

The Africa Climate Talks (ACT!)



The Promise of Paris –A critical Inquiry into the Issues, Challenges and Prospects of a Post Kyoto Climate Framework for Africa

A concept note for ACPC supported sub - regional public lectures and discussions on the creation of a new global climate governance framework, Africa's role in the process, and the implications of the framework for Africa.



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa



“The Promise of Paris” seeks to crystallize an umbrella conceptual framing of Africa’s role in the global governance of climate change, and to position climate change as both a constraint on Africa’s development potential as well as an opportunity for the structural transformation of Africa’s economies. The climate talks will explore the possibilities of Africa prospering in a changing climate, how that prosperity can be leveraged, and the roles of different countries in enabling this prosperity through their contributions to global climate governance.

The evolution of the Global Framework for Climate Governance (the UNFCCC and the Associated Kyoto Protocol) has been complicated and not without controversy. Since the emergence of climate change as the most pressing and complex challenge for human development, significant progress has been made in developing a global framework within which humanity could collaboratively identify solutions to the myriad challenges posed by climate change, and translate these solutions into national and sub-national actions. Various policy solutions and actions have been developed and implemented in response to climate change. These have ranged from the Clean Development Mechanism, the National Adaptation Action Plans (NAPAs), the National Action Plans (NAPs) to the REDD and REDD++ responses. All these responses developed within the context of the Kyoto Protocol of the UNFCCC, and sought to limit the emission of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere while at the same time supporting efforts to adapt to the effects of climate change that were already expressing themselves in different ways.

The impact of Global climate governance to date has been mixed. Successive Assessment Reports (ARs) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) note that while progress has been made in many areas of defining the global response to climate change, this is not sufficient. More still needs to be done and urgently to avert catastrophic climate change. The global climate governance framework needs to become more robust in order to create a solid foundation to guide humanity’s climate response, and time is of the essence. The global narrative now seeks to limit temperature increases due to anthropogenic GHG to 2°C by 2050. However, all evidence indicates that for Africa and the Small Island Developing States, temperature increases above 1.5°C are already catastrophic. The 1.5°C is the Precautionary Principle threshold established in the UNFCCC, yet subsequent interpretations and re-interpretations of the UNFCCC have revised the emissions reduction ambition downwards. What has been the role of Africa in this process? How does the current framing of emissions reduction ambition in the lead up to Paris reflect the different interests and aspirations of the parties to the UNFCCC? How will the Paris agreement resolve the apparent gap between the interests of the developed countries and the developing world? How will African interests be articulated and reflected in the post Kyoto agreement?

The trajectory of the global climate governance framework reflects the outcomes of complex interactions between the different and sometimes conflicting interests of developing vs. developed countries, of governments vs. markets, public vs. private interests, and so on. The negotiations in the successive COPs of the UNFCCC have focused on defining the main components of the climate response

(Mitigation and Adaptation); apportioning responsibilities for these responses (e.g. the definition of parties into Annex 1 and non-Annex countries, with each category having different sets of responsibilities); Financing for the climate response (include the mobilization and distribution of climate funds), and monitoring and verification mechanisms.

The Convention has impacted African national responses to climate change in significant ways, defining and supporting national policy frameworks, implementing capacity building programmes, and providing some funding for the national climate responses. However, Africa’s role in shaping the architecture, content and effect of the convention has been limited by several factors, including *inter alia* limited capacities -both financial and technical- which have meant that Africa’s participation in the convention processes has been episodic rather than continuous; differences between the approaches

of different countries which have complicated African common positions on many convention issues; and climate change financing mechanisms which are accessed on an individual country basis.

As the global climate governance framework has evolved and become more complex, the challenges of engaging with this framework to reflect the interests of the African states as well as to create a conducive environment to support the development of African national responses has also become more challenging. Various initiatives have been launched to support African governments and negotiators in the UNFCCC processes. These have cumulatively improved Africa's engagement with the convention and its protocols.

