control and eradication of tsetse and trypanosomiasis constraint in the African continent, that require immediate implementation.

On ISCTRC, the STC REQUESTED: -

181. That Member States and Partners commit towards the achievement of the objectives of the Lomé decision with renewed vigour;

182. That T&T problem be tackled within the broader context of One Health, Sustainable Rural development, agriculture strategies and changing climate conditions;

183. Member States explore new innovative strategies and policies, strengthen advocacy and awareness, partnerships, and coordination for accelerated progress with clear and achievable milestones and timelines agreed upon at country, regional and continental levels;

184. That National Governments commit adequate resources for the agriculture sector including for T&T control and eradication as committed in the CAADP/Malabo declaration;

185. That ISCTRC make regular progress reports to the Ministerial meeting.

AU-IBAR Strategic Plan 2018 – 2023

186. The STC underscored the importance of developing Animal Resources as over 70% of Africa's rural populations depended on them for survival. It took note of the presentation by AU-IBAR of its Strategic Plan developed for the period 2018 - 2023, which aims to enhance the contribution of Animal Resources to Africa's food and nutritional security, and improved livelihoods, by:

- Improving animal health, disease prevention and control systems;
- Enhancing animal resource production systems and ecosystem management; and
- Improving access to inputs, services and markets for animals and animal products.

187. The meeting further noted that the state of Animal Resources (ARs) in Africa is influenced by a number of issues, to which the Strategic plan defines corresponding broad interventions including: building human and institutional capacities in the ARs sector; formulation and harmonization of policies in the sector; strengthening coordination, partnerships and collaboration; investment in Livestock Value Chains; and enhancing technology generation, dissemination and utilization on AR issues. Moreover, the report specifies key elements for the successful implementation of this Strategic Plan.

On the AU-IBAR Strategic Plan 2018-2023, the STC:

188. ENDORSED the AU-IBAR Strategic Plan for the period 2018 – 2023; and

189. REQUESTED AU-IBAR, in close collaboration with the Commission, to intensify efforts to mobilize resources for its implementation.

Selection of African Institutions for Designation as African Union Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres for Food Safety

190. The STC recognized the high foodborne disease burden in Africa and noted that 137000 Africans die every yearly as a result of consuming contaminated food. And that this trend was unacceptable and needed to be urgently reversed. The meeting observed that food safety laboratories are critical in helping to safeguard the health of African consumers by providing assurance on the safety of food. The meeting noted that existing African institutions with the required laboratory capabilities could be selected as AU Reference Laboratories or Collaborating Centres for Food Safety to deliver targeted technical capacity to enable African food safety laboratories attain the threshold of laboratory capabilities needed to adequately determine the safety of food.

On the Selection of African Institutions for Designation as African Union Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centres for Food Safety, the STC:

191. ENDORSED the following African institutions as AU Collaborating Centres for Food Safety:

- i. Animal Health Research Institute (AHRI), Egypt for microbiological contaminants in food and feed;
- ii. Food Research Institute (FRI) Ghana for microbiological contaminants in food and feed;
- iii. Institut de Technologie Alimentaire (ITA), Sénégal for mycotoxins in food and feed;
- iv. Central Laboratory of Residue Analysis of Pesticides and Heavy Metals in Food (QCAP-Lab), Egypt for pesticide and heavy metals in food;
- v. Office nationale pour l'inspection sanitaire des produits de la pêche et aquaculture de Mauritanie; and
- vi. Laboratoire d'analyse des denrées alimentaire de Douala.

The STC further:

192. REQUESTED the Commission to facilitate collaboration among African Food Safety laboratories, the active continental networking of food safety laboratories and platforms; and the role of AU-IBAR, PAQI, RECs and other relevant technical offices of the AUC in supporting the process through resource mobilization; and

193. REQUESTED the Commission on an ongoing basis, identify and select African Institutions for designation as AU Reference Laboratories or Collaborating Centres for Food Safety.

