

Climate changes Development

Challenges and Opportunities for Sub-Saharan Africa

Symposium

Berlin, 1 November 2011

Contacts:

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Symposium Abstract

The unimpeded rise of global warming is a key challenge to development.

In Africa, the stakes are high because of the region's vulnerabilities. With its land and water resources already under stress, the double bind of climatic change and structural poverty will create huge obstacles for sustainable development unless adaptive capacities are developed.

African livelihoods and economic activities are much dependent on natural resources and rain fed agriculture. Agriculture contributes on average ¼ of GDP and employs about 70 % of the population. It is unarguably the main safety net of the rural poor.

To integrate agriculture development in ongoing development efforts while making them more resilient to climate risks is a core principle therefore for a continued economic growth and a successful path to poverty reduction.

A pro-growth and pro-poor development agenda can only emphasize the need for a coherent support for agricultural sustainability that contributes to food-security.

The reality however is far from that: Where adaptation planning exists among the sub-Saharan countries, it tends to be narrowly focused on biophysical vulnerabilities, follow sectoral and project approaches to adaptation and fail to facilitate integrated responses as well as account for micro-level adaptation requirements. Greater consistency between development strategies, agriculture, food security and climate change policy is as much needed as is the necessary financial support for adaptation and transformation of the agriculture sector.

Climate change being a threat multiplier in Sub-Saharan Africa highlights the need for policy makers to move the agricultural agenda quickly and decisively.

One year before the end of the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol and two years after the Copenhagen summit, a legally binding global treaty seems further away than ever. The 17th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 17) taking place in Durban, South Africa provides yet another window of opportunity for African governments and civil societies to advance proposals for easily accessible finance mechanisms for agricultural adaptation. With South Africa as an emerging nation from the African continent, the case of new alliances in the South moves centre stage.

The one-day symposium seeks to bring together policymakers, academics and practitioners to discuss the key challenges and options ahead of Durban and make the connections between what constitutes a "fair deal" in the climate negotiations with what is applicable and necessary on the ground, especially in the agricultural sector.

Schedule

13.30 Welcome

Barbara Unmüßig, President Heinrich Böll Foundation

13.45 Introduction: Climate changes Development

Keynote

Dr. Youba Sokona, Coordinator of the African Climate Policy Center (ACPC) and co-chair of the IPCC Working Group III

Commentary

Prof. Judi Wakhungu, Executive Director, African Center for Technology Studies (ACTS), Kenya (*tbc*)

Chair: Kirsten Maas-Albert, Heinrich Böll Foundation

15.00 Panel (1): Agriculture for Sustainable Development

Panellists

Prof. Dr. Joachim von Braun, Director Department of Economic and Technological Change, Center for Development Research (ZEF), Bonn/Germany

Prof. Judi Wakhungu, Executive Director, African Center for Technology Studies (ACTS), Kenya

Chair: Christine Chemnitz, Heinrich Böll Foundation

16.15 Coffee Break

16.45 Panel (2): The Double Bind: Mainstreaming Agriculture and Climate Change in Development Strategies

Panellists

Masego Madzwamuse, Regional Vice Chair for Southern Africa, IUCN Commission on Environmental Economics and Social Policy, Economic Justice Programme manager, OSISA

Dr. Imme Scholz, Deputy Director of the German Development Institute (DIE),
Bonn/Germany

Chair: Heike Höffler, University of Leipzig

17.30 Panel (3): How to make finance available

Panellists

Barbara Unmuessig, President, Heinrich Böll Foundation

Frank Fass-Metz, Head of Division Climate Policy and Climate Financing,
BMZ (Federal Ministry for economic Cooperation and Development), Germany

Chair: Sascha Müller-Kraenner, The Nature Conservancy

18.15 Conclusions

Rapporteur: Christine Chemnitz, Heinrich Böll Foundation

18.30 End of symposium

19.30 Evening Event: On the Road to Durban

Panellists

Dr. Youba Sokona, Coordinator of the African Climate Policy Center (ACPC)
and co-chair of the IPCC Working Group III (*tbc*)

Nicole Wilke, Department Head of International Climate Protection Division,
German negotiator in Durban, BMU (Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature
Conservation and Nuclear Safety), Germany (*tbc*)

Mohamed Adow, Christian Aid

Masego Madzwamuse, Regional Vice Chair for Southern Africa, IUCN
Commission on Environmental Economics and Social Policy, Economic
Justice Programme manager, OSISA

Chair: Lili Fuhr, Heinrich Böll Foundation

Information

German/English Translation (simultaneous; only for the evening event).

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