The challenges of constructing a binding global agreement on climate change were starkly laid bare in the evolution of the UNFCCC, whose response to the stalemate was the Kyoto Protocol (KP). But even the KP soon became problematic as some countries refused to be bound by its provisions and others withdrew from the protocol for whatever reason. The Kyoto protocol effectively ceased in 2012, to be replaced by a successor climate agreement which was to be finalized at the Copenhagen COP. However, Copenhagen did not deliver an agreement, reflecting the different interest and ambitions of the parties, and instead developed a set of interim measures to guide the transition from the KP to a new climate agreement. COP 21 in Paris in December 2015 is expected to deliver the new climate agreement which will define global climate governance in the post KP period. As such COP 21 will be a land mark moment in the evolution of global climate governance.

For Africa in particular, COP 21 represents a moment when the creation of a new global agreement coincides with the increasing influence and confidence of Africa in the global scene. African economies have been growing significantly over the past decade. The amount of investment flows onto the continent have increased exponentially. Democratization and other processes to streamline governance systems in all spheres of economic activity have been undertaken successfully in most African countries. In the climate change context, the continent has put in place a Committee of Heads of State on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), African Ministers of Environment have an annual conference at which climate change has become the most significant discussion; African Regional Economic Commissions have elaborated regional climate strategies; and most African governments have put in place policy and legal frameworks to guide their own national climate responses. But climate change remains a global rather than national challenge, and as such national responses can only be effective in the context of an enabling global framework.

The global context in which the climate response is framed is characterized by a divergence of interest between the global north and the south. This divergence is reflected in the outcomes of many of the past COPs, which have tended to sideline the interests of developing countries. However, there is also a growing recognition that failure to put in place adequate climate responses will have dire consequences for both the developed and developing world. Climate change threatens the advances made by developed countries while at the same time presenting massive challenges for the growth of developing economies as the incidence and costs of climate related disasters increases. While the world has long been galvanized into action, evidence indicates that the response thus far is inadequate. As such Africa, being the continent that contributes the least to global warming and suffers the most from climate change, is singularly interested in a post Kyoto framework which ensures that global climate governance continues to be based on the Precautionary Principle and Common but Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR), sufficiently addresses the Polluter Pays Principle and builds on Article 2 of the UNFCCC. It is imperative for African negotiators, scientists, policy makers and publics to debate the structure and content of an agreement that would deliver such a global governance frameworks, and to seek ways of informing the negotiation process towards achieving this agreement.

But how will the ideals enshrined in the principles of the UNFCCC be represented in a post Kyoto Climate Governance framework given the geopolitical and economic issues underlying the negotia-

tions processes? The parties to the UNFCCC have historically had different interpretations of CBDR as reflected in the tensions between mitigation and adaptation. Mitigation is seen as the reflection of the historical responsibility for GHG emissions which must be borne by the developed industrialized north. Adaptation, on the other hand, should define compensatory payments made by the industrialized countries to those who bear the costs of climate change to which they contributed little. Towards Paris, the dominant narrative appears to have become one based on a recognition that responsibilities for emissions are not static, and that therefore developing countries should also move beyond adaptation and integrate mitigation in their climate strategies by controlling their emissions. This is the defining debate underlying the road to Paris.

A related issue is that of compliance. The UNFCCC has faced the challenge of creating an adequate balance between voluntary and compulsory mechanisms to ensure compliance with emissions reductions targets, funding for adaptation, and technology investments. The different solutions that have been adopted to undergird climate actions to date reflect a preference for voluntary, market based mechanisms. The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), attracted a lot of interest but limited investment prior to the collapse of carbon markets. REDD+ has been seen as a mechanism that will generate both carbon and non-carbon benefits, although the implementation of REDD+ initiatives suggest that it may have been still-born. Efforts at compulsion have alienated leading industrialists and resulted in some of the most influential polluting economies pulling out of the KP process. The Paris accord will, by all indications, emphasize voluntary emissions reduction targets set through the so-called Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) to emissions reduction.

