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REPORT OF THE 1ST CONFERENCE OF THE STC ON
AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
WATER AND ENVIRONMENT,
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, OCTOBER 2015

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**Inaugural Conference of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) On
Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment
05 October - 09 October 2015
Addis Ababa
ETHIOPIA**

STC1/ARDWE/MIN

**Ministerial Report and Resolutions
of the Inaugural Conference of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on
Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment**

Theme: “Concerted actions to improve livelihoods in Africa “

08 October - 09 October 2015

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Ministers' Session of the Inaugural Conference of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC¹) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment took place at the African Union Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 08 October - 09 October 2015.

II. PARTICIPATION

2. Delegations from the following Member States of the African Union participated: Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Chad, Comoros, Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Tunisia, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe,.

3. Senior representatives of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) included Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East Africa Community (EAC), Economic Community of the Western African States (ECOWAS) and Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

4. Representative of Development and International partners: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), US Mission to the AU, the European Union Commission, the World Bank, the German Technical Cooperation (GIZ), and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), UNECA, World Food Program (WFP), the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), United Nations Development Programme Africa (UNDP), Economic Development Commission for Southern Africa, Food, Agricultural and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANPRAN), and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

5. Ministerial Conferences: African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW), African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) and the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET).

6. A number of Non State Actors: African Women Entrepreneurship Program (AWEP), Maghrébine des Agriculteurs (UMAGRI), Pan African Farmers Organisation (PAFO), East African Farmers Federation (EAFF), General Sudanese Farmers Union, Africa Development Interchange Network, Action Aid, Fresh & Young Brains Development Initiative, European Center for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)- Food Security Programme, Local Development Research Institute and ACORD.

¹Acronyms are attached as Annex 1

7. The AUC was represented by the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission (AUC-DREA) and its technical offices. The NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) was also represented.

III. COMPOSITION OF THE BUREAU

8. After consultations among the five regions, the Bureau for the Ministers meeting was constituted as follows:

Chair:	Congo
1st Vice Chair:	Senegal
2 nd Vice Chair:	Swaziland
3 rd Vice Chair:	Egypt
Rapporteur:	Sudan

IV. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND PROGRAM OF WORK

9. The Ministers' adopted the agenda and programme of work with some modifications.

V. OPENING STATEMENTS

10. **H.E. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace**, the AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, opened the meeting by outlining DREA's Vision and perspectives for fostering the African Agenda on Agricultural growth and transformation; and sound environmental management. She indicated that the STC would consolidate energies and resources, and reduce duplication across related sectors like crop agriculture, livestock, fisheries, water, land, forestry, wildlife, environment, climate change, meteorology and disaster risk reduction. In setting up the STC, she urged the ministers to consider the following key points and targets:

- a) Africa ceases to be criticised for churning out so many decisions and declarations that are hardly implemented;
- b) Africa does not only boast of having majority of the world's 10 fastest growing economies but also ensures inclusive growth and shared prosperity;
- c) Africa reduces the current unsustainable annual food import bill of nearly USD40 billion;
- d) Africa goes beyond boasting of holding 60% of the world's uncultivated arable land but ensures the current high levels of hunger and malnutrition are drastically reduced;

- e) African agriculture ceases suffering from erratic weather patterns and harnesses the continent's irrigation potential which has thus far been exploited by only 3%;
- f) African households, communities and nations cease complaining of low agricultural production and productivity when we can catch up with other regions of the world in the application of mechanisation and use of fertiliser;
- g) Africa ceases registering high levels of poverty and unemployment especially youth unemployment when in addition to crop agriculture, the potential of other sectors such as livestock and fisheries remains untapped;
- h) Africa ceases to suffer from illegal exploitation of and illicit trade in wild flora and fauna but build capacity to promote and protect as well as sustainably manage its enormous precious natural resources;
- i) African citizens cease being vulnerable to increasing and intensifying disasters, especially natural and climatic disasters and risks, including desertification but build resilience and strengthen adaptation mechanisms;
- j) Africa brings down to the minimum possible level the post-harvest losses that cost the continent nearly USD48 billion annually;

11. Mr. Degene Habisha, the representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia welcomed participants to Ethiopia and encouraged participants to find ways of operationalising the Malabo Declaration. He reemphasised the importance of the new STC in maintaining synergy, and avoiding duplication among interrelated sectors.

12. Brief opening statements were then received from Ministers from Senegal, Swaziland, Congo, Egypt, Mauritania, Sudan and Cabo Verde.

