



African-European Parliamentary Action Plan on Climate Change and Food Security

Preamble

*The purpose of this Action Plan is to define a range of actions and policies that commit parliamentarians to tackle the effects of Climate Change on poverty, food security and livelihoods and ensure a more effective approach of donors. This Action Plan was adopted by the participants at the **Parliamentary Forum on Sustainable Development and Aid Effectiveness**, organized by AWEPA in Nairobi, Kenya, 26-28 August 2008, in cooperation with the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), East African Assembly (EALA) and the Kenyan Parliament in coordination with UNEP and NEPAD. The consultation was attended by delegations from some 14 Parliaments in Africa and 14 Parliaments in Europe, plus international experts and NGO representatives. This Action Plan will form the basis for discussions during the African European Parliamentary Dialogue on Climate, Food Security and Development as a preparation on the road to the Copenhagen Summit in December 2009.*

Climate Change is one of the biggest challenges humanity has ever faced and Africa now finds itself at a critical juncture. There is an increased concern about the impacts of global Climate Change and calls for global justice. Whereas the North bears the largest responsibility for the causes of Climate Change, the South, and especially Africa, will suffer the worst consequences, consequences that are now inevitable. Agreement must now be reached among the international community regarding compensatory financing and technology transfers to achieve the necessary adaptation measures to address the harm being caused.

There is global concern that while Climate Change has a wide range of impacts on all sectors and regions, the solutions need to be worked out in a collective manner. The fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC provided regional assessments which showed Africa to be the most vulnerable to the adverse effects of Climate Change with the least adaptive capacity. Furthermore, it is the poorest people within those African communities who are the most vulnerable and who most urgently need assistance. The region faces critical Climate Change related challenges in the areas of:

- Food security
- Water security
- Energy security
- Ecosystem management
- Human health, affordable fuel, sanitation and hygiene
- Urban and coastal communities' security
- Transport infrastructure

These challenges include aggravated land degradation, water scarcity, augmented disasters such as floods and droughts, and Climate Change forced migration, low accessibility to energy resources and poor energy use efficiency, and changing disease prevalence. There is also the alarming rise of armed conflicts related to diminishing

access to natural and vital resources, internally displaced persons and migration. These challenges are exacerbated by multiple-stresses and limitations including low adaptive capacity, limited access to knowledge and technology support, extreme poverty, weak policy support, lack of integrated approaches for strategic planning and regional cooperation. The most vulnerable groups include women, children and elderly, who suffer the most because of Climate Change impacts.

These challenges, which will jeopardize the prospects of achieving and sustaining the 2015 MDGs, require collective action as was envisaged in the Addis Ababa Declaration (2007) on Climate Change in Africa. The declaration embodies the commitments of the African Heads of State and Government to integrate Climate Change into national, sub-regional and regional development policies and programmes. In this endeavor, the parliaments and parliamentarians in Africa will have a critical role to play parliamentarians are the missing links in the Climate Change response.

The General Assembly special session devoted to Climate Change (September 2007) was convened to reflect the high priority that governments and the world community should accord to Climate Change. The session sent a strong signal regarding the bold measures to be taken on the road to UNFCCC COP15 to be held in 2009 in Copenhagen, in which the world's parliamentarians must demonstrate a strong leadership role. AWEPA has a special role to play in mobilizing and facilitating African parliaments towards addressing the critical concerns of Climate Change's impact on Africa. The declaration on integrating Climate Change into development cooperation, adopted by the development and environment ministers of OECD countries (April 2006) provides an additional compelling reason for European parliamentarians, in partnership with their counterparts in Africa, to mobilize the necessary actions.

The COP15 in 2009 Copenhagen provides a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between commitment and action, particularly as it relates to the needed adaptation and mitigation measures in Africa. Once an agreement is reached in Copenhagen, there will be a need for a strategy to implement the commitments. Special attention should be accorded to the role of parliamentarians in the following:

- Development of Climate Change-related policies and legislation
- Budgetary allocations
- Awareness raising

In addition, an enabling environment will be needed for capacity building, multilateral and other forms of cooperation, including additional resources to parliaments to enable them to fulfill their scrutiny and oversight obligations.

