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Fourth Conference on Climate Change  
and Development in Africa

Marrakech, Morocco  
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## **Conference summary and recommendations**



## I. Introduction

1. Consistent with the African Union's declaration of 2014 as the Year of Agriculture and Food Security, and its Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDev-Africa) organized the Fourth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA-IV) under the theme: "Africa can feed Africa now: translating climate knowledge into action". The conference was held from 8 to 10 October 2014, in Marrakech, Morocco. The main goal of the conference was to facilitate dialogue and in-depth reflection on how Africa could tap into opportunities offered by climate change to ensure sustainable food production and better livelihoods. The conference also served as a platform to address the need for adequate preparation by the African delegation to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP20) in Lima-Peru.
2. The conference deliberations were organized under the following sub-themes:
  - Sub-theme one:* Climate data for food security;
  - Sub-theme two:* Agricultural opportunities for renewable energy development;
  - Sub-theme three:* Climate finance and investment for agricultural transformation;
  - Sub-theme four:* Innovation, technology transfer and deployment to enhance agricultural transformation in a changing climate.
  - Sub-theme five:* Transformation towards a green economy and low-carbon development as Africa feeds itself

## II. Summary of proceedings

3. Fatima Denton, Director of the Special Initiatives Division of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and Mr. Rajendra K. Pachauri, Director General of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Chairperson of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), set the stage for conference deliberations. Ms. Denton introduced the theme of the conference and noted that it was critical since climate represents a challenge and an opportunity for food security. She also noted that agriculture could serve as a catalyst for development if additional smart agricultural practices were implemented. However, this would require improved climate information services to become an indispensable component of national agricultural policy development. Mr. Pachauri then highlighted the key findings of the recent Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. He emphasized those findings that showed Africa's vulnerability to climate change, as it is already causing scarcity of water, a reduction in agricultural yields and spread of diseases.
4. Welcoming remarks and opening statements were delivered by Abdalla Hamdok, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA; Yacine Fal, AfDB Vice-President in charge of agriculture, water, human development, governance and natural resources; and Olushola Olayide, representing the African Union Commission. They all noted the challenge for Africa to improve its agricultural production capacity in order to simultaneously feed itself and produce surplus for export. To address this challenge would require transition from subsistence to business-oriented agriculture, but that must also take into account the additional stress posed by climate change.

5. Hakima El Haite, Deputy Minister responsible for environment, Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment, Morocco, officially opened the conference. She described how land degradation, soil erosion and drought contributed to food insecurity in Africa, and stated that concerted effort to reclaim degraded land needed to be part of the effort to ensure that Africa could increase agricultural production and be able to feed itself. She emphasized that the key to Africa's development would depend on progress in agriculture, citing examples of Moroccan success stories.
6. A high-level dialogue was held to promote in-depth discussion on the overall conference theme by a diverse group of experts, policymakers, civil society representatives and other participants. It featured eminent public and private sector personalities, that included Haidi Hasin, Minister of Energy and Mining, Morocco; Abdoulaye Baldé, Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Senegal; and Raphael Edou, Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Reforestation, Benin. Uduak Amimo of the Kenya Royal Media Services moderated the question-and-answer session of the panel discussions. The overall high-level panel deliberations focused on the following key questions, with respect to agriculture and food security in Africa:
  - (a) Why is so little action given to the impacts of climate change in Africa?
  - (b) Why does Africa import its food when it has vast productive agricultural land?
  - (c) How can Africa balance divergent national and continental interests in order to transform agricultural production and ensure food security across the continent?
7. A special plenary session was held to address the unique circumstances of Africa's Small Island Developing States, under the theme "Food systems and marine resources: are African [small island developing States] ready to explore the blue economy?" At the session, the importance of marine resources in ensuring food security and socioeconomic development was discussed.

