

# **African Climate Solutions in the New Climate Change Agreement**

## **High Level Event at COP 21**

**Date:** 1 December 2015      **Time:** 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm      **Venue:** African Pavilion

### **I. Context**

Over the recent years, the Conferences of Parties (COPs) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have become important spaces for strengthening international collaboration and improving global response to climate change, as evidenced by the ongoing negotiation process on the new climate change agreement. The COP 21 in Paris will mark a decisive stage in negotiations of the future international agreement on climate change. At COP 21, Africa will have a dedicated space at the African Pavilion, which will serve as the hub for networking through debates, information exchange, and exhibitions, formal and informal meetings.

In Africa, climate change constitutes a major threat to the continent's development, and has major implications and impacts on African economies. For instance, climate extremes such as drought, flooding, heat stress and tropical cyclones will become more intense and more frequent. Rising sea levels will threaten Africa's large coastal population with agriculture, tourism, cities, water levels, health, energy and fisheries all likely to be impacted by climate change. The economic cost of these impacts is estimated to be about USD 45-50 billion per year by 2040, and up to 7% of Africa's GDP on average by 2100. Moreover, one of the many challenges facing African countries in their quest to improve social and economic development, is the lack of access to affordable and reliable modern energy, as Africa has the lowest electrification rate of all regions. It is estimated that only 42 percent of Africa's population has access to electricity, compared with 75 percent in the developing world. In Sub-Saharan Africa the ratio is much lower, at 30 percent and only 14 percent in rural areas. Even when modern energy is available, it is expensive and unreliable. If current trends continue, less than half of African countries will reach universal access to electricity by 2050.

In Africa, climate change issues are addressed at the highest political level through the Committee of African Heads of States and Governments on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) established in July 2009 by the African Union. In this context, CAHOSCC adopted in Malabo in 2014 the high level framework "Work Programme on Climate Change Action in Africa" (WPCAA) that covers five priority areas including: i) Climate financing and addressing technology needs; ii) Africa-wide programme on Adaptation; iii) Actions on Mitigation; iv) Cross-cutting actions and participation. Similarly, African Heads of State have officially launched in 2010 the Climate for Development in Africa Programme (ClimDev-Africa) as a joint initiative implemented by the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. The overarching goal of the ClimDev-Africa Programme is to

seek ways of overcoming the lack of necessary climate information, analysis and options required by policy and decision-makers at all levels, with the view to bridging the disconnection between climate services and development priorities.

In addressing climate change, Africa needs to drive an economy that is climate-resilient, less-carbon intensive and that closes the energy deficit and reduces poverty. Hence, the continent needs to strengthen its existing continental initiatives such as the high level framework Work Programme on Climate Change Action in Africa (WPCAA) and the Climate for Development in Africa Programme (ClimDev-Africa). Moreover, Africa as part of the new climate change agreement expected in Paris, needs to design and implement Africa-led initiatives, including the recently endorsed African Initiative on Adaptation and Loss and Damage and the African Renewable Energy Initiative. The Adaptation and Loss and Damage Initiative will facilitate the development and implementation of concrete actions on adaptation and the approaches to address loss and damage on the ground in Africa. The Initiative will facilitate and support African countries in identifying, planning and implementing concrete actions – including policies, plans and strategies – to enhance adaptation and address loss and damage and will also provide support to African countries to access the means of implementation through international cooperation and financial support.

To improve energy access, Africa needs to tap into its significant energy potential and scale up renewable energy investments, thereby increasing low-carbon energy generation and expanding access to modern energy. Several recent initiatives are underway to improve the continent's access to clean, reliable and affordable energy, including the AfDB's New Energy Deal for Africa and the Africa Renewable Energy Facility and the Sustainable Energy Development Programme under the Regional Flagship Programmes. As requested by African Heads of States and African Negotiators, the development of the African Renewable Energy Initiative provides Africa with a framework to facilitate coordination and implementation of African renewable energy solutions.

Of importance to Africa's participation at COP 21 are the continent's priorities articulated in its common position on climate change, and the implementation of existing and new programmes, in particular the high level framework Work Programme on Climate Change Action in Africa (WPCAA) and the Climate for Development in Africa Programme (ClimDev-Africa) as well the two recent African initiatives on Renewable Energy and Adaptation and Loss & Damage to enable Africa effectively contribute to the implementation of the new Climate Change Agreement.

## **II. Background**

The Government of France invited Heads of State and Government to a **Leaders Event** at the opening of the conference on Monday, 30 November 2015. The objective of the event is to call for support towards reaching a durable and meaningful new climate change agreement.

The joint Steering Committee for the African Pavilion intends to create a platform for African leaders present in Paris to articulate key negotiation issues relevant to Africa, to draw the attention on the existing African climate change programmes and to advocate for the recent Africa-led initiatives on Renewable Energy and Adaptation and Loss & Damage.