Climate finance has also defined previous UNFCCC negotiations, and remains a thorny issue in the lead up to Paris. The link between developed countries; contributions to climate finance and ODA remains problematic, with limited new funds being dedicated towards financing the climate response. At the same time, some developing countries have made admirable progress in mobilizing domestic funds to finance their own climate policies, but these also remain woefully small, reflecting the limited capacity of the LDC economies to internalize the climate response. The debate on financing climate actions cannot be delinked from CBDR, and the tensions between the developed and developing countries in this context are based on the perceptions and realities of responsibilities for GHG emissions.

There are currently many debates and discussions on the road to Paris taking place across the continent. The ACPC does not seek to supplant these debates, but rather to add and to enrich them by creating spaces and forums for scaling up the discussions. To contribute to the ongoing debates on the post 2015 Climate Governance Framework, ACPC proposes a series of regional meetings with partner research institutions. The meetings will convene panels of government ministers and parliamentarians, senior researchers and negotiators, representatives of RECs and Development Banks, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders in climate policy to debate pertinent issues on the road to Paris. The proposed 3 day meetings will be moderated by an experienced journalist/public intellectual and will prompt invited panelists to speak to key issues under debate/discussion or negotiation in the lead up to Paris. The sessions will seek to build up consensus towards a common African position on the post 2015 framework, and to develop mechanisms to hold African policy makers and negotiators accountable to that vision. The sessions will be held in public spaces, such as University lecture rooms, and engage as many people as possible in regional discussions. The debates will be webcast and podcast live, and regional audiences will participate in the online discussions with the panelists. Each session should end with agreement on what should constitute the African position on the main issues emerging from the debates. A final session will be held at the Africa Pavilion at the end of COP 21 to review the outcomes of the COP and assess Africa's position in the outcome framework agreement.

Objective

The objective is to mobilize the engagement of Africans from all spheres of life in the lead up to the Paris COP, to increase public awareness of climate change and the roles they can play in the global governance of climate change, and to elicit critical reflection on the UNFCCC process among Africans. These reflection will contribute towards the identification of African solutions to the climate challenge.

Outcomes

It is anticipated that the debates will inform Africa's positions on the key issues in the post 2015 agreement, provide spaces for national and regional collaboration on climate change; provide platforms for information sharing and interaction between different stakeholders, and catalyze the convergence of the multiple interests in climate issues on the continent. The debates will culminate in the Africa Pavilion in Paris.

Discussion Themes

The negotiation text for the Paris COP 21 was published in February 2015. Several key themes in the text will occupy the negotiators in Paris. While climate change is a global concerns, there are historical, regional and local specificities which ensure that of the main themes under negotiation, some will have more significance for Africa than other continents, and Africa will seek outcomes from these themes that support the continent's sustainable development, adaptation and mitigation goals. Of these, none is more significant than the question of climate finance and other means of implementation. Also significant for the continent are the questions surrounding the founding principles of the UNFCCC and Kyoto protocol, the Precautionary Principle, the Principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibility, and the principle of sustainable development. Successive COPs of the UNFCCC have had the effect of refining and the interpretations of these principles in ways that have caused concern among some African constituencies. These concerns are reflected in efforts to uncover the extent to which the Paris accord will represent shifts in the global interpretations of these principles, and the implications of these reinterpretations for Africa. Of particular concern is the question of how climate science is generated and deployed to inform global climate policy positions, and how these are implemented through mechanisms of the UNFCCC.

The extant climate science confirms that climate change is not a distant prospect but a current reality. Climate change is unequivocal, and the impacts are already being felt in many different spheres of life. But in particular, climate change is negatively affecting the livelihoods of the most vulnerable communities, especially small-island developing states, fisher-folk, rural smallholders and other natural resource dependent communities across the African continent. For such communities whose livelihoods are dependent on climate sensitive activities such as agriculture and fishing, adaptation to climate change is imperative. Adaptation must also occur at the municipal, state and global levels. At these local levels, the capacity to adapt to climate change impacts is determined by the underlying social and economic weaknesses that also determine vulnerability to climate change impacts in the first place. These underlying weaknesses include access to resources, land tenure, health and education, and the wider enabling environment created by strong and accountable local and wider governance systems. Adaptation at the local level is therefore difficult to separate from development. Some observers have therefore called for a 'development first' approach to adaptation that addresses the vulnerability context, rather than addressing the impacts of climate change alone.

