

Leveraging climate research partnerships for resilient development planning and implementation of the SDGs in Africa

Proposed side event, 8th session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

Organizers: Climate Policy Laboratory, The Fletcher School, Tufts University and the African Climate Policy Centre, ECA

Draft Concept Note

Context

The Climate Policy Laboratory of The Fletcher School at Tufts University and the African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa are proposing a side event at the 8th session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development on the topic of “***Leveraging climate research partnerships for resilient development planning and implementation of the SDGs in Africa***”.

Africa, which is 17 percent of the global population and accounts less than 4 percent of global emissions, is the region impacted the most by climate change and has a very low adaptive capacity to build resilience. Climate change is causing the continent on average 5 percent loss of GDP and many governments are spending, unplanned, significant amounts of their budgets to respond to extreme weather events caused by climate change. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the situation by significantly reducing the fiscal space of African countries and increasing the debt vulnerability of those countries at a time when significant investments need to be made to recover from the pandemic. This has huge implications on the attainment of the SDGs and the development aspirations of Agenda 2063 on the continent, where many countries before the pandemic were either stagnating or indeed regressing on progress with the SDGs. These challenges to the attainment of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 cannot be adequately addressed without addressing climate change. Many governments identify climate policies as a tool for ensuring a more sustainable and prosperous development pathway. However, it is important to clarify and articulate the development co-benefits and potential trade-offs of different climate policies, recognizing that this analysis is central to the decision-making of policymakers. In this regard, climate research partnerships, knowledge sharing and support for capacity enhancement for policy makers are critical.

In 2013, at the Africa Climate Change Conference that held in Arusha, Tanzania, African climate scientists, policy makers, climate services providers, and development partners recommended the establishment of an African-owned and African-led climate research partnership programme to strengthen the links between climate science research and climate information needs in support development planning on the continent. This resulted in the establishment of the Climate Research for Development (CR4D) programme as partnership between the African Climate Policy Center (ACPC) of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). CR4D became fully operational in 2015 with initial funding from the UK FCDO under the Weather and Climate Information Services (WISER) programme that was being implemented by ACPC and the UK Met Office. The first phase of CR4D, implemented in partnership with the African Academy of Science, completed in 2021 with 21 grantees supported to carry out research on climate change and development covering various areas

such as health, energy, food security, and community resilience, among others. This has demonstrated the power of research partnerships in support of sustainable development. Resource and the expansion of the partnership are new ongoing for the second phase of the programme that is envisaged to scale up and at speed the lessons learned from the first phase to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Africa and Africa's Agenda 2063.

The Climate Policy Lab (CPL) is an initiative of the Center for International Environment and Resource Policy (CIERP) at The Fletcher School, Tufts University. The CPL houses an extensive network of government officials, scholars, and policy experts who participate in the work of policy analysis through project-specific study teams and contribute insights to enable comparative study. The CPL empirically evaluates the impact of existing climate policies and provides support and education to governments contemplating revision of existing policies or the creation of new policies to achieve measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Such policies are required to advance the low-carbon transition, achieve the deep decarbonization required to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, and to enhance resilience to climate change itself. From its extensive collaboration and partnerships, CPL has compiled valuable information on lessons and best experiences to attain the SDGs and Agenda 2063 in a tailored and inclusive, greener, and resilient approach. CPL is partnering with the ACPC to establish a partnership framework aimed at sharing ideas for African climate policy options to foster knowledge transfer and mobilize investments for for implementation of SDGs and Agenda 2063.

Objective

To showcase opportunities for leveraging climate research and information sharing partnerships at the global and regional levels to inform policy-making trade-offs for sustainable development planning under changing climate in a tailored and inclusive, greener, and resilient approach. The side event will share ideas for African policy options and discuss an integrated approach of partnerships and collaboration (SDG 17) to foster knowledge transfer and mobilize finances for climate research and education (SDGs 4) for implementation of SDGs and Agenda 2063.

Programme

Time (Kigali Time)	Description
Moderators: Prof Amy Jaffe , Managing Director at Climate Policy Lab, The Fletcher School, Tufts University Dr Linus Mofor , Senior Environmental Affairs Officer, African Climate Policy Centre, ECA	
16:00 – 16:10	Welcome and opening statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPL, The Fletcher School, Tufts University (tbd) • Dr James Murombedzi, Head, African Climate Policy Centre, ECA
16:10 – 16:30	Setting the scene: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mieke, CPL (tbd) - The Climate Research for Development (CR4D) programme, Dr Yosef Amah, African Climate Policy Centre, ECA
16:30 – 17:25	Panel discussion <p>Prof Kelly Sims Gallagher, Professor of Energy and Environmental Policy, Academic Dean and Director of the Climate Policy Lab, The Fletcher School, Tufts University</p> <p>Prof Yacob Mulugetta, Professor of Energy and Development Policy / Partnerships Director & International Engagement Lead, Climate Compatible Growth Programme, University College London</p> <p>Mr Ken De Souza, Research Manager, Climate, Energy and Water Research Team, FCDO, UK (tbc)</p> <p>Dr Lara Allen, CEO, Centre for Global Equality (CGE)</p> <p>Prof Godwell Nhamo, Chief Researcher and Exxaro Chair in Climate and Sustainability Transitions at the University of South Africa</p> <p>Michael Northrop, Program Director, Sustainable Development, Rockefeller Brothers Fund (tbc)</p> <p>Dicussants:</p> <p>Dr Geoffrey Ogutu, Climate Scientist and Consultant, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Naibobi, Kenya</p> <p>Dr Mary-Jane Bobape, Chief Scientist, South African Weather Service and CR4D Grantee (tbc)</p> <p>Pannellists will share experiences of research partnerships in support of implementation of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, including innovations in leveraging triangular (South-South / North-South) as well as public-private sector cooperation for research and innovation.</p>
17:25 – 17:30	Closing remarks and next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr Amy Jaffe, CPL - Dr Linus Mofor, ACPC