REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EXCO) OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERS COUNCIL ON WATER (AMCOW), ENTEBBE, UGANDA, 17 FEBRUARY 2006

SUMMARY REPORT (CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS)

1. Introduction

Further to the decisions taken at the meeting of the African Ministers’ Council on Water (AMCOW), in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in June 2005 and in Namibia in December 2005 and as part of the follow up action envisaged, the President of AMCOW agreed to convene the meetings of:

a) Technical Advisory Committee of AMCOW in Entebbe, 15-16 February 2006
b) Executive Committee of AMCOW, 17 February 2006.

2. Attendance

The EXCO meeting was attended by members from:

Northern Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Libya
Eastern Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania
Southern Africa: Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Malawi
Western Africa: Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana
Central Africa: Republic of Congo

Absent were Niger, Mozambique, Chad, DR Congo, Cameroun and the Central African Republic.

Also in attendance were representatives of the African Union (AU), African Development Bank (AfDB) and officials of UN-Water/Africa, (WMO, UNECA, UNEP, UN-Habitat), WSP-Africa, Global Water Partnership-Africa (GWP-A) and the European Commission (EC), GTZ, European Space Agency, Governments of Belgium and France. The complete list of participants is included as Annex 1.

3. Opening

In a welcome address, The Rt. Hon. Prime Minister of Uganda, Professor Apollo R. Nsibambi, represented by H. E. Mrs Maria Mutagamba, Chair, AMCOW and Minister, Land, Water and Environment, Uganda welcomed the participants and expressed her appreciation for the level of participation in the meeting. She then thanked the development partners for their continued support to Africa’s development efforts and wished participants a fruitful deliberation.

The representative of European Commission (EC), in his remarks, appreciated the open discussion during the EU-Africa Partnership mid-term review workshop held prior to the AMCOW EXCO meeting. He reiterated that the EU remains committed to the strengthening of AMCOW organs.
Dr. M. Tawfik, Chairman of UN-Water Africa, thanked AMCOW for inviting the UN agencies to participate in this important meeting and assured the participants of UN support to AMCOW activities. A statement of support was also made by representative of the Global Water Partnership-Africa (GWP-A).

AMCOW EXCO expressed profound gratitude to the Government of Uganda and its Ministry of Lands, Water and Environment for graciously hosting the meeting and for the solid support and hospitality extended to AMCOW members.

4. Agenda Items

The meeting deliberated on the provisional agenda items and members suggested minor amendments. The amended agenda is included as Annex 2.

5. Outcomes and Recommendations

5.1 Administrative and Legal Issues (AMCOW-MOU; Secretariat Issues)

a) Secretariat Hosting Agreement

The EXCO members approved and signed the Hosting Agreement between AMCOW President and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria today, Friday, 17th February 2006.

b) Secretariat Structure

The EXCO members noted that the lack of a fully functional Secretariat has hampered the operations of AMCOW in the past and accordingly approved as follows:

- **AMCOW Secretariat structure as in Annex 3 is approved.**
- **For an independent body to initiate a recruitment process of key officers which will pass through TAC and subsequently EXCOM for final employment. The Executive Secretary will be involved in lower cadre recruitment exercise.**
- **a remuneration scheme in conformity with AU scales**
- **the Executive Secretary post to be on sub-regional rotating basis and other senior staff positions should reflect sub-regional balance**
c) Finance Matters

EXCO noted with concern that no resources have been procured to implement the AMCO\textemdash\textsc{w} 2005-2007 Work Programme and other initiatives. African governments have not yet contributed to the AMCO\textsc{w} trust fund partly because they have not yet signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). On a positive note, it was brought to the attention of EXCO that negotiations are underway with the EC to enter into a Direct Financial contribution (to the tune of €2.6million) with AMCO\textsc{w} to support the AMCO\textsc{w} 2005-2007 Work Programme, encouraging the establishment of a sustainable Secretariat structure and giving EXCO the capacity to deliver.

