



Afrique Internationale pour le Développement  
et l'Environnement au 21<sup>ème</sup> siècle.

# « THE GREEN FUTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA »

**Started!!! For RIO+20**

**Declaration of African Youth**

**January 2012**

*We, African youth, meeting within the network called Pan Africa International Development and the Environment in the 21st Century (AIDE21) who wants the echo of an African youth sensitive to the increasing degradation of the environment, launching in that day a solemn appeal to all heads of state of the world especially to the Heads of African States, and the various participants of the UN Conference on sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, better known as Rio 20.*

*We affirm, through our network of different associations AIDE21 in Africa namely: AIDE21-Cameroon, Burkina Faso-AIDE21, AIDE21-Ivory Coast, Mali-AIDE21, AIDE21-Madagascar, Senegal-AIDE21, AIDE21-TOGO, AIDE21-DRC, Congo-Brazzaville AIDE21, AIDE21-Benin, the importance of preserving the environment and the planet for the survival of humanity,*

*Gathered in the thinking of members of our respective departments, among others, the Department for the "Environmental Law and Sustainable Development" and the one in charge of "Democracy and Human Rights" available on our website Internet [www.aide21.org](http://www.aide21.org),*

*We thought and made to serve all mankind such a dynamic whole to support the actions of public policy to promote African integration in recent law principles international environmental and sustainable development;*

*We, members of the network "AIDE21" concerned with the harmonious and sustainable development of our planet, + first salute the decision of the 64th UN General Assembly, to organize the 20 to 22 June 2012 in Brazil, fifth "Summit Earth»*

*We also welcome the choice of specific topics "green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication" and "the institutional framework for sustainable development", and strongly urge their actual impact on the advent of a world environmentally sustainable, economically strong in the interest of present and future*

*At the place of African leaders, we reaffirm our faith in their commitment and an Africa that can influence the conclusions of the summit of the earth through shared commitments.*

*Also, and at first glance, we would affirm the place of African leaders, namely, the states and their international organizations, NGOs and members of civil society, our faith in an Africa which can influencing the outcome work of this earth Summit through shared commitments to be taken and their effective implementation at the regional to continental optimization potential, the rest renowned throughout the world as the most important in the advent of a global ecological balance.*

*So,*

*Considering that we have no spare planet or reserve,*

*Considering that the health of the planet is the condition for the survival of humanity,*

*Considering the increasing degradation of the state of the global environment,*

*Considering the mixed results of the implementation of resolutions taken in the various and previous summits of the earth since the first Stockholm of 1972,*

*Whereas the Rio Earth Summit 20 offers another unique opportunity for all participants to affirm the will of our generation to preserve nature in good condition to ensure a healthy planet for present and future generations,*

*Considering the key role to be played by politicians and world leaders to establish a new world order with the priority, sustainable development*

*Aware of the immensity of the reforms necessary for this new world order,*

*Recognizing the indispensable role and must be played by the environmental law at all levels, local, national and international in preserving the environment,*

*Whereas the African, implement plans and strategies for environmental protection and that they are still insufficient in terms of International Environment Governance (IEG) is recommended,*

*Whereas on Rio Principle 10 enshrines the rule of "non-regression" in the quest for environmental democracy.*

*Considering that improved environmental protection requires at this stage to assess the level of environmental degradation,*

*Aware that the level of poverty among African populations and the inadequacy of our land and agrarian reform contribute to the destruction of natural resources of wildlife and flora,*

*Whereas access to food resources is seriously challenged in the crisis of economic, financial, political or environmental, affecting especially the most vulnerable groups, including disadvantaged communities,*

*Recognizing the need to ensure legal rights to land and natural resources,*

*Considering the close links between the rural and urban land rights, and protection the environment,*

*Encouraging greater involvement of civil society, for an action of environmental protection at the base, the position of women must be strengthened in the institutional system,*

*Finally, proclaiming that education is the foundation for behavior change, That without this prerequisite, no strategy can permanently have a lasting impact on people;*

*We urge African leaders:*

- To participate massively in the Rio conference on 4 and 6 June 2012 and to bear voices of African youth;
- To have consolidated positions, joint and concerted in the best interest of Africa and the world as part of discussions of RIO.

We therefore, recommend the following Heads of State and Government:

## **I / the Environmental Governance within United Nations**

*Whereas the African States are implementing plans and strategies for environmental protection, and that they are still insufficient in terms of International Environment Governance (IEG) we recommend to:*

- Support the idea that states should move towards a new world order in which primacy is given to the environmental field;
- Advocate for the creation of a "World Environmental Organization," which may have financial, material and technical, to the high stakes, with a different system of regulations that are binding on all parties and all areas;
- Support a reform of an Integrated Environment that take needs of developing countries and facilitating the participation of these last;
- Support the idea of an integrated environmental management, further encouraging regional cooperation environment;
- Support the idea of an integrated environmental management, to strengthen the lines of actions of civil society, and subtracts it from the influence of multinationals.

## **II- Principle of "no regression" and the role of civil society and NGOs in environmental law**

*Whereas the Rio Principle 10 enshrines the rule of "no-regression" in the quest for environmental democracy, we recommend to:*

- Consider the establishment of an African Charter on World Environment;
- Building bridges African institutional assessment and capacity building for implementation of the Aarhus Convention and Principle 10 of Rio;
- Consider with local and regional authorities, the creation of Delegates regional, and local environmental and even environmental unions, responsible for supervising and monitoring and evaluation of public participation on environmental issues;
- Develop deliberative and participatory processes like the "hybrid forums" or citizens' conferences;
- Increasing the role of environmental NGOs in Africa in the process law-making and introduce them into public institutions or government, governing areas related to the environment;
- Establish policy innovations such recognition in African constitutions systems "Referendum green" and install new institutions such a Ministry of Sustainable Development;
- Establish mechanisms for mediating local implementation of a decentralized democracy in the environment sector.

