

Inception Workshop “Delivering Climate Resilient Development Policies in Africa” Opening Remarks

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**Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,
All protocols observed,**

It is indeed a great pleasure and honor for me to be here on the occasion of the official opening of the inception workshop on **“Delivering Climate Resilient Development Policies in Africa”**.

Allow me to express my most sincere thanks to the organizers for inviting Sweden/Sida to deliver a few remarks at this auspicious occasion.

As we all are well-versed, climate change is a major threat to Africa, the continent that have already on track to be affected most negatively owing to the combination of severe climate-related impacts, economies that are highly climate-dependent, and countries that have the least capacity to adapt. Given a combination of structural fragilities, the significant exposure to climate change risks and very limited adaptation capacity, the African continent is particularly highly vulnerable. In today’s world, climate change is bringing about the linkages between human rights and the environment. It is evident that the right to life, health, food, and an adequate standard of living, are adversely affected by the changing climate. Responses to intensified ‘natural’ hazards and increasingly uncertain weather conditions are coming to be recognised as reliant on safeguarding the rights of vulnerable populations – the justice aspect.

In this context the intervention proposed to be implemented by ACPC in collaboration with pertinent stockholders is highly relevant as it contributes towards supporting improved climate information and services to support climate sensitive planning, building the capacities of Africans to integrate development concerns into the evolving global climate governance mechanisms, stimulate improvements in the management and disbursement of support for the implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts, as well as institutional developments to manage potential threats from the same.

Sweden/Sida has been collaborating with UNECA/ACPC since the launch of the flagship joint programme of AUC, UNECA and AfDB - Climate for Development (ClimDev) Africa Programme initiated with aim of mounting a coordinated response to climate change and development in Africa. During this period Sweden’s net contribution to ACPC is more than 9 MUSD including the bridging one-year support aiming at sustaining staffs preparing this project document while implementing other projects whose activity costs were covered by other funding partners. Sida is pleased to acknowledge the fact that the initially tripartite initiative of AUC, ACPC and AfDB which have now brought on board the very dynamic long-term partner of Sida i.e. PACJA obviously for elaborated and synergetic effect.

Specific to this project, the six-month inception phase is strategically designed to ensure a fully collaborative pan African programme which integrates the interests and comparative advantages of the main stakeholders.

As the proposed intervention is continental in focus it will give ACPC to continue leveraging the longstanding ClimDev-Africa partnership by working together with AUC (Division for Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA), AfDB and PACJA to link climate governance frameworks and translate global policy imperatives. Hence this inception workshop is an ideal platform to agree on the workplan of the six months inception phase defining expected role of the major partners.

Therefore, the inception phase is strategically designed to achieve many deliverables, including:

- identifying working modalities for harnessing the comparative advantages of the major partners,
- put in place institutional arrangements for the coordination of partner activities,
- agree on criteria for the selection of focus countries for specific interventions,
- develop strategies for engagement of the private sector and
- developing concrete and revised work plans, monitoring mechanisms and revised results framework.

Honestly speaking today, I am more convinced about the momentous importance of the inception phase and the workshop today than the time when I was discussing the issue with James and his colleagues' months before seeing distinguished and high caliber personalities in the room. I'm glad to see you all here and I've got high hopes for what we can achieve while we're here.

I strongly believe that working on these specifics with the full participation of major stakeholders unquestionably reduce operational risks significantly throughout the full implementation phase. Should assumptions and risk assessments at results level turn out to be inadequate or invalid, or unforeseen external factors intervene, as a longstanding development partner Sida is committed to work very closely with ACPC to ensure project management flexibility to achieve the intended results. However, the potential risk related to coordination among the major stakeholders needs to be very closely followed up by ACPC to ensure the joint engagement and attainment of the results at the end of the intervention period.

Given ACPC's in-depth proficiency in generating knowledge to ensure evidence-based decision-making to effectively tackle the problems identified and practical experience of ACPC working through collaborative partnerships, Sida is confident that achievement of the objectives of the project will be very high.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I conclude, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the major stakeholders committed to contribute their share in the proposed intervention, as well as the organizers for their excellent arrangements for holding the inception workshop as planned and for allowing me to deliver these few brief remarks on behalf of my organization, Sida.

I Thank you,