



Submissions to the Talanoa Dialogue from the African Climate Talks (ACT!)

Background

The African Climate Policy Center (ACPC) in collaboration with Addis Ababa University convened the second round of the African Climate Talks (ACT!) at the Intercontinental Hotel in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on the 22-23rd March 2018. The event attended by more than 170 participants as a follow-up to the inaugural ACT event which took place in September 2015 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

This African Climate Talks proposed to introduce a critical dimension to the Talanoa dialogue by interrogating contextual questions which are typically silent in the UNFCCC process. In this broad context, the ACTS elicited debate over a range of issues that affect the implementation of the Paris Agreement in Africa. Participants identified alternative pathways to the resolution of the climate (and development) crises facing the continent.

From October 10-12, 2018, The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), African Development Bank (AfDB), Africa Union Commission (AUC) and the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) convened the seventh conference on climate change and development in Africa, (CCDA-VII). The conference was attended by over 700 participants representing communities, policy makers from local and national governments, scientists and researchers as well as other stakeholders from across the African continent. The participants gave feedback and validated the Talanoa dialogue inputs from the second African Climate Talks.

Below are the proposed contributions from the African stakeholders into the Talanoa dialogue.

Introduction

We acknowledge that due to its rapid adoption and ratification, the Paris Agreement (PA) entered into force without any preparation (ground rules and rule book, modalities and guidelines). Until the ground rules are finalized, implementation is going to be extremely difficult. However, the development of the ground rules should be an opportunity to finesse the agreement and specially to address the concerns of Africa and the developing world regarding issues of equity, as well as CBDR.

The Paris Agreement is effectively a ‘deregulation/derogation’? of article 2(2) “This Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances.”

Although Africa has a committee of African Heads of State on Climate Change (CAHOSCC); the African Ministerial Committee on Environment (AMCEN) providing political leadership at the pan African scale, in reality there is limited political leadership on climate change at the national level throughout the continent. This results in climate change being marginal in national political and development discourses across the continent, although this is the continent that is most heavily impacted by the phenomenon.

The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which are the main mechanisms for achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, are completely voluntary and lacking in ambition at the aggregate level. On the other hand, Africa’s NDCs are overly ambitious, given the continent’s limited role in global

warming. As such, every effort should be made to raise the ambition of the developed world. Consider regional dimension of NDCs.

Climate change and development are not mutually exclusive. There is therefore a need to link climate change negotiations with other development and trade negotiations. It is well established that the absence of linkages between the different regulatory frameworks results in the practice of avoiding legal restrictions in rich countries by moving manufacturing and waste to poor countries. For instance, the WHO does not have air-quality programmes in place for sub-Saharan Africa, though it does for Europe, the Western Pacific, and the Americas. Because of regulatory deficiencies, the oil industry complies with tighter restrictions on some continents by offloading dirtier fuel on others. There are many other ways by which emissions are transferred to Africa. This only results in increasing emissions from Africa, and yet this could be resolved by linking trade, health and climate change regulations. Climate change should be more comprehensively integrated into the WTO, the SDGs and Agenda 2063, with clear performance indicators.

Despite the agreement on a global goal on adaptation, the PA remains mitigation centric. More effort should be made to support adaptation in Africa. Already, many countries are diverting significant national funds and other resources towards climate change adaptation, and these expenditures need to be reflected and accounted for in the implementation of the agreement, and particularly in the further development of the climate finance mechanisms.

On the Performance of the UNFCCC

The meeting noted with concern that despite the institution of the UNFCCC process in 1992, there has been no meaningful reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Instead, atmospheric concentrations of GHG have been increasing, with already disastrous impacts on Africa.

The meeting recognized the ideological, political and economic challenges that face the UNFCCC and all its instruments. However, the meeting recommended that in order to be effective, the UNFCCC should explicitly address the enormous power imbalances that exist between the developed and developing world, and ensure that the principle of CBDR is brought back, with appropriate mechanisms for binding commitments to emissions reduction.

The market based mechanisms put in place to manage emissions and mitigation, especially REDD+ and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) have not been particularly effective in Africa for a variety of reasons. For REDD+, the project preparation overly complex – yet there is no guarantee for funding. The administrative costs tend to be extremely high, and there is a disconnect between global policy optimism and local realities of implementation of REDD+ initiatives – such as recentralization, leakage, permanence, monitoring, unmet community expectations and human rights abuses.

Instead of relying solely on market mechanisms and responses driven by the state, the UNFCCC should seek creative ways of engaging society. Non-state actors beyond the private sector have important roles to play in climate change adaptation and mitigation, but are not accorded adequate recognition in present agreements. The engagement of society in climate action requires that society be furnished with adequate and relevant information. This cannot be the responsibility of the media alone.

