AFRICAN UNION

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FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (AMCOST V)
12th to 15th NOVEMBER 2012
BRAZZAVILLE, CONGO

AU/MIN/ST/Dec.(V)

Ministerial Decisions

1. INTRODUCTION

The fifth Ordinary Session of the African Union Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology (AMCOST V) took place in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo on the 14th and 15th of November 2012. The meeting was preceded by two days Senior Official Session from the 12th to the 13th of November 2012. The conference discussed among other issues, the progress report on the implementation of Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA), African Union (AU) decisions on science and technology, international cooperation and programmes proposed by Member States, Regional Economic communities (RECs), and Regional Organisations.

2. DECISIONS

The AMCOST V made the following decisions:

2.1 Governance

The African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology elected the following Member States to the Bureau and Steering Committee:

1. Central Africa	Republic of Congo	Chair of the Bureau and the Steering Committee
	D.R. Congo	Member of the Steering Committee
2. Southern Africa	Namibia	First Vice Chair of the Bureau and the Steering Committee
	Malawi	Member of the Steering Committee
3. Western Africa	Nigeria	Second Vice Chair of the Bureau and the Steering Committee
	Niger	Member of the Steering Committee
4. Eastern Africa	Sudan	Third Vice Chair of the Bureau and the Steering Committee
	Ethiopia	Member of the Steering Committee
5. Northern Africa	Egypt	Rapporteur of the Bureau and the Steering Committee
	Algeria	Member of the Steering Committee

2.2 CPA Implementation

2.2.1 AMCOST notes and appreciates the progress made by the AUC and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NEPAD Agency) in the implementation of the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA). AMCOST recommends for the institutionalization of monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment in order to track progress, facilitate learning and communicate results to relevant stakeholders. The meeting called upon AU Member States to be proactive in supporting implementation of the CPA programmes to extend outreach and ensure sustainability.

2.2.2 AMCOST acknowledges the progress made in the implementation of the AMCOST IV matrix of recommendations and further recommends the AU Commission to activate and manage the use of the AMCOST portal as a robust platform for availing information and publicity of science and technology in Africa. It also calls on the Commission to make available the information and relevant documents on different initiatives to ensure that countries are well informed. AMCOST further calls upon the Commission to ensure that all documents are available within two weeks prior to meetings.

2.2.3 AMCOST commends the AUC for successfully launching two calls for research proposals and acknowledges the roles of development partners especially European Commission's (EC) financial and technical support in the implementation of the research grant programme as an innovative way to fund science and technology. Furthermore AMCOST urges the AU Member States, RECs and International Partners to avail resources and to take all necessary actions to ensure the sustainability of the research grant programme.

2.2.4 AMCOST welcomes the decision by the Heads of State and Governments Assembly/AU/Dec.306(XV) in July 2010 to rename the AU Scientific Award as "AU Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Award" and urges the AU Commission, the Member States and the RECs to intensify the popularisation of science and technology among African citizens particularly women and youth and to capitalise on the successes achieved so far. AMCOST further recommends conferring a science and technology ambassadorial role to the laureates in order to increase the visibility of STI in the continent.

2.2.5 AMCOST welcomes and applauds the decision of H.E. President Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic Congo to launch an "African Science Innovation Award" and invites the Commission to work with the Republic of Congo for the implementation of the decision.

2.2.6 AMCOST welcomes the decision of the AMCOST IV Bureau to set up a Working Group to explore and recommend innovative and alternative funding mechanisms for science, technology and innovation initiatives in Africa. AMCOST further requests the group to finalise the resource mobilisation framework under the supervision of AMCOST V Bureau.

2.2.7 AMCOST endorses the Framework for the Detection, Identification and Monitoring of Infectious Diseases of Human, Animals and Plants in Africa and

to carefully coordinate and collaborate with NEPAD Agency health initiatives, network of Centres of excellence on biosciences, African Network for Drugs Diagnostic and Innovation (ANDI) and other relevant institutions in the implementation of the framework and the impact of integrating health and social issues together to maximise the benefits of the framework.