### III. Key messages and recommendations

#### 8. *Sub-theme one: Climate data, information and knowledge for agricultural production, water resources management and food security*

Reliable and scale-appropriate climate data and information are critical to understanding the impact of climate change on African agriculture. This is critical to achieving sustainable agricultural production that ensures Africa can feed itself. In addition, the appropriate packaging and translation of climate data for end users can significantly contribute to the reduction of risks and uncertainties presented by a changing climate. This would ensure better management of agricultural water resources requirements, timely planting and harvesting, storage, processing and transportation of agricultural produce to markets.

#### Key messages

- There is an urgent need to improve climate data quality and access, based on a framework developed by the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

- A paradigm shift to risk management is needed. This requires access to reliable and high-quality climate data at the local level.
- There is need to support decision makers and practitioners through the provision of tailored climate data.
- Ranking climate models based on their performance in simulating the historical and contemporary climate does not necessarily translate into the reduction of uncertainty in future projections.
- There is need for better understanding of processes that drive regional climate systems in order to improve regional climate predictions.
- There is need to understand the potential influence of anthropogenic aerosols on the African climate systems.
- There is need for enhanced horizontal resolution of climate models to improve accuracy of climate knowledge and information.

### **Recommendations**

- Increase the involvement of climate experts in policymaking processes.
- Enhance capabilities of existing institutions to facilitate public access to climate information and knowledge.
- Consideration of the nexus between natural resources, energy, agriculture and livelihoods when assessing climate data and information requirements.
- Invest in the modernization of equipment and methodologies for climate observation and build synergies at the international, regional and national levels for coordinated field campaigns to fill climate data and knowledge gaps.
- Support further climate research through observational analysis and modeling in order to understand the processes underpinning climate variability, predictability and changes across Africa.
- Ensure climate information is timely, appropriate and suitably tailored for decision-makers.
- Encourage continuous interaction among climate science expertise, policy makers and end users in order to translate research into tangible applications and decision-making.
- Integrate the indigenous knowledge of pastoralists and sedentary farmers into climate risk management.
- Enhance climate change adaptation capacity at the grass-roots level through relevant adaptation measures.

- Strengthen capacities of key organisations addressing the needs of various communities at the grassroots.

***10. Sub-theme two: Agricultural opportunities for renewable energy development in Africa***

Africa's energy needs can only be met by promoting the development of clean and renewable energy as part of its overall energy supply.

**Key messages:**

- Governments and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) should provide an enabling environment that promotes investment in renewable and green energy sources.
- Robust legal frameworks are necessary for the sustainable production and marketing of firewood and charcoal.
- Modernization of techniques used to harness biomass is critical to supplementing energy access and needs in rural areas.
- Targeted delivery of affordable and sufficient energy in the agricultural sector is necessary to transform agricultural value chains and agribusinesses in rural areas.
- As biofuel feedstock and food compete for land, biofuel projects should be designed with full participation of local stakeholders.
- Investments in affordable energy sources should be undertaken concurrently with infrastructure development, especially in rural areas. This will accelerate the transformation of rural economies, create employment and improve livelihoods.
- Small Island Developing States possess huge potential for wind and ocean tide energy that can be harnessed through increased investments.
- A gender dimension must be integrated into agricultural and energy policies since women are key actors in the production and consumption of goods and services in the two sectors.

**Recommendations:**

- Stakeholders should promote and encourage Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) by co-investing in affordable energy sources, especially in rural areas.
- Governments should endeavor to harmonize policies, regulations and institutional frameworks at national and regional levels in order to safeguard food security.
- Governments should lead the development of the biofuel industry and encourage research and development on lesser-known feed stocks.
- Leaders should strengthen policy integration and cooperation at regional and national levels to address food, energy and water needs.

- Stakeholders should provide a level of support for the development of the “blue economy” that is equal to the level of support currently afforded to the green economy.
- Institutions should undertake a comprehensive scenario analysis on the impacts of climate change in order to develop informed policies that tackle food insecurity, energy independence, poverty reduction and water scarcity.
- In collaboration with governments, institutions involved in climate change should undertake a comprehensive assessment of the energy sector in order to target investments that maximize the potential for the sector to create sustainable development in Africa.
- User communities and practitioners should encourage the development of agro-waste energy generation, especially within farming communities.

