Enhancing Africa’s Engagement in International Climate Change Negotiations through Minilateralism

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Problem statement 1/2

- Africa’s engagement in the (fragmenting) international climate change negotiations has been challenging.

Regime complex for Climate Change
Problem statement 2/2

- There is minimal research on how African countries can innovatively engage in implementation of the international climate regime (post-negotiations)
Methods

Methods: Literature review/document analysis; interviews with key policy makers & scholars

Conceptual Framework:

- Minilateralism: ‘Subgroup of multilateral actors/countries’ e.g G8, Major Economies Forum (MEF). Focus on RECs as minilateral platforms
- Leveraging international trade to foster climate action
- Focus on post-negotiations (implementation) phase of international climate negotiations
Key Findings

• Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa have been platforms for climate initiatives, though disparate

• RECs, if improved and reconfigured, can be viable minilateral platforms that can contribute to realising Africa’s climate commitments, by leveraging on international trade

• Challenges:
  – Coordination (weak) between national governments & RECs
  – Overlapping memberships in RECs
  – Lack of adequate capacity (institutional, technical, huma)
Key Findings

– Carbon leakage: relocation of polluting industries to Africa

– Persistent failure of realising sustainable development via international trade

• Opportunities:
  – Transformation to clean energy: through liberalisation of environmental goods & services (WTO rules)
  
  – Enhanced coordination between RECs and international trading/development partners, e.g. on emissions trading

  – Bargaining efficiency: overcome individual country limitations e.g. technical & institutional capacity
Conclusions/Recommendations

– RECs, as minilateral platforms, can leverage international trade to foster Africa’s climate actions

– Improvements in RECs should integrate capabilities to foster climate action

– Further research is needed on how specific RECs can leverage on international trade to foster climate action

- Thank You -