African Common Position on Antimicrobial Resistance and the African Union Framework on Antimicrobial Resistance 2020 – 2025

194. The STC noted that antimicrobials play an indispensable role in the treatment, prevention and control of a wide range of infectious diseases. That misuse and overuse of antimicrobials across all sectors have resulted in the emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) globally. AMR threatens to render existing treatments ineffective against many infectious diseases and hence threaten the achievement of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 if urgent, coordinated, and multi-sectoral approach is not taken to avert the AMR crisis. The STC resolved that AU should work towards becoming a unified and influential voice in the global governance and accountability on AMR by taking steps to: improve surveillance of antimicrobial use and AMR microorganisms; delay emergence of AMR; limit transmission of AMR; and mitigate harm from AMR microorganisms.

On the African Common Position on Antimicrobial Resistance and the African Union Framework on Antimicrobial Resistance 2020-2025, the STC:

195. ENDORSED the African Common Position on AMR and the Africa Union Framework on Antimicrobial Resistance Control 2020 – 2025;

196. REQUESTED the Commission to fully constitute and fund the AU Task Force on AMR for monitoring, reviewing, coordinating, and developing policies related to AMR with representation from all relevant sectors in a One Health approach;

197. REQUESTED the AUC to work with African Universities and research institutions to promote innovation in defining and quantifying the source and extent of AMR and development of new antimicrobials, vaccines, diagnostics and waste management tools to secure the future of antimicrobials;

198. REQUESTED the Commission to convene at least one high-level meeting annually in conjunction with AU Summit to update Member States about progress in AMR control and advocate for sustained progress; and

199. ENCOURAGED Member States to prioritize and invest in the implementation of their National Action Plans on AMR.

The Blueprint for Africa's Blue Economy Strategy

200. The Blueprint for Africa's Blue Economy Strategy was developed through stakeholder's consultative process, expert reviews and scoping missions to collate best practices within the continent following the Nairobi Global Sustainable Blue Economy Conference in November 2018. The concept of the Blue Economy integrates into a new approach; the economic exploitation of the resources of oceans, lakes, rivers and other bodies of water and the conservation of aquatic ecosystems. It represents a basis for rational and sustainable use and conservation of natural resources (both renewable and non-renewable) and their natural habitats.

201. The objective of Africa's Blue Economy Strategy is to guide the development of an inclusive and sustainable blue economy that becomes a significant contributor to continental transformation and growth, through advancing knowledge on marine and aquatic biotechnology, environmental sustainability, the growth of an Africa-wide shipping industry, the development of sea, river and lake transport, the management of fishing activities on these aquatic spaces, and the exploitation and beneficiation of deep sea mineral and other resources.

On The Blue Print for Africa's Blue Economy Strategy the STC:

202. ENDORSED the Blueprint for Africa's Blue Economy Strategy;

203. URGED the Commission to support adequate awareness creation, capacity building and sharing of best practices of the application of the Blue Economy concept;

204. ENCOURAGED the Commission to support setting up Blue Governance mechanisms to ensure planning and coordination at continental, regional and national levels; and

205. REQUESTED to the Commission to mobilize resources for the implementation of Blue Print for Africa's Blue Economy Strategy.

Selection of African Union Centres of Excellence in Fisheries and Aquaculture

206. Following the Executive Decision Doc. EX.CL/842(XXV) of the Summit of African Heads of States and Governments in 2014, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, the Executive Council requested African Union Commission 'to establish African Centres of Excellence for Aquaculture, Capture fisheries, biodiversity studies and oceanography to enhance capacity for fisheries and aquaculture research.'

207. The STC **ENDORSED** the following institutions as African Union Centres of Excellence:

- i) Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, University of Cape Coast (Ghana) for Academic training in Marine Fishery and coastal zones management; with additional options in policy and governance;
- ii) National Fisheries Resources Research Institute (NaFIRRI), Uganda, Research in Aquaculture (Fish feeds, nutrition, genetics etc) and Research Inland Capture Fishery; with additional options in Climate Change;
- iii) Rhodes University, South Africa for academic training in Marine Fisheries and Aquaculture; additional options in biodiversity; Oceanography and Ecosystems studies;
- iv) University of Ibadan, Nigeria, for academic Aquaculture and inland fisheries;
- v) Faculty of Fisheries Resources, University of Suez, Egypt, Academic Aquaculture and Academic Aquaculture, Marine Fishery Sciences and Technology; Research Aquaculture; Fish Feeds, diseases, genetics (incorporating the Central Laboratory for Aquaculture Research (CLAR), Egypt)
- vi) Académie Régionale des Sciences et Techniques de la Mer (ARSTM), Cote D'Ivoire, for training in Marine Engineering, Seafaring and Safety, Navigation, fishing gear and fish technologies;
- vii) L'Agence Gabonaise d'Etudes et d'Observation spatiale (AGEOS); and
- viii) Institut des Arts et métiers nautique de limbe, Cameroon.