\textit{In this regard, EXCO}

\begin{itemize}
  \item noted with appreciation the contribution of development partners such as GTZ for their financial support.
  \item Approved the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and thereafter urged member countries to contribute to the trust fund. A minimum annual contribution of US$10,000.00 was agreed in Addis Ababa.
\end{itemize}

\textbf{d) Trust Fund}

EXCO members noted with appreciation the support of UNEP towards the actualisation of the trust fund. It further noted that while this fund is purely for the operational activities of AMCO\textsc{w}, the AWF is to be used for infrastructure development in Africa. It further requests the AMCO\textsc{w} president to issue letter to individual member states conveying the MoU with specific figures and necessary account numbers.

5.2 AMCO\textsc{w} relationship with the African Union (AU)

EXCO noted the EXCO directive to the Secretariat to follow-up the issue of AMCO\textsc{w}’s relationship with the AU. The Secretariat followed up and the AU Commission confirmed setting up a Committee to ensure smooth integration of AMCO\textsc{w} into AU.

The EXCO members were pleased to note that the study to integrate the ministerial bodies on water, health, education and environment has been completed by the AU Commission.

EXCO further noted that AMCO\textsc{w} representatives will be invited to Addis Ababa to discuss and conclude the integration process in the first quarter of 2006.

\textit{EXCO approved the selection of two people per sub-region to attend the meeting with African Union (AU) officials on the integration of AMCO\textsc{w} into AU. AU may however be requested to formally suggest to AMCO\textsc{w} the cadre of personnel required to attend this meeting.}
5.3 Relationship between AMCOW and other African ministerial bodies

EXCO welcomed the developing relationships between AMCOW and other African ministerial bodies, including the entities for energy and hydropower, environment, agriculture, etc.

EXCO has asked the Secretariat to strengthen AMCOW’s links with such bodies and invite them to AMCOW-EXCO meetings, as appropriate.

*EXCO notes the above developments.*

5.4 Progress reports by the sub-regional EXCO Chairs

Sub-regional EXCO Chairs presented their reports indicating progress of AMCOW activities in their respective sub-regions.

The EXCO members noted that various meetings, consultations and briefings on issues related to IWRM, trans-boundary waters, and natural disasters. The presentations also mentioned the ministerial changes in the respective sub-regions.

Some of the technical issues, included in the sub-regional reports, were discussed in details under other agenda items. The full sub-regional reports are available in Annex 4.

*EXCO members may, based on their perusal of the reports, wish to provide further guidance for more effective implementation of AMCOW’s activities in the respective sub-regions.*

5.5 (a) The current drought spell in Africa

EXCO noted, with concern, the prevailing drought conditions in parts of the African continent. The impact of the drought has been manifested in the dropping of water levels in major lakes, and many water storage facilities have dried up. It is known that hydropower capacity has been adversely affected. The cumulative impact of the drought is already reflected in the loss of lives and livelihoods and reduced economic growth rates.

EXCO realised that while drought can be predicted with reasonable precision, its mitigation and management is a major challenge that adversely affects all communities especially the vulnerable groups. In that context, EXCO was informed by AU about the commencement of the development of a Great Green Belt for the Sahara region. The AU Commission is also working on developing the African Monitoring of Environmental initiative.

*In this regard, EXCO approved:*  
- the call on African water Ministers to join hands with development partners in adopting sound strategies on drought preparedness  
- noted the two initiatives by the African Union to address the drought situation
noted the promotion of the development of water infrastructure to mitigate the extreme drought conditions and requests each sub-region to present strategies of mitigation for consideration in the 4WWF in Mexico.

(b) Rain Water Harvesting

EXCO recalled the presentation on Rain Water Harvesting Partnership during the 5th AMCOW Council. The objective of the partnership is to promote integration of rain water harvesting into policies and programmes in African countries. Already 43 organisations and 11 governments of Africa have signed the partnership agreement.

EXCO agreed to take the leadership in promoting public awareness and mainstream investment in rainwater harvesting in policy instruments of African countries. Each country should integrate rain water harvesting programme in its activities. However, countries should ensure that harvested rainwater for drinking purposes should meet the WHO standards.

