



CONCEPT NOTE

THE FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, WATER AND ENVIRONMENT (ARDWE) 14-17 NOVEMBER 2023

A. INTRODUCTION

The Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment STC - ARDWE is one of the fourteen (14) STCs established by the Decision of the Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union (Assembly/AU/Dec.227 (XII)), which was held in Addis Ababa Ethiopia on 01-03 February 2009.

The STC is composed of Ministers or senior officials responsible for sectors falling within its areas of competence. The Ministers approve projects and programmes submitted by the STC-ARDWE experts. They also have the duty to ensure effective 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 (African Union) Acts. The Commission convenes Ordinary Sessions of the STC once every two (2) years in order for the STC to discharge its responsibilities.

The Fifth Ordinary Session of the STC on ARDWE is scheduled to take place on 14-17 November 2023, to review progress made in implementing previous AU and STC Decisions and recommendations; provide policy guidance; adopt reports, frameworks, Guidelines and programmes; 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.

B. OBJECTIVE OF THE MEETING

The objective of the meeting is to review progress made in the implementation of AU and STC Decisions, provide policy guidance, adopt reports, frameworks, Guidelines, and programmes, as well as recommendations that will be presented for consideration by the Executive Council of the African Union.

More specifically, the meeting will consider and validate the report on the implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the 4th STC focusing on the work under the following sectors:

- (a) Agriculture and Food Security
- (b) Animal Resources
- (c) Blue Economy
- (d) Rural Development
- (e) Sustainable Environment

C. FORMAT AND STRUCTURE OF THE MEETING

The 5th STC-ARDWE will be held in hybrid format from the 14th to 17th of November 2023. The first 3 days; 14th and 16th of November, will be the meeting of Senior Officials and Experts. who will examine the various documents and prepare a report for the Ministers' consideration on the 17th of November 2023. The Commission, together with the Bureau of the STC (Expert Level) will support the finalization of the reports.

Senior Officials/Experts Meeting (14-16 November 2023)

This will be organized in plenary and parallel sessions. The parallel sessions will be clustered along thematic coverages for Experts/Senior Officials to facilitate deliberations and review of documents. The following structure will be adopted: **Opening Plenary Session**

- **Parallel Session 1:** Sectoral Session shall be on Agriculture and Rural Development to include, RED, AFSA, SAFGRAD, IAPSC and CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme); Animal Resources (IBAR, PANVAC, PATTEC),
- **Parallel Session 2:** Sectoral Session on Blue Economy (Biological and Non-Biological Resources; Ocean Governance) and Sustainable Environment (Biodiversity, Forestry and Wildlife; Climate Change and Meteorology; Disaster Risk Reduction; Sustainable Land Management; Water and Environment (including Sanitation)

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.

High-Level Segment: Ministerial (17 November 2023)

The one-day Ministerial Session will be conducted in a format that facilitates inclusive and interactive conversations and dialogue among the Ministers as well as between the Ministers and key strategic stakeholders. The Session will also allow the Ministers to consider strategic reports and items that warrant their consideration.

D. PARTICIPATION

The STC meeting will be attended by AU Member States Ministers and Experts in-Charge of agribusiness and agro-industry, agriculture, animal resources (including fisheries and livestock), biodiversity, blue economy (biological and non-biological resources, ocean governance), climate change, disaster risk reduction, environment, food security, food safety, food quality, forestry, infrastructure and digital agriculture, land tenure, meteorology, sustainable land management, water and sanitation, and wildlife.

E. AGENDA

The provisional Agenda is in Annex