VI. PRESENTATION OF EXPERTS REPORT

13. The report of the expert's session, that preceded the ministers meeting was presented by the rapporteur of the experts and senior officials session, Mauritania, for consideration by the ministers. The report covered three areas as follows:

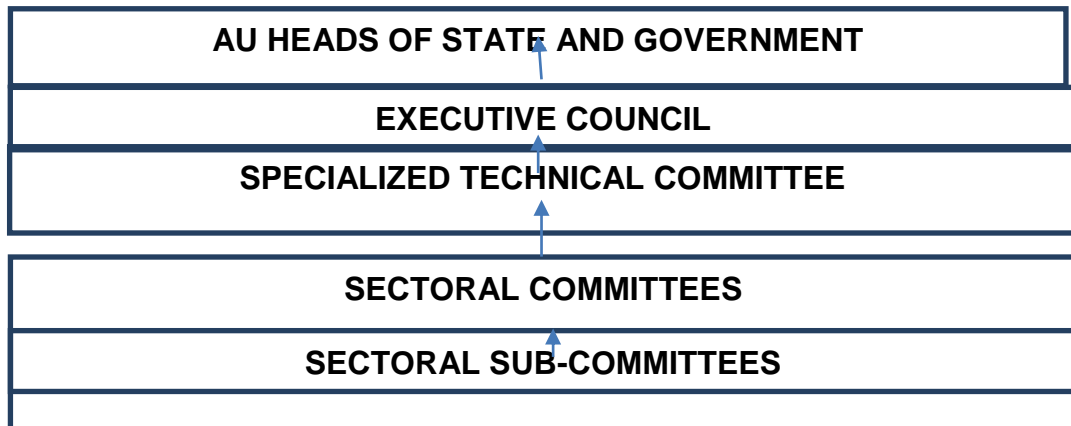
- a) Draft Rules of Procedure of the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment;
- b) Environment, Land, Natural Resources, Climate Change, Meteorology, Disaster Risk Reduction Water and Sanitation;
- c) Agriculture, Rural Development, Livestock and Fisheries.

VII. RESOLUTIONS OF THE MINISTERS DURING THE INAUGURAL STC

14. *The inaugural STC decides and resolves as follows:*

1) On the Rules and Procedures of the STC:

1. Adopt the following structure for the STC



2. Note that the implementation of AU Assembly's Decision on STCs is overarching in terms of the operationalization of the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment.
3. Further note that the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment should be a framework for coordination and harmonisation of the implementation of ongoing programmes related to the Sectors.
4. Resolve that the STC should be comprised of Ministers of the sectors Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Sanitation, Environment and Natural Resources, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Fauna and Flora supported by senior officials, experts as well as NPCA, AfDB and the RECs.
5. Resolve that the STC Committees to be established should be representative of the sectors of this STC.
6. The Bureau of the STC would take into consideration both geographical representations as well as sectoral balance.
7. Decide the establishment of the following Sectoral Committees composed of Ministers:
- Agriculture, Rural Development, Livestock and Fisheries;
 - Environment and Natural Resources;
 - Meteorology, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction;
 - Water and Sanitation;
 - Fauna and Flora.

8. While noting that in accordance with the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of this STC, other Sub-Committees and ad-hoc working groups, may be set up as it deems necessary and shall determine their mandate, composition and functioning.
9. Decide that, on the short term, the Ministerial Conferences will be allowed to continue functioning to the end of the special missions as mandated by the Heads of State in a transitional phase.
10. Adopt and endorse the revised draft of the Rules of Procedure (available separately as an annex to this document) to be presented for consideration by the high-level session of the STC for further legal processing by the STC for Justice and Legal Affairs and adoption at the next AU Executive Council meeting in January 2016

2) Environment, Land, Natural Resources, Climate Change, Meteorology, Disaster Risk Reduction Water And Sanitation:

On Strengthening the role of Science and Technology in combating desertification in Africa

1. Urge continental, regional and national institutions to facilitate the collaboration between STCs, NFPs and policy makers.
2. Request each sub-region to work closely with support of the AUC to identify and strengthen at least one centre of excellence to stimulate the exchange of scientific data and enhance collaboration between scientists and policymakers in the sub-regions.
3. Request the AUC, RECs, Member States and development partners to facilitate, promote and provide the necessary resources for strengthening the role of science and technology in combating desertification in Africa.
4. Request AUC to strengthen its specialized technical office for Semi Arid Food Grains Research and Development (AU-SAFGRAD) by increasing the human capital in the areas of land degradation, water resources, irrigation, and partnerships to ensure critical mass of expertise for execution of its mandate.