***11. Sub-theme three: Enhancing Africa’s capacity to mobilize and access climate finance and investment for a climate-resilient agricultural transformation***

Appropriate policies that increase access to finance are necessary preconditions to enhancing the resilience of Africa’s agricultural sector. Strategies and incentives for reducing emissions from deforestation and enhancing carbon stocks through clean development mechanisms (CDM), the reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD+) initiative, and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) have emerged as key international financing mechanisms under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Africa needs to strengthen its capacity to utilize available climate funds, participate in the carbon market, create an enabling environment for private sector investments, and develop public-private partnerships.

**Key messages**

- It is important to have a clear mechanism to quantify needed climate funds, share information, ensure predictability and provide simplified rules and procedures to access climate funds.
- There is a need for transparent mechanisms that ensure climate finance is channeled effectively to meet the specific requirements of key stakeholders.
- The African Risk Capacity Agency should play a vital role in changing the narrative of climate change responses in Africa and enabling States to pool resources for early response measures that can enhance resilience to the impacts of climatic change.
- Risk aversion of smallholder farmers and socio-economic implications should be taken into account when formulating policies on climate finance mechanisms.
- The Green Climate Fund can prudently consider the needs of climate finance beneficiaries in Africa when financing and disbursing channels are designed.

**Recommendations**

**I: Member States and Regional Economic Communities should:**

- Lobby for international policies that can provide a window for gaining access to finance for agriculture through climate change financing mechanisms under the UNFCCC.
- Invest in knowledge management throughout the agricultural value chain, including the transformation of extension services to provide pre- and post-harvest support for farmers.
- Develop land and tenure security policies that reduce risk and attract private investments.
- Enhance research on agricultural commodity value chains to formulate policies that attract private investments.
- User communities and practitioners should work directly with government banks and financial institutions, multilateral development banks and other financial actors.

**12. *Sub-theme four: Innovation, technology transfer and deployment to enhance agricultural transformation in a changing climate***

Direct dependence on subsistence agriculture has created technical, economic and cultural obstacles to improving livelihoods in many rural African communities. Indigenous knowledge alone cannot respond to the complex problems facing the agricultural sector. Emerging issues such as climate change require innovation, science-based technologies and supportive policies to transform African agriculture. This sub-theme focused on agricultural transformation in Africa to devise mechanisms to utilize the public-private partnerships and international research that have developed resistant and high-yielding crops, biotechnology and other agricultural technologies.

**Key messages**

- There is a need for an approach that includes rural communities and other stakeholders along the value chain.
- Harnessing local and indigenous knowledge, developing resilient crop varieties and improving information and communications technology as well as market information should be encouraged.
- Innovations should consider gender dimensions and home-grown solutions to ensure effective interventions.
- Transforming Africa's vision into action requires political will and appropriate institutions. Suitable resources and mechanisms to implement actions should be provided in the short, medium and long-term.
- The communication of new and transformative research findings is key to their adoption. There is need for appropriate mechanisms to scale up research findings beyond local and community levels.

## Recommendations

- Public and private investments should be encouraged in the agricultural sector through the creation of regulatory frameworks that attract investments and protect communities.
- Increase investment in information and communications technology and capacity building in multi-disciplinary research.
- Take measures that enhance the sustainability of agricultural production systems i.e. for crops, livestock and fisheries.
- Promote access to appropriate technology and innovation that enhance implementation of priority actions and practices at all levels.
- Invest in programmes and projects that improve communication of new research findings in order to enhance adoption at all levels.
- User communities and practitioners should shift from the exclusive use of chemical fertilizers to farming practices that blend organic and inorganic inputs.
- User communities and practitioners should integrate livestock and crop farming systems.

