



AFRICA ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK

Past, present and future perspectives



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CONTENTS

<i>AEO Collaborating centres</i>	v
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vi
<i>Foreword</i>	x
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>The AEO Project</i>	xii
<i>Synthesis</i>	xiv
<i>The AEO Sub-regions</i>	xviii

CHAPTER 1

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: 1972–2002 1

Introduction	2
The 1970s—winds of change	4
The 1980s—stagnation	7
The 1990s–2002—towards revitalization	13
Conclusion	23

CHAPTER 2

THE STATE OF AFRICA'S ENVIRONMENT AND POLICY ANALYSIS 25

Introduction	26
Part A: Atmosphere	27
<i>Regional Overview</i>	27
<i>Northern Africa</i>	32
<i>Eastern Africa</i>	36
<i>Western Indian Ocean Islands</i>	39
<i>Southern Africa</i>	42
<i>Central Africa</i>	45
<i>Western Africa</i>	47
<i>Conclusion</i>	50
Part B: Biodiversity	53
<i>Regional Overview</i>	53
<i>Northern Africa</i>	63
<i>Eastern Africa</i>	67
<i>Western Indian Ocean Islands</i>	72
<i>Southern Africa</i>	75
<i>Central Africa</i>	80
<i>Western Africa</i>	83
<i>Conclusion</i>	88

CHAPTER 2 *(continued)*

Part C: Coastal and Marine Environments	93
<i>Regional Overview</i>	93
<i>Northern Africa</i>	100
<i>Eastern Africa</i>	104
<i>Western Indian Ocean Islands</i>	109
<i>Southern Africa</i>	113
<i>Central Africa</i>	118
<i>Western Africa</i>	121
<i>Conclusion</i>	125
Part D: Forests	130
<i>Regional Overview</i>	130
<i>Northern Africa</i>	137
<i>Eastern Africa</i>	139
<i>Western Indian Ocean Islands</i>	143
<i>Southern Africa</i>	145
<i>Central Africa</i>	148
<i>Western Africa</i>	151
<i>Conclusion</i>	153
Part E: Freshwater	157
<i>Regional Overview</i>	157
<i>Northern Africa</i>	164
<i>Eastern Africa</i>	167
<i>Western Indian Ocean Islands</i>	172
<i>Southern Africa</i>	175
<i>Central Africa</i>	179
<i>Western Africa</i>	182
<i>Conclusion</i>	185
Part F: Land	189
<i>Regional Overview</i>	189
<i>Northern Africa</i>	196
<i>Eastern Africa</i>	200
<i>Western Indian Ocean Islands</i>	205
<i>Southern Africa</i>	209
<i>Central Africa</i>	213
<i>Western Africa</i>	217
<i>Conclusion</i>	221
Part G: Urban Areas	226
<i>Regional Overview</i>	226
<i>Northern Africa</i>	232
<i>Eastern Africa</i>	235
<i>Western Indian Ocean Islands</i>	238
<i>Southern Africa</i>	240
<i>Central Africa</i>	243
<i>Western Africa</i>	246
<i>Conclusion</i>	249

CHAPTER 3**HUMAN VULNERABILITY TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE 265**

Introduction	266
Understanding human vulnerability	267
Environmental change: impacts on people	270
Social dimensions to human vulnerability	277
Economic dimensions to human vulnerability	284
Addressing human vulnerability to environmental change	290
Challenges of reducing human vulnerability	297
Conclusions	298

CHAPTER 4**OUTLOOK 2002–2032 303**

Visualizing the future	304
Methodology: the scenario approach	306
Africa regional futures: scenario development in the AEO	307
Quantitative expressions of the scenarios	309
The driving forces of the scenarios	311
Scenarios and their environmental implications	318
Discussions and synthesis	357
Conclusion	362

CHAPTER 5**POLICY RESPONSES, ANALYSIS AND ACTION 365**

Introduction	366
Policy responses and analysis	369
Proposals for action	382
Conclusion	390
Annex 1: Summary of key policy responses	392
Annex 2: Failures, weaknesses and gaps in environmental management	396
Annex 3: Proposed action areas, activities and responsibilities	398

<i>Acronyms and abbreviations</i>	405
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<i>Contributors</i>	407
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FOREWORD



About two decades ago, African environment ministers met in the Egyptian capital, Cairo, to lay the foundation of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), the supreme continental forum responsible for articulating authoritative perspectives on Africa's environment and its place in the global arena. AMCEN was established against a backdrop of deteriorating state of environment as well as increasing social and economic inequality and their impacts on the region's environment. However, and from the outset, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) have been particularly supportive of the work of AMCEN as the environmental voice of conscience of the region, thereby highlighting the interdependence of environment, social and economic issues and the political commitment to work in concert in the interest of the well-being of the peoples of Africa.

Despite the achievements registered since its establishment, AMCEN still faces daunting challenges, including amongst others: harmonization of sub-regional and regional environmental issues in order that they receive equal attention at these levels; translation of global environmental concerns into practical, feasible and achievable programmes of action at national, sub-regional and regional levels; the positioning of AMCEN within the framework of new and emerging issues at regional and global level (the African Union, NEPAD, etc.); enhancing AMCEN's advocacy role in the new

global economic order and, in particular, voicing Africa's concerns in the intergovernmental organizations (e.g. WTO, IMF, WB) that are beginning to place environmental considerations very high in their decision making processes; and, promoting and according environmental concerns priority status within national development processes.

The efforts of AMCEN to address these challenges are the subject of the first ever regional comprehensive report on the state of Africa's environment—*Africa Environment Outlook* (AEO). The report, which was specifically requested by AMCEN, traces environment and development trends since the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, provides a comprehensive analysis of status and trends of the environment in Africa integrated with the impacts of policies, laws and regional agreements, and proposes alternative policy options for the future as well as recommends concrete policy actions for follow-up at national and sub-regional levels.

It is our hope that this report will provide a valuable opportunity for AMCEN to take stock of its policy performance and effectiveness since inception in 1985, look into the future and access the various policy options for consideration at national, sub-regional and regional levels, and also serve as a basis for AMCEN to reorient its focus and programmes in light of the findings and recommendations contained in the report.

The AEO report also highlights some of the major issues to be addressed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa in late August 2002. It is the basis upon which Africa and its cooperating partners, both bilateral and multilateral can engage each other to determine how best to tackle some of the pressing challenges facing Africa. It is also our hope that emerging initiatives under African Union and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and its environmental Component, will be

able to take advantage of the information contained in this report, in particular policy recommendations, to advance their programmes of work for the future. These new initiatives provide a challenge for the future AEO process as the African development paradigm shifts beyond WSSD.

The success of the AEO process requires special mention in view of the unique approach adopted in the production of the report. It has engendered participation from a wide range of stakeholders, built consensus on several issues and findings, cultivated a sense of ownership and clearly demonstrated the need to build from the bottom up. It is through this unique approach that the AEO report has established a strong foundation for the harmonization of integrated environmental assessment and reporting processes in the Africa region. It is hoped that in the short term the assessment and reporting methodologies will be adopted and become fully incorporated in national level environmental management practices.

The AEO report and process are clear testimony of Africa's capacity to undertake specialized scientific work for itself and not rely on northern-based institutions to analyse, articulate and make recommendations on Africa's own issues. AEO is the basis for the African renaissance in environmental terms.

I trust the report will be useful to all who subscribe to the attainment of sustainable development in Africa for the benefit of present and future generations.

Muhammad Kabir Sai'd

**President,
African Ministerial Conference on the
Environment (AMCEN)**

PREFACE



The very first *Africa Environment Outlook* report is a significant milestone in the collaboration between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN).

It should serve as a roadmap,

supporting the environmental component, on Africa's journey to sustainable development. It is clear that poverty is inextricably linked to the environment and action to protect and care for the environment must be taken. Otherwise the poison of poverty will continue to plague the continent.

Africa faces a number of critical challenges. The environment continues to deteriorate; social and economic inequality is increasing; globalization is sweeping across the world, largely leaving Africa behind. Rapid changes in the global economy, in consumption patterns and in population and demographics are having a negative impact on the environment.

Without sustainable development we cannot solve the problems. It is not enough to simply say we have a conservation plan for nature, and natural resources. We have also to look at the impact of environmental change on people. The people who are struggling to survive are most vulnerable to environmental change, and suffer most from its effects. We must give these people a chance to live a better life.

Extensive consultations with African experts and collaborating institutions in the AEO process have concluded that the challenges Africa faces require new thinking and vision. There is an urgent need for all stakeholders within Africa, and globally, to act coherently in order to meet the challenges.

The AEO is a unique tool, providing an analysis of the state of the environment over the past 30 years, the driving forces behind environmental change, and the

consequences for social and economic development. These consequences are presented both in terms of impacts on ecosystems, and vulnerability of human populations to floods, droughts, earthquakes, pests and diseases. The links between environmental change and poverty are explored, and appropriate intervention points identified. The AEO assessment methodology is modelled on UNEP's Global Environment Outlook process. It builds on sound data, information and science, and input from all stakeholders to identify priority issues.

Africa is a continent of great natural riches, biodiversity and vast unspoiled landscapes. These assets must be valued and preserved, in order to bring benefits to all. The decisions taken today, and tomorrow will define the kind of environment this, and future generations will enjoy. Building on the analysis of the past, AEO outlines a series of policy approaches for the future, leading to different outcomes over the next 30 years. *Africa Environment Outlook* concludes with recommendations on the road that Africa should take.

The AEO report is therefore a substantive tool for African policy makers to use in their assessment of the pressing environmental issues facing the region. The information in the report can serve as a firm foundation for discussions at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. I trust that many of you will find it a useful aid in preparing for the summit and beyond. I hope that it will inspire you, and all its readers to increase your commitment to care for the environment, especially in Africa.

Klaus Töpfer

**United Nations Under-Secretary General and
Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme**



THE AEO PROJECT

ORIGINS

The Eighth Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) which was held in Abuja, Nigeria in April, 2000 approved AMCEN's medium-term programme, a key element of which was the production of the *Africa Environment Outlook* report. This decision was affirmed at the AMCEN Inter-sessional Committee, which met in Malmo, Sweden in May 2000. In response to this, the AMCEN Secretariat—the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for Africa (ROA)—in collaboration with the Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA) embarked on a process to produce the *Africa Environment Outlook* report.

THE AEO PROCESS

Partnership

The AEO report process has been based on wide consultation and participation between UNEP and various partners in the Africa region. It therefore reflects a variety of sub-regional perspectives and priorities. The AEO process involves partnership with six collaborating centres (see page v) responsible for producing sub-regional state of the environment and policy retrospective reports for Central Africa, Eastern Africa, Northern Africa, Southern Africa, Western Africa and the Western Indian Ocean Islands. These centres engaged individual and institutional experts at the national and sub-regional level to provide inputs into the process.

Experts from specialized organizations were also involved in providing inputs for sections of the report and in its review to ensure sub-regional balance, scientific credibility, and comprehensiveness. They include, among others, The UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), African Development Bank (ADB), the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), Southern African Development Community (SADC), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Economic Community of West

African States (ECOWAS), Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), AMU and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC).