5.6 Contribution and Participation in Regional and Global processes:

a) Africa’s preparation for the 4th World Water Forum

EXCO members were briefed on the status of preparation for the 4th WWF scheduled for Mexico, 16-22 March, 2006. The African report has been submitted to the conference secretariat. The ministerial declaration has been drafted for consideration by ministerial sub-committee in requests members to participate. The Regional Secretariat has been informed that the Mexican Government will support all African Water Ministers’ airfare, accommodation, and limited subsistence for three nights (22 – 25 March 2006). Prospective African delegates are having difficulties registering online and accessing entry and transit visas to the Mexico. EXCO appreciated the work of the ADB as Regional Beacon and the commitment of USD475,000 from its Water Partnership Programme fund in support of the regional process and African participation in the Forum.

EXCO

- noted the progress of activities relating to Africa’s preparation, including the resources made available through the Mexican government for the sponsorship of African ministers. TAC members are directed to fully brief their ministers.
- considered and adopted the ministerial declaration presented
- confirmed their participation and encourage members of the council to attend and further directed the support office of AMCOW’s President, AMCOW Secretariat and AfDB to work closely to ensure participation at the African session in Mexico.
- notes online registration difficulties and the fast approaching registration deadline of 1st March 2006 and further requests AfDB to facilitate the logistics of ministers’ participation.
b) AMCOW’s input into the African Ministerial Conference, Hydropower and Sustainable Development

EXCO
- noted the preparations for this conference
- co-host with UNEP, a 90-minute side event on the subject of improving decision making on dams to meet the MDGs ensuring dams contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction.
- Confirmed its participation and requests AMCOW President office to convey through sub-regional chairs to participate in this conference.

5.7 Progress Reports from AMCOW endorsed initiatives:

(a) African Water Facility

It was reported to EXCO that the Africa Water Facility has been operationalised with effect from January 2006. Up to Sixty million Euros has been pledged and some donors have already honoured their pledge (Euros 10 million). AWF is targeting a reserve of 500 million Euros by 2009. Therefore, African countries, through their governments and recognised institutions, are being encouraged to submit funding proposals in line with stipulated submission guidelines.

EXCO
- approved the sensitisation of AMCOW membership to access AWF through its website
- agreed to contribute to the Facility as principal stakeholders
- approved the constitution of task force to come up with mobilisation strategies for the Facility such as requesting the African Development Bank to host a Donors’ Conference.

5.8 Reports from the EU-Water Initiative Review Process

EXCO was briefed on the outcome of the review workshop (Entebbe, 13-14 February 2006) on the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership signed in 2002 at the WSSD. The review highlighted progress and difficulties that have encumbered implementation of key objectives of the Strategy. It was realised that country dialogue which has recently started in Ghana and Ethiopia is proving to be valuable in identifying the synergy and complementarities. However, a working formula was subsequently jointly developed to accelerate fulfilment and achievement of the set aims and objectives.

EXCO
- agreed to facilitate a forum for dialogue between AMCO water initiative.
- agreed to give guidance on the establishment of a sub-committee of TAC to act as a Steering Committee for the implementation of the Partnership principles.
- agreed to encourage country dialogue process to enable successful
implementation of the objectives of the Africa-EU partnership.

5.9 ACP-EU Water Facility

The EXCO members were briefed on the process of accessing the ACP-EU Water Facility for which 500 million Euro has been mobilised. A first call for proposals for 180 million Euro has been launched to which 50 million Euro have been added. It was noted that out of 800 applications from Africa, Caribbean and Pacific, 97 were selected. This result reflects that many of the disqualified proposals were due to several technicalities including late submissions and lack of conformity with the set guidelines. The EXCO members were further briefed on the new procedure which was developed to simplify the application process. Due to these difficulties, ACP-EU Water is organising a sensitisation programme at a country level to introduce the new procedures to interested applicants.

The next call for papers will be announced in March 2006 and it is expected that the selection process will be finalized by November 2006. It was also reported that all the information on the application guidelines and procedures are available on their website http://europa.eu.int/waterfacility.

EXCO

- noted the above information and requested to urge member countries to be well prepared for the submission of their applications when the second call will be announced.
- noted that with 230 million Euro from this first call, 10 million people will gain sustainable access to water and 5 million people will gain sustainable access to hygiene facilities, within the next four years.
- Encouraged countries to seek information on the sensitisation programme for the facility through the EC delegation in their countries.

