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**P. O. Box 3243, Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA Tel.: (251-11) 5525849 Fax: (251-11) 5525855
Website: www.au.int**

**FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE SPECIALIZED
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, RURAL
DEVELOPMENT, WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ARDWE)
13-17 December 2021**

INTRODUCTION

The African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted the configuration of the Specialized Technical Committees (STCs) and the modalities of their operationalization (Assembly/AU/Dec.227 (XII) and Assembly/ AU/Dec.365 (XVII) in January 2009 and July 2011, respectively, as Organs of the Union in accordance with Article 5 (1) (g) of the Constitutive Act. One of the Specialized Technical Committees that was established is the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (ARDWE). The Specialized Technical Committees are composed of Ministers or senior officials responsible for sectors falling within their respective areas of competence. The Ministers are responsible for preparing projects and programmers of the Union and submitting them to the Executive Council. They also have the duty to ensure the supervision, follow-up and evaluation of the implementation of decisions taken by the organs of the Union and the coordination and harmonization of projects and programmers of the Union. The STC is also expected to carry out any other functions assigned to it for the purpose of ensuring the implementation of the provisions of relevant AU Acts. The STCs are expected to meet at least every two years in order to discharge the responsibilities vested upon them by the AU Assembly

The Fourth Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (herein referred to as 'the STC') will be held 13-17 December 2021, to review progress made in the implementation of previous AU and STC Decisions; provide policy guidance; adopt reports, frameworks and programmers; as well as make recommendations that will guide the activities of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (DARBE) for the next two years.

CONTEXT

This session will be held in the context of:

1. The restructuring of the department that made two fundamental changes: (i) creation of two separate Directorates, and (ii) creation of a Blue Economy Division.
2. The COVID19 Pandemic and its impact on the various sectors under the STC.
3. UN Food Systems Summit that will be held in September 2021.

OBJECTIVE OF THE MEETING

The main objective of the meeting is to consider and recommend to the Executive Council several key policy and operational documents in the fields agriculture, rural development, water and environment.

More specifically the meeting will consider and validate the report on the implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the 3rd STC focusing on the work under the following sector:

1. Report on the implementation of the 3rd STC

2. COVID 19 responses and recovery

- I. COVID 19 agriculture and Food Security: reports of the AU-FAO task force
- II. COVID19 Implications on Pastoralism Practices in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities
- III. Position Paper on Empowering Women in Agriculture in light of COVID-19.
- IV. Report on the Special Session of Ministers Responsible for Environment and Natural Resources on the Challenges and Opportunities Presented by the COVID-19 Pandemic convened under the auspices of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (ARDWE) held from 9-10 November 2020.
- V. COVID-19 recovery framework for Africa 2022-2030

3. Agriculture and Food Security

- I. The 3rd CAADP Biennial Review Report and its communication and advocacy tools
- II. The 2022-2025 CAADP Business plan
- III. The continental Food Safety Strategy
- IV. The Continental Plant Health Strategy
- V. The Continental Strategy for Responding to Emerging Pests and Invasive Species in Agriculture
- VI. The reports on the establishment of an AU Food Safety Agency and Continental Food Safety Reference Laboratory
- VII. Boosting investment in Agriculture research in Africa (Building a case for increased investment in agricultural research in Africa).
- VIII. The Framework to upscale bio fortification in Africa
- IX. The reports on the implementation of the African Seed and Biotechnology programme
- X. The Guidelines for harmonization of Seed Policies
- XI. The Guidelines for the use of biotechnology in food and agriculture

- XI. Report on the Implementation of Abuja summit on Fertilizer: The Africa soil Initiative and Proposal for a 2nd Fertilizer Summit
- XII. The report on the implementation of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative
- XIII. Report of the 4th AU-EU Agriculture Ministers Conference

4. Livestock and Fisheries

- I. Report on the establishment of five regional gene banks for cryo-conservation of animal genetic materials in Africa and a proposal to consider these institutions as Centres of Excellence on Conservation of Animal Genetic Resources in Africa
- II. Guidelines for the Domestication of the Livestock Development Strategy for Africa
- III. Guidelines for Enhancing Inclusion of Livestock in the National and Regional Agriculture Investment Plans
- IV. The Livestock Sector Advocacy Report
- V. Lessons learn from the eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants in Africa