The STC further:

208. REQUESTED the Commission to mobilize resources to support the operationalization of the selected centres of excellence;

209. REQUESTED the Commission to further identify related disciplines for which institutions will be selected as African Union Centres of Excellence; and

210. URGED the Commission to set up mechanisms for effective collaboration among institutions.

The 10-Year Action Plan for Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries Development in Africa

211. The 10-Year Action Plan for sustainable small-scale fisheries in Africa was developed by African Union in consultations with stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa (PFRS) for improve and strengthen the contribution of small-scale fisheries to poverty alleviation, food and nutrition security and socio-economic benefits of fishing communities. The specific objectives of the 10-Year Action Plan are to:

- Improve governance for Sustainable Management of small-scale in African context;
- Enhance the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food and nutrition security and wealth creation;
- Improve resilience and adaptability of small-scale so as to reduce vulnerability in the face of internal & external shocks.

On The 10-Year Action Plan for Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries Development in Africa, the STC:

212. ENDORSED the 10-Year Action Plan for Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries Development in Africa and as a vehicle to support the operationalization of the policy arena on small scale fisheries development of the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa;

213. REQUESTED the Commission, RECs and MS to support the implementation of the 10- Year 10-Action Plan

Report of the Institutional Review of the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM) - Within the Framework of the Specialized Technical Committee for Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (STC-ARDWE)

214. Following the recommendation of the 2010 Conference of African Ministers in charge of fisheries and aquaculture, The African Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM) was established in a consultative manner and adopted in 2014 to primarily enhance coordination and coherence in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. Through consultative processes, the changes in the policy structure and nomenclature of the high-level political organs at the African Union level, (Specialized Technical Committee, STCs) have been incorporated in a revised AFRM structure to enhance policy consultation and implementation of decisions. The two statutory bodies, STC-ARDWE and STC-BUREAU, have been incorporated in the revised structure. The structure also underpinned the roles of NSAs, Networks and platforms as well as strengthened the role of the Secretariat to the conference of African ministers in charge of fisheries and aquaculture, based at AU-IBAR.

On the Report of the Institutional Review of the African Fisheries Reform Mechanism (AFRM) - Within the Framework of the Specialized Technical Committee for Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment, the STC:

215. ENDORSED the revised structure of the AFRM taking into account the decision on abolishing sectorial ministerial conferences;

216. **ENDORSED** the recommendations to strengthen the STC on ARDWE by establishing a Sectoral Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture;

217. **REQUESTED** the Commission to mobilize resources for the full operationalization of the revised AFRM structure; and

218. **RECOMMENDED** that until DREA takes over the mandate for Blue Economy in 2021, matters of the Blue Economy should be handled by the Sectoral Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture.

The African Union 10-Year Aquaculture Action Plan for Africa

219. The African Union Ten Year Aquaculture Action Plan was developed through a multi-stakeholder consultative process to actualize the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa (PFRS). The following priority areas identified in the action plan:

- Establish an enabling environment for sustainable aquaculture development,
- Improved Service Delivery to the Sector
- Capacity Building,
- Trans-boundary Ecosystem Management for Aquaculture; and
- Innovation (Research and Development).

220. The purpose of The African Union 10-Year Aquaculture Action Plan is to provide a harmonised and coherent continental approach for implementing the PFRS' sustainable aquaculture development goals.

On the African Union Ten Years Aquaculture Action Plan for Africa the STC:

221. **ENDORSED** the African Union 10-Year Aquaculture Action Plan for market-led sustainable aquaculture development in Africa and as a vehicle to support the operationalization of the policy arena on aquaculture development of the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa; and

222. **REQUESTED** the AU Commission, RECs and MS to support the implementation of the Ten-Year Action Plan.

