

In partnership with



Fourth Africa Climate Talks

Enhancing climate resilience for better human security in the Sahel region

2nd Session, Niamey, Niger, 26-27 February 2023

Introduction

The African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in partnership with the Climate Change and Desertification Unit (CCDU) of the African Union Commission (AUC) and the ClimDev-Africa Special Fund (CDSF) of the African Development Bank (AfDB) will host the 4th Africa Climate Talks (ACT!) as part of the build-up to the eleventh conference on climate change and development in Africa (CCDA-XI) and the 28th Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP28). The event is organized in hybrid format in Niamey for Central, Western and Northern Africa subregions. It follows the first session which was convened last year in Mozambique for the Eastern and Southern Africa subregions.

The ACT! webinar series brings together different perspectives and stakeholders to stimulate a pan-African discourse aimed at contributing to the emergence of an African narrative on climate change and development, drawing on lessons and experiences of civil society groups, academics, researchers, youth, the private sector and climate change negotiators. ACT! articulates opportunities that could be translated into policy options by African decision makers to build more resilient societies and economies, while enhancing environmental integrity.

The ClimDev-Africa partners have convened three past ACT! sessions, which aimed at stimulating a wide-ranging discourse informed by emerging African common positions on a range of pertinent issues in the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, and at creating



platforms for the discussion of African perspectives on key issues in the linkages between climate change and Africa's transformative development trajectories.

For example, given the significant losses and damages to African infrastructure exposed to disasters a pivotal policy recommendation is to build resilient future infrastructure for development. Climate resilient Plan for Infrastructure Development for Africa (PIDA) is essential for accelerating implementation for the African Free Trade Area but projected hazards and impacts are required for better planning, design, building, operation and maintenance for this infrastructure.

ACT! will elevate the extant climate change issues and vagaries vexing communities and governments in the region, with resulting impact on progress towards achieving development goals defined in both the regional Agenda 2063 – “leaving no one behind” and the UN 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

The recent IPCC 6th Assessment Reports outline the science underpinning the state of the climate today, as well as the basis for the observed and expected climate change impacts. The reports paint a grim picture of future extremes if CO₂ emissions and resulting global warming trajectory continues unabated. In Africa, storms, hurricanes and droughts continue to ravage communities and disrupt economic activities at both the local and national levels. In March 2022, tropical cyclone Gombe pounded Mozambique and caused the death of 50 people. Shortly thereafter, flooding in South Africa washed away entire houses, bridges and roads, caused the death of over 450 people and made thousands homeless. The storm dumped close to an entire year's rainfall in just 48 hours.

In Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, persistent drought has put 20 million people at risk of starvation. According to the UN, the subregion is experiencing its worst drought in 40 years, in the affected areas, people make a living mainly from herding and subsistence farming. A fourth consecutive poor rainy season since the end of 2020 has created a situation that is exacerbated by a locust invasion that wiped out crops between 2019 and 2021. The prolonged drought also increased exposure of women and girls walking longer distances to access water to gender-based violence, exploitation and abuse.

In western Africa, worsening dry conditions and depletion of water resources has led to food insecurity for millions of farmers and pastoralists, leading to constant local and global migration in search of better livelihoods. Efforts such as the Great Green Wall and massive undertakings to plant billions of trees in countries such as Benin can barely dent recurring drought exacerbated by climate change, if there is no concerted and coordinated action to address climate change.

Weak climate services information systems are the among the main causes of significant disaster losses and damages. Strengthening Africa climate services information systems is essential to building effective resilience and saves resources for adaptation. Resilient infrastructure needed to accelerate implementation of the Continental Free Trade Area and stronger Climate service information systems are among priorities to be discussed.

While many drought-affected countries are struggling to cope with the cumulative consequences of climate change impacts, other shocks including internal conflicts, COVID-19 and deteriorating macroeconomic conditions and trade disruptions related to the war in Ukraine are also wreaking havoc to these economies. People in Africa are experiencing the impact of

the climate emergency almost daily. The war in Ukraine is contributing to inflation of food and energy prices, with serious implications exacerbating poverty and famine in Africa. The need for action is urgent and should be at scale.

Just Transition has gained significant reach in the recent past as countries realign their post-pandemic recovery measures. According to Nigerian Vice President Yemi Osinbajo “Countries including the US, China, Japan, and large parts of Asia and the EU include gas as a major pillar of their multi-decade decarbonization strategies, including actively developing African gas in countries like Mozambique, Ghana, Senegal, and Nigeria for export to Asia and Europe, while limiting financing to gas projects for domestic use in those countries.” “Clearly the continent will require an unprecedented scale of investment. An energy mix compatible with a 1.5 degrees Celsius pathway would require \$40billion to flow to Sub-Saharan Africa annually; a fourfold increase compared to the \$10billion invested in 2018”, he added.

The question of just transition for Africa presents challenges that require a multi-faceted and innovative approach for developing effective strategies to cushion communities that are vulnerable to climate impacts and safeguard economic development that is necessary to ensure access to clean energy and eradicate poverty. A just transition also entails finding solutions to the challenge of identifying alternative job opportunities for the youth, a whole-of-society approach that links climate action to social justice and provides a roadmap for governments to achieve a sustainable future which leaves no-one behind. Stronger digitalization, data capabilities and ecosystems, moving understanding of climate change from global, regional to national and local or community level in Africa, better multi hazards early warning systems focussing intervention on Least developing and small islands states in Africa are challenges to consider.

Objective

The specific objective of the 4th ACT! is to interpret the science emerging from the IPCC reports and the resulting implications for climate action, energy transition, human insecurity, food security and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) in Africa. The discourse will be guided by the theme of the talks i.e. “*Enhancing climate resilience for better human security in the Sahel region*”, which will contribute to the tenth CCDA deliberations and shape Africa’s priorities at COP28.

Specific objectives – Key issues

To ensure there is adequate discourse and engagement on the foregoing regional climate change challenges, the event deliberations will be organized into the following topics:

- Implications of IPCC AR6 on Africa’s development aspirations with emphasis on resilient infrastructure and free trade;
- Milestones and imperatives of climate action and energy transition;
- Unpack the regional perspectives of the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) in Africa;
- Implications of IPCC AR6 on disasters and Multi-hazard Early Warning and action Systems in Africa

- State of discourse on loss and damage, and article 6 of the Paris agreement;
- Challenges and strategies for addressing disaster displacement and climate induced food and human insecurity;
- Riding the climate change, recovery from Covid-19 and economic storm;
- Perspectives and key messages to shape Africa's priorities at COP28.

Expected outputs/outcomes

- Broadening of the climate change debate to include critical linkages between climate change and underlying economic, human security and political dynamics;
- Contribution to a more comprehensive climate response, to complement regional strategies and global frameworks;
- Robust interrogation of the science behind the inter-connected crisis i.e. escalating climate change, COVID-19 recovery and the resulting economic challenges.
- Side events titles, summaries and Key messages for common position of Africa's priorities for COP28

Targeted audience

Africa researchers, policy and decision makers, civil society, youth and women groups as well as marginalized groups in the climate change and development communities.