The high level event which will be held on Tuesday, 1 December 2015 will offer a great opportunity for African leaders to discuss these issues at the outset of the COP 21 and give direction to negotiators.

### **III. Challenges and Opportunities**

#### *Challenges*

Africa is facing a number of challenges in its preparations for a 2015 Agreement. Among the challenges the limited attention accorded to adaptation and the weak Africa's access to climate finance to scale up renewable energy programmes and build climate resilience, need to be addressed. One of the key elements of the proposed new agreement is the development of the Intended Nationally-Determined Contributions (INDCs) through which all parties including African countries have expressed commitments and national contributions to global climate ambitions, within the context of their national priorities and capabilities. Africa is concerned about the means of implementation with regards to finance, capacity-building and technology that are required to tackle mitigation and adaptation in a balanced manner, and ensure transparency of actions and support. With the recent adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (Global Goals), the challenge for African countries is to ensure that the SDGs are aligned with their national development priorities and the commitments they have to make through the INDCs. Africa also faces various challenges to effectively implement transformative climate change initiatives that can have concrete impacts. It is therefore crucial for African Leaders to critically examine the climate change challenges and commitments for COP 21 as well as African existing and new solutions to address these challenges.

#### *Opportunities*

A new climate change agreement will build momentum through new commitments and actions by the international community and provide a global response to climate change. This momentum provides an opportunity for Africa to access benefits associated with the implementation of the new agreement, including technologies for mitigation and adaptation, additional financial resources, as well as capacity building. Additionally, the SDGs will provide opportunities for Africa to develop sustainably, reduce poverty and enhance climate action. The potential benefits can be realized through scaled up renewable energy investments, with positive implications for access to modern energy. Opportunities also exist in agriculture and land-use with sustained benefits in emission reduction and increased climate resilience in major development sectors such as agriculture, energy, infrastructure, water, health, and forestry.

The COP 21 in Paris is therefore an opportunity to put Africa as a strategic player in the negotiations, in ensuring that commitments under the new agreement are acceptable to African countries, taking into consideration African realities, priorities and solutions.

## **IV. Event Objectives and Outputs**

### *Objectives*

The overarching objective of this High Level Event is to articulate Africa's prospects about the implementation of the new climate change agreement, by highlighting Africa-specific solutions to address climate change.

More specifically, the High Level Event will:

- Underscore the importance of the Africa's common position on climate change and advocate for Africa's COP 21 Key Messages supported by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN);
- Deliberate on relevant African climate solutions at COP 21, including existing programmes such as the high level framework Work Programme on Climate Change Action in Africa (WPCAA) and the Climate for Development in Africa Programme (ClimDev-Africa) and recent initiatives such as the African Renewable Energy Initiative and the African Adaptation and Loss & Damage Initiative.

### *Outputs*

The expected outputs of this High Level Event include:

- African Leaders are informed about the key issues of the ongoing negotiations, including Africa's COP 21 priorities and key messages;
- African Leaders are provided an opportunity to articulate Africa's perspectives about the implementation of the new climate change agreement;
- African climate solutions at COP 21, including the the high level framework Work Programme on Climate Change Action in Africa (WPCAA), the Climate for Development in Africa Programme (ClimDev-Africa), the African Renewable Energy Initiative and the African Adaptation and Loss & Damage Initiative, are presented and further elaborated;

## **V. Key Questions**

The following questions will be addressed by the High Level Panel:

1. How to ensure that Africa's COP 21 priorities and key messages endorsed by the Committee of African Heads of States and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) are taken into consideration in the New Agreement?
2. What are the Africa-specific solutions that can be put forward in the new agreement, and how can they be implemented by African countries?

3. How to secure political momentum from African Leaders and secure international support for the successful implementation of the African initiatives?

## VII. Proposed Program

<b>12:00 – 12:05:</b>	<b>Setting the Scene</b> by the Moderator, Minister of Environment of Egypt and President of AMCEN
<b>12:05 – 12:10:</b>	<b>Official Launch of the Africa Pavilion: Welcome Remarks</b> by H.E. Robert Mugabe, President of the African Union, President of Zimbabwe
<b>12:10 – 12:15</b>	<b>Opening Remarks by H.E. Francois Hollande</b> , President of France
<b>12:15 – 12:30:</b>	<b>Kick-off presentation: “African climate solutions in the new climate change agreement”</b> by the President of AMCEN
<b>12:30 – 13:30:</b>	<b>High Level Panel Discussion</b> on Africa’s Solutions at <i>COP 21</i> : H.E. Abdel Fatah Al Sissi, President of Egypt and CAHOSCC Coordinator H.E. Boni Yayi, President of Benin H.E. Kofi Annan, Chair of the Africa Progress Panel H.E. Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank H.E Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission H.E Carlos Lopes, Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer, NEPAD Agency
<b>13.30 – 13:55</b>	<b>General Question and Answer Session</b>
<b>13:55 – 14:00</b>	<b>Closing Remarks by the Chair of CAHOSCC</b>