5.10 Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (RWSSI)

EXCO was briefed on the objectives and progress of the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative which commenced operation in 2003. It was noted that the AfDB has approved the RWSSI programme for eight countries with co-funding from the Bank of US $ 304 million at the end of 2005 which is expected to extend water and sanitation services to about 15 million rural people by 2008. In addition the programme will be extended to cover 11 countries in 2006 and 2 countries in 2007 with additional funding of USD528 million. At the Paris international conference for the attaining MDGs water supply and sanitation in rural Africa on April 2005, the initiative received strong support from the international community.

EXCO

- encouraged African governments to take concrete actions in terms of prioritizing resource allocation from the ADF as well as national budget activities to support the implementation of the programme.
- urged governments to strengthen implementation capacity and expediting the implementation of overall strategies and national programmes.
5.11 Water and Sanitation for African Cities – Phase II

EXCO was briefed on the progress made by the Water and Sanitation for African Cities – Phase II programme, which include development of strategic partnerships, country level programmes and regional level programme. It was noted that 17 cities in 14 African countries have been identified to benefit from this programme. Some countries have signed the MoU while several others are at different stages of consultation. An important initiative under the programme is the Lake Victoria Region Water and Sanitation Initiative covering 15 small towns in the Lake area. It was also noted that gender mainstreaming, capacity building, introduction of innovative sanitation technology and water and sanitation education were central pillars to the programme. It is expected that the programme will impact on the water and sanitation agenda on the continent.

EXCO

- supported and encouraged members of the selected countries to accelerate the signing of the MoU.
- AMCOW promotes the sensitisation of gender mainstreaming, capacity building, introduction of innovative sanitation technology and water, sanitation and hygiene education.

5.12 German G8 Trans-boundary water initiative

EXCO was brief on the commendable achievement by the G8 Trans-boundary water initiative. A Progress report was presented on the three components of the initiative, which are well on course. It was noted that opportunity exists for synergies between the G8 initiative and the AMCOW.

EXCO

- noted with satisfaction the progress of the G8 initiative.
- approved the initiation of dialogue with the G8 in order to benefit AMCOW from their experience.

5.13 Attainment of WSSD target on IWRM, GWP-Africa

EXCO was briefed on the progress of IWRM policy, planning and implementation in selected 20 focal countries in African. Further information was provided on the situation assessment of the African river basins in terms of their institutional arrangements. Issues of concern were raised for each one of them in a direct reflection of the current use.

Poverty, inadequate infrastructure, weak legal and regulatory framework, issues of environmental concern, climate variability, high rate of population growth, stakeholder participation and resource mobilization were highlighted as pertinent in addressing a sustainable utilization of these water ecosystems.
EXCO

- noted the complimentary work GWP-Africa is doing in the area of IWRM policy development in Africa and further mandated the TAC to work out modalities of cooperation between GWP-Africa and AMCOW.

5.14 NEPAD regional network on centres of excellence on water sciences and technology

EXCO was briefed on the NEPAD initiative to establish region network on centres of excellence on water sciences and technology. It was recalled that Africa was faced with a dearth of information due to inadequate and sporadic research efforts to inform any competent decision making process. It was noted that NEPAD has already mobilized resources toward the fulfilments of centre of excellence.

EXCO

- directs the office of the President of AMCOW and the AMCOW Secretariat in Abuja to arrange a joint meeting of AMCOW and AMCOST under the auspices of NEPAD to expedite the implementation of centres of excellence on water sciences and technology.

5.15 African Water Journal

EXCO was updated on the next issue of the Africa Water Journal. It is expected that the next issue shall be released soon.

EXCO noted the satisfactory progress of the African Water Journal.

5.16 Gender mainstreaming in the management of African Water Resources

EXCO was presented with the report of the consultative process mainstreaming gender concerns in policy formulation in sectors of water, sanitation, human settlement, agriculture, and food security. A project has already been elaborated, aiming at improving knowledge, articulating policies and strategies and instituting monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure that gender equity and equality is mainstreamed.