Sources of information

In compiling the sub-regional inputs, national level information and data sources were used. These data sources were then compared and harmonized with data available from regional sources such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), UN Development Programme (UNDP), Africa Development Bank (ADB), The World Bank and the World Resources Institute and others. A meeting of experts from the Collaborating Centres took place to agree on harmonization of information and standardization of data sources, to ensure consistency in the report.

Capacity building

The AEO report process has also successfully built capacity in state of the environment reporting, policy analysis, scenario development and integrated reporting, at national, sub-regional and regional levels in Africa. Capacity-building workshops were organized at sub-regional level for national experts and NGOs on the methodologies of state of the environment/policy retrospective reporting using the State, Pressure, Impacts and Responses (PSIR) framework, including methods of data management. A scenario development workshop was also held.

THE AEO REPORT

Africa Environment Outlook is the first comprehensive integrated report on the African environment. The AEO assessment methodology is derived from UNEP's cutting edge Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Process. The Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) Process was initiated incorporating key attributes of the GEO process, such as the:

- use of sound data, information and science;
- incorporation of regional and sub-regional perspectives;
- inclusion of multi-stakeholder perspectives;
- identification of priority and emerging issues such as human vulnerability to environmental change;
- provision of early warning of impending threats;
- orientation toward sustainable development.

Why integrated environmental assessment reporting?

- It is a process of identifying environmental trends and conditions integrated with the assessment of key driving forces while identifying leverage points to decision makers.
- It goes beyond the scope of traditional state of the environment reporting (SOE) which falls short of integrating the assessment of key driving forces and policies that cause or influence environmental trends.
- It answers four consecutive questions that are key to effective decision making. They are;
 1. What is happening to the environment?
 2. Why is it happening
 3. What can we do and what are we doing about it?
 4. What will happen if we don't act now?
- It brings together information and insight that is usually dispersed across disciplines and institutions.
- It is a tool to aid communication between science and policy.

Africa Environment Outlook aims to provide comprehensive, credible environmental information in a way that is relevant to policy making. The structure, which combines comprehensive environmental information with policy analysis, within an overall context of socio-economic conditions and development imperatives, is thus ideally suited to this purpose.

It provides recommendations for international cooperation and action and thus can be used by sub-regional organizations and national environment departments in developing national policies and international agreements.

The AEO report responds directly to Agenda 21, Chapter 40, which states:

'While considerable data already exist, as the various sectoral chapters of Agenda 21 indicate, more and different types of data need to be collected, at the local, provincial, national and international levels, indicating the status and trends of the planet's ecosystem, natural resource, pollution and socio-economic variables. The gap in the availability, quality, coherence, standardization and accessibility of data between the developed and the developing world has been increasing, seriously impairing the capacities of countries to make informed decisions concerning environment and development.'

'There is a general lack of capacity, particularly in developing countries, and in many areas at the international level, for the collection and assessment of data, for their transformation into useful information, and their dissemination. There is also need for improved coordination among environmental, demographic, social and developmental data and information activities.'

SYNTHESIS

The *Africa Environment Outlook* (AEO) report provides a comprehensive and integrated analysis of Africa's environment. AEO contains a detailed assessment of the current state of the environment in the region, indicates discernible environmental trends and examines the complex interplay between natural events and the impacts of human actions on the environment. Against this background, the report analyses the effects of environmental change in terms of human vulnerability and security, presents a set of scenarios for Africa's future and gives recommendations for concrete policy actions to steer the region, ultimately, towards the most favourable of those scenarios.

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT 1972–2002

The historical focus of AEO is the 30-year period since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1972. However, much of the degradation of Africa's environment today is part of a legacy from less favourable times, including the periods of the slave trade and colonialism. The historical scope of AEO therefore widens to discuss that legacy, and to show how the march of history has often overshadowed traditional African ways of life and knowledge that were inherently more respectful of the environment than some modern forms of development.

The 'winds of change' that began to blow across Africa in the early 1960s and the gathering momentum of African countries' struggle for independence are also described. An understanding of this process is vital to appreciate the emergence of a common African will to address the problems of environmental change and sustainable development.

In the 1970s, it was largely as a result of the 1972 Stockholm Conference that environmental concerns moved centre stage in the social and political debate in most parts of the world, and its conclusions helped to

set the modern environmental agenda in Africa as elsewhere. But the conclusions of the Stockholm Conference have, perhaps, special significance for Africa. First because they state firmly that a healthy environment is not only a fundamental right but that it is one that cannot be attained while apartheid, racial segregation or colonial domination persist, and second because they call for the earth's resources to be protected for the benefit of present and future generations. Such a call had immediate relevance for a region that was throwing off colonial ties and where many people are poor and therefore rely directly on natural resources for their livelihood. AEO traces the efforts made by African organizations, governments and institutions throughout the focus period to meet the challenge of that call, to translate a common will into careful, planned and appropriate management of Africa's huge wealth of natural resources, and to set the region on a course for sustainable development.

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT 1972–2002

The causes of environmental change up to 2002 are examined, including those relating to policy and governance. The impacts of environmental change on the functioning of ecosystems and on social and economic development are also considered, in seven major areas.

- **Atmosphere:** Africa is extremely vulnerable to climate variability and climate change. Variations in rainfall patterns have led to incidences of drought and flooding, often with disastrous consequences for populations and for the environment. The predicted consequences of global climate change—worsening impacts of drought, desertification, flooding, and sea level rise—may well worsen the situation of Africa's people, even though the region's greenhouse gas emissions are, on the whole, negligible. Analysis of the consequences of activities such as deforestation,

inappropriate coastal development, and poor land management shows that these can exacerbate the effects of climate variability and climate change. Air quality is an emerging issue of concern in many parts of Africa, especially in expanding urban areas where concentrations of population, industry and vehicles are increasing air pollution.

● **Biodiversity:** Africa's biological resources are declining rapidly as a result of habitat loss, overharvesting of selected resources, and illegal activities. Formal protection has been strengthened at the national and international level over the past 30 years. However, additional measures are required including additional research and documentation, particularly of indigenous knowledge, implementation of strategies for sustainable harvesting and trade, wider involvement of stakeholders, and more equitable sharing of benefits.

● **Coastal and marine habitats:** Coastal and marine habitats and resources in Africa are under threat from pollution, overharvesting of resources, inappropriate development in the coastal zone, and poor inland land-management. Oil pollution is a major threat to resources, habitats, and economies along the African coastline. Policies and regulations for sustainable coastal development and use of marine resources are in place but require sustained resources such as trained personnel, equipment, financial resources, and more effective policing, monitoring, administration and enforcement.

● **Forests:** Africa has the fastest rate of deforestation anywhere in the world. In addition to its ecological impacts, deforestation also means definitive loss of vital resources causing communities to lose their livelihoods and vital energy sources. Political commitment to protection of indigenous forests, sustainable harvesting practices, and community ownership require strengthening. Development of alternative energy sources is also a priority.

● **Freshwater:** Lack of availability and low quality of freshwater are the two most limiting factors for

development in Africa, constraining food production and industrial activities, and contributing significantly to the burden of disease.

● **Land:** Degradation of soil and of vegetation resources is largely a result of increasing population pressures, inequitable land access and tenure policies, poor land management, and widespread poverty. The results are declining agricultural yields, affecting economies and food security; desertification of arid areas, raising competition for remaining resources; and increased potential for conflict. Land tenure reform, international cooperation, and integration of land resource management with development goals are required.

● **Urbanization:** Although most Africans currently live in rural areas, the region's rates of urbanization are among the highest in the world. Poor economic growth and low investment in infrastructure have left provision of housing and basic services in urban areas lagging far behind rates of inward migration, resulting in a proliferation of informal settlements in urban Africa.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE AND HUMAN VULNERABILITY

The poverty of most Africans, and their consequent direct dependence on natural resources for their livelihoods, increases their vulnerability to environmental change. Over the past 30 years, poverty has continued to worsen in Africa and the region's environment has continued to deteriorate, making Africans even more vulnerable to environmental change.

In sub-Saharan Africa, 61 per cent of the population lives in ecologically vulnerable areas characterized by a high degree of sensitivity and low degree of resilience (IDS 1991) This is not necessarily by choice, but by force of circumstance, because other options are either unavailable or have been exhausted.

Rapid population growth and overexploitation of natural resources, deepening poverty and increasing food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa have brought about human-induced environmental change. Human mismanagement of environmental resources and processes significantly exacerbates the impacts of

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●

disasters and their effects on natural resources.

Other factors such as poor economic performance, and weak institutional and legal frameworks have left most Africans with limited choices and low coping capacity. Interventions addressing human vulnerability to environmental change must therefore be translated into integrated responses that reflect the multi-dimensional nature of the causes and states of vulnerability.

OUTLOOK: 2002–2032

Focusing on the next three decades, AEO considers a number of policy options that are likely to have the most significant impact on environment and socio-economic development. Four scenarios are presented, based on different environmental and social situations that are likely to result from alternative policy interventions. These scenarios are not predictions of the future, but aim to illustrate the range of possible outcomes based upon four policy choices and their interface with environment and developmental conditions, driving forces, and management interventions. The identified driving forces most likely to shape the future are: demographics, economics (including poverty), social, culture, environment, technology and governance.

The four scenarios are:

- Market Forces
- Fortress World
- Policy Reform
- Great Transitions

The *Market Forces* scenario presents market-driven global development, leading to a dominant western-style economy. The environmental impact of this style of development in Africa will be a series of gains tempered by further environmental and social problems, and continued low economic growth.

Potential outcomes of this scenario include: increased incidence of drought and floods; reduction in agricultural production; increased health problems due to continued depletion of the ozone layer; intensification of migration to urban areas; spread of invasive species; increased deforestation; further decrease in the availability of freshwater; increased

water-borne diseases; and intensified degradation of coastal and marine resources.

The *Policy Reform* scenario sees policy adjustments steer conventional development towards poverty-reduction goals. While more significant progress is made in terms of social and economic development, it is largely at the cost of further exploitation of natural resources and environmental degradation.

Potential outcomes of this scenario include: gradual decline in atmospheric pollution; expansion of the tourism industry in Africa; more energy choices and hence less dependence on biomass for fuel; meeting of water resource needs; reduced rural urban migration and reduction of conversion of fragile ecosystems into agricultural land.

The *Fortress World* scenario is a future where socio-economic and environmental stresses mount, the world descends towards fragmentation, extreme inequality in power and socio-economic status, resulting in widespread conflicts, both within Africa and between Africa and other regions.

Potential outcomes of this scenario include: increased vulnerability to climate change; decline in urban air quality and higher incidence of respiratory diseases; declining productivity of grazing and agricultural land and overexploitation of water, land, forest and pasture resources; poor water quality and poor health; depletion of groundwater resources; increased vulnerability of coral reefs and mangrove forests; deterioration of the urban economy and higher incidence of crime.

