



ECA

Economic Commission for Africa

Climate Change and the Broad Mandate of ECA

Within the framework of its mandate, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is increasing the emphasis of its work on climate change, an emerging considerable challenge that threatens to derail progress in achieving the MDGs and sustainable development in Africa. Indeed, projected impacts of climate change in Africa include increase in droughts, floods and other extreme events, which would exacerbate the stress on water resources, agriculture, food security, human health, and infrastructure, and thereby constrain development. Such threats are compounded by the low adaptive capacity of the continent, which features among the poorest regions of the world that will likely be disproportionately affected by the adverse effects of climate change. To address the related challenge, ECA has been working with other continental institutions, within the framework of the Joint Secretariat of the African Union Commission (AUC), ECA and the African Development Bank (AfDB), to develop appropriate climate change response policy and intervention agenda for the Africa region.

Mainstreaming Climate Change into Development Policy, Strategies and Programmes

In April 2006, ECA co-organized, in partnership with the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS/WMO), a regional workshop on climate information for development in Africa. This Workshop resulted in a strategy and implementation programme aimed at improving climate information for development in Africa. As a follow up and within the framework of the AUC-ECA-AfDB partnership, ECA has played a central role in preparing a major "Climate for Development in Africa Programme" (ClimDev-Africa), with a view to guiding the effective integration of climate information and services into development planning and to ensuring the mainstreaming of climate considerations in policies and programmes aimed at achieving the MDGs. Endorsed by the AUC, ECA and AfDB, ClimDev-Africa sets out to improve policies, climate risk management practices, climate services, and climate observations, data management and infrastructure across the continent in key development areas such as agriculture and food security, water resources, energy and health.

As Technical Secretariat for this major AUC-ECA-AfDB initiative, ECA prepared the related draft program implementation documents, which were reviewed/discussed by the ClimDev-Africa Steering Committee in January 2007, and are now being finalized with support from the AfDB for the effective implementation of the programme.

Mitigation and Support to Negotiations and International Agreements and the Climate Change Regime

In collaboration with UNEP, ECA prepared in 2005 the Africa Regional Review Report on Climate Change for the CSD-14 session as a follow-up to WSSD outcomes, highlighting the challenges, progress and achievements, lessons learned and options for the way forward for mitigation and adaptation measures in addressing climate change in the Region. The ECA Committee on Sustainable Development discussed this report at the Africa Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) for CSD-14, which drew from it a Statement tabled at CSD-14 in April 2006. As a follow-up, ECA assisted the Africa Vice-Chair of CSD-15 and Africa Group to prepare and present regional policy options on climate change at the CSD-15 policy session of April-May 2007.

ECA also assisted the African Union Commission (AUC) in preparing the background document and the Declaration adopted on Climate Change by the AU January 2007 Summit. Furthermore, ECA tabled a Resolution that was adopted in April 2007 by its Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, engaging African member States and development partners to support the implementation of the joint AUC-ECA-AfDB ClimDev-Africa initiative.

Impacts and Adaptation

Through its Sub-Regional Office for West Africa (SRO-WA) based in Niamey, Niger, and in partnership with the Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (Commite Inter-Etat de Lutte contre la Secheresse dans le Sahel - CILSS) and the African Centre for Meteorological Applications to Development (ACMAD), ECA organized in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 25 to 27 January 2007,

an international conference on the reduction of the vulnerability of natural, economic and social systems to climate change in West Africa. The conference reviewed the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) of countries within the sub-region, raised the awareness of decision makers and planners, and development partners, and adopted a programme of work towards the preparation of a sub-regional action plan on climate change.

Technology Cooperation and Transfer

The implementation of the ClimDev-Africa programme includes the provision of seasonal forecasts to end-users in climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture and food security, water resources, energy and health, the foundation of which is technology-based. This involves collaboration with African weather, climate and water institutions to tailor climate forecasts to other variables related to specific types of decisions for climate risk management in the different development sectors. It also involves improvement of infrastructure and networks for better climate observations, data management and forecasts.

Science, Research and Observation

ECA co-organized, in partnership with the Climate Change Adaptation in Africa (CCAA) programme of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), an inception workshop for a regional capacity building programme on research on climate change in Africa. This workshop paved the way for concrete projects on participatory action research, knowledge sharing and training on climate change adaptation. As a follow-up to this partnership with CCAA, ECA is preparing a collaborative project for further analytical work on the economic and social impacts of climate change as well as peer learning on climate risk management in Africa.

Carbon Trading and the Carbon Market

The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is not yet developed to its full potential in Africa, particularly as regard to the promotion of renewable energies, climate-friendly waste management systems, and fossil fuel switching activities. ECA is currently studying these issues for inclusion in ClimDev-Africa programme implementation activities with a view to helping African countries attract greater Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

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