Report on the Establishment of Pan-African Platforms for Enhancing Entrepreneurship and Coordination in the Animal Resources Sector

223. This report details the establishment of Pan-African platforms for enhancing entrepreneurship and coordination in the animal resources sector. These platforms aim to enhance Women empowerment and independence; Youth agribusiness and employment; Fisheries policies and practices; Veterinary Education Establishment; and

Veterinary Statutory Bodies. With an objective of unifying Africa to drive a more dynamic and inclusive animal resources sector for a prosperous future, the Commission facilitated the formation of a number of continental platforms bringing together women, the youth, and knowledge generation and policy practitioners in the animal resources sector. It is envisaged that this would enhance inclusiveness, innovation, coherence and convergence of approaches; as well, it would improve the welfare, working conditions and incomes of women and youth in the animal resources sector.

224. These continental platforms include: (i) the Association of Veterinary Education Establishments (2A2E-V); (ii) the Association of African Veterinary Statutory Bodies (2AVSB); (iii) African youth in livestock, fisheries and aquaculture incubation network (AYL-FAIN); and (iv) African women in animal resources farming and agribusiness network (AWARFA-N), that were formed in July 2018. Other networks are: (v) the African Women Fish Processors and Traders Network (AWFishNET) formed in 2017; and (vi) the Policy Research Network for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa (PRNFAA) formed in 2017 and launched in 2018.

On the Report on the Establishment of Pan-African Platforms for Enhancing Entrepreneurship and Coordination in the Animal Resources Sector the STC:

225. ENDORSED the establishment of the Pan-African platforms for enhancing entrepreneurship and coordination in the Animal Resources sector; and

226. REQUESTED the Commission to mobilize resources for their operationalization.

AU-SAFGRAD Strategic Plan 2019-2023 on Building Resilience of Rural and Peri-Urban Livelihoods through Strengthening the Policy and Institutional Environment, Enhancing Research-Related Capacity and Climate Change Adaptation

227. The African Union Semi-Arid Food Grain Research and Development's (AU-SAFGRAD's) goal is to contribute to sustainable food security of smallholder agricultural producers in the semi-arid zone (SAZs) of Africa by helping build their resilience to crises and shocks. Concerned about the unique and specific challenges being faced by people living and working in semi-arid areas of Africa in relation, among others, to access and management of land and water, production, productivity, technology and innovation, interaction of climate change and desertification, market opportunities and policies and institutions,

On The AU-SAFGRAD Plan 2019-2023 On Building Resilience of Rural and Peri-Urban Livelihoods Through Strengthening the Policy And Institutional Environment, Enhancing Research-Related Capacity And Climate Change Adaptation, the STC:

228. ENDORSED the Strategic plan 2019-2023 of AU-SAFGRAD that was presented and discussed during the Conference as well as the proposals suggested for actions;

229. REQUESTED AU-SAFGRAD to work with the issues identified in the strategic plan and implement formulation of appropriate programs to improve livelihoods in semi-arid Africa;

230. CALLED UPON governments, development partners, the private sector to increase investments in terms of improving the levels and targets of domestic and international funding support for improving rural livelihoods in semi-arid areas;

231. FURTHER CALLED upon governments, development partners, the private sector to step-up efforts towards strengthening local capacities for enhanced empowerment of the people and their institutions and for effective implementation of initiatives;

232. CALLED UPON national, sub-regional, regional and international research, extension and education systems to scale up and scale out effective approaches, methods and technologies through innovative and inclusive/participatory approaches; and

233. URGED AUC to strengthen AU-SAFGRAD human capital by increasing the staff personnel to ensure a critical mass of expertise for execution of its mandate.