Financing Mechanisms need to be rethought

The UNFCCC process should learn lessons from more successful multi-lateral agreements such as the Montreal Protocol and the WTO. What made the Montreal Protocol effective and how can this be adopted into the PA? The WTO negotiations are a permanent process, with rounds of negotiation

dedicated towards resolving specific challenges in the agreement. The same principle of permanent negotiation should be adopted in the PA. WTO is a rule based organization, with e.g. formulae on how much each country should offer to reduce the tariffs.

South-South can help develop initiatives on finance and tech transfer through working with regional development Banks for example ADB, Asia Dev Bank

The meeting noted that Africa's contribution to the climate change narrative is very minimal, and this needs to be addressed. The continent should invest its own resources to promote a climate science which is multidimensional, focusing on all issues or threats that Africa faces. All the disciplines, including Anthropology, Finance, Meteorology are relevant. In order to strengthen African participation in understanding climate change and in designing responses, the continent should therefore consider the following:

- Create an African Climate Science Working Group
- Create stronger institutions at the continental level to enhance the integration of an African climate science into the continental and global arena. In this regard the meeting noted, with appreciation, the role that has been played by the African Group of Negotiators since its inception in unifying African voices and negotiating common African positions at the UNFCCC COPs. To enhance this contribution, the meeting recommended that:
 - The African Union considers establishing a Commission on Climate Change
 - The Climate Change Commission should in turn create a permanent secretariat supporting the AGN. This would enhance institutional accountability
 - The Commission should raise domestic resources to support the AGN and wean it of reliance on foreign donors as this compromises the negotiations of African positions
 - The Commission strengthens South-South Cooperation towards the 1.5 degrees target.

On engaging African Knowledge Systems

The meeting noted that climate change governance has systematically marginalized endogenous knowledge systems, and yet local adaptation responses are based on local interactions with the climate, using local knowledge and observations. This has been exacerbated by a development model which is 'western centric' 'Formal' climate actions are detached/divorced from the societies in which they are implemented. It was further noted that the discourse on technology transfer has been dominated by western technologies. Yet there are many technologies among African communities and cultures which are locally relevant and resilient. There is need to disrupt the pattern of relying on western technologies for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

To promote the inclusion of Endogenous Knowledge Systems in understanding and responding to climate change, investments should be made in the following:

- Promotion of co-learning and co-creation of information
- Translation and communication of information in other languages, including the promotion of media such as community radio
- Development of platforms where EKS knowledge systems can be shared
- Support for scientists to bring out the link between science and IKS
- Promotion of entrepreneurship for local innovations

On “Thinking Big”

The meeting noted that the scale of the climate challenge in Africa is massive in terms of the resources required to support adequate adaptation and mitigation responses (including new technologies for avoiding emissions); as well as the policy and legal frameworks that are required to support climate informed decision making. The meeting further noted that the continent is investing in several large initiatives that are aimed at tackling the climate challenge at continental scale, including the Climate Change and Development in Africa (ClimDev – Africa) initiative; the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI); the Weather and climate information Services (WiSER) initiative; the African Adaptation Initiative (AAI); and the African Infrastructure Climate Resilience (AfriRes) Initiative, among others. These initiatives demonstrate the need to have response strategies that are properly scaled. However, none of these initiatives is properly supported both in terms of the requisite high level political recognition as well as the domestic financial resources necessary for successful implementation. These large scale initiatives also provide some key lessons for the future of climate governance:

1. There is a need to expand the scope of negotiations from a sectoral focus to economy wide focus.
 - Towards this end, negotiations and response strategies should focus on outcomes: poverty, livelihood, food security, water security [rather than agriculture, water, health] which are sectoral issues.
 - Sector planning should be improved, and perhaps consider holistic planning – looking at sectors globally.
2. Funding mechanisms for climate change interventions should be reconsidered, and existing mechanisms are in urgent need of review and overhaul.
 - Financing institutions (e.g. AfDB; GCF, GEF etc.) should be asked to develop more flexible financing and disbursing mechanisms. In particular, climate finance institutions have adopted World Bank/IMF standards for processing what are essentially developmental rather than investment initiatives. New innovative procedures and standards are required which are based on the particular needs of climate finance.
 - Sourcing private finance from developed countries for climate change mitigation and adaptation should be improved, beyond the existing focus on investment opportunities. Creating carbon markets for private investment is potentially disastrous and these approaches should be reconsidered.
 - Domestic mobilization of resources should be encouraged, and this can be achieved by mainstreaming climate change adaptation into budgeting cycles in African countries.