5. Rural Development

- I. Progress Report on Status of implementation of the Continental Framework for Boosting intra-African Trade in Agricultural Commodities and Services
- II. Guidelines for sustainable and inclusive value chains development for market access in Africa
- III. Securing Pastoralism and Preventing Conflict: Guidelines for secure, peaceful and sustainable Pastoralism
- IV. Information note/update on the Agricultural Digitization Strategy
- V. Report of the 3rd All African Post-Harvest Congress and Exhibition
- VI. Progress Report on the Common African Agro Parks Programme (CAAP)
- VII. African Agribusiness Youth Strategy
- VIII. AU Land Governance Strategy
- IX. Report of Study on Agribusiness Incubators in Africa
- X. Rural Infrastructure Framework for Africa
- XI. Investment Guidelines for Youth in Agri-Food Systems in Africa

6. Environment and Natural Resources:

- I. Report on the preparation of Africa Integrated Assessment on Air Pollution and Climate Change
- II. Report from the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) on the 17th and 18th Sessions held in October 2019 and September 2021 respectively

7. Meteorology, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction:

- I. The Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology (Weather and Climate Services)

- II. Report of the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET)
- III. Institutional and operational framework for the Multi-Hazard early warning system (MHEWS)
- IV. The African Strategy on Climate Change
- V. Inauguration of Continental Situation Room for Multi-Hazard Early Warning System and Early Action
- VI. **CREATION OF AFRICAN DISASTER OPERATIONS CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY**

8. Water and Sanitation:

- I. Report on the implementation of the Partners' Coordination Platform (PCP) on Water and Sanitation Programme Africa. (PCP)
- II. Report on the preparation for the 9th World Water Forum and convening of AU Summit on Water and Sanitation in Dakar, Senegal in 2022.
- III. Report from the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) on the 12th General Assembly of the Governing Council held in February 2021 including the launch of the African Sanitation Policy Guidelines on 11 June 2021.

9. Fauna and Flora:

- I. Report on the implementation of the Strategy to Combating Illegal Exploitation and Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora
- II. Report on the implementation of the Sustainable Forest Management Framework
- III. Report on the Preparations for the 15th COP to the Convention on Biological Diversity and COP19 to the CITES.

10. Blue Economy

- I. Terms of Reference of the Sectoral Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture
- II. Terms of Reference for the proposed Sectoral Committee on Blue Economy
- III. Report on implementation of the African Strategy on Blue Economy
- IV. "Validation of the **Environmental related** annexes of the LOME CHARTER
- V. Draft Ocean Governance Framework

FORMAT AND STRUCTURE OF THE MEETING

The 4th Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment will be held virtually due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministerial segment that will be held on 16th and 17th December 2021, will be preceded by a two-day meeting of Senior Officials/Experts that will take place on 13th and 14th December 2021 to examine the various documents and prepare their report to the Ministers. The 15th December 2021 will be used to prepare and adopt the reports of the Senior Officials/Experts to be submitted for consideration by the Ministers.

Senior Officials/Experts Meeting (13-15 December 2021)

There will be plenary and parallel sessions for Experts/Senior Officials to facilitate deliberations and review of documents. These will include: -

Opening Plenary Session

- **Parallel Session 1:** Sectoral Committee Agriculture, Rural Development, Livestock and Fisheries
- **Parallel Session 2:** Sectoral Committees Environment and Natural Resources; Meteorology, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction; Water and Sanitation; and Fauna and Flora

Plenary Session of Experts/Senior Officials: to review and consider reports and issues on the reports of the parallel sessions and the theme of the Conference.

The Ministerial Session (16-17 December 2021)

The two days' Ministerial session will be conducted in a format that on the one hand facilitates inclusive and interactive conversations and dialogue among the ministers as well as between the Ministers and key strategic stakeholders; and on the other hand allows the Ministers to consider strategic reports and items that warrant their considerations.

PARTICIPANTS

The STC meeting will be attended by Member State Ministers and Experts in-Charge of agriculture, livestock, fisheries, rural development, water and sanitation, environment, natural resources management, meteorology, climate change, disaster risk management, fauna and flora.