The *Great Transitions* scenario describes new development paradigms emerging in response to the challenges of sustainability, new values, pluralism, and planetary solidarity. As this new ethical code is translated into policies that are in turn implemented in an integrated fashion, social and political stability permeate throughout Africa. Renewed ecosystem health and vitality ensure abundant resources and services, sustaining the lives and livelihoods of new generations.

Potential outcomes of this scenario include: improved urban air quality and energy use efficiency; increased equitable access to land; rehabilitation of marginal and degraded lands; decline in biodiversity losses and strengthening of ecosystem integrity;

empowerment of communities to manage resources; less pressure on coastal zones; marked increase in access to water and sanitation; and a marked decrease in people living in urban slums and upland settlements.

CALL TO ACTION

Most African countries face many challenges, such as the need to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life of their people and to improve the state of the environment. These need to be addressed from a policy perspective in order for the region to move closer to sustainable development.

A key aim of AEO is to recommend 'achievable action items' to AMCEN, as Africa's environmental body, and to other relevant policy officials. Urgent actions are required to reverse the current trend in environmental degradation in Africa. The key issues for action are poverty reduction and reversal of the direct causes of environmental degradation, by addressing environment and development together. There are also a number of cross-cutting issues that affect Africa's quest for sustainable development.

Specific actions are summarized below in the following categories:

- Eradicating poverty
- Halting and reversing environmental degradation
- Promoting actions on crosscutting issues.

Eradicating poverty

Poverty is a complex issue requiring a multi-dimensional approach and there is no uniform solution to its eradication. In Africa, poverty is considered to be both an agent and a consequence of environmental degradation. Because poverty reduction is pivotal to sustainable development, African countries are called upon to direct attention and resources to poverty challenges in the region through:

- endorsement and promotion of principles of sustainable development;
- acceleration of industrial development;
- securing food-self sufficiency and food security; and
- reversing the health crisis, including overcoming the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Halting and reversing environmental degradation

The problems of socio-economic development in Africa are inextricably linked to people, resources and the environment. Environmental conservation thus relates directly to the structure and functioning of the economy given that the majority of African people derive their livelihood directly from natural resources. The region is, however, losing its resources at relatively rapid rates, thereby leaving millions of people vulnerable to adverse environmental change. Future strategies and actions aimed at halting and reversing environmental degradation must include and prioritize:

- halting and reversing desertification and land degradation;
- conservation and management of biodiversity and forest resources, including wetland and cross-border ecosystems;
- climate change mitigation and improvement of air quality;
- improvement of access to and quality of freshwater resources;
- conservation of coastal and marine ecosystems and resources; and
- promotion of environmentally-sound management of toxic wastes.

Promoting action on cross-cutting issues

A number of cross-cutting issues require urgent attention in Africa in order to halt and reverse environmental degradation and reduce vulnerability. These are wide-ranging and must include such important areas as:

- mobilization of domestic and international financial resources for sustainable development;
- promoting trade;
- promoting peace building, good governance and human rights;
- enhancement of scientific and technological base;
- accelerating regional cooperation and integration;
- promoting the role of civil society; and
- promoting the development of human resources.

AEO SUB-REGIONS

Northern Africa

Algeria
Egypt
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Morocco
The Sudan
Tunisia

Western Africa

Benin
Burkina Faso
Cape Verde
Côte d'Ivoire
Gambia
Ghana
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Liberia
Mali
Mauritania
Niger
Nigeria
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Togo

Eastern Africa

Burundi
Djibouti
Eritrea
Ethiopia
Kenya
Somalia
Rwanda
Uganda

Central Africa

Cameroon
Central African Republic
Chad
Congo
Democratic Republic of Congo
Equatorial Guinea
Gabon
Sao Tomé and Príncipe

Southern Africa

Angola	South Africa
Botswana	Swaziland
Lesotho	United Republic of Tanzania
Malawi	Zambia
Mozambique	Zimbabwe
Namibia	

Western Indian Ocean Islands

Comoros	Réunion (France)
Madagascar	Seychelles
Mauritius	



CHAPTER 1

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: 1972–2002





CHAPTER 1

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA: 1972–2002

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 of the *Africa Environment Outlook* (AEO) provides an overview of developments in Africa, particularly over the three decades up to 2002. It highlights social and economic policies and programmes which have impacted on the environment, and which have influenced various policy responses.

While the chapter focuses mainly on the 30 years since the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment—which laid the foundation for international

action on the environment—it also reviews some of the developments before

1972 which had a major bearing on Africa's political economy.

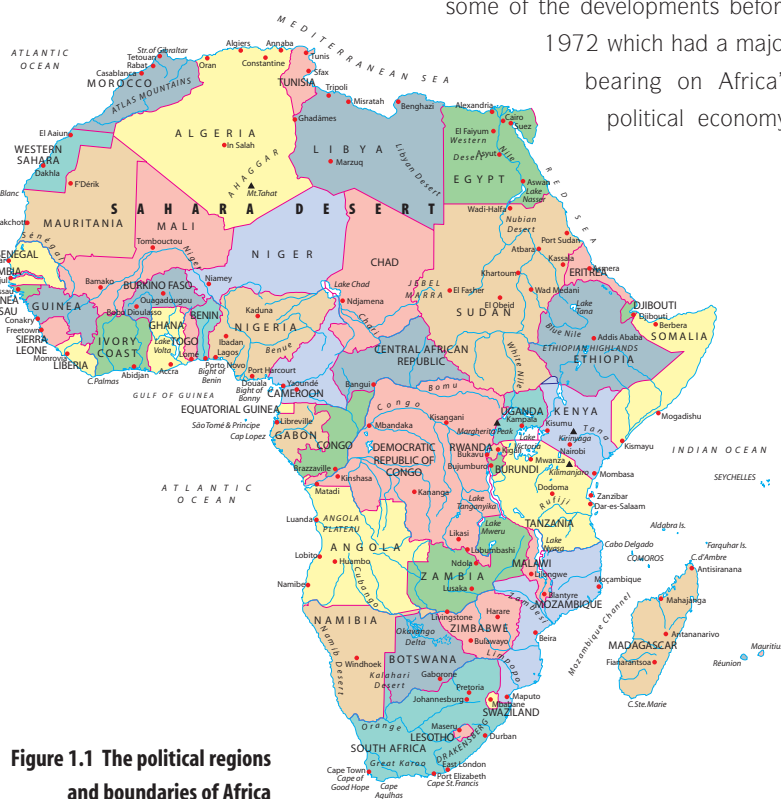
Such developments include: the slave trade; colonization; decolonization; and the struggle for independence. This historical background information serves to place the evolution of environmental management in Africa in its proper perspective.

Social, economic and environmental issues in Africa are discussed in three major sections, each covering approximately one decade, namely: the 1970s; the 1980s; and the 1990s and beyond.

The section on the 1970s also deals with some developments before 1972, including: colonization; decolonization; and the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. The legal and institutional framework for environmental management is also covered.

The section on the 1980s highlights the economic decline of Africa, including: the debt problem; famine in the mid-1980s; and African attempts at revival, with the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action at the beginning of the decade. The creation in 1985 of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the work of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) are also highlighted. The WCED popularized the concept of sustainable development. By embracing both sustainable development and the World Conservation Strategy, which spawned many national conservation strategies, Africa has claimed its position as a major global player at the international level in terms of environmental management.

The section on the 1990s and beyond lowers the curtains on the decolonization process, with the abolition of apartheid in South Africa and the creation of a new political dispensation. The section also covers the end of



**Figure 1.1 The political regions
and boundaries of Africa**

the Cold War, which had made the region a theatre for both Western and Soviet geopolitical games. The 1990s also saw the evolution of new political systems in many African countries. In terms of the environment, many countries adopted new constitutions, which enshrined environmental rights. The section looks at the impact of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), and at preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in South Africa later in 2002.

BACKGROUND

Since time immemorial, the environment has been woven into the lives of African people. Traditional and cultural values among varied and disparate communities across the region have governed the way in which people interact with the environment, and the way in which natural resources are used and managed. In many sub-regions, the people's relationship with natural resources is strong, and there have been traditional regulatory mechanisms covering natural resource management. Box 1.1 highlights how such traditional rules have facilitated resource use and conservation in parts of Africa.

Africa is also rich in indigenous knowledge systems, some of which have survived two of the major events

that have contributed to defining modern Africa: slavery and colonization.

The slave trade facilitated the shipping of millions of Africans across the Atlantic Ocean to work in plantations in North and South America and the Caribbean, and as domestic servants in Europe. Arabs and Europeans, on both the east and the west coast of Africa, bartered simple commodities—such as cloth, gunpowder, salt, beads and others—for slaves.

The abolition of the slave trade beckoned in a new form of commerce. The discovery of large tracts of 'empty lands', and the discovery of rich reserves of gold and other minerals further inland, enticed Europeans to explore Africa. Africa's vast natural resources promised cheap raw material for European industries. Charters were established with local chiefs, and Europeans were offered great tracts of land. In return, the chiefs and their people were promised protection from invading armies as well as European commodities. A new era of subjugation—colonialism—took root in Africa. The plunder of Africa's natural resources and the environment had begun, leading to the scramble for colonies by European countries.

Colonial policies led to heightened conflicts between users, and to assaults on the environment, through the destruction of natural forests for timber, cropland, fuelwood, pasture and urbanization. For

Box 1.1 Guardians of tradition

Traditional rules, once established, controlled the access of African people to natural resources. Rules prohibited, for example: cutting particular trees; some methods of gathering certain fruits and other tree by-products; and access to sacred groves and mountains.

Cutting fruit trees, in particular, was prohibited. In Zimbabwe, it was almost inconceivable for anyone under traditional tenure to cut *Uacapa kirkiana* without the express permission of the guardians of the land. Other trees, such as *Sclerocarya birrea* and *Parinari curatellifolia*, were directly linked to ancestral spirits and rituals, and were protected by a standing penalty system, which was enforced by a chief and his lineage.

Traditional rules regarding gathering fruit facilitated the conservation of fruit trees. Most fruits were supposed to be harvested for use in the home, and not for sale.

Rules governing fruit gathering included the following:

- Never pick up a [*Uacapa kirkiana*] fruit with two hands.
- Shake the tree, using a stone or another instrument, as a way to dislodge the fruit.
- Do not curse or express delight about the quality or quantity of fruit.

Other rules limited the quantity of unripe fruits leaving the forest, so that fruit picking did not damage the trees. It was generally understood that if any of the offences were committed, the person who committed them would disappear in the forest.

In terms of woodland management, the traditional rules went even further: tree cutting was banned in designated places. The declaration of such places, and their subsequent protection, lay in the land-guardian relationship.

example, colonial forestry policies tended to focus on plantations, in order to meet the growing and specialized demands of industry and commerce in Europe. This practice led to loss of species diversity as large areas were cleared of indigenous trees and substituted with exotic ones. Under colonialism, African people had little say regarding how their resources were exploited, and they benefited little from the region's natural assets.

The situation has changed, particularly over the past 30 years, with African countries attaining national independence, and adopting their own social, political, economic and environmental policies and programmes. Progress has been achieved on many fronts, but many challenges remain. Some of the developments that have shaped Africa's socioeconomic and environment agendas are explored in the following sections.