There are numerous adaptation initiatives and interventions. However, many of these are informal, small scale and very fragmented. African governments are already contributing significant proportions of their budgets to supporting adaptation in their countries. There is, therefore, a need to recognize these contributions to climate change adaptation, and to factor them into climate finance arrangements. In return, frameworks for scaling up adaptation must be strengthened in order to improve coordination and avoid fragmentation.

The cost of climate change adaptation for African countries is massive, and increasing as climate disruptions become more frequent and intense. The current responses will not be sufficient to meet the required level of effort. As such continental scale initiatives to support climate change adaptation are welcome, and should be supported. However, there is a danger that new initiatives are being developed and launched at continental scale with little effort at coordination and alignment with existing initiatives. The African Union, in particular, should review the different resolutions and decisions of the continental decision makers on climate change and ensure that actions to implement

these decisions are not duplicated, do not result in unnecessary fragmentation of the continental response, and that resource mobilization and the design of interventions is streamlined.

A big challenge for streamlining climate change into development policy in Africa is the limited availability of climate information, as well as the limited capacities of the climate information services agencies on the continent. Pan African initiatives such as the Weather Information Services (WiSER) are therefore crucial to supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation. Such interventions should be scaled up. The contributions of developed countries in funding and supporting WiSER and similar initiatives are acknowledged. Africa needs to put in place mechanisms to scale up and finance such initiatives from innovative resource mobilization mechanisms. For example, the continent could impose levies on all exported fossil fuels.

Pan African Institutions such as the Africa Union Commission, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank should do more to document learning on adaptation and focus on scaling up. There are many good examples of such activities at local and national scales, such as the adaptation initiatives of the South African National Biodiversity Institute. There is no framework to support adaptation policies on the continent. The pan African institutions should develop innovative methodologies of documenting the impact of climate change and linking these to adaptation strategies in order to inform the development of appropriate policy frameworks for adaptation.

Climate imperatives should be considered in infrastructure planning and development. Africa has a massive infrastructure deficit. Closing the gap will require huge investments. These investments should be informed by climate information. The cost of climate proofing of infrastructural investments should be factored into global climate finance, and innovative ways of directing funds to support relevant climate proofing investments. Policies should be developed to support the emerging standards in climate resilient project development. Climate finance could also be directed towards supporting such policy developments. Valuable lessons are emerging from ACPC and partners on climate proofing project development guidelines, compilation of good practices. Investments should also support closing gap between climate science and project design.

On Climate Information and Services

Climate change has numerous disruptive impacts on economies, ecosystems and livelihoods. The public has right to information the causes and impacts of climate change. Weather and climate information should therefore be easily accessible to all. Given the uncertainties of weather and climate information, it should be provided by a credible and trusted source. However, most public weather and climate information providers are severely underfunded, and typically fail to fulfil their mandates. Consequently, the future of MET services in Africa threatened. Domestic resources should be directed towards enhancing MET services. Climate finance should also be readily available to support the public production and delivery of MET services.

The private sector is playing an increasingly important role in providing weather and climate information services. However, the policy and regulatory environment for the production and dissemination of CIS is rudimentary and needs to be developed very quickly to align private investments with public policy imperatives. The UNECA should invest in supporting the urgent development of an enabling environment for private sector participation and investment in CIS. African Met services should also be assisted to modernize to adapt to new demands of a changing climate. Urgent investments in CIS include:

- Integration of in-country networks to increase observations and fill gaps in special coverage

- Embracing opportunities such as big data, internet, smart sensors, cloud computing, and social media. Many of these are available in the private sector, and smart partnerships with Met departments should be developed.
- Maximization of benefits from cutting edge research and technical developments and innovations (which are also predominantly the domain of the private sector)
- Incorporate indigenous/endogenous knowledge in CIS

Youth Perspectives

Key messages:

- The youth are involved in a number of local initiatives on climate change mitigation and adaptation but funding limited;
- Youth are pushing for a model that changes advocacy to action;
- Invest in youth to enhance their capacity to understand national issues;
- There is need to make youth ideologically conscious and politically engaged;
- There is need for coordination of many youth based organizations at the national level.

Gender Issues

- On inequalities in climate policy and action: Institutional gender inequalities crosscut from national to international level; similarly gender imbalance is strong in our institutions.
- Climate change has gender differentiated impacts. It exacerbates already existing inequalities and vulnerabilities, and thus creates inordinately higher burdens on women and girls.
- We urge our Governments to ensure that all climate actions are gender responsive in line with the Decisions of the Lima Work Program on Gender and aspirations of the Paris Agreement.
- Gender and renewable energy – given chronic lack of clean and affordable energy in rural areas, providing renewable energy solutions to the rural populations will contribute towards addressing the gender balance.