### **13. *Sub-theme five: Transformation towards a green economy and low-carbon development as Africa feeds itself***

Promotion of a green economy and low-carbon development is important to accelerate economic growth while simultaneously addressing poverty, inequality, unemployment and the efficient and sustainable use of natural resources. African countries need to develop clear visions and strategies to foster the transition to green growth, low-carbon development and inclusive green economies. Some organizations, programmes and mechanisms are already providing support to a number of countries, such as Kenya, Sierra Leone and Mozambique. The African Development Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the Global Green Growth Institute, mechanisms under the UNFCCC and the International Institute for Environment and Development are some of the organizations that have provided support to Africa's economic transition. The main challenges for Africa include the mainstreaming of an inclusive green economy into national development frameworks and planning. In addition, there is a need to track the transition and ensure that accurate data and information are collected and disseminated.

## Key Messages

- It is important to harmonize and enhance understanding of the concepts and complementarity of inclusive growth, green growth and inclusive green economy.
- There is need for effective tracking and monitoring of the transition to an inclusive green economy. To meet that need, appropriate tools and data collection protocols for monitoring and evaluation must be developed.

- Natural resources valuation is necessary to capture the economic value of these resources in national accounts.

### **Recommendations**

- Member states and regional economic communities should identify their critical needs in order to effectively mainstream inclusive green economy strategies into their development frameworks.
- ClimDev-Africa and partners should develop a protocol for tracking and monitoring the transition to an inclusive green economy and the contribution of such an economy to the transformation and sustainability of overall economic growth.

#### ***14. Recommendations on Youth involvement in Agriculture***

Young people participated in the conference under the aegis of the African Youth Initiative on Climate Change (AYICC). Mariam Alam from Egypt, the youngest member of AYICC, delivered a statement at the closing of the conference. She emphasized the fact that a number of young people have come to appreciate the role of agriculture as the backbone of wealth creation in Africa. Through AYICC, youth groups are carrying out grass roots and national activities to enable youth participation in sustainable agricultural development and on other issues relating to climate change.

#### **Key recommendations by the African Youth Initiative on Climate Change**

- Reform agricultural studies curricula in primary and secondary schools in order to cultivate interest and impart relevant skills in agriculture and related sciences, thus enabling young people to acquire value-based education that exposes them to the opportunities of the entire agricultural value chain.
- Invest in vocational education and training in agriculture that promotes the development of skills and capacities to sustain young people's interest in agriculture.
- Develop agricultural policies and regulatory frameworks that encourage the participation of young people in agricultural and agri-business production systems.
- Develop flexible policies that cushion young people from the risks of engaging in agriculture, as well as minimize restrictions on age limits in land ownership and management.
- ClimDev-Africa and partners should promote the rebranding and repackaging of agriculture and agribusiness as a profitable career to encourage youth participation and investment.
- User communities and practitioners should encourage young people to take up agriculture as potential employers through the adoption of innovative technologies and communication platforms.

#### ***G. Recommendations on implementing the Climate Research for Development initiative***

A consultative meeting on the Climate Research for Development (CR4D) initiative was held prior to the conference to deliberate on the role of the initiative in coordinating user-driven research that can contribute to development in Africa. The primary sponsors of the meeting were the African Climate Policy Centre, the World Meteorological Organization and the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology.

Consistent with the objectives of the fourth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa, the consultative meeting made the following recommendations for ClimDev-Africa and partners:

- The CR4D collaboration platform should promote knowledge-sharing among organizations, institutions and individuals involved in climate research, while also capitalizing on existing initiatives, activities and partnerships.
- ClimDev-Africa and the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology should have overall oversight over the CR4D activities.
- A joint meeting between the African Climate Policy Centre, the World Meteorological Organization and the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology should be organized as soon as practicable, with the goal of developing a proper CR4D governance structure that clearly takes into account their roles and complementarity regarding CR4D oversight.
- The CR4D Institutional Collaboration Platform should be officially launched during the third session of the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology to be held in 2015.
- The functions and activities of ClimDev-Africa, the World Meteorological Organization and the African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology related to CR4D should be harmonized.