While climate change entails a slew of negative impacts on livelihoods and economies, and even an existential threat to whole nations as in the case of small-island developing states (SIDS), it also offers some opportunities. At a broad developmental level, it is acknowledged that given the correct level of support and enabling environment, climate change could stimulate developing economies into

adapting sustainable development paths. At more localized levels, the transition to carbon neutral development pathways offers entrepreneurial opportunities to investors, new opportunities and spaces for policy makers to address equity concerns in gender and youth policies, as well as opportunities to revisit questions of regional and international articulations of economies. However, the opportunities from climate change are attenuated significantly by the costs of climate change. In Africa, there is a need to negotiate the balance between costs and benefits carefully and develop a narrative that is realistic and supports a progressive position on climate response strategies.

Finally, there can be no doubt that the narrative of climate change is highly political, and that the political context shapes the nature of the global climate governance framework. To be sure, significant efforts have been made by African researchers and activists to analyze the political economy of global climate governance. However, there remains an urgent need to unravel the political nuances of the UNFCCC process in order to ensure informed participation in the process by African politicians, negotiators and policy makers. There is also an urgent need to create spaces for the elaboration of African political positions on climate changes, and to create debate on these positions between politicians, policy makers and the various African stakeholders affected by climate change.

Given this context, the specific themes that will be addressed in the climate dialogues will be means of implementation, the linkages between climate science and climate policy, opportunities for development in the context of a changing climate, and global climate governance.

Means of Implementation

A major issue omnipresent in all COP negotiations is the question of means of implementation – finance, technology transfer and capacity building. The question of means of implementation is rooted in the equity of approach premise that rich countries should assist poorer countries to transition their economies to climate friendly production technologies as well as provide assistance to cope with the lived impacts of climate change on economies and livelihoods. However, the mean of implementation question has remained unresolved in the progression of the global climate governance framework. Various funds have been created to support climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives. But such funds have remained un or under resourced. Where pledges have materialized, complicated procedures have been put in place to access them, with the result that those countries with the least capacity to adapt to climate change also need the most capacity support to access the available climate funds. Major initiatives such as the African Group Renewable Energy Development Initiative have remained in -operational due to lack of adequate financing.

Debate is required to demonstrate the effectiveness or otherwise of existing means of implementation, and to explore alternatives at global and national levels. Innovative approaches to mobilizing domestic resources for climate response are beginning to emerge in some African countries. There is a need to explore these innovations and inform other African countries of alternative climate finance strategies. Thus a key question to be addressed in the Paris framework is how can the global climate ambition be reflected in resource mobilization for climate finance? How can nations develop alternative and innovative mechanisms to finance climate initiatives?

A linked issue is the need for a global strategy to address loss and damage from climate change. Loss and damage will be a core debate in Paris, and as with the other means of implementation, it appears that the dominant narrative is for market based systems to address loss and damage.

Similarly, capacity building and Technology transfer are contentious issues.

The IPCC, Climate Science and Climate Policy

Understanding of the climate phenomenon is based on solid physical and hydro-meteorological sci-

ence. This solid scientific basis in turn informs the policy and governance responses to climate change. In practice, climate science has been provided by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which collects the best available science from individual scientists working in a broad spectrum of environments across the globe and across the various climate disciplines. The IPCC Assessments have become the basis for climate policy at global and local levels. Global and national climate policies are geared towards mitigating climate change while at the same time adapting to the impacts of changes that are already occurring. This entails integrating climate change into development and sectoral policies. However, development processes invariably impact on the mitigation response by emitting GHGs, or by refocussing technologies to wards less carbon intensive production, manufacturing and distribution technologies. As a consequence of the significance of carbon emissions to the development processes, it has become imperative to calculate correctly the amounts of carbon that can still be safely absorbed in the atmosphere, and to allocate this carbon equitably in order to support sustainable development processes. Thus a key aspect of the IPCC climate science is the estimation of the ‘carbon budget’¹.

