

Climate Research for Development in Africa (CR4D)

CR4D Regional Climate Research Partnership Workshop for Southern Africa

“Co-Designing, Co-Resourcing, and Co-Producing user-driven climate information and services: Going beyond the Talk”

25-26 May 2016

University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana

Concept note

Background

The Climate Research for Development (CR4D) in Africa initiative was officially launched in 2015 to strengthen links between climate science research and climate information needs and thus enhance integrating climate change into policy and development planning in Africa. CR4D is an African-led initiative supported by partnership between African Climate Policy Center (ACPC) of UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). The initiative facilitates integration of the Africa climate research community (scientists and institutions) with end-user climate information needs. The Secretariat is located at the African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC). The CR4D collaborative platform promotes multi-stakeholder collaboration that brings climate science, services and policy-making under a coordinated multi-disciplinary network of expertise and institutions to collectively address the challenges while maximizing on the opportunities presented by climate change and variability to socio-economic Development in Africa. It promotes participatory climate research by facilitating and strengthening networking capacities of institutions and stakeholders to enable and enhance co-production of demand-driven climate information and services. This will lead to improved access, quality, usability, dissemination and mainstreaming of climate information/knowledge into socio-economic planning, and critical for Africa’s meeting commitments under the COP21 agreement, Agenda 2063, as well as the SDGs.

The overarching mission of CR4D is to create a Pan-Africa Collaborative Platform and a federated network of African climate science, services, policy, and practice communities as well as development partners and other stakeholders to co-explore, co-design, co-produce and co-communicate climate information and services, thus improving access, quality, and usability as well as mainstreaming of climate information into Development Planning in Africa. To achieve this grand mission, CR4D Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), in conjunction with the Secretariat, the Institutional Collaboration Platform, and the Oversight Board, supports implementation of the CR4D initiatives. In addition to these formal components of the governance structure, achieving CR4D goals will focus on Six (6) federated Regional Climate Research Partnerships (RCRPs) for East, West, Central, South, North and African-SIDS as the regional implementation mechanism. RCRPs will be the regional platforms/nodes for bringing together multiple stakeholders and institutions to:-

- Jointly identify key challenges, knowledge gaps and user-driven research priorities
- Co-design climate research and co-produce user-oriented climate information and services
- Facilitate the development of multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder research and outreach Teams or Partnerships
- Promote innovative communication and user platforms and tools for translating new research into applications



Regional Perspective

Although climate change presented challenges to the entire world, the Southern Africa region is uniquely susceptible to the impacts of climate change especially. Already unreliable rainfall in much of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region, access to water is predicted to become more challenging with the continued onset of climate change. In coming decades, the SADC region will also expect to experience higher land and ocean surface temperatures than in the past, which will in turn affect rainfall, winds, and the timing and intensity of weather events <http://www.sadc.int/themes/meteorology-climate/climate-change-adaptation/>. Increased frequency of floods, cyclones, and droughts in the region may damage infrastructure, destroy agricultural crops, disrupt livelihoods, and cause loss of life. Hence, the CR4D RCRP workshop for Southern Africa will primarily focus on kick-starting a consultative process of assessing and consolidating the unique regional challenges and opportunities for multi-institution and multi-stakeholder, user-driven and integrated climate research that contributes to enhancing climate information and services for policy and development planning.

The workshop will be deliberately build on ongoing collaborations and initiatives such as the outcomes of the SADC Regional Climate Outlook Forums (RCOFs). This will enable CR4D to build on the achievements of the SADC-RCOFs and also take advantage of the existing RCOFs' climate information 'users-producers' interactions and forums. The workshop will target different players and stakeholders in climate science, services and policy in the region to collectively discuss a collaborative and inclusive strategy for identifying and co-designing priority user-driven climate research and how outcomes of new research could be transitioned into applications. Non-State grassroots players and actors in the climate enterprise such as NGOs and CSOs will also be invited to engage with regional climate community in prioritizing sector-responsive research with the aim of enhancing and improving climate information and services for decision making in the agriculture/food security, water, health, climate-related disaster risk reduction(DRR), and energy sectors. The CR4D-RCRPs¹ will, therefore, comprise of representations from the Regional Climate Centers (RCCs), National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs), National Climate Change focal points, Universities (especially Early Career scientists), Research and Training Institutes (Water, Agriculture, Agro-Forestry, Energy, Health, DRR, etc), NGOs, National Academies of Sciences, Development Partners, among others to provide valuable input into the process of establishing CR4D Regional Climate Research Partnerships (CR4D-RCRPs).