2.2.8 AMCOST takes note of the feasibility study on ARIC in the implementation of the AU Assembly Decision EX/CL/Dec.216(VII) to establish the African Research and Innovation Council (ARIC), and requests the Commission under the auspices of AMCOST Bureau to take the necessary action to implement the Assembly Decision and create linkages and synergies with existing initiatives at the national regional and continental levels including African Academy of Sciences (AAS). AMCOST appreciates the technical and financial support provided by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA).

2.2.9 AMCOST commends the effort made in the implementation of African Observatory for Science, Technology and Innovation (AOSTI) and thanked the Government of Equatorial Guinea for hosting the observatory and providing seed funding and further called upon the Member States and partners to provide the necessary support including financing the implementation of AOSTI programmes. It further notes the AOSTI draft statutes document including AOSTI draft structure of the executive secretariat and urges the AU Commission to expedite its adoption by the AU policy organs. AMCOST calls on AOSTI to collaborate with similar initiatives such as the UNESCO Global Observatory on STI Policy Instruments (GOSPIN) and the STI Global Assessment Programme (STIGAP).

2.2.10 AMCOST notes the establishment of the High Level Panel and Working Group for the CPA review process. AMCOST further notes the progress made and called upon Member States and RECs to provide comments on the draft to NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA). Further developments of the plan will be overseen by Bureau of AMCOST V.

2.2.11 AMCOST commends the NEPAD Agency for establishing the NEPAD Science, Technology and Innovation Hub (NSTIH) in response to the recommendations of the first Bureau of AMCOST IV.

2.2.12 AMCOST notes the draft Terms of Reference (TORs) for the space science working group and calls for the establishment of a space working group composed of Member States of the five regions and those Member States who currently run space programs. AMCOST calls upon the Department of Human Resources Science and Technology to synergise and coordinate space activities with the Department of Infrastructure and Energy and other related Departments. AMCOST further notes the proposal for the creation of the African Space Agency and the need for coordination. AMCOST invites the Ministers in charge of ICT to establish a joint Ministerial Committee comprising of the bureau of AMCOST and CIT to work on the space file.

2.2.13 AMCOST notes the progress reported by Egypt on the development of the Global Ring Network for advance applications development (GLORIAD) project to expand the eastern ring of the network through an initial seed fund of 5 million USD grant from USAID.

2.2.14 AMCOST congratulates South Africa along with the African partner countries for winning the bid to co-host the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) radio telescope on the continent and also for winning the bid to host the International Astronomical Union (IAU) Office for Astronomy Development and calls upon the Member States to actively participate in the SKA and other astronomy related capacity building and research programmes including related infrastructure such as the African Very Long Baseline Interferometry (VLBI) network.

2.2.15 AMCOST takes note of the draft statues of Pan-African Intellectual Property Organisation (PAIPO) and commends the Commission for the progress made so far in the implementation of the AU Assembly Heads of State and Governments decision Assembly/Decision AU/Dec.138 (VII). AMCOST requests the Commission to liaise with AMCOST Bureau and take the necessary actions to implement the assembly decision by 2013 in consultation with sectors dealing with Intellectual Property in Member States.

2.2.16 AMCOST congratulates COMEDAF for advances made in the implementation of the Pan-African University initiative and invites SADC region to expedite the identification of the host institute for the space thematic area.

2.3 REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS' SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES

2.3.1 AMCOST notes and commends the progress reports on science, technology and innovation initiatives being implemented by the REC's (ECOWAS, SADC and COMESA) and further requested the RECs to institutionalize STI at regional level and calls upon other region to engage in the process.

2.3.2 AMCOST commends the science, technology and innovation initiatives that are implemented by development partners; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), African Academy for Sciences (AAS), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Pan-African Congress for Ethics and Bio-Ethics (COPAB) and UN-Cluster for Science and Technology and recognizes that the activities are a remarkable contribution to the implementation of the CPA.