AU SPS Policy Framework on SPS

234. The AU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Policy Framework was developed following the recommendation of the 2nd STC Session on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment in October 2017. The 2017 STC report, containing Ministers' recommendation was subsequently endorsed by the Executive Council (Ex.Cl/Dec. 987(XXXII) (Rev.1). The Policy Framework is strategically articulated and poised to support the implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Annex 7 on SPS and enhance quality assurance for Africa's agricultural trade competitiveness. The AU SPS Policy Framework's four objectives and corresponding strategies address the diverse and intersecting needs and priorities of SPS systems in Africa. The Policy Framework is driven by the core principles that include: trade driven by science-and risk-based decision-making; trade based on international standards guided by the WTO SPS Agreement; having shared responsibility and continuous improvement of Africa's trading processes; harmonization; consistency; transparency of SPS measures; adaptation to regional conditions; protection of consumers, animals, and plants; trade facilitation. It is also based on preventive measures, equivalence and recognition of trading partner's systems and adhering to existing processes.

235. The framework is driven by four objectives which are to; Establish Science-based SPS systems; Strengthen collaboration and trade facilitation; Build technical capacity;

and Increase political support and public and private sector investment in SPS systems to enhance opportunities to expand intra-African trade of plants, animals, and food.

On AU SPS Policy Framework the STC:

236. ENDORSED the AU SPS Policy Framework;

237. REQUESTED Member States and Regional Economic Communities to facilitate the domestication of the AU SPS Policy Framework;

238. REQUESTED the Commission and development partners to mobilize resources and support its implementation.

Proposal on the Establishment of Africa Food Safety Agency

239. Recognizing the proactive steps needed to improve the competitiveness of African agriculture and agri-food industry to meet the regulatory requirements of export markets within Africa under the Africa Continental Free Trade Area as well as global markets; aware that food safety is a requisite for food security and nutrition as well as economic development; aware that a continental body to coordinate modernization of food safety complementing the existing pan-African structures on animal health and plant health is urgently needed to enhance sanitary and phytosanitary capacity, the Commission proposed to establish an Africa Food Safety Agency for this purpose.

On the proposal for the Establishment of Africa Food Safety Agency the STC:

240. NOTED the preparatory work by the AU Commission in conducting consultations with member states and partners in 2012, 2013 and the 2019 scoping study that went into identifying value added missions, functions and structure for the establishment the Africa Food Safety Agency at the African Union Commission; and

241. REQUESTED the Commission to undertake further consultations on the functions of the Agency in order to avoid duplications with existing regional and continental structures;

242. REQUESTED the Chairperson of the Commission to request the AU Assembly to consider lifting the moratorium on the establishment of new agencies in order to facilitate the consideration for the establishment of the Africa Food Safety Agency.

Strategic Framework for Scaling Holistic Country-led Model for Aflatoxin Control in Africa

243. Aflatoxin contamination of staples and export commodities remains a persistent problem in Africa that deserves continued attention. However has been made in

prioritization of aflatoxin control in Africa and the comprehensive strategic framework developed based on practical implementation in six AU member states and the tools and models generated for guiding the scale up of holistic aflatoxin control to cover more member states.

On the Strategic Framework for Scaling Holistic Country-led Model for Aflatoxin Control in Africa, the STC:

244. ENDORSED the strategic framework for holistic aflatoxin control with the tools and models generated by AU Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) from its support to six (6) African countries; and

245. CALLED for continued integration of aflatoxin control into the NAIPs/NAFSIPs and other national frameworks for sustainable implementation by all AU Member States.

Framework for an Emergency Fund for Responding to Emerging Pests in Africa

246. The Executive Council Decision (Ex.CI/Dec. 987(XXXII)(Rev.1) in January 2018 requested the Commission to conduct a study to inform the establishment of a Fund for Responding to Emerging Pests in Africa in accordance with relevant AU regulations. The objective of the fund is to enable countries to respond rapidly to emerging pests, and thereby reduce damage both to the country affected and other countries by limiting spread. The Framework for an Emergency Fund for responding to Emerging Pests in Africa will be constituted of various pillars to make it operational including; eligibility criteria that consider the presence of pests and potential impact to a country; type of activity proposed; the period and level of funding; and the applicant. Financing of the fund would have options including the establishment of a multi-donor trust fund. A fund to which Member States can make regular (annual) contributions to or a combination of both. An organization will be identified to serve as trustee for the fund and tasked with the responsibility for collecting the funds from Member States and other contributors. A secretariat will also be established for the management of the fund. A committee will be established to rapidly review proposals. The secretariat will be supported with technical support from external experts. A monitoring and reporting framework will be developed for the implementation of the fund.