Objective of the Southern Africa RCRP Workshop

The major objective of the workshop is to expand the landscape of collaboration among critical stakeholders and institutions to include a balanced representation from academic institutions, policy makers, NGOS, and other grassroots players/practitioners within the SADC region. This will ensure that inputs from all critical stakeholders are fully integrated into the identification of user-driven climate research priorities, in the co-design and co-production of new climate knowledge and information, as well as in the translation of new science into applications.

Specific objectives are

- Scoping and assessment of user-driven climate research priorities for Southern Africa and initiating Multi-Stakeholder Collaborative Partnership for effective integration of new research into applications
- Facilitate the formation of multi-disciplinary participatory climate research and outreach teams jointly focused on identifying, co-designing and undertaking priority user-inspired climate research that can improve quality and access to climate information and services for policy making and development planning

Expected Outputs and Outcomes

The Southern Africa CR4D inception workshop will in many ways try to draw from country and sub-regional (RCC) experience and existing climate research infrastructure and interaction channels between climate information producers and users. The workshop will specifically build on existing partnerships that have been created over the past two decades (15+ years) through the Regional Climate Outlook Forums (RCOFs) to

¹ RCRPs: Regional Climate Research Partnerships

broaden that platform to include understanding evolving challenges, needs and gaps in user-driven climate research priorities that are necessary for enhancing co-production of climate information and services for development planning.

Expected Outcomes

- Awareness and better understanding of the overarching goal and mission of the CR4D Collaboration Platform, its key objectives, and implementation plan for improving user-driven climate research that responds to climate information needs in priority sectors in Africa
- Better understanding of the cross-cutting and cross-disciplinary challenges in undertaking user-driven climate research by various stakeholders and institutions, and how an integrated approach can be jointly formulated to identify and undertake priority user-driven climate research and how to translate research into applications
- Shared understanding, among key climate stakeholders, based on lessons learnt through the climate information user forums and sessions during the Climate Outlook Forums (COFs) on how to form multi-disciplinary and multi-institution, user-driven, Regional Climate Research Partnerships(RCRPs)
- Building on best practices and experiences at the national and regional level on how to link and translate climate research into applications (e.g. through the Regional Climate Outlook Forums)
- Designing a communication framework that will make RCRPs to effectively implement their projects

Expected Outputs

- Identification of priority user-driven climate research needs and criteria for establishing Regional Climate Research Partnerships (RCRPs) with diverse skills and experiences to pursue the relevant research activities
- Documentation of user-driven climate research priorities for the Southern Africa that can be undertaken on short, medium and long term by the SA-RCRP to enhance climate information and services for decision making
- Establishment of Southern Africa, Regional, Climate Research Partnership(SA-RCRP) with balanced representation from all relevant climate disciplines/sectors and stakeholders
- Summary Recommendations Report and master list of priority climate research activities and expected products within specific timelines
- Draft guidelines on how to integrate user-driven climate research within the climate value chain for better mainstreaming in different climate-sensitive sectors.

Workshop Format and Participants

a) Workshop Format

The workshop will for two (2) full days. We target at least 60 participants drawn from different sectors (agriculture/food security, water resources, climate science, health, DRR and Energy), institutions and stakeholders, including government ministries and climate/environment policy institutions drawn mainly from SADC member countries.

b) Participants

- SADC
- NMHSs in Southern Africa
- WMO Regional Office for East and Southern Africa
- Representatives of key Academic Institutions
- NGOs
- Regional Climate Center
- Development agencies
- Early Career Scientists, especially women and youth
- Scientists and practitioners with expertise and experience working in key climate-sensitive sectors: Agriculture/Food security, water resources, health, DRR, and Energy
- Others relevant institutions

Workshop Agenda

- The final agenda will be sent soon