

Key Resolutions and Recommendations of the Workshop on Mainstreaming Climate Information and Services into Legislation, Development Policies, Plans and Practices

ADDIS ABABA

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The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) organized a workshop on mainstreaming climate information and services to enhance capacity and knowledge among African legislators about the effects of climate change and to promote actions to mitigate these effects. The workshop participants included Members of Parliament from XX African countries and representatives from International Non-Governmental Organizations, civil societies, academic institutions and youth organizations (see attached list of participants). It was the first of its kind in Africa.

Experts from Camco Advisory Services¹ led the presentations through an interactive process that drew heavily on the contributions from participants. The broad themes introduced were along existing frameworks for addressing climate change impacts from the global community and from experiences found within the continent. Participants were engaged in discussions where they shared their views and experience, as well as proposed actions to address climate change in the member countries.

The workshop participants acknowledged that greater awareness among policy makers and other stakeholders on the issue of climate change is imperative for formation of important partnerships and synergies for action on climate change. Members of Parliament can play an important role in providing oversight on institutions engaged with Climate Information and Services, strengthening their capacity to deliver and ensuring linkage to development plans and budgetary priorities.

The participants saw value in increased efforts to broaden awareness among decision makers and emphasised that the approach of providing examples and case studies from other African countries was constructive and compelling. Participants were enthusiastic about a potential climate change guide modelled around this workshop's approach, as part of an awareness raising series at the national level. Such a guide would provide practical steps and models for integrating climate change information and services (from data collection to dissemination) as well as climate change adaptation.

The recommendations below have been drafted based on the observations and discussions from the 3 day workshop.

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The Honorable Members of Parliament present at the UNECA Workshop on Mainstreaming Climate Information and Services into Legislation, Development Policies, Plans and Practices (October, 2016) endorsed the following recommendations:

- Establish or strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks to enhance the generation, analysis and dissemination of for Climate Information and Services. Strengthen the capacity of C/S generators – National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHS) and related institutions (i.e. lobby for budget increase to hire experts, DRR interventions, invest in CI equipment/infrastructure etc)
- Increase policy makers and community stakeholders' knowledge of the probable impacts of climate change on the key economic sectors of the member countries. Need for legislators to be proactive in addressing Climate Change issues e.g. by engaging UNCCC focal points at the Ministry of Environment.
- Prioritize the development of a wide range of innovative, user friendly data collection systems and tool for assessing climate impact and vulnerability, and for planning adaptation strategies. There is a need to better package information for target users in the key sectors.
- The issues of climate change need to be demystified through similar workshops held in each member country. Need for climate experts to downscale CI for easier interpretation by MPs and the public in general. It would be useful to come up with a practical information tool kit that can be used by communities. Emphasize the need to cater for populations that are most vulnerable to climate change (e.g., rural communities, youth, women, children, elderly). Merge indigenous knowledge with formal knowledge on CI.
- Take necessary action towards integrating climate change into national and sector policies, and in to development programmes. Reinforce C/S linkages with key sectors of the economy.
- Develop adaptive measures to reduce vulnerability of agricultural production, livelihood systems, water resources, power supply, spread of disease and human settlement to the impact of climate change.
- Strengthening capacities on disaster risk management, enhance disaster response interventions and improve local practices for risk reduction.
- Development partners, such as UNECA, continue to support member countries to achieve sustainable agriculture production and enhance food security.

- Development partners, such as UNECA, spearhead the establishment of exchange forums between African countries. This will help build greater resilience to climate change by drawing on improved and sustainable practices that have been developed successfully within the continent.
- Need for assessment of existing strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in member countries and link with current effects of climate change in their respective countries. This will ensure that practical approaches/interventions are put in place to counteract effects of climate change.
- Africa needs an integrated approach in addressing climate change issues. Need to lobby for any form of assistance (national, regional, international) with regards to addressing effects of CC. Need to strengthen cross-border coordination among C/S institutions
- Establish legislative and institutional frameworks governing climate change. Need to establish a Secretariat on climate change in African parliaments (at national level, regional level and international level). Disasters are preventable and risks can be reduced by creating an enabling environment for CI through for example building linkages between CI experts and MPs.
- MPs need to ensure that policy and economic instruments for mainstreaming climate change are adequately monitored and evaluated to ensure that they achieve their objectives. Mechanisms to ensure that climate secretariat provides information
- Decentralize climate information services (across the country)
- Provide a platform where farmers can interact with other C/S stakeholders. CI can be translated to local languages and disseminated through community outreach programmes. Emphasize the need to cater for populations most vulnerable to climate change (e.g., youth, women, children, elderly etc.). Merge indigenous knowledge with formal knowledge on CI. Widespread dissemination of CI e.g., through media, social media etc. Promote adoption of easy to use applications e.g., phone applications. Institutional performance indicators and budget criteria can be used to encourage NMHS and other government C/CS providers to package their data and services better for farmers and other end-users (rather than speaking to the science community).
- Use C/S to address threats to biodiversity, land degradation and other environmental impacts of climate change, stemming from unsustainable forest and land-use practices