On Framework for An Emergency Fund for Responding to Emerging Pests In Africa the STC:

247. NOTED the progress made towards establishing the Framework for an Emergency Fund for Responding to Emerging Pests in Africa;

248. REQUESTED the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and partners to finalize the framework and submit it to the next STC session for endorsement.

Report on Fall Armyworm (FAW)

249. The devastating effects of the Fall Army in Africa were highlighted in the presentation by AU-IAPSC. The report called for setting up of a national emergency fund to tackle this menace. In noting the devastating effect that regulated pests have in member states' economies and the need for a programmatic response towards the management of these pests, the STC was informed that the UN General Assembly FAO has declared the year 2020 to be the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH).

On the Report of the Fall Armyworm, the STC:

250. ADOPTED the report on the Fall Army Worm;

251. URGED for the establishment of National Emergency Fund for the control of emerging pests in Africa.

Report on Coffee as a Strategic Commodity for Africa's Economic Transformation

252. The vision and mission of the Inter-African Organization of Coffee were outlined and the contribution of coffee to the economies of Africa was stressed. It was noted that Africa's share of the global coffee market is on a decline. On the other hand, the consumption of coffee in Africa and globally is increasing.

On the Report on Coffee as a Strategic Commodity for Africa's Economic Transformation, the STC:

253. NOTED the presentation; and

254. REQUESTED the Commission to identify strategic commodities for export and identify institutions that can promote these commodities.

Report on Current Status and Sustainability Options for the Center for Tick and Tick-Borne Diseases (CTTBD)

255. The CTTBD was established in 1978 and it is based in Malawi. The center was not integrated into the structures of the Commission when the OAU was transformed into AUC. The AU Assembly decided that it should be integrated into the AU structures but before that is done, a study should be carried out to find out its legal, structural and financial implications. This study proposed that CTTBD should either be turned into an intergovernmental organization under COMESA or be ran as a private-public partnership entity. The Department decided that before the report is sent to the PRC, it should be considered by this STC for a decision to be taken.

On the Report on CTTBD, the STC:

256. NOTED the report and referred the decision on it to the Bureau of the STC.

CLOSING SESSION

257. Following the Statements from member States, the Chair of the STC, Minister Didiza gave a summary of the Ministerial recommendations. She said that issues pertaining to procedures and operationalization of the STC would be addressed. She called for the strengthening of the capacity of AUC-DREA and noted that the Department remains a key component in the implementation of the decisions of the STC. Minister Didiza requested that expertise on the continent from various institutions such as FARA and others should be utilized for the benefit of the continent. She also pointed out that the work that needs to be done by the Commission requires financial and human resources and called for innovative ways of funding the programmes as and strengthening capacity of the Department. The Chair recommended that the FAO Conference in Africa be used for networking and smart working in order to achieve the goals of the STC. In her conclusion, she congratulated the Ministers and delegates for working excellently over the period of the STC and officially declared the 3rd Ordinary Session of the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment closed.

Annex 1: ACRONYMS

AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
AfDB	African Development Bank
ALPC	Africa Land Policy Center
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on Environment
AMCOMET	African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AU-IAPSC	AU Inter-African Phytosanitary Council
AU-IBAR	AU Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources
AWSA	Animal Welfare Strategy for Africa
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Plan
COMESA	Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa
CoP	Conference of Parties
CST	Committee on Science and Technology of the UNCCD
DREA	Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of the Western African States
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FAW	Fall Armyworm
GGWSSI	Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
ISCTRC	International Scientific Council for Trypanosomiasis Research and Control

LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MEAs	Monitoring of the Environment Agreements
MESA	Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa
NAIP	National Agricultural Investment Plans
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NFP	National Focal Point
PANAAC	Pan African Agribusiness and Agroindustry Consortium
PATTEC	Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign
PPR	Peste des Petits Ruminants
REC	Regional Economic Community
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAFGRAD	Semi-Arid Food Grains Research and Development
SAMA	Framework for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Africa
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
STC	Specialized Technical Committee
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WMO	World Meteorological Organization