An outcome of the Copenhagen COP was global agreement on the emissions reductions required in order to control global temperature increases within the 1.5°C or 2°C limits. The Copenhagen accords required significant emissions reductions in order to stay within these limits. Several countries have made commitments to reduce their commitments and there climate scientists have responded by modelling different scenarios to demonstrate the probabilities of staying within the desirable limits with the pledges that have so far been put forward. This represents the level of global ambition to control global warming. Going forward to Paris, the emphasis of national commitments to reduce emissions is encapsulated in Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) to emissions reductions which all parties are to compile and submit by the 15th of October. But questions remain about the best possible mechanisms to achieve the goal of controlling global warming, the implications of 1.5°C and 2°C for development and livelihoods in Africa, and about the extent to which INDCs not only represents a shift in the interpretations of CBRD, but also the extent to which the INDC is the appropriate mechanism to regulate emissions.

In the lead up to Paris 2015, UNFCCC Parties are discussing ways to increase the level of mitigation ambition in the pre-2020 period, (2015-2020) with a view to ensuring the highest possible mitigation efforts by all parties. The aim is to close the ambition gap between the aggregate effect of Parties’ current mitigation pledges and an aggregate pathway consistent with maintaining a likely chance of holding the increase in global warming below 2°C or 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Major issues in the negotiations include concerns about low levels of mitigation ambition in developed countries’ pre-2020 pledges (lower than developing countries); low levels of finance, technology and capacity building to enable mitigation actions by developing countries (no roadmap for finance to 2020); inadequate progress in implementing concrete mitigation actions to curb warming; and efforts to shift responsibilities away from developed countries under the Convention towards international cooperative initiatives and the private sector.

Many scientists are debating the different emission pathways that can be adopted in order to meet the temperature increase limits. It is thus important to have an African debate on the carbon gap, the carbon budget and its relationship to Africa’s sustainable development requirements. This debate will also be linked to the INDCs as a response mechanism, and the nature of technological support and other means of implementation required for Africa to meet its development needs while at the same time mitigating carbon emissions. This session will discuss the IPCC Physical Science with respect to Africa and COP 21, focusing in particular on determining what the acceptable temperature increases for Africa are, how these can be achieved and Africa’s role in those scenarios. Within this context, debate will also focus on what does the carbon budget mean for Africa? How best can this be allocated

¹ UNEP 2010. The Emissions Gap Report

in order to allow for Africa to develop equitably and sustainably? How should the carbon budget be incorporated in the post 2015 agreement?

The opportunities in climate change

While it is acknowledged that climate change represents an enormous challenge to humanity, it is increasingly also recognized that it is an opportunity to catalyze a transition to a more energy efficient green economy². National economies can be assisted to transition from carbon intensive to green technologies. National and global enterprises can be developed and grow around the provision of appropriate technologies, and green growth can contribute towards poverty reduction in sustainable ways. The transition to efficient green economies has sectoral implications for climate sensitive sectors such as agriculture, water, energy as well as the environment. In the agriculture sector, structural transformations will be required to respond to rainfall and seasonal variability. These will include innovations in seed technologies as well as water harvesting, storage and utilization. In the energy sectors, technological innovations will include improving energy efficiency, investments in 'green' energy technologies, and improving access to sustainable energy for all. In the water sector, improvements in water storage, distribution and use are indicated. Other responses such as flood control, management of underground water resources, and improvements in urban water and sewerage reticulation systems, are also required.

