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## 15 African climate researchers to receive £1.5M to conduct research on impacts of climate change in Africa

In October 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published its Special Report on the Implications of 1.5 degrees warming (SR 1.5), and shortly thereafter UN Environment published its 2018 Emissions Gap Report. The SR 1.5 concludes that the projected impacts of 2 degrees warming are more dangerous than initially thought, and brings us closer to a number of critical tipping points. The report also cautions that we have only 12 years to act, **drastically, if we are to have any chance of achieving the 1.5 degrees' target**. The **UN Environment's Emissions Gap Report establishes that greenhouse gas emissions are once again on the increase, despite progress made in the global climate governance regime**. Africa, more than any other continent, is already impacted by the instability of the climate system as evidenced by increasingly unpredictable patterns of precipitation and high temperatures. **These trends have devastating impacts on the continent's economies, livelihoods and ecosystems**. Thus drastic and urgent climate action is required to ensure that the continent does not experience worsening climate related devastation and retains some capacity to meet its development aspirations.

**Drastic climate action will require the engagement of all sectors, interests and stakeholders. However, a key gap in climate policy and governance in Africa is the weak linkage between science and policy. This gap must be closed urgently in order to ensure that development strategies, policies and programmes are climate informed.** The African Academy of Sciences (The AAS), the United Kingdoms' Department for International Development (DFID) Weather and Climate information SERvices for Africa (WISER) programme and the Africa Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa are today announcing the implementation of a multimillion dollar initiative to support Africa-led climate science research through the Climate Research for Development (CR4D) in Africa initiative. The CR4D initiative was conceptualized at the Africa Climate Conference in 2013 as a mechanism to strengthen links between climate science research and climate information needs to support development planning in Africa. The initiative addresses climate research priority areas that have been identified in Africa by African researchers.

Over the next year, CR4D will support research into identified priority areas for climate change and development linkages. The research will cover foundational climate science, impacts, information and research translation and engagement with policy and decision-making communities. The goal will be to produce research outputs that inform policy in climate sensitive sectors to better prepare Africa to deal with the impacts of climate change.

**Dr James Murombedzi of the ACPC noted that** "While Africa is responsible for only 4% of global greenhouse-gas emissions, 65% of the African population is considered to be directly impacted by climate change. It is therefore imperative that climate action must be stepped up in order to deliver high impact outcomes for African populations, and to ensure the resilience of economies, ecosystems and infrastructure on the continent. The framework for scaling up climate action was

put in place in the 2015 Paris Agreement. The realization of the ideals of this agreement will be determined by the national frameworks, strategies and policies that are put in place to implement national and sub-national climate actions. **The CR4D initiative will enhance** support for improved climate information and services in order to contribute to climate sensitive planning. This in turn will contribute towards ensuring human and environmental security, improved investment policies, as well as institutional developments to manage potential threats from climate change.”

The Executive Director of The AAS , Prof. Nelson Torto says, ***“With smallholder farms, most being rainfed, forming about 80% of farmed land in sub-Saharan Africa and given that most of sub-Saharan Africa’s population draws its livelihood from smallholder farming,<sup>1</sup> the CR4D initiative will be a huge addition to Africa’s quest to transform itself through science.*** Tackling climate change in Africa requires that African researchers are supported to ensure they have the best understanding of the problems to be better prepared to provide and amplify solutions. The AAS is particularly proud to be part of this noble initiative and we look forward to celebrating its impact in all climate sensitive sectors including agriculture, health, water resources, tourism and other areas of socio-economic development.”

CR4D will award 1-year research grants to 15 African climate researchers of up to USD 130,000. Through The AAS Rising Research Leaders programme grantees will be supported to develop as independent research leaders through training, mentoring, and networking opportunities that will enable international collaborations. CR4D candidates must be hosted by or affiliated with a university, research institute or other eligible institution of higher education in Africa. They must and hold a PhD in climate or related sciences and/or have a proven track record of high-quality, impactful research in a relevant field. Applicants must have a clearly defined scientific research proposal and all African nationals are eligible to apply. A call for proposals for CR4D has been issued and is open from **11 January to 11 February 2019**. The call is accessible here [CR4D Call 2019](#) and information on how to apply is provided in the [Guidance Document](#).

**Environment and climate change is a strategic focus area of The Academy’s five-year strategic plan, 2018 to 2022 that includes health and wellbeing; social sciences and humanities; natural sciences; and policy and governance.**

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Notes to editors

[The African Academy of Sciences](#)

The AAS is a Pan-African organisation with headquarters in Kenya. The Academy has a tripartite mandate of pursuing excellence by recognising scholars and achievers; providing advisory and think-tank functions for shaping the **continent’s strategies and policies; and implementing key science, technology and innovation programmes** that impact on developmental challenges through the agenda setting and funding platform - the Alliance for Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa (AESA).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-BO092E.pdf>

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For any queries regarding eligibility for this scheme, please contact The AAS office

at **CR4D@aasciences.ac.ke**

### **The African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)**

ACPC aims to influence, strengthen and enable a transition to climate-resilient development in Africa through responsive policies, plans and programmes that will ensure transformed economies, healthy ecosystems and human well-being. ACPC contributes to poverty reduction through mitigation and adaptation to climate change in Africa by improving the capacity of African countries to participate effectively in multilateral climate negotiations.

The CR4D initiative was launched to strengthen links between climate science research and climate information needs to support development planning in Africa. CR4D is an African-led initiative supported by partnership between African Climate Policy Center (ACPC) of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). CR4D is the outcome of the African Climate Conference 2013 (ACC-2013), which was held in Arusha, Tanzania. The ACC-2013 recommended the establishment of an African Climate Research Agenda for Climate Services and Development in order to advance new frontiers of African climate research, focusing on four priority areas.

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### **Department for International Development**

The Department for International Development is a United Kingdom government department responsible for administering overseas aid. The goal of the department is "to promote sustainable development and eliminate world poverty" **DFID's partnership is through the Weather and Climate Information SERVICES for Africa (WISER) Programme**, which is working to improve the generation and use of the weather and climate information across Sub-Saharan Africa. (WISER) was conceived by DfID in 2015 to stimulate the uptake of climate information by policy makers and vulnerable groups including the youth and women.

Read more about WISER at <https://www.uneca.org/wiser/pages/about-wiser>

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