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**Fourth Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee
(STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment
(ARDWE)**

13th – 17th December 2021

VIRTUAL SESSION

**Draft Agenda of the Senior Officials and Experts Segment
13-15 December 2021**

12:00-18:00

Time	Activity	Responsible
Day 1: 13 December 2021: Plenary Session		
11:30-12:00	Meeting Room open	AUC
12:00-12:15	Opening Session: Welcome remarks by AUC-DARBE • Opening Remarks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director ARD• Director SEBE Chair of the Bureau of the 3 rd STC ARDWE
12:15-12:45	Election of the Bureau 4 th STC ARDWE	
12:45-13:00	Hand over Remarks Incoming Remarks	Chair of the 3 rd STC ARDWE Chair of 4 th STC ARDWE
13:00-13:10	Adoption of the Agenda	
13:10-14:00	Presentation of the Report on the Implementation of the recommendations of the 3 rd STC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director ARD• Director SEBE

14:00-14:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of The 3rd CAADP Biennial Review Report • CAADP communication and advocacy tools • Report of regional Consultations 	Director ARD
14:40-15:00	Break	
15:00-15:20	Presentation on Emerging issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Africa common Position to UNFSS 	Director ARD
15:20-15:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID 19 responses including the Green Recovery strategy 	Director SEBE
15:40-16:00	Breaking into parallel sessions	AUC
	Parallel Sessions	
16:00-18:00	Consideration of various reports and documents	
Day 2: 14 December 2021:Parallel sessions		
12:00-18:00	Consideration of various reports and documents	
Day 3: 15 December 2021		
12:00-15:00	Parallel Sessions: Adoption of the reports of the parallel Sessions	
15:00-17:30	Plenary Session: Presentation of adopted reports of the Experts from the parallel sessions	
17:30-18:00	Closing of the meeting of Experts	

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**Fourth Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee
(STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment
(ARDWE)**

13th – 17th December 2021

VIRTUAL SESSION

**Draft Agenda of the Ministerial Segment
16-17 December 2021**

Time	Activity	Responsible
16 December 2021		
11:30-12:00	Meeting Room Open	
12:00-12:20	Opening Session: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome remarks • Opening Remarks:	Commissioner DARBE Chair of the Bureau of 3 rd STC ARDWE
12:20-12:30	Election of the Bureau	
12:30-12:45	Hand over remarks by outgoing Chair of the Bureau Acceptance speech by incoming Chair of the Bureau	Chair of 3 rd STC ARDWE Chair of 4 th STC ARDWE
12:45-13:00	Adoption of the Agenda	
13:00-14:00	Report of the Experts <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Presentation of the 3rd CAADP BR report○ Regional consultations on CAADP Communication Tools○ Presentation of the revised CAADP Communication tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director ARD• Members of the bureau of 3rd STC• Director ARD

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report of meeting experts 	Chair of Expert's meeting
14:00-18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements by Ministers (3min each) 	Ministers and Head of Delegations
17 December 2021		
11:30-12:00	Meeting Room Open	
12:00-13:30	Inauguration of multi-hazards early warning system and early action continental situation room	Director SEBE
14:00-17:30	Report of the meeting of ministerial session	
17:30-18:00	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing remarks • Closing Remarks 	Commissioner DARBE Chair of the Bureau 4 th STC ARDWE

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Fourth Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture,
Rural Development, Water and Environment (ARDWE)

13th – 17th December 2021

ADDIS ABABA,
ETHIOPIA

Expert Parallel Session on Agriculture and Rural Development

Time	Activity	Responsible
13 December 2021		
16:00-16:15	Adoption of the agenda of the parallel session and working methods	
16:15-	Considerations of Various Reports:	
16:15-18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The 2022-2025 CAADP Business plan• The continental Food Safety Strategy• The Continental Plant Health Strategy• The reports on the establishment of an AU Food Safety Agency• Continental Food Safety Reference Laboratory	AFSD / IAPSC
14 December 2021		
11:30-12:00	Meeting Room Open	
12:00-13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Continental Strategy for Responding to Emerging Pests and Invasive Species in Agriculture• The Framework to upscale bio fortification in Africa• Declaration on Bio fortification	AFSD / IAPSC