However, climate change is also a constraint on growth and development. Addressing climate change has become central to the continent's development and poverty reduction agenda. Poorer countries and communities will suffer earliest and hardest because of weaker resilience and greater reliance on climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture. In Africa, recent modelling indicates that a temperature increase of 2^oc could mean a loss of 4.7% of GNP, most of it as a result of loss in the agricultural sector. A temperature rise of 2.5-5^oc would be worse; hunger for 128 million, 108 million affected by flooding and a sea-level rise of 15-95cm. Climate variability lies behind much of the prevailing poverty, food insecurity, and weak economic growth in Africa today. Climate change will increase this variability; the severity and frequency of droughts, floods and storms will increase, leading to more water stress. Changes in agricultural, livestock and fisheries productivity will occur, and the continent will face further food insecurity as well as a spread of water-related diseases, particularly in tropical areas. Some 200 million of the poorest people in Africa are food insecure, many through their dependence on climate sensitive livelihoods – predominantly rain-fed agriculture. Temperature increases and changes in mean rainfall and evaporation are likely to become ever greater and more damaging to livelihoods through the 21st century.

The ability to adapt production and manufacturing technologies is constrained by limited financial resources in developing countries and is thus dependent on technology transfers. Adaptation also means the reallocation of available finances from limited resources towards responding to immediate and local needs, including responding to climate related disasters and emergencies. Thus while climate is an opportunity for development, it is also a significant cost.

This session will critically examine the opportunities from climate change narrative by discussing the implications of climate change for the various climate sensitive sectors of African economies, the opportunities that are available for the transformation of these sectors in response to climate change impacts, as well as the structural and other limitations to adaptive capacities within these sectors.

Global Climate Governance and Climate Politics

Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) are the central mechanisms for global environmental

² UNEP 2010

governance³. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the associated Kyoto Protocol (KP) govern global cooperation in response to climate change and global warming. The UNFCCC is undergirded by three key principles – the Precautionary Principle, the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR), and the commitment to sustainable development – which define cooperation between countries and also condition national and sub-national climate policies. Global climate governance has been characterized by a standoff between developed and developing countries, and among developed countries, which has prevented the emergence of a legally binding climate governance framework. This standoff appears to be continuing, and taking on new dimensions in the build up to Paris 2015. The main areas of contention in the design of the global climate governance framework revolve around questions of attribution (common but differentiated responsibility), equity (financing climate mitigation and adaptation, including technology transfer and capacity building), and emissions reductions.

While non-nation state actors (NSSAs) have become increasingly important in climate governance, the development and implementation of adaptation policies and strategies remains dominated by state actors. Civil society organizations and local communities have so far played a limited role in the formulation of national climate change adaptation policies and strategies. This is a highly contradictory reality, and reflects the uncertainties in the changing balances and configurations of power between states, civil society (including the market), and international organizations. Climate change constitutes an arena in which power shifts between different actors and interests are expressing themselves in many complex ways. The need to understand how the different power relations act out, and the implications of these interaction on climate governance at local, national and global scales is urgent.

The original remit of the UNFCCC was to manage mitigation. Adaptive capacity was considered to be an indicator of the extent to which societies could tolerate changes in climate, and was not seen as a policy objective. Adaptation emerged from this context to deal with the impacts of non-mitigated greenhouse gas emissions, resulting in an “impacts-based” approach to climate change risk. This impacts-based approach requires external scientific and technological expertise to define climate change problems, and formulate technological adaptation solutions, based on specific knowledge of future climate conditions.

The principal current climate change concern for Africa is its implications for development and the wellbeing of societies and ecosystems. The governance of climate change adaptation on the continent thus requires a review of the nature and trajectory of growth and development processes, the democratization of global systems to achieve equity, and the realignment of decision making processes to facilitate greater public engagement in the formulation of global and national responses to climate change.

Africa contributes only 3.8% of total greenhouse gas emissions, yet Africa’s countries are among the most vulnerable to global warming. The global climate governance framework seeks to achieve an equitable and democratic climate response which allocates historical responsibility and also mobilizes resources to support national and sub-national responses to climate change. However, commitment to the global framework has proved to be variable, with some countries repudiating the KP and others similarly withdrawing from global climate agreements⁴. The UNFCCC is increasingly characterized by contestations over its legitimacy, issues of institutional fragmentation, and significant differences in the interpretations of key principles of the convention and the KP. These contestations are indicative of the highly political nature of global climate governance.