Action Plan:

In a North-South context and related to the Road to Copenhagen in 2009, we have agreed on the following actions to accelerate and scale up the responses at national, regional and international levels to global responsibilities of poverty reduction, food security and mitigating the impact of Climate Change.

For members of African parliaments and assemblies:

1. Participate in awareness-raising meetings on the basic facts of the situation of Climate Change and develop skills on how to advocate more effectively for legal and policy frameworks to better address the Climate Change issues
2. Secure resources for strengthening constituency outreach efforts and sharpening skills on issues related to Climate Change, including for promotion of more

information sharing and collaboration between communities and their elected representatives

3. Develop media relations skills and use them to speak out often about Climate Change issues, aiming particularly to stress the urgency of moving to a low carbon development path.
4. Call for public oversight hearings that require relevant ministries to account for their actions to address Climate Change
5. Raise awareness and increase knowledge by making specific information demands to CSOs and research organisations (for example CGIAR, IIED, Africa NESS and African members of the CLACC network)
6. Raise awareness of this issue among young people and in school curricula
7. Allocate national budget resources to Climate Change initiatives and the mainstreaming of Climate Change adaptation into national planning
8. Re-energise NAPAs (National Action Plans for Adaptation)
9. Communicate and interact with UN country teams and UNFCCC focal points
10. Develop media relations with key journalists who have an interest in this area
11. Oversight and accountability of government agencies and ministerial bodies
12. Take action at constituency level on Climate Change, learning from local experiences and cooperating with local experts and scientists

For members of trans-regional, sub-regional parliaments, assemblies and other bodies:

1. Synchronised and harmonised legislation and policies for all issues related to cross-boundary ecosystem management, including management of water resources and migration of peoples
2. Strengthen parliamentary oversight of regional food security, early warning and rapid response systems
3. Regional parliamentary bodies, as well as regional and national women's parliamentary caucuses and networks, should play a significant role in facilitating information exchange and joint policy initiatives to harmonise and catalyse the Climate Change response in their region
4. Economic cooperation on regional Climate Change initiatives
5. Knowledge-sharing on successful adaptation experiences on local, national and regional initiatives
6. Pay particular attention to the needs of pastoral communities affected by Climate Change

For members of European national parliaments, regional parliaments and assemblies:

1. Participate in awareness-raising meetings on the basic facts of the situation of Climate Change and develop skills on how to advocate more effectively for legal and policy frameworks to better address the Climate Change issues
2. Ensure political accountability by monitoring government compliance with international commitments and obligations, including in relation to the IMF, the World Bank, the EU and G8 action plans, pledges and other measures
3. Initiate parliamentary debate on the level of budgetary resources available for development cooperation, and hold governments accountable for separate and additional resource allocation to Climate Change initiatives in Africa
4. Track and share information with African parliamentarians on resource allocation to Climate Change in Africa through the AWEPA-proposed North-South parliamentary dialogue
5. Identify opportunities in negotiating positions for African countries at international meetings on Climate Change
6. Raise awareness and share information of the critical urgency of Climate Change issues to Africa (and of related effects such as the real costs of water resources for food and crop production in Africa and of land clearances for food and crop production)

For development partners and agencies:

1. Provide financial resources and information to enable African parliamentarians to become better informed on Climate Change issues, so that they become more active in both parliamentary and constituency work
2. Provide financial resources to enable African parliamentarians to engage in regional dialogue among themselves and with European colleagues on the development of joint strategies based on shared information, experiences and good practices
3. Initiate reviews of all development cooperation resources, including in the context of the OECD-DAC Peer Review, to assess their adequacy and level of prioritisation from an environmental perspective
4. Review with international financial institutions the macro-economic planning processes, such as PRSPs and other plans submitted to them, from the viewpoint of action to advance sustainable development and to limit the adverse effects of the Climate Change
5. Information provision for oversight and scrutiny of Climate Change initiatives
6. Adequate resource allocation for investment in Climate Change initiatives, in particular local adaptation strategies for Africa. Pledges made to multi-lateral funds for climate adaptation need to comply with and these funds need to be replenished to levels adequate to need
7. Assist with re-energising NAPAs (National Adaptation Plans for Action)
8. Tools for action for parliamentarians (including guidelines on Climate Change initiatives for parliamentarians)

9. Speedy operationalisation of adaptation funds

For all parliamentarians:

1. Review and amend as necessary all relevant legislation and national policies related to mitigating and adapting to Climate Change
2. Establish and designate a specific portfolio committee to deal with Climate Change issues in every parliament
3. Initiate and strengthen the monitoring of national Climate Change programmes to ensure that funding reaches intended beneficiaries at the grassroots level
4. Hold annual public hearings on Climate Change issues, as part of an overall public outreach and information sharing among government, parliament, civil society, the private sector and communities
5. Strengthen monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for Food Security assistance programmes at national and sub-national levels
6. Stimulate the development of national plans of action for Climate Change into national level macro-planning processes, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, national development plans and bilateral support agreements
7. Preparation for a trans-regional parliamentary conference in advance of the UNFCCC XV conference of parties in Copenhagen 2009. As part of these preparations, a delegation of African parliamentarians and AWEPA members should attend the UNFCCC XIV conference of parties in Poznan December 2008
8. Closer cooperation between European and African parliamentarians and UNFCCC delegates before and after Copenhagen 2009
9. Closer dialogue of parliamentarians with ministerial bodies and government agencies on Climate Change
10. Better coordination between diverse UN bodies and parliaments and parliamentary committees on Climate Change
11. Demonstrate particular concern for the groups most vulnerable to Climate Change in Africa including women, children and the elderly
12. Balanced resource allocation between sustainable development, food security, energy security and industrialisation in Africa (in consultation with the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders)

We here agreed to introduce and discuss this Action Plan within parliaments, committees, political parties and other relevant bodies for debate and for action.

AWEPA will circulate the Action Plan to all its members, and all parliaments in Africa and Europe.

Together with the Pan African Parliament, and other major parliamentary actors in Africa, AWEPA will continue to work together to implement this Action Plan through the African European Parliamentary Dialogue on Climate, Food Security and Development. Other partners involved in the dialogue will be parliamentary networks such as GLOBE, Parliamentarians for Global Action, the Parliamentary Network of the World Bank, the

Commonwealth Parliamentary Assembly, l'Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie, the African Parliamentary Union, the Parliamentary Working Group on NEPAD and the African Parliamentarian's Forum on NEPAD and the NEPAD Contact Group for African Parliamentarians. Important guidance and advice will be given by UNDP, UNEP, FAO and UN HABITAT.

AWEPA is requested to organise a joint African and European parliamentary delegation to COP14 in Poznan in December 2008 and to COP15 in Copenhagen in December 2009, to advance the issues contained in this Action Plan.

ANNEX

PARLIAMENTARY RECOMMENDATIONS ON FOOD SECURITY AND POVERTY REDUCTION TO BE ADDED TO THE AFRICAN – EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY ACTION PLAN ON CLIMATE CHANGE

28 AUGUST 2008

We, the Parliamentarians present at the Forum on Sustainable Development and Aid Effectiveness, 26-28 August 2008, in Nairobi, Kenya make the following Parliamentary Recommendations on Food Security:

1. Review available and relevant water and sanitation legislation, identify gaps and formulate legislation supportive of integrated gender-focused water management policies that will ensure good governance, access to clean water through use of appropriate rainwater and flood water harvesting mechanisms
2. Strengthen extension and technical support through training local communities to gain skills in appropriate sustainable agricultural methodologies and technologies that also support value addition to agricultural produce, food preservation and marketing partnerships with Europe
3. Parliamentarians to review where countries are in terms of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) implementation, which captures most of the issues raised in the group such as gender, corruption and 10% national budgetary allocation to the agricultural sector, and to support CAADP implementation at national level
4. Incorporate research findings in agricultural sector to assess the socio-economic and political dimensions of climatic change and secure land tenure, and utilize the research findings to reform legislation in support of the agricultural sector, including environmentally friendly bio-fuels, environmentally friendly urban agriculture and agricultural support in dry lands and semi arid areas
5. Address effectively unfair trade practices with regards to the agricultural sector as a result of agricultural subsidies, in particular the phasing out of unfair trade practices in the West. Africa should provide budgetary support to the agricultural sector in order to compete fairly in the international food market
6. Promote and establish appropriate ways, including use of media and especially radio, to sensitize local communities in appropriate agricultural techniques and disseminate research findings and best practices