THE 1970s—WINDS OF CHANGE

DECOLONIZATION

The decolonization of Africa was described in the 1960s by the former British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan as the 'winds of change'. Decolonization of the region began in 1957, with the independence of Ghana. It gathered momentum through the 1960s and beyond, to 1994 and the eradication of apartheid in South Africa.

The momentum which fanned African nationalism strengthened relations between former colonies, leading to stronger voices in favour of pan-Africanism. In 1963, the founding fathers of African independence established the OAU, whose main objectives were to:

- promote the unity and solidarity of African states;
- coordinate and intensify cooperation and efforts among African states, in order to achieve a better life for the people; and
- defend the sovereignty of African states, their territorial integrity and their independence.

In many instances, independence did not mean political stability. Many countries which gained independence in the late 1950s and the 1960s—such as Chad, Congo, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda, Somalia and Sudan—underwent phases of political instability which, in some cases, have

continued up to the present. Major developments which took place in the 1970s, and which have influenced policies in Africa, are listed in Table 1.1.

The Cold War is arguably one of the major events that had the greatest impact on Africa, in terms of its socio-economic alliances and development. Environmental management was generally not considered paramount during that period as it is today, even though Africa has a long track record in terms of the sustainable use of natural resources. The two dominant development paradigms during the Cold War were capitalism and socialism. This sometimes led to tensions between African countries, often resulting in armed conflict between them and civil war in others. Armed conflict led to a refugee problem, which saw the number of refugees grow from a low figure of 23 500 people at the end of the 1950s to a high of about 50 million refugees at the end of the 1990s (UNHCR 2000). Political unrest and the resultant refugee situation in many parts of Africa during the past decades have led to many problems, including:

- deforestation, resulting from massive land clearance for agriculture and fuelwood;
- rapid urbanization, particularly in coastal areas;
- widespread poverty;
- poor economic performance;
- trade policies which are not conducive towards peace and development;
- inadequate technology base to satisfy existing demand;
- increased civil strife; and
- growth in illegal trade in minerals and other natural resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA

Five years after the OAU was established, African countries adopted the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, in Algiers in September 1968. The main objective of the Algiers Convention was to encourage individual and joint action for the conservation, utilization and development of soil, water, flora and fauna, for the present and future welfare of humankind.

The main principle of the Algiers Convention states: 'The contracting states shall undertake to adopt the measures necessary to ensure conservation, utilization

Table 1.1 Major developments which shaped policies in Africa in the 1970s

Year	Developments
1971	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat is adopted in Ramsar, Iran
1972	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The UN Conference on the Human Environment is held in Stockholm, Sweden ● The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is established, with its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya ● The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage is adopted in Paris, France ● The Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and other Substances is adopted in London, United Kingdom, and Mexico City, Mexico
1973	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The 'oil weapon' is first used on the world oil market by the Arab oil exporting countries. This has a devastating impact, especially on the economies of developing countries, including those of Africa ● The Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is adopted in Washington, D.C., USA ● The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships is adopted in London, United Kingdom
1975	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mozambique becomes an independent state on 25 June, followed by Seychelles on 29 June and by Angola on 11 November ● The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat enters into force ● The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage enters into force ● The Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Substances enters into force
1976	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques
1977	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques is opened for signature in Geneva, Switzerland in May
1978	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Protocol relating to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships modifying provisions, adopted in 1973, is adopted in London, United Kingdom ● The Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques enters into force
1979	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Protracted negotiations are held at Lancaster House between the British government and the Patriotic Front. The talks led to the independence of Zimbabwe in the following year ● The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals is adopted in Bonn, Germany in June

Sources: SADC/UNCSARDC (1998) and UNEP/SSIDA (undated)

and development of soil, water, floral and faunal resources in accordance with scientific principles and with due regard to the best interests of the people.’

- The Algiers Convention also demands that parties undertake to:
 - adopt effective measures to conserve and improve the soil; and to control erosion and land use;
 - establish policies to conserve, utilize and develop water resources; to prevent pollution; and to control water use;
 - protect flora and ensure its best utilization; ensure good management of forests; and control burning, land clearance and overgrazing;
 - conserve fauna resources and use them wisely; manage populations and habitats; control hunting, capture and fishing; and prohibit the use of poisons, explosives and automatic weapons in hunting;
 - tightly control traffic in trophies, in order to prevent trade in illegally killed and illegally obtained trophies; and
 - reconcile customary rights with the convention.

Well after the Algiers Convention, the modern environmental agenda—which was first set at the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment—also shaped environmental policies and programmes in the region. For example, African governments have responded positively through policy implementation to global, regional and sub-regional environmental problems and challenges, although the success of policy implementation has varied from one sub-region to another. At the national level, the Stockholm Conference influenced the establishment of the first environment ministry in 1975 in what was then Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo). More environment ministries have been established in other African countries over the past three decades. At the global level, the Stockholm Conference led to the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), with its headquarters in Nairobi.

The global environmental, political, economic and social issues of the 1960s and early 1970s influenced the preparations for, and the final decisions of, the 1972 Stockholm Conference. For Africa, the Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment stands out as the defining document in terms of ‘soft law’ on environment and development issues. The Stockholm Declaration laid the foundation in terms of:

- Environmental rights.
- Environmental education.
- The sovereign rights of states to ‘exploit their own resources’, in terms of their own environmental policies and their responsibility to ensure that activities in their territory do not harm the environment of other states.
- Calling for the ‘elimination and complete destruction’ of nuclear weapons and ‘all other means of mass destruction’.
- Speaking strongly against ‘apartheid, racial segregation, discrimination, colonial and other forms of oppression and foreign domination’.
- Highlighting nature conservation, including wildlife, as important in planning for economic development.
- The sustainable utilization of non-renewable resources, to ensure that they benefit all humankind.
- Recognizing the importance of ‘substantial quantities of financial and technological assistance’ to developing countries, in order to tackle environmental deficiencies caused by underdevelopment and natural disasters.
- The need for environmental policies of all countries to enhance, and not to adversely affect, the present or future development potential of developing countries.
- Rational planning to reconcile any conflict between the needs of development and the need to protect and improve the environment.
- Appropriate demographic policies ‘which are without prejudice to basic human rights’.
- The application of science and technology to identify, avoid and control environmental risks.

The 1972 Stockholm Conference rekindled the African spirit of living in harmony with each other and with the environment, as was stated by Professor Mostafa K. Tolba (who later became the second UNEP executive director) at that conference (see Box 1.2).

In addition to the Algiers Convention, African countries are party to some of the following international agreements, which were adopted in the 1970s:

- The 1971 Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar).

Box 1.2 Opening a new window in global environmental management

‘One of our prominent responsibilities in this conference is to issue an international declaration on the human environment; a document with no binding legislative imperatives, but—we hope—with moral authority, that inspire in the hearts of men, the desire to live in harmony with each other, and with their environment.’

Professor Mostafa K. Tolba, President of the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology, and head of the Egyptian delegation at the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment

- The 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage).
- The 1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
- The 1979 Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS).

THE 1980s—STAGNATION

By the close of the 1970s, some countries in Africa were still under colonial rule. South Africa was still struggling to eliminate apartheid and, in what is now Zimbabwe, a liberation war was raging against the minority government, which had pronounced a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from Britain in 1965. South West Africa, now Namibia, was also yet to achieve independence. Elsewhere in the region, the territories of Western Sahara and Eritrea were fighting for self-determination.

Civil and political strife in Africa were taking a large toll on human life and on natural resources, which were being plundered to finance wars. In Mozambique, for example, the civil war intensified in the 1980s, forcing millions to become refugees in the neighbouring countries of Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. At the height of the war, Malawi was host to more than 1 million Mozambicans—about 10 per cent of the country’s population.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

Since independence, many African countries have persistently faced social and economic challenges. Economic growth for most African countries has been sluggish or negative, impacting heavily on the welfare of the people, especially the rural population. In the 1980s, Africa underwent many economic experiments, such as economic Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which have been blamed in some countries for exacerbating poverty. The region’s continued dependence on external aid, and increasing external debt, illustrate the complete failure of some of its social and economic policies, a number of which were prescribed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). SAPs in the region led to, among other things, the removal by governments of subsidies on essential services, such as education, health and transport; and a severe reduction of jobs in the public service sector. These policies have resulted in: a reduction in real income and purchasing power; an increase in the importance of the informal economy and family labour; an increase in the relative price of many basic goods and services; and a reduction in the quality of public services.

The negative impacts of SAPs have been heaviest on: the urban poor, who rely most heavily on employment, consumer subsidies and public services; and rural smallholder farmers, who relied on subsidies for their farm inputs. In urban areas, wages and job opportunities declined considerably following the introduction of SAPs.

The external debt problem in Africa heightened during the 1980s. The decade between 1985–87 and 1995–97 saw 41 sub-Saharan countries sinking deeper into debt (see Table 1.2). In some cases, the debt rose by more than 150 per cent, as in the case of Angola, Chad and Lesotho. Debt-related issues in the region are covered in more detail in Chapter 3 of this report.

DISASTERS

The major environmental disasters in Africa are recurrent droughts and floods. Their socio-economic and ecological impacts are devastating to African countries, because most of the countries do not have real-time forecasting technology, or resources for post-disaster rehabilitation. The impacts of disasters include: massive displacement of people, as happened in

Table 1.2 Percentage change in indebtedness by African countries

Country	Total external debt US\$ (million) 1985–87	Total external debt US\$ (million) 1995–97	Percentage change
Angola	4 035	10 739	166
Benin	1 012	1 611	59.2
Botswana	438	626	42.9
Burkina Faso	659	1 286	95.1
Burundi	598	1 117	86.8
Cameroon	4 003	9 394	135
Central African Republic	474	921	94.3
Chad	275	975	255
Congo	3 625	5 439	50.0
Congo, D.R.	7 373	12 799	73.6
Côte d'Ivoire	11 562	18 010	55.8
Equatorial Guinea	162	286	76.5
Eritrea	-	52	-
Ethiopia	6 234	10 155	62.9
Gabon	1 923	4 318	125
Gambia	281	437	55.5
Ghana	2 779	5 992	116
Guinea	1 767	3 334	88.7
Guinea Bissau	390	918	135
Kenya	4 841	6 922	43.0
Lesotho	211	669	217
Liberia	1 461	2 091	43.1
Madagascar	3 073	4 191	36.4
Malawi	1 182	2 253	90.6
Mali	1 749	2 970	69.8
Mauritania	1 740	2 405	38.2
Mozambique	3 496	5 833	66.8
Namibia	-	-	-
Niger	1 411	1 567	11.0
Nigeria	23 392	31 318	33.9
Rwanda	474	1 061	124
Senegal	3 275	3 725	13.7
Sierra Leone	870	1 169	34.4
Somalia	1 816	2 628	44.7
South Africa	-	25 543	-
Sudan	9 945	16 967	70.6
Tanzania	6 506	7 345	12.9
Togo	1 078	1 427	32.4
Uganda	1 522	3 652	140
Zambia	5 655	6 933	22.7
Zimbabwe	2 631	5 006	90.3

Source: UNDP/UNEP/World Bank/WRI 2000

Ethiopia in the mid-1980s; increased erosion and sedimentation of reservoirs; degradation of coastal zones; and general changes in habitats. These impacts negatively affect both people and wildlife.