EXCO

- noted with satisfaction the progress of gender mainstreaming in the management of African Water Resources and recommends pilot studies in the five sub-regions and involvement of African Water Facility in the project.

6.0 Introduction of new initiatives:

a) Tiger Initiative (European Space Agency)

EXCO received the report from the European Space Agency on the Tiger Initiative which is aimed at assisting African countries to overcome problems faced in the collection, analysis and dissemination of water related geo-information by exploiting the advantages of Earth Observation (EO) technology.
It was noted that data received through this initiative could be used for early warning systems for emergency preparedness and response mechanisms. Already more than 150 African institutions are involved in Tiger projects and activities. More than 50 research projects are distributed all over Africa as integral part of Tiger initiative and this incorporates capacity building, Africa water information network awareness raising resource mobilisation and coordination.

**EXCO**

- noted the Tiger initiative and mandated TAC to seek further collaboration for the benefit of AMCOW processes.
- mandated TAC to study how best Africa should strategically position itself so as to control access to its data.

b) Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in the water sector, peer review

A special focus group of the EXCO discussed the rationale and procedures of monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms on water supply and sanitation in Africa. This process put into consideration, the various players and stakeholders in the water sector in Africa. This includes multilateral and bilateral donors, financial institutions, civil society, private sector and government. It was underscored that monitoring is a very important process and NEPAD peer review mechanisms was sighted as a good model.

**EXCO**

- mandated AMCOW TAC to develop a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the water sector in Africa.
- supports the regional conference on Monitoring and Evaluation to be organised by African Water Facility.

c) Regional private sector partnerships in the water sector

EXCO recognised the important role that private sector can play in facilitating and financing water and sanitation infrastructure for both its social and economic value as well as an express commercial ventures. It was noted that many countries with advanced water supply and sanitation infrastructure have a significant engagement of the private sector. WSSD called for the promotion of public-private-participation (PPP) as a vehicle for enhancing and accelerating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on water.

**EXCO**

- directs AMCOW TAC to commission a study to establish the extent of private sector participation in the water sector.

7.0 Engagement of Civil Society and Relationship with regional institutions (WUP, CREPA, others)

EXCO deliberated on civil society participation in the AMCOW processes and considered the merits and demerits of such an engagement. It was recalled that the
civil society started the process of an engagement with AMCOW since the 2003 Pan-African Conference on Water in Addis Ababa. This CSO petition was received during the 5th Ordinary Session of the AMCOW during which EXCO was directed to initiate discussions and advice on the rules of engagement. EXCO is pleased to report that the process of engaging the CSO has already started.

EXCO

- directs AMCOW TAC to liaise with the CSO in the water sector to be invited as observers for EXCO meetings
- EXCO continues to constructively engage the CSOs in determining service delivery according to AMCOW programs.

8.0 Roadmap to the 6th AMCOW General Council meeting:

EXCO recognises that the mandate of the current EXCO expires at the end of 2006, after a two-year term. It was reported that AMCOW President had initiated correspondence with a counterpart in the Republic of Congo who have offered to host the next governing council.

EXCO

- notes with appreciation the welcoming gesture by the Republic of Congo to host the 6th Ordinary Session of the AMCOW.
- requests the AMCOW Chair to enter into bilateral discussions with the Republic of Congo to plan early for this event.
- requests the Republic of Congo to propose a date for the 6th Ordinary Session of AMCOW at their earliest convenience.
Annex 3

Executive Secretary
(Regionally Recruited)

Dep. Executive Secretary
Finance & Administration
(Regionally Recruited)

Bilingual Secretary
Assistant to Exec Sec
(Locally Recruited)

Programme Officer
Monitoring, ICT/Database
(Sub-regionally Recruited)

Programme Officer
Inter-governmental &
Sub-regional Cooperation
(Sub-regionally Recruited)

Programme Officer
IWRM & Capacity
Building
(Sub-regionally
Recruited)

Programme Officer
Infrastructure, Water &
Sanitation
(Sub-regionally
Recruited)

Programme Assistant
(Locally Recruited)

Programme Assistant
(Locally Recruited)

2 Officers
Translation, Information and
communication
(Sub-regionally
Recruited)

Appropriate
Support Staff