13:00-14:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reports on the implementation of the African Seed and Biotechnology programme • The Guidelines for harmonization of Seed Policies • The Guidelines for the use of biotechnology in food and agriculture • Report on the Implementation of Abuja summit on Fertilizer: The Africa soil Initiative and Proposal for a 2nd Fertilizer Summi 	AFSD
14:15-14:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report on the implementation of the Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative • Report of the 4th AU-EU Agriculture Ministers Conference 	AFSD
14:40-14:55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break 	
14:55-16:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boosting investment in Agriculture research in Africa (Building a case for increased investment in agricultural research in Africa). • Progress Report on Status of implementation of the Continental Framework for Boosting intra-African Trade in Agricultural Commodities and Services • Guidelines for sustainable and inclusive value chains development for market access in Africa • African Agribusiness Youth Strategy • Investment Guidelines for Youth in Agri-Food Systems in Africa 	SAFGRAD RDD
16:30-18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information note/update on the Agricultural Digitization Strategy • Report of the 3rd All African Post-Harvest Congress and Exhibition • Progress Report on the Common African Agro Parks Programme (CAAP) • AU Land Governance Strategy • Report of Study on Agribusiness Incubators in Africa • Rural Infrastructure Framework for Africa 	RDD
15 December 2021		
11:30-12:00	Meeting Room open	
12:00-15:00	Adoption of the reports of the parallel Session	

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13th – 17th December 2021

ADDIS ABABA,

ETHIOPIA

Parallel Session on Livestock, Fisheries and aquaculture

Time	Activity	Responsible
14 December 2021		
11:30-12:00	Meeting Room open	
12:00-13:00	Report on the establishment of five regional gene banks for cryo-conservation of animal genetic materials in Africa and a proposal to consider these institutions as Centres of Excellence on Conservation of Animal Genetic Resources in Africa	IBAR
13:00-13:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Securing Pastoralism and Preventing Conflict: Guidelines for secure, peaceful and sustainable Pastoralism	SAFGRAD
13:45-17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Guidelines for the Domestication of the Livestock Development Strategy for AfricaGuidelines for Enhancing Inclusion of Livestock in the National and Regional Agriculture Investment PlansThe Livestock Sector Advocacy Report	IBAR
17:00-18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lessons learn from the eradication of Peste des Petits Ruminants in Africa	IBAR
15 December 2021		
11:30-12:00	Meeting Room open	

12:00-15:00	Adoption of the reports of the parallel Session	
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**Fourth Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (ARDWE)
13th – 17th December 2021
ADDIS ABABA,
ETHIOPIA**

**Parallel Session on Environment and Natural Resources;
Meteorology, Climate Change; Disaster Risk Reduction;
Water and Sanitation; Fauna and Flora and Blue Economy.**

Time	Activity	Responsible
13 December 2021		
16:00-16:15	Adoption of the agenda of the parallel session and working methods	
	Considerations of Various Reports:	
16:15-18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the preparation of Africa Integrated Assessment on Air Pollution and Climate Change • Report from the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) on the 17th and 18th Sessions held in October 2019 and September 2021 respectively • The Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology (Weather and Climate Services) • Report of the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET) • Institutional and operational framework for the Multi-Hazard early warning system (MHEWS) • Creation of African disaster operations capacity and capability 	SEBE

	•	
14 December 2021		
11:30-12:00	• Meeting Room Open	
12:00-12:45	• The African Strategy on Climate Change	SEBE
12:45-14:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the implementation of the Partners' Coordination Platform (PCP) on Water and Sanitation Programme Africa. (PCP) • Report on the preparation for the 9th World Water Forum and convening of AU Summit on Water and Sanitation in Dakar, Senegal in 2022. • Report from the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) on the 12th General Assembly of the Governing Council held in February 2021 including the launch of the African Sanitation Policy Guidelines on 11 June 2021 	SEBE
14:00-15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the implementation of the Strategy to Combating Illegal Exploitation and Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora • Report on the implementation of the Sustainable Forest Management Framework • Report on the Preparations for the 15th COP to the Convention on Biological Diversity and COP19 to the CITES. 	SEBE
15:00-15:15	• Break	
15:15-18:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference of the Sectoral Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture • Terms of Reference for the proposed Sectoral Committee on Blue Economy • Report on implementation of the African Strategy on Blue Economy • "Validation of the Environmental related annexes of the LOME CHARTER • Draft Ocean Governance Framework 	SEBE
15 December 2021		
11:30-12:00	• Meeting Room Open	
12:00-15:00	• Adoption of the reports of the parallel Session	