In addition to drought and floods, tropical cyclones cause havoc, especially in the West Indian Ocean Islands. Islands states, such as Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, Reunion and others, and coastal states, such as Mozambique, are also vulnerable.

Poor land management practices, which lead to land degradation and deforestation, contribute to increased flood disasters in some risk areas. The effects of droughts and floods are exacerbated by ineffective policies. For instance, where governments are aware that a large percentage of their people rely heavily on wood for energy, and yet do not provide adequate energy resources, people are forced to cut trees for charcoal, which is sold primarily in urban areas. This contributes to deforestation in Africa. Unless alternative energy sources are made available, the deforestation trend is likely to continue, exposing more and more people to risk from disasters related to environmental change. Human vulnerability to environmental change is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 of this report.

Major developments which took place in the 1980s, and which have influenced policies in Africa, are listed in Table 1.3.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Although the 1980s have been referred to as the 'lost decade' for Africa, it was also the decade in which governments in the region consolidated efforts to set their countries on a path of sustainable development. Various environmental initiatives were undertaken during this period, at both regional and global levels, and these greatly influenced environmental policy in Africa.

Emergence of African common resolve

Meetings under the auspices of the OAU, such as the 1980 Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government, which led to the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action, helped to highlight the challenges facing the region. Under the Lagos Plan of Action, African leaders emphasized that 'Africa's huge resources must be applied principally to meet the needs and purposes of its people.' They also emphasized the need for Africa's

Table 1.3 Major events which shaped policies in Africa in the 1980s

Year	Developments
1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Zimbabwe attains independence from Britain ● The Organization of African Unity (OAU) adopts the Lagos Plan of Action ● Nine southern African countries – Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe – establish a political and economic bloc called the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), now the Southern African Development Community (SADC) ● The World Conservation Strategy is published by the World Conservation Union (IUCN), introducing the concept of sustainable development, and becomes a blueprint for national conservation strategies (NCS)
1982	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat is amended in Paris, France ● The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is adopted
1983	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The United Nations establishes the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) ● The Protocol relating to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships enters into force ● The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals enters into force ● The International Tropical Timber Agreement is adopted in Geneva, Switzerland in November. This agreement was later succeeded by the International Tropical Timber Agreement (1994) ● The first incidence of HIV/AIDS is recorded in Africa
1985	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer is adopted in Vienna, Austria ● The Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region is adopted in Nairobi, Kenya ● The Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora in the Eastern African Region is adopted in Nairobi, Kenya
1986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat enters into force
1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Brundtland Commission publishes <i>Our Common Future</i>, which advocates sustainable development ● The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer is adopted in Montreal, Canada ● The Agreement on the Action Plan for the Environmentally Sound Management of the Common Zambezi River System is adopted in Harare, Zimbabwe, and enters into force
1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer enters into force
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parties to CITES ban international trade in ivory and other elephant products. Some Southern African countries put up a strong opposition ● The Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer enters into force, in January ● The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal is adopted in Basle, Switzerland

Sources: SADC/IUCN/SADC (1998) and UNEP/Sida (undated)

apparent 'total reliance on the export of raw materials' to change, and the need to mobilize its entire human and material resources for the development of the region (OAU 1980). The Lagos Plan of Action (see Table 1.4) is one of many measures adopted by the region which set either qualitative or quantitative targets. Unfortunately, many of these targets remain unmet.

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

The first meeting of AMCEN, organized by UNEP in close collaboration with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the OAU, was held in Cairo, Egypt in December 1985. In addition to being Africa's direct response to the 1972 Stockholm Conference, the establishment of AMCEN was also part of UNEP's response to Africa's environmental crisis. The objective of the AMCEN programme, which was adopted in Cairo, is to mobilize national, sub-regional and regional cooperation in four priority areas:

- halting environmental degradation;
- enhancing Africa's food producing capacity;
- achieving self-sufficiency in energy; and
- correcting the imbalance between population and resources.

As part of its programme, AMCEN focuses on environmental, social and economic inequality, and their impact on the environment. It also focuses on the pace of economic globalization and its environmental impact on Africa. The AMCEN meeting in Abuja in 2000 marked a turning point for AMCEN. At this meeting, African governments committed themselves to:

- keeping a constant review of policy actions that would enable Africa to address environmental challenges, especially new and emerging issues;
- building capacity to deal with major concerns;
- forging strategic partnerships with the public and private sectors, with civil society, with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and with the international community in preparing and implementing AMCEN policies and programmes;
- coordinating the implementation of environmental treaties, in accordance with environmental and development priorities; and
- cooperating with relevant regional and sub-regional bodies in preparing a common position for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg in 2002.

Through its partnership with UNEP, AMCEN has committed itself to keeping under review the state of the environment, and emerging environmental issues and trends, in Africa. It also aims to provide early warning signals, and to promote government and public access to environmental information, as a basis for policy development, programme responses and action to achieve environmental security.

For almost 20 years, AMCEN has facilitated the broadening of the political and public policy legitimacy of environmental concerns, through the growth of civil society organizations, and their active participation in international and national environmental activities. Some of the milestones that AMCEN has achieved include the following:

- the adoption in January 1991 of the Bamako Convention on Hazardous Wastes;
- the adoption in Abidjan in November 1992 of the African Common Position, which was subsequently submitted to the UNCED Secretariat;
- the establishment and promotion of eight networks, in the areas of: environmental monitoring; climatology; soils and fertilizers; energy; water resources; genetic resources; environmental education and training; and science and technology;
- the establishment of four committees related to the development and improvement of the environment of the five African ecosystems, namely: deserts and arid lands; rivers and lake basins; forests and woodlands; regional seas; and island ecosystems;
- the harmonization of Africa's position on global environmental issues, through the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD); and
- the strengthening of cooperation between African member states.

World Conservation Strategy

The 1980 World Conservation Strategy (WCS), which was developed by the World Conservation Union (IUCN), introduced the concept of sustainable development.

Table 1.4 Goals of the Lagos Plan of Action, 1980–2000

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Action</i>
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt a plan of action, which should incorporate the development of policies, strategies, institutions and programmes, for the protection of the environment. ● Utilize urban wastes to produce biogas, in order to save energy; and convert rubbish into manure; combat water-borne diseases; control water pollution from agricultural and industrial effluents. ● Introduce measures to control marine pollution from land-based industrial wastes and oil from shipping. ● Implement stricter control of fish exploitation in economic exclusion zones by foreign transnationals. ● Establish programmes to rehabilitate mined-out sites, by removing earth tailings; filling up ponds to eradicate water-borne diseases; and controlling toxic heavy metal poisoning. ● Establish stations to monitor air pollutants from factories, cars, and electrical generators using coal. ● Control the importation of pollutive industries (cement, oil refineries, tanneries and so on). ● Create national programmes in environmental education. ● Improve legislation and law enforcement, in order to protect the environment. ● Plan and manage the rational use of land, water and forest resources as part of the campaign against desertification. ● Develop innovative approaches in drought management and desertification control. ● Collect and disseminate environmental data, in order to monitor the state of the environment. ● Facilitate the establishment of techniques for the proper exploitation of natural resources, in order to prevent water and air pollution. ● Facilitate the establishment of techniques to manage and use forests and grasslands, in order to prevent the exposure of the land to soil and wind erosion.
Food and agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieve a 50 per cent reduction in post-harvest food losses. ● Attain food self-sufficiency in the next decades. ● Set up national strategic food reserves, at 10 per cent of total food production. ● Increase production from African waters by 1 million tonnes by 1985. ● Develop a national food policy in each country. ● Establish an inventory of forest resources. ● Promote indigenous research, and the study of indigenous species in particular ecological areas. ● Expand areas under forestry regeneration by 10 per cent annually up to 1985. ● Expand forest reserves by 10 per cent by 1985.
Water resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establish an inventory of surface and groundwater sources. ● Develop special techniques for managing water resources, that is, collect data on water availability and quality; forecast demand in various rural sectors; and develop and use technologies for recovery and recycling. ● Develop technologies for collecting water in rural areas, for distribution, irrigation, treating polluted water and disposal of waste water. ● Establish river basin organizations. ● Strengthen existing sub-regional organizations, such as river and lake basin commissions.

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'The environment is the business of everybody, development is the business of everybody, life and living is the business of everybody. I think the solution will be found in encouraging mass environmental literacy so that there can be democratic and literate decisions, because if decisions are taken by a few without the incorporation of the opinion of the masses, the NGOs especially included, the likelihood is that the situations will not succeed.'

Joseph Ouma,
Moi University Dean of
School of Environmental
Studies, at a WCED public
hearing in September 1986,
in Nairobi, Kenya

●

The WCS influenced African governments to undertake their own national conservation strategies, satisfying one of the objectives of the 1972 Stockholm Conference, that is, to incorporate the environment in development planning. While such policy documents became common, particularly in the 1980s, the environment did not immediately become part of mainstream activity, as indicated by the small annual budget allocations for environmental management.

World Commission on Environment and Development

The WCED was established in 1983 in response to the United Nations General Assembly (UN GA) Resolution 38/161, which mandated the WCED to:

- examine the critical environment and development issues, and formulate realistic proposals for dealing with them;
- propose new forms of international cooperation on issues that would influence policies and events in the direction of necessary change; and
- raise levels of understanding and commitment to the action of individuals, voluntary organizations, business institutions and governments.

The UN GA asked the WCED to formulate 'A Global Agenda for Change' on the environment and development. The WCED's Environmental Perspectives: examine issues in their relationship to the challenges of social and economic development; set out goals for environmentally sound and sustainable development; and call upon governments, international organizations, industry, financial institutions and NGOs to take specific actions to achieve those goals (UNEP/OAU 1991). The WCED, or the Brundtland Commission, popularized sustainable development in its 1987 report, *Our Common Future*. The WCED's definition of sustainable development—development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs—is now part of the environment lexicon. The WCED process also popularized public participation in environmental issues, because it convened many public meetings in Africa, and in other developed and developing regions.

Some of the actions recommended by the WCED for African countries are shown in Box 1.3.

Box 1.3 Key issues faced by Africa

The WCED has defined sustainable development as 'a process in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are made consistent with future as well as present needs'. For Africa, this entails massive house-cleaning exercises, and international negotiations yet unmatched among national governments, including:

- providing more resources to meet the priority needs of the people, rather than satisfying the needs of international creditors;
- utilizing the ability and the aspirations of the people in development plans, so that poverty alleviation becomes a core element as they move towards sustainable development;
- setting up democratic domestic mechanisms to harmonize the activities of NGOs operating in Africa with development policies defined by governments;
- negotiating for commodity prices which reflect the real cost of production for Africa; and
- carrying out intensive intra-Africa trade.