On the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI):

1. Extend this initiative to Southern and Eastern African regions.
2. Urge countries to finance the first-step activities, give full support to the Pan African Agency of the GGWSS and the harmonization of projects implementing all actions on the GGWSSI

3. Request AUC support from partners to undertake similar initiatives in Southern and Eastern Africa to address the increasing challenges of land degradation in these regions.
4. Members States should strengthen the AUC to play its full role as the political coordinator of the initiative.
5. Request AUC to accelerate the mainstreaming of the Pan African Agency as per the decision of the 14th session of AMCEN in 2012.

On Sustainable Land and Water Management: African Resilient Landscape Initiative (ARLI):

1. Endorse the African Landscape Action Plan and Africa Resilience Landscape Initiative.
2. Encourage AU member states and sub-regional institutions to adopt the landscape approach in their interventions.
3. Encourage actions to strengthen governance in natural resources management, transparency and the rule of law while also empowering communities and recognizing the rights pertaining to land and water resources.
4. Request technical and financial partners to support African countries on the implementation of the Resilient Landscape Initiative through investment in integrated landscape management and land restoration.

On the AUC/DREA Disaster Risk Reduction Programme: Effective implementation of the Sendai Framework:

1. Request the AUC to oversee the implementation of the Yaoundé declaration, including by implementing the decision on the stepped approach to institutionalize DRR within the AUC to ensure effective implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 on the African continent.

On Water and Sanitation

1. Resolve to adopt the Ministerial commitments; programmes; and partnerships in the water and sanitation sector as tools for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa as well as the Common Africa Position on Post 2015 and the Africa Water Vision 2025 (which should be updated to 2030 SDGs).
2. Requests the water and sanitation sector to fully operationalize the harmonized monitoring and reporting system in order to report on the state of water resources management, uses and sanitation in Africa.

3. Observe the necessity of an integrated approach for water management.

On Production and marketing of Gum Arabic to address climate change, desertification and women empowerment:

1. Call on AUC and partners to support the development of the Common Regional Strategy on Arabic Gum & Resin and other Non-Timber Forest Products (NTPFs).
2. Asks the AUC to convene a high policy dialogue for African producer countries to discuss the issues related to Gum Arabic.
3. Resolve to support the implementation of the Regional Strategy on Gum, Resin and other NTFPs.
4. Urge Members States to consider Gum, Resin and other NTFPs in the National Agricultural Investment Plans.

On Climate change:

1. Urge member states to implement the high level work programme on climate change in Africa as endorsed by the Malabo 2014 AU Summit and the January 2015 AU Summit.

On Wild flora and fauna:

1. Call upon Member States to domesticate the African Strategy on Combatting Illegal Exploitation and Illegal Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa endorsed by the 25thAU Summit of Heads of States and Government and to put in place and implement the national and sub-regional strategies 2016-2030, taking into account their specific conditions and challenges: RECs would conduct their evaluations every five years.
2. Request that the necessary financial and technical support be provided to Governments to support the implementation of the national strategies with the framework of innovative financial mechanisms and the transition to a green economy in Africa.
3. Resolve that the African Union holds a joint-conference with transit and consumer countries with a view to agreeing on joint action to be carried out to eliminate supply, demand and illegal trade in wild flora and fauna products in Africa.
4. Resolve that the following Forums should include issues of wildlife crime as priority agenda item: the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) to be held on 2-5 December 2015 as well as nine other strategic partnership fora.

5. Requests relevant organs to create synergies with other AU STCs, mainly the STC on Defense and National Security.

On the Project for Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa, MESA:

1. Noting the successes/progress in the implementation of the project in the participating regions (CEMAC, ECOWAS, IGAD, IOC, and SADC):
2. Urge Member States to use products and information services generated by the MESA project in agricultural production as well as in the management of environmental and natural resources.
3. Urge Member States to utilise earth observation technologies provided by the MESA project for near-real time information for informed policy and development planning.
4. Request the AUC to accelerate the **facilitation** of monitoring of Africa's environmental and natural resources for sustainable management.

On the Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology:

1. Urge Regional Economic Communities and Member States to mainstream meteorology into their national development plans

On the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA):

1. Resolve to sustain the activities of the AU project on Multilateral Environmental Agreements in Member States.

On Natural resource accounting:

Requests the AUC to revive its programme on Natural Resource Accounting.