### **III the effectiveness of environmental assessments**

*Considering that improved environmental protection requires at this stage to assess the level of environmental degradation, environmental assessment must be strengthened and deepened. To this end, we recommend:*

- That the environmental assessment takes into account all the tools necessary for its effectiveness;
- What impact studies environmental and social be accompanied by an environmental management plan original and subject to effective monitoring.
- Achieving true horizontal administrative organization, involving qualified technicians in the various ministries involved in the execution of a project;
- That the consulting firms are regulated, so that one finds their skills to the education they will be agents.

### **IV - The land grab and the right to food**

*Aware that the level of poverty among African populations, and the inadequacy of our land and agrarian reforms, contribute to the destruction of natural resources of fauna and flora;*

*Whereas access to food resources is seriously challenged in the crises of economic, financial, political or environmental, affecting especially the most vulnerable groups of the poor,*

*Recognizing the need to ensure legal rights to land and natural resources, we recommend:*

- Devote of constitutionally effective democratization of land for the purposes of equitable access for all social strata;
- Encourage States to promote the acquisition of land titles, including the most vulnerable to economic and legal plans;
- Working to protect farmers against land title holders of the abusive expropriations;
- Adopt policies that reflect the property right to food of the poorest;
- Reforming land laws and other related instruments so as to integrate the right to food;
- Reflect on the adoption of a Framework Convention on the land issue;
- Regulating the market for land titles in their respective countries;
- Wear eye on succession and others relating to access to land and land ownership, particularly from the customary;
- Extend the land management on local committees and other groups at the base;
- Ensuring land for agricultural use against subsequent assignments for other purposes.

## **V - The conservation of biodiversity in relation to the land issues**

*Considering the close links between the rural and urban land rights and environmental protection, we recommend that governments:*

- Under the issue of interdependence between biodiversity and land issues, establish legal mechanisms to promote the preservation of biological and natural resources without compromising the rights to land, and to ignore the growing urban demand, which changes patterns of consumption of renewable resources;

- Establish a true security of tenure on pastoral resources, fishery and forestry by adopting a legal and institutional structure timely. This security will be done in an objective Accountability all stakeholders and to lay the foundations for a sustainable management system of resources;
- Rethinking the land law, to address the gulf that exists between customary and modern law of access to land, to allow an efficient use of land;
- What laws, and land tenure, vary from country to country, the Governments at the appropriate levels, including local authorities, should however, strive to eliminate all obstacles that may prevent access equitable access to land and ensure that the equal rights of women and men to land, and property are protected by law.

## **VI - Strengthening women's role in protecting the environment.**

*Encouraging greater involvement of women in environmental protection, women's role should be strengthened in the institutional system and in everyday life. We recommend:*

- Continue to emphasize a transverse view of women's role in linking environment, education and national development strategies and the strategies for poverty reduction;
- Raising awareness of environmental protection, and provide the technical means, financial and monitoring;
- Using culture, to educate urban and rural women, highlight traditional discriminatory practices;
- Identify the needs of women, by collecting data updated statistics on women's role in managing natural resources and the thematic "Gender and Environment";
- To demonstrate the impact of climate change on the vulnerability of women;
- Develop tools to measure the impact of the role of women in environmental protection, including the establishment of indicators binders' environmental protection and poverty reduction in women. And improving the living environment on the health of women and his entourage;
- To involve Aboriginal women make up for deficiencies in literacy and communication by emphasizing traditional crops for better awareness of environmental protection.

## **VII - the effectiveness of environmental law**

*Proclaiming that education is the foundation for behavior change, that without this prerequisite, no strategy can have a lasting impact on people, we recommend to:*

- Insert into school curricula, eco-citizenship education, from kindergarten, namely, offering lessons and basic fundamentals in terms of environmental protection into the next level and university, or faculties, though there is no specific Departments, to turn to, Schools and Higher Institutes specialized in order to achieve the preparation of an elite, an appropriate cream;
- In the context of environmental education, political commitment to a broad scope that offers practical solutions and strategies for reforestation and forest management is imperative. A sustained effort for forestry, agriculture, energy and rural development programs related is also necessary.

## **VIII-Environmental Taxation**

*Finally, considering that to be effective, leaders need to resolutely engage in a battle by scoring their environmental policies of a seal, while translating the idea of a true green economy in reality, we recommend:*

- The start of a deep reflection on the establishment of a tax Environmental active.
- The identification of economic agents' producers and consumers, responsible for damage, their ranking for their appropriate taxation.
- Identification of vulnerable areas and priority protection for overtaxing companies operating in the sector.
- To avoid "killing the goose that lays golden eggs" by a huge tax burden, proceed with a pilot experiment of taxation.
- If the previous phase is successful, proceed to a general reform of taxation in which some taxes will be expected to disappear, the rate of other charges will be lowered and environmental taxation will definitely be implemented in all sectors whose activities will impact on nature.



These recommendations are not exhaustive, but they emphasize the canvas, and highlights, to enhance an environmental democracy of tomorrow.

With this declaration, we, young Africans are making the choice of taking full responsibility for sustainable development.

Indeed, we believe that the environmental law addresses the need for security legal, meets the requirement of protection of present and future generations, is an ethical, moral, for a more sustainable world and wants to be the channel for a fairer world. A Green and economically strong Africa will undoubtedly pledge.

We call and your shared commitment to the constituents, legislators and judges spend the reality of environmental law as its effectiveness is vital.

Hoping that this statement retains your attention and pushes you to consider the adoption of an international pact in the field, we reaffirm our gold and already available to join our efforts with yours for a more efficient manner.

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