These are the issues that put the destiny of Africa at stake. They can only be ignored at great cost to an environmentally sound future for the region.

Source: UNEP/OAU 1991

First African Regional Conference on Environment and Development

In response to the UN GA resolution adopted in 1987, and by the recommendation of the WCED, the First African Regional Conference on Environment and Development was convened in Kampala, Uganda in June 1989. Ministers responsible for economic planning, education and environment, as well as NGOs, youth and women, attended the conference.

The Kampala Conference undertook to integrate environmental concerns into all existing and future economic and sectoral policies, in order to ensure that they protect and improve the environment and the natural resource base on which the health and welfare of the African people depend. The conference also adopted the Kampala Agenda for Action on Sustainable Development in Africa. The Kampala Conference was a synthesis of the programmes and plans of action taken on the environment since the Lagos Plan of Action was

adopted in 1980 (see Figure 1.2). The priority issues adopted by the Kampala Conference were:

- managing demographic change and pressures;
- achieving food self-sufficiency and food security;
- ensuring efficient and equitable use of water resources;
- securing greater energy self-sufficiency;
- optimizing industrial production;
- maintaining species and ecosystems; and
- preventing and reversing desertification.

The Kampala Conference was further endorsed by the OAU Pan-African Conference on Environment and Development, held in Bamako in January 1991.

THE 1990s TO 2002— TOWARDS REVITALIZATION

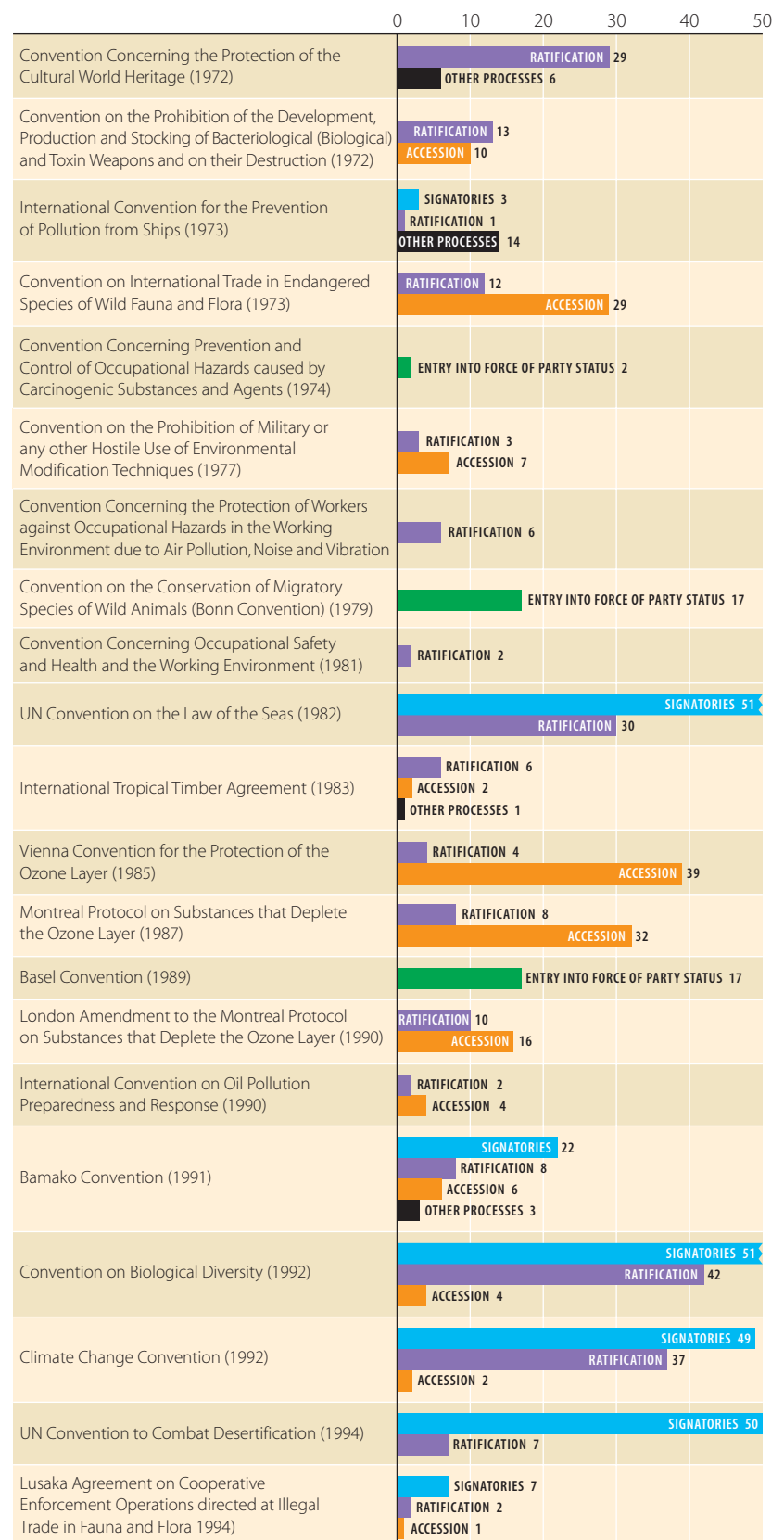
Following global trends, significant and positive achievements, including political liberalization, spread across Africa during the 1990s. Pluralism and accountability were more evident than ever before. One-party dictatorships and military regimes were swept out of power, as Africans exercised their right to elect their governments. Leaders who accepted the will of the people at the ballot box began to emerge. In most countries in the region, civil society grew in strength, with significant movements towards decentralization, and with popular participation in the development process.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The 1990s saw a further shift in the development paradigm for Africa. The ‘real issue’ for the 1990s centred on good governance. One of the major political events of the last decade of the 20th century was the abolition of apartheid in South Africa. The photograph of the release of Nelson Mandela from prison in February 1990 perhaps best represents the most lasting icon not only of the decade, but also of decolonization. The first democratic elections in the country in 1994, which elected Mandela into power as the first black South African president, essentially marked the end of the decolonization process for Africa, even though many hotspots continue to exist in the region.

During the period 1992–2002, the OAU also recognized the importance of cooperation in

Figure 1.2 Some international conventions and the number of countries participating in each since the 1970 Lagos Plan of Action



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'The relationship between climate change, desertification and poverty is one of grave concern to our continent. All demand global action.'

Ketumile Masire,
 President of Botswana,
 speaking on behalf of the
 Chairman of the
 Organization of African
 Unity at the Rio Earth
 Summit, 3–14 June 1992

●

environmental management. It established broad-based agreements, such as Articles 56–59 of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community, which relate to: natural resources; energy; the environment; and the control of hazardous wastes (UNEP 1999). The OAU and many governments in Africa have adopted instruments or national constitutions which recognize the environment as a fundamental right. This is, perhaps, a direct achievement of the 1972 Stockholm Conference, which articulated, in Principle 1, the right of people to live 'in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being'.

REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

A number of regional and sub-regional institutions have been established in Africa during the 1990s, in order to introduce and to strengthen sustainable development programmes. Some of the institutions and initiatives are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

African Economic Community

Efforts to strengthen regional cooperation in the sustainable use and management of natural resources and the environment have never been more inclusive and holistic than is provided for under the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community, adopted by OAU member states in Abuja in June 1991. The Treaty aims at ensuring the harmonization and coordination of environmental protection policies among member states. The objectives of the African Economic Community (AEC), which was launched in Harare in 1997, are to promote economic, social and cultural development, and the integration of African economies, in order to increase economic self-reliance and to promote self-sustained development. Specifically, the Abuja Treaty obliges parties to:

- coordinate and harmonize their policies and programmes in the field of energy and natural resources, and to promote new and renewable forms of energy;
- promote a healthy environment; adopt national, sub-regional and regional policies, strategies and programmes; and establish appropriate industries for environmental development and protection;
- take appropriate measures to ban the importation and dumping of hazardous wastes in AEC

territories; and cooperate in the transboundary movement, management and processing of such wastes, where these emanate from a member state;

- cooperate in the development of river and lake basins; in the development and protection of marine and fishery resources; and in plant and animal protection;
- ensure the development within the borders of member states of certain basic industries (for example, forestry and energy) which are conducive to collective self-reliance and to modernization; and
- ensure the proper application of science and technology to a number of sectors, including energy and environmental conservation.

Intergovernmental Authority on Development

In 1986, six drought-stricken countries—Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda—created the Inter-governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), in order to coordinate development in the Horn of Africa. IGADD was later renamed the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Eritrea became the seventh member of IGAD in September 1993. In April 1996, the IGAD Council of Ministers identified three priority areas of cooperation:

- conflict prevention, management and resolution, and humanitarian affairs;
- infrastructure development in the areas of transport and communications; and
- food security and environmental protection.

Common Market for East and Southern Africa

In December 1994, the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) succeeded the Preferential Trade Area (PTA), which had been established in 1981. COMESA's main focus has been on the formation of a large economic and trading unit which is capable of overcoming some of the barriers that are faced by individual states. COMESA's strategy is 'economic prosperity through regional integration'.

African Union and the New African Initiative

Some 38 years after the establishment of the OAU, African heads of state meeting in Sirte, Libya in March 2001 declared the establishment of the African Union

(AU). The main thrust of the AU is to build capacities, in order to enhance the economic, political and social integration and development of the African people.

Crowning the birth of the AU is the New African Initiative, unanimously adopted by the Lusaka Summit on 11 July 2001. The New African Initiative represents a merger between the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP) and the OMEGA Plan. It is a pledge by African leaders based on a common vision to eradicate poverty. The New African Initiative is also a conviction by African leaders to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and to participate actively in the world economy and body politic. It is a call for a new relationship—one of partnership—between Africa and the international community, in order to overcome the development chasm.

CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACE-BUILDING

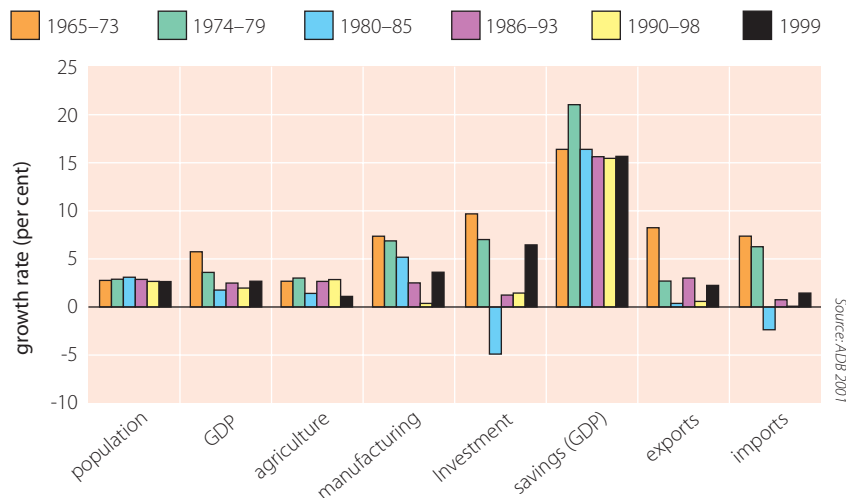
Despite making some noticeable efforts towards progress in the region, setbacks have also been encountered during the past decade. Wars in countries such as Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia-Eritrea and the Democratic Republic of Congo have not only led to a resurgence of the serious problems of refugees, but also to the plunder of natural resources. The United Nations (UN) has produced a number of reports on this issue, and some countries have been sanctioned over the trade in illegal diamonds and other minerals and natural resources.