Leading up to Paris 2015, UNFCCC Parties are negotiating a new climate agreement under the Convention that will be applicable to all parties. This agreement — in the form of a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force — is to be agreed by the 2015 Paris COP and

³ Andonova et al (2009)

⁴ See e.g. Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen (2013)

to come into effect by 2020. The two main issues currently under discussion are in relation to the “elements” of the agreement (whether it will cover mitigation, adaptation, technology, finance, capacity and transparency, and how) and “contributions” (the scope and information to be provided in the “intended nationally determined contributions” or INDCs by Parties to the new agreement).

Major issues include whether the post-2020 agreement will cover all the elements in a balanced and comprehensive manner, or focus asymmetrically on mitigation, carbon markets and transparency or “MRV” to the exclusion of adaptation, finance, technology or capacity (all of which are important to Africa). Concerns with the latter approach is that it will result in a weaker international regime than the Kyoto Protocol for developed countries, and a stronger one for developing countries, without adequate provisions for support.

The African Group of negotiators is calling for a comprehensive agreement covering all elements in a balanced way, with general commitments and global objectives, specific commitments by parties, operational mechanisms and provisions on accountability, compliance and review. On “contributions” the Group has stated that these must be in conformity with the Convention, respect differentiation between developed and developing countries and build on established Convention obligations. Developed countries should put forward contributions addressing adaptation support, finance, technology and capacity (as well as mitigation) as failure to do so will limit prospects for a balanced outcome in Paris.

The ACT debates will explore global climate politics and the implications that questions of power, equity and ethics affects the principles of the UNFCCC. The dialogues will seek to elaborate an African position on the founding principles of the convention and ways by which these principles should be reflected in the post 2015 climate agreement. The dialogues will also address global climate governance dynamics and the implications of these for Africa’s development pathways.

Structure

The regional dialogues will be a series of discussions and debates based on the presentation of a High Level contextualizing key note address. This will be delivered by a head of state, former head of state or similarly high level speaker. This will then be followed by a high level panel discussion of the key issues arising from the speech. The high level panel will be made up of the heads of key regional and multilateral institutions, Universities and similar organizations. The themes will be determined by the available interest and expertise, be closely aligned to the post-2015 discourse, and thus focus on the themes detailed in the foregoing section.

The second day of the ACTs will be devoted to thematic sessions to debate specific issues relevant to these themes and determined by the available regional expertise and priorities. A leading expert on each theme will be identified to deliver a keynote lecture addressing the most pertinent issues within that theme. A panel of experts will then deliberate issues arising from the lecturer in a moderated debate. The debate will then be opened to the public, with the keynote speaker then summarizing the key points arising out of the debate in a 5 minute summary at the end of each session. This approach will guide all of the four themes.

The third day will be devoted to concluding debates, focusing on civil society dialogues to explore climate change implications and impacts on the different sectors, as well as the desirable responses. Representatives of African civil society, including the private sector, farmers groups, and the academic community and so on will be constituted into different panels to brainstorm the implications of the main issues arising from the debates on their respective sectors, and presenting solutions to a plenary meeting. The policy and other solutions will be recorded as inputs into the Paris framework. The proposed dates, venues, structure and specific themes of each of the dialogues is detailed in a separate annex.

About ClimDev-Africa

The ClimDev-Africa Programme is an initiative of the African Union Commission (AUC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB). It is mandated at the highest level by African leaders (AU Summit of Heads of State and Government).

The Programme was established to create a solid foundation for Africa's response to climate change and works closely with other African and non-African institutions and partners specialised in climate and development.

Contacts

Africa Climate Policy center
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
Menelik II Road, PO Box 3001
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
info@climdev-africa.org
www.climdev-africa.org

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