3) Agriculture, Rural Development, Livestock And Fisheries

On the Review of National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans (NAIPs/NAFSIPs) and the Biennial Review Process as part of the Malabo Implementation process

1. Appreciate the draft guidelines, tools and instruments that have been developed for the roll-out of the CAADP-Malabo implementation plan.
2. Note that the first biennial review process report will be presented to AU Heads of State and Government in January 2018.
3. Adopt the draft NAIP/ NAFSIP Review Guidelines and the Biennial Review Structure and urge that these draft plans be swiftly finalized by the AU.

4. Request each Member State to domesticate the Biennial Review and NAIP/ NASFIP Review processes and adapt the CAADP Results Framework at country level.
5. Resolve that Member States make the NASFIP/NAIP Review Process consultative and inclusive in order to have all relevant stakeholders concerns accounted for; including women, non-state-actors, farmers including smallholder farmers, youth, private sector.

On the Malabo Financing Facility:

1. Laud the proposed Malabo Facility as a important financing mechanism for continued technical and financial support at country, regional and continental levels.
2. Support the integration of other existing financial mechanisms and the creation of a more adequate financial mechanism.
3. Resolve that Member States should have direct access to finance within this facility.
4. Member States should participate in the finance preparatory and steering committees.
5. Urge the widening of financing coverage to RECs and Non-State Actors.
6. Urge the AUC to consider the set-up of financing coordination units of RECs and Member States as part of the design of the Malabo Facility.

On the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative Strategy (2015-2025):

1. Recognize the importance of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative (EOA-I) as a continental initiative by the AU Heads of State and Government Summit in 2010.
2. Resolve that ecological agriculture should be mainstreamed into the agricultural sector at country level.
3. Note the draft strategy.

On the Implementation Modalities for the Livestock Development Strategy for Africa (LiDeSA):

1. Endorse the Implementation Modalities for the Livestock Development Strategy for Africa (LiDeSA).
2. Call upon technical and development partners in the livestock sector and other stakeholders to mainstream their interventions through LiDeSA

implementation mechanisms in order to attain the realization and impact intended by LiDeSA and the Malabo declaration.

3. Note that Livestock in Africa is not just a way of life, but increasingly a business. Ministers resolved to support the development of the livestock business sector in Africa through a proven business incubation model.

On Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy Framework and Reform Strategy in Africa:

1. Note that the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for fisheries and aquaculture supports best practices for sustainable fisheries management and responsible aquaculture development.
2. Endorse the guide for implementation of the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa.
3. Endorse the African Fisheries Reform mechanism as the mechanism for the delivery of reforms in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.
4. Develop and strengthen regional cooperation in the management and development of fisheries and aquaculture.
5. Develop business incubation frameworks for fisheries and aquaculture as part of the framework.

On the Continental Agribusiness Strategy:

1. Note the critical importance of the Continental Agribusiness Strategy which seeks to develop a dynamic, inclusive agribusiness sector in Africa by facilitating a conducive environment for increased (domestic) private sector investment and business in Africa's agriculture.
2. Support the development of incubation models to support new agribusinesses by building the capacity of, especially, the youth and smallholder farmers.
3. Endorse and agree with the seven strategic pillars in the strategy which address the key issues for agribusiness in Africa.
4. Urge the finalization of the document in consultation with stakeholders.

On the draft policy framework for integrating Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis interventions within a sustainable rural development strategy:

1. Endorse the framework for integrating tsetse and trypanosomiasis (T&T) intervention programmes in sustainable rural development strategies.

On the Strategy to improve food security, trade and public health through Aflatoxin Control in Africa:

1. Reaffirm the importance of managing and controlling Aflatoxins, a public health threat in Africa, which also threatens agriculture, food security, trade, nutrition and health of millions of Africans.
2. Endorse the integration of the Aflatoxin Control model developed by AU Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) and piloted in six (6) African countries, into the NAIPs/NAFSIPs of Member States making it an integral part of CAADP/Malabo implementation at country level.
3. Urge wider and deeper partnerships with all stakeholders under PACA.
4. Urge increased awareness creation and sensitization on the effects and management of Aflatoxins at farm level to inform and protect, in particular, smallholder farmers.