African countries have taken bold steps in solving conflicts themselves at a regional level. For instance, the sub-regional defence bloc for West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), has been instrumental in bringing peace to Liberia and Sierra Leone. Elsewhere in the region, there are similar bodies that are entrusted with sub-regional security, such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defence and Security.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

The 1990s were also characterized by state involvement in the shift towards a market economy in Africa. This is the decade when many African countries

Figure 1.3 Economic performance in Africa, 1965–2000



Source: ADB 2001

liberalized their economies. Privatization of state-owned infrastructure was introduced in many countries. There were mixed results but, overall, job losses were evident in those countries. Figure 1.3 illustrates Africa's economic performance between 1965 and 2000.

Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs)

During the past decade, many African countries continued with economic reform through SAPs. While economic liberalization may have triggered economic recovery, there have been indications that economic growth will worsen, as opposed to improving, environmental conditions (UNDP/UNEP/World Bank/WRI 1996). The general trend between 1995 and 1998 shows a declining economic situation, with GNP per capita falling. Indications, however, reveal that, in some countries of the region, the economy may have started to pick up again. According to the World Bank, only nine out of 48 countries have annual per capita income of more than US\$1 000, and only five countries in the region—Botswana, Gabon, Mauritius, Seychelles and South Africa—have annual per capita levels of more than US\$2 500 (Kappel 2001).

Value of Africa's natural resources

One of the challenges facing Africa is the failure of economic markets to capture and promote the real value of Africa's natural resources. Many African countries are in the same position today as they were at independence, that is, dependent on capital from natural resources for economic development and growth. Commodity prices on exports

'The international community seems to remember the existence of Africa only when disaster strikes the continent. Yet in Africa, like in other developing regions, poverty is the single most serious contributor to environmental degradation associated with land abuse, deforestation and the lack of access to freshwater.'

Robert Mugabe,
President of Zimbabwe and
Chair of the OAU, speaking
at the Rio +5 Summit,
23–27 June 1997

from developing countries are determined by the World Trade Organization (WTO) through a quota system. This puts African countries at a great disadvantage. In most countries, national policies and market activities fail to reflect the full economic value and potential of their natural resources. This has led to the degradation and overexploitation of natural resources, as industry and commerce have generally focused on maximizing profits at the expense of sound environmental management and protection. The greatest problem lies in the imbalance in the use of the natural resources, which results from a combination of factors, such as: lack of investment capital; inappropriate technologies; and poor management.

Debt

External debt continues to be a major impediment to the achievement of accelerated economic development and sustainable environmental management in the region. Africa's external debt has been growing since the 1980s (Expanded Joint Secretariat 2001). The total debt stock stood at US\$313 000 million in 1994, equivalent to 234 per cent of income from exports, and 83 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) (UNEP 1999). Between 1980 and 1995, 22 African countries renegotiated their commercial bank debts 58 times. During the same period, 35 African countries renegotiated their external debt with their creditors in the Paris Club a total of 151 times (Expanded Joint Secretariat 2001). Some 33 of the 41 most heavily indebted countries in the world (in relative terms) are in Africa. The debt issue is covered in more detail in Chapter 3 of this report.

In many countries of the region, natural resource utilization is driven by the demand on governments to earn foreign exchange from exports of primary commodities. Trade liberalization and the pressures to service foreign debts may exacerbate environmental degradation, if appropriate regulatory policies and laws are not instituted. In the face of declining export earnings and debt burdens, many governments have tried to boost the exploitation of natural resources and cash crop production. This has led to widespread environmental damage, as rural communities are forced to cultivate fragile and marginal areas.

Globalization

Globalization has resulted in the removal of barriers to trade, capital mobility and technological advances,

mostly in the developed world. While globalization may drive future economic prosperity, including poverty reduction, it has, however, advanced the interests of developed countries to the detriment of developing countries, particularly in the areas of trade, finance and technology.

The Millennium Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, published in September 2000, states that although globalization is transforming the world today, there are dangers associated with it, including crime, narcotics, terrorism, diseases and weapons. The benefits and the opportunities of globalization are concentrated in a small number of countries. An imbalance has arisen between the creation and enforcement of rules which have facilitated the expansion of global markets, while environmental activities or social programmes—such as labour standards, human rights or poverty reduction—have received no support (Expanded Joint Secretariat 2001).







Health and HIV/AIDS

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has established that most African countries in sub-Saharan Africa experienced declines in per capita incomes during the past decade as a result of HIV/AIDS. In many African countries, HIV/AIDS has already had a devastating impact on many development sectors, such as agriculture, health and education. Of the world's 36 million people living with HIV/AIDS, more than 23 million, or 64 per cent of them, are in sub-Saharan Africa (UN 2000). It has been estimated that, by 2010, there could be 40 million orphans in sub-Saharan Africa as a result of HIV/AIDS.

Poverty

Poverty encompasses a range of deprivations, including: lack of access to natural resources, health care and education; inability to access the political process; vulnerability to catastrophes; and the denial of opportunities and choices that are basic to human development. An estimated 40 per cent of people in sub-Saharan Africa live below the poverty line, and both income and human poverty are increasing (UNDP 1997). Poverty is a major factor in accelerating environmental degradation in the region. This is because the majority of the poor are heavily dependent on land and its resources for livelihood. The poor are

Table 1.5 HDI ranking of African countries in 2000

<i>Sub-regional grouping</i>	<i>African countries by HDI levels</i>		
	<i>Low HDI</i>	<i>Medium HDI</i>	<i>High HDI</i>
Northern Africa 	Sudan (143)	Libya (72) Tunisia (101) Algeria (107) Egypt (119) Morocco (124)	none
Western Africa 	Togo (145) Mauritania (147) Nigeria (151) Cote d'Ivoire (154) Senegal (155) Benin (157) Gambia (161) Guinea (162) Mali (165) Guinea Bissau (169) Burkina Faso (172) Niger (173) Sierra Leone (174)	Cape Verde (105) Ghana (129)	none
Central Africa 	Democratic Republic of Congo (152) Central African Republic (166) Chad (167)	Gabon (123) Equatorial Guinea (131) Sao Tome & Principe (132) Cameroon (134) Congo (139)	none
Southern Africa 	Zambia (153) Tanzania (156) Angola (160) Malawi (163) Mozambique (168)	South Africa (103) Swaziland (112) Namibia (115) Botswana (122) Lesotho (127) Zimbabwe (130)	none
Eastern Africa 	Djibouti (149) Uganda (158) Eritrea (159) Rwanda (164) Burundi (170) Ethiopia (171)	Kenya (138)	none
West Indian Ocean States 	Madagascar (140)	Seychelles (53) Mauritius (71) Comoros (137)	none

Source: UNDP 2000 [Figures in brackets refer to world HDI rankings, from the highest ranking of 1, for Canada, to the lowest of 174, for Sierra Leone]

forced to overexploit resources, such as fisheries, forests and water, in a desperate struggle to survive. Environmental degradation contributes markedly to many health threats, including: air and water pollution; poor sanitation; and diseases, such as malaria.

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a way of measuring quality of life, defined by the UNDP. It is clear from Table 1.5 that, in 2000, there were no African countries in the high (HDI) group. A number of countries were in the medium HDI group, while the majority were ranked in the low HDI group.

African governments now generally acknowledge that the overriding objective of development hinges on poverty reduction in the short term, and on its complete eradication in the long term. In reducing poverty, there is a need for strong political commitment combined with specific policy instruments targeting the poorest segments of society. To achieve average growth rates of 7 per cent per year—which estimates suggest would resuscitate Africa's economic performance and put the region on a path of sustainable development—an additional investment of 33 per cent of GDP is required.

ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

The major environmental highlight of the past decade was the 1992 UNCED, or Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Africa played a major role both during the process leading up to UNCED and at the conference itself.

Box 1.4 A turning point in global environment and development

'It is indeed an historic conference. Possibly, future generations will call it a turning point, a moment in history when a major correction was introduced in the process of the industrial revolution which started, less than 200 years ago, to transform so profoundly conditions on our planet ... While the environment is an emerging new and very serious problem, we must not forget that development is still the highest priority and an unreachd objective.'

UN Secretary-General, Butros Butros Ghali, opening the 1992 Earth Summit

Box 1.5 Abuja Treaty—Article 58 (Environment)

'Member states undertake to promote a healthy environment. To this end, they shall adopt national, regional and continental policies, strategies and programmes and establish appropriate institutions for the protection and enhancement of the environment. For purposes of paragraph 1 of this article, member states shall take the necessary measures to accelerate the reform and innovation process leading to ecologically rational, economically sound and socially acceptable development policies and programmes.'

Source: OAU 1991

The region, through the OAU, presented the African Common Position on Environment and Development, which highlighted the region's environment and development priorities. The environmental challenges facing Africa and the rest of the world were articulated by the then UN Secretary-General, Butros Butros Ghali, at the opening of UNCED (see Box 1.4).

Perhaps the most defining decision of the 1992 Earth Summit was the granting of equal footing, in the Rio Declaration, to both the environment and to development. This was a significant departure from the 1972 Stockholm Conference, which gave prominence to the environment, despite its groundbreaking decisions on political, social and economic issues. While the Stockholm Conference defined an environmental right, the Earth Summit not only reaffirmed this right, but also balanced it with 'the right to development', which it said must be fulfilled 'to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations'. This reaffirmation echoes the 1991 Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (see Box 1.5), which sets out Africa's obligations towards natural resources and development.

At the Earth Summit, the eradication of poverty was identified as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in order to decrease the disparities in standards of living and to better meet the needs of most people in the world. The Earth Summit also called for:

- elimination of unsustainable patterns of production and consumption;
- enhancement of the development, adaptation, diffusion and transfer of technologies, including new and innovative technologies;

- recognition that environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens at the relevant level;
- enactment of effective environmental legislation;
- implementation of environmental impact assessments (EIAs) before projects are undertaken;
- recognition of the vital role women play in environmental management and development, and the need to ensure their full participation; and
- recognition of the vital role of indigenous people and their communities, and of other local communities, in environmental management.

Major developments which took place in the 1990s, and which have influenced policies in Africa, are listed in Table 1.6.

Agenda 21 and Multilateral Environmental Agreements

The recommendations set out in the blueprint for environment and development—Agenda 21—adopted at the Rio Earth Summit included:

- the integration of environment and development in policies, plans and management;
- the provision of an effective legal and regulatory framework;
- making effective use of economic instruments and other incentives; and
- the establishment of systems for integrated environment and economic accounting.

The Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) of the 1990s, to which African countries are party, include the following:

- the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);
- the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
- the 1994 UN Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD); and
- the 1997 Kyoto Protocol (not yet in force).

Sub-regional policy responses and actions

Many of Africa's policy responses to the environmental issues and challenges of the 1972 Stockholm Conference and the 1992 Earth Summit are found in the various sub-regional frameworks and agreements that have been developed since 1972. These responses

are based on sub-regional political and economic groupings and priorities.

Central Africa

The Central African sub-region has a number of economic units, namely: the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC); the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC); and the African Timber Organization (ATO). The primary aim of these organizations is to promote economic cooperation and sound environmental management in the sub-region. In the past three decades, Central Africa has also seen the emergence of intergovernmental organizations responsible for the development and management of shared rivers in the sub-region. However, the performance of these institutions remains far below their potential. Part of the underperformance of the sub-region's institutions relate to governance. Furthermore, much of Central Africa is, or has been, involved in civil war at one time or another, and this has affected the progress of policy responses. Poverty and lack of cooperation have also combined to affect the progress and success of sub-regional efforts.

Eastern Africa

In Eastern Africa, policy responses have largely been based on ecosystems, rather than political and economic groupings. A number of sub-regional initiatives have been developed and implemented, including: the Eastern Africa Biodiversity Support Programme; the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI); the Eastern Africa Wetlands Programme; Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM); and the Lake Victoria Global Environment Facility (GEF) Project. The Eastern African Convention on the Protection of Coastal and Marine Environment has been very important in bringing together the coastal countries of the sub-region to discuss and address issues of common interest. The Nile Basin Initiative is one of the most successful regional initiatives. It has 21 projects, whose main focus is: integrated water resources planning and management; capacity building; training; harmonization of legislation; and environmental protection. Famine and civil strife have slowed down the progress of Eastern Africa's environmental policy responses. Despite the presence of the East Africa Economic

Table 1.6 Major events which shaped policies in Africa in the 1990s

Year	Developments
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After 27 years of political detention by apartheid in South Africa, Nelson Mandela is finally released from prison, and preparations for a new political dispensation begin ● The Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer is amended in London, United Kingdom ● The International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation is signed
1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leaders of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) sign a Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) ● The Protocol to the Atlantic Treaty on the environment, reaffirming the status of the Atlantic Ocean as a special conservation area, is adopted in Madrid, Spain ● The Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Waste within Africa is adopted
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Conference on the Environment is held in Dublin, Ireland; many African countries are present, and demand that water should be recognized both as a social and an economic good ● The United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, is held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil ● Agenda 21 is adopted by the international community ● The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer as amended in London, enters into force ● The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is adopted in New York, USA ● The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer further amended in Copenhagen, Denmark ● The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal enters into force ● The Convention on Biological Diversity is adopted
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Convention on Biological Diversity enters into force, in December ● The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa ● The Convention on Nuclear Safety ● South Africa abolishes its apartheid laws, general elections are held and Nelson Mandela becomes the first black president of a multiracial society ● The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer as amended in Copenhagen, enters into force ● The Lusaka Agreement on Cooperative Enforcement Operations Directed at Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems is adopted and signed by member states ● The Protocol Concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora in the Eastern African Region enters into force
1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region enters into force, 11 years after its adoption
1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses ● Parties to CITES gather in Harare, Zimbabwe, where they agree to relax the ban in international trade in ivory and other elephant products ● The Rio +5 Summit is held in New York to review progress made since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Bamako Convention comes into effect ● The Protocol on Energy in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region enters into force in April

Community (EAEC), regional integration and cooperation in Eastern Africa has been weak. The frameworks for cooperation are generally limited in the sub-region.

Northern Africa

In Agenda 21, UNCED adopted the river basin as the unit of analysis for integrated water resources management (IWRM). Since then, Northern African has started to create an enabling environment for IWRM, including formulation of the legal framework governing the development and preservation of freshwater resources and of the institutional framework for conducting this approach.

At the multinational level, the NBI is an excellent example of cooperation within the framework of IWRM between and among the ten Nile riparian states. The Joint Authority for the Nubian Sandstone Aquifer is another example of cooperation, between Chad, Egypt, Libya and Sudan (CEDARE 2000).

Southern Africa

The SADC formulated a Regional Policy and Strategy for Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources in the 1990s. The main aim of this regional policy and strategy is to ensure the efficient and sustainable use of natural resources, and their effective management and conservation. It incorporates environmental considerations in all policies and programmes, and integrates the sustainable use of natural resources with development needs. Other environmental policies that have been put in place in the sub-region include: the SADC Wildlife Policy; the SADC Wildlife Protocol; the Forestry Sector Policy and Development Strategy; the Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems; the Southern African Power Pool; and the Southern Africa Trade Protocol. Running parallel to these initiatives are other important sub-regional responses, including: the SADC Environmental Information Systems Programme; the SADC Wetlands Conservation Programme; the SADC Environmental Education Programme; and the Southern Africa Biodiversity Support Programme. Although regional frameworks for coordination and cooperation exist on paper, their implementation on the ground has been weak, as a result of lack of funding and institutional problems.

Western Africa

ECOWAS brings together Western African countries as a single grouping and sub-region. Most of the policy responses to environmental issues in Western Africa have been at the national level. However, a few initiatives have been taken, based on river basins and ecosystems. These include: the creation of river basin authorities in the Senegal, Gambia and Niger basins; and the West Africa Wetlands Programme, supported by the IUCN and Wetlands International. One of the oldest African intergovernmental organizations, the Niger River Basin Authority, is in Western Africa. The main aim of this authority, and of numerous others in the sub-region, is to promote cooperation among member countries and to ensure integrated development in the river basins.

West Indian Ocean Islands

Policy responses are few in the West Indian Ocean Islands sub-region, with the exception of an environmental education programme. An ICZM programme, a five-year project supported by the European Union, is being implemented. The goal of the programme is to enable the sustainable development of coastal zones. In addition to this programme, other sub-regional projects, funded by GEF, include: the Western Indian Ocean Marine Biodiversity Conservation programme; the transboundary Diagnostic Analysis and Strategic Action Plan for Marine and Coastal Environments; and the Western Indian Ocean Oil Spill Contingency Planning Project. Due to the isolated nature of the countries in this sub-region, environmental responses at the sub-regional level are few. Apart from the common problem of the seas, there are few common agendas. Funding is also a problem within the sub-region.

National responses and actions

Africa's policy responses to environmental concerns are most pronounced at the national level. The policy responses vary from one country to another, depending on the priority environmental issues. In most countries, the responses take the form of: policy frameworks; resource use planning regulations; public awareness programmes; and the promotion of private sector involvement in natural resources management issues.

National Environment Action Plans (NEAPs), National Conservation Strategies (NCSs), National Plans

of Action to Combat Desertification (NPACDs), National Tropical Forestry Action Plans (NTFPAs), Country Environmental Strategy Papers (CESPs), National Energy Assessments and Country Programmes for the Phasing out of Ozone-Depleting Substances under the Montreal Protocol are playing significant roles in integrating environment and development in many African countries. At present, about 80 per cent of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa are involved in the NEAP process, and other countries are preparing or implementing similar kinds of environmental strategies (World Bank 1995).

Success stories continue to be seen in Africa, especially with regard to moving towards strengthening the institutional frameworks that deal with the environment. High-level coordination for environmental management has been created in some countries, such as: Benin, Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, the Gambia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. EIAs have also been implemented in many countries, and EIA guidelines and procedures are being prepared as a follow-up to appropriate legislation.

2002 WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In August–September 2002, Africa will host the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa—a major milestone for a region which faces many environmental challenges. The main objective of the WSSD is to review progress made on sustainable development since the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. The main focus points for Africa are:

- Eradicating poverty in African countries, through the formulation and implementation of policies that are conducive to the enhancement of domestic savings, as well as allowing external resource inflows, such as foreign direct investment.
- Promoting education, which will require African countries to establish new institutions, or to strengthen existing institutions, in order to enhance their ability to respond to new and longer-term challenges, instead of concentrating on immediate problems.
- Providing new, and improving on existing, healthcare institutions, in order to reduce the

incidence of disease in Africa. This will require a broad development approach, with health sector reforms going hand-in-hand with poverty reduction, conflict prevention and community participation. Among the most urgent areas for action in African countries is the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which is a serious impediment to sustainable development and growth.

- Taking new and strong measures in the management and use of biodiversity, including forest and marine ecosystems and resources. Strategies to implement these programmes could include:
 - developing national forest programmes, in accordance with each country's national conditions, objectives and priorities;
 - strengthening political commitment in the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests;
 - undertaking concrete actions to share equitably the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources;
 - recognizing the role of women in the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of biological resources;
 - providing necessary support to integrate the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of biological resources into national development plans; and
 - promoting the involvement of communities, the private sector, NGOs and other stakeholders in the management of forests, with a view to ensuring the equitable sharing of the benefits accruing from forest resources.
- Ratifying the 1997 UNFCCC Kyoto Protocol to control greenhouse gas emissions, which are believed to be a major factor in climate change, which threatens African countries.
- Switching to higher value-added resource industries, where African countries will have a comparative advantage, and promoting the diversification of industrial production.
- Taking all necessary measures to guarantee a pollution-free environment, especially with respect to toxic wastes, including:
 - ratification and implementation of all relevant conventions;

- development of skilled personnel and testing equipment required for the effective detection and monitoring of the movements of hazardous wastes; and
- strengthening the respective institutions and enacting legislation, in order to facilitate the smooth implementation of the conventions.
- Reviewing national development planning options.
- Promoting communication, and removing the digital gap that currently exists between Africa and the rich nations.
- Promoting trade with targeted strategies, including:
 - developing higher value-added resource-based industries;
 - broadening the production base;
 - allowing the establishment of, and the strengthening of, regional trade;
 - forging ahead with regional integration, in order to increase Africa's share of global trade; and
 - integrating environmental and resource management policies which take into account the effects on sustainable development of trade liberalization programmes.
- Promoting the role of civil society.
- Establishing a single centralized political council which meets regularly, and which is responsible for environmental policy and governance.
- Promoting peace, democracy and human rights, and moving away from the position in which Africa is characterized by conflicts, political strife and human suffering (Expanded Joint Secretariat 2001).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has highlighted some of the major policy issues which have influenced development in Africa, particularly over the past three decades, and which have contributed to the region's responses to growing environmental challenges. Many of these issues are discussed in greater detail in the following chapters.

- Chapter 2, 'The State of Africa's Environment and Policy Analysis', provides more in-depth analysis of the environmental issues facing Africa, and looks at how countries in the region have tried to address them.

- Chapter 3, 'Human Vulnerability to Environmental Change', explains how African people are particularly vulnerable to changes in the environment.
- Chapter 4, 'Outlook 2002–2032', uses four scenarios to explore possible alternative futures in the region, depending on the policy decisions taken to address particular problems.
- Chapter 5, 'Policy Responses, Analysis and Action', presents some of the policy responses needed to resolve some of the environmental and developmental challenges facing the region.

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