2.3.3 Furthermore the AMCOST urges the Commission to operationalise the African Union Cluster on Science and Technology to ensure synergies and minimize duplication and parallel efforts among the AU implementing partners and calls upon the partners to participate actively in the cluster.

2.3.4 AMCOST appreciates the efforts deployed by the Pan-African Congress for Ethics and Bio-Ethics (COPAB) for implementing the resolution No. AHG/Res.

254 of the 32nd Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on Bio-ethics. AMCOST requests AU Commission to collaborate with COPAB and put in place an African Ethics and scientific task force through the organization of sub-regional workshops on Ethics and Bio-ethics and also enhance bipartite EU/AU collaboration in that respect.

2.3.5 AMCOST acknowledges the efforts and initiatives of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) on supporting the development in Africa as well as promoting science, technology and innovation for socio-economic development and

(a) welcomes the IDB's proposal to its Member Countries to make up to 10% of their financing proposals to the IDB on the promotion of Science, Technology and Innovation for development, noting that this 10% portion can be stand alone S&T projects, or components under sectoral projects especially on infrastructure, agriculture, health or education; and

(b) urges the concerned educational and scientific institutions and line Ministries in the IDB Member Countries to propose to the Bank sound STI focused projects through the IDB's official channel in the respective countries.

2.3.6 AMCOST notes the work presented by the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) and urges the Commission to closely work with the AAS to tap from the pool of expertise, as a think-tank in the implementation of CPA and setting up of panels of experts to undertake reviews and/or foresight studies, and assisting in running competitive prizes/awards under the auspices of the AU Commission.

2.4 INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

2.4.1 AMCOST commends the International Development Partners for their support both financially and technically in promoting the development of science, technology and innovation in the continent and further calls for their continued commitment with Africa.

2.4.2 AMCOST commends the progress made in the implementation of the Africa – EU 8th Partnership, Africa-India Partnership, Africa-Japan Meeting, and China-Africa Cooperation and requests the Commission to develop a follow up mechanisms to ensure the successful implementation of the science and technology cooperation. AMCOST also calls upon Member States and RECs to actively participate in the programmes of the various partnerships.

2.5 DATE AND VENUE FOR AMCOST VI

2.5.1 AMCOST welcomes and endorses the offer by the Government of the Republic of Namibia to host the Sixth Ordinary Session of AMCOST planned to take place in 2014, and further requests the Commission to carry out the

necessary consultation with the host country and inform AMCOST Members on time.

2.6 APPRECIATION

2.6.1 AMCOST expresses its appreciation to the Government and the people of the Republic of Congo, and in particular H.E. President Denis Sassou Nguesso. The hospitality of H.E. Mr. Bruno Jean Richard Itoua, Minister of Scientific Research and Technological Innovation of the Republic of Congo is highly acknowledged.

2.6.2 AMCOST extends its appreciation to the outgoing Chair, H.E. Prof. Nadia Zakhary, Minister of Scientific Research of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Members of the Bureau and Steering Committee for their able leadership during their tenure of office for AMCOST IV.

2.6.3 AMCOST congratulates and welcomes the incoming Chair, H.E. Mr. Bruno Jean Richard Itoua, Minister of Scientific Research and Technological Innovation of the Republic of Congo.

2.6.4 AMCOST appreciates the offer by the Government of the Republic of Namibia to host the Sixth Conference of the AMCOST in 2014.

2.6.5 AMCOST thanks the AUC for the efforts to make the conference a success.

2.6.6 AMCOST extends its appreciation to H.E Prof. Jean Pierre Ezin, the Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology for the effort and work done during his tenure of office.

Adopted on the 15th of November 2012, Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

REPUBLIQUE DU CONGO
UNITE * TRAVAIL * PROGRES
Le Ministre
MINISTERE DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE

President AMCOST V

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