On the Joint Grow Africa and New Alliance Report:

1. Recognize the role that Grow Africa and the New Alliance play in increasing private sector investment in agriculture and accelerating the execution and impact of investment commitments to enable countries to realize the potential of the agriculture sector for economic growth and job creation, particularly among farmers, women and youth.
2. Note the comprehensive report on the progress, results and impacts achieved by in the implementation of the Grow Africa and the New Alliance over the last year.
3. Urge the implementation of all recommendations contained in the Grow Africa and New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition report to be implemented by all stakeholders mentioned therein including governments, private sector, non-state actors and RECS.

On the African Union Inter- African Phytosanitary Council (AU-IAPSC) strategic plan 2014-2023 for a better plant health in Africa:

1. Endorse AU-IAPSC developed the Strategic plan 2014-2023 for better Plant Health in Africa that serves as a platform for establishing new partnerships in the promotion of continental plant protection matters.
2. Recommend the integration of the strategy into national plant protection policies and strategies.

On the Progress report on the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges:

1. Note that African Heads of State and Government adopted the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges (AU Declaration on Land) in July 2009 to take ownership of and lead land reform processes by strengthening institutions for effective land governance and allocating adequate budgetary resources for policy development, implementation and tracking of progress.
2. Resolve to establish and capacitate the African Land Policy Centre to provide leadership, coordination, build partnerships and promote policy advocacy in support of member states.
3. Adopt and operationalize the proposed comprehensive M&E framework to track progress and share lessons on in the implementation of land policies in Africa.
4. Start mobilizing resources and actualize a fund for land policy from partners and members states to support implementation of land programs, policies, plans and other actions by member states and other actors.
5. Resolve to continue to use the AU Guiding principles on Large Scale Land-Based investments in Africa.
6. Recommend member states to move towards allocation of 30% of land to women to improve the rights of women to land through legislative and other mechanisms.

On the NEPAD Rural Futures:

1. Note that rural development requires a people-centred rural transformation based on equity and inclusiveness and further note that Rural Futures project is promoting multi-sectorial approach for to rural transformation and employment creation.
2. Note the strategies and frameworks for Rural Transformation identified in the Cotonou Declaration at the inaugural Africa Rural Development Conference.
3. Note that rural transformation requires youth employment.

Adoption of the Report

15. The report of the inaugural session of the STC on Agriculture, Rural Development Water and Environment was adopted at the Headquarters of the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa by the Bureau of the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment on 29 February 2016.

16. This report will be presented to the Office of Legal Counsel prior to its adoption at the next AU Executive Council in July 2016.

17. Motion to adopt the report was moved by Swaziland.

Chair – Congo (Flora and Fauna)

1st Vice Chair – Senegal (Water and Sanitation)

2nd Vice Chair – Swaziland (Metrology and Disaster Risk Reduction)

3rd Vice Chair – Egypt (Environment)

Rapporteur (Agriculture)-Sudan

Annex 1: ACRONYMS

2M4M	Programme for Universal Access to Water Supply and Sanitation in Africa
ACMAD	African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development
ACP	African countries
ADB	African Development Bank
ALAP	Africa Landscape Action Plan
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on Environment
AMCOMET	African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology
AMCOW	African Ministerial Conference on Water
ARI	African Restoration Initiative
ARLI	African Resilient Landscape Initiative
AU-IAPSC	AU Inter-African Phytosanitary Council
AU-IBAR	AU Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources
AU-PACA	AU Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa
AU-SAFGRAD	AU Semi Arid Food Grains Research and Development
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUC-DREA	AUC - Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture
AWEP	African Women Entrepreneurship Program
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Plan
CEMAC	Economic Community of Central African States
COMESA	Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa
CoP	Conference of Parties
CST	Committee on Science and Technology of the UNCCD
DPs	Development Partners
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of the Western African States
EOA-I	Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative
EUC	European Union Commission
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FOCAC	Forum for China-Africa Cooperation
GGWSSI	Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GIZ	German Technical Cooperation
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
KAP	Kigali Action Plan
LiDeSA	Livestock Development Strategy for Africa
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MESA	Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa
NAFSIP	National Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plans
NAIP	National Agricultural Investment Plans
NAP	National Action Plans
NFP	National Focal Point

NGARA	Network for Natural Gums and Resins in Africa
NPCA	NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency
NTPF	Non-Timber Forest Products
REC	Regional Economic Community
S&T	Science and Technology
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAFGRAD	Semi-Arid Food Grains Research and Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SLWM	Sustainable Land and Water Management
STC	Specialized Technical Committee
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNSDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Reduction
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Program

2016

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