



01 December 2011

# African Pavilion Daily

This Summary Brief is intended for media representatives. Published by the Joint Communication Sub-committee (AU, AfDB and UNECA) in partnership with Dalberg. The Brief summarizes the daily discussion sessions taking place in the African Pavilion, capturing key discussion points, key implications, and key action items from selected sessions.

The Africa Pavilion, located within the precincts of the UNFCCC, is serving as a platform to have Africa's voice heard. To demonstrate Africa's ability to be part of the solution to the challenges of climate change on the continent, the Pavilion is hosting a full program of roundtables and events during the UN climate conference.

All the events organized in the Africa Pavilion are open to media representatives, who can ask questions to the panelists (interpretation English / French available).

## **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION, Desert Room (13.20-15.20):**

### **Climate Change Adaptation in Africa**

- The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in collaboration with the African Union Commission and African Development Bank organized a roundtable discussion on Climate Change Adaptation in Africa. The roundtable discussion took place in the Desert Room in the African Pavilion.
- The roundtable discussion was moderated by Dr. Abebe Haile Gebriel, Director, Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union Commission (AUC).
- The following panelists participated in the event:
  - Mr. Ali Mohammed, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Mineral resources, Republic of Kenya
  - Dr. Saleemul Haq, Senior Fellow, International Institute of Environment and Development
  - Dr. Fatima Denton, Program Leader, Climate Change & Adaptation in Africa (CCAA)
  - Prof. Coleen Vogel, Professor, University of the Witwaterstrand
  - Dr. Tom Downing, President & CEO, Global Climate Adaptation Partnership

- Dr. Heather McGrey, Co-Director, Vulnerability & Adaptation Initiative, World Resource Institute
- Mr. Richard Myungi, assistant Director of the Division of Environment, Vice-President's Office, United Republic of Tanzania.

**Key Takeaways from the Roundtable:**

- It was made clear during the session that Africa must move forward and not wait for the developed countries' assistance.
- Africa must share experience with other developed countries – e.g. in Latin America and Asia. This will lead to South-to-South development and help in reducing dependency on the developed countries.
- However, the issue of capacity is prominent in Africa as some countries do not have the capacity to implement adaptation measures due to the lack of appropriate resources. Thus, Africa needs to walk the talk (plan and implement).
  
- An important point raised was that in the past decades, more focus was being put on mitigation measures. However, now there is a clear trend towards adaptation measures.
- It was pointed out that there is a need for an integrated approach where all the stakeholders will have a say as to which way forward is viable.
  
- The panelists emphasized that all sectors are crucial in terms of the need for adaptation measures. But in Africa there are three sectors which stand out: Energy, Water & Agriculture.
  - Agriculture is the most directly affected sector by climate change and demands most attention.
  - Water is also one of the sectors which demands more focus on adaptation measures.
- A point was made that communities should be consulted in the adaptation process since they possess valuable indigenous knowledge, which has proved to be useful in adapting to climate changes.
  
- It was pointed out that economic costs of adaptation in Africa are huge. However, one has to focus on the bigger picture, which is to build a better tomorrow today.
- Adaptation shouldn't be set aside from sustainable development, they go hand in hand. Thus, we shouldn't focus on the outcome but the process in which we get to that outcome.
- The private sector must also come into play in this matter (adaptation measures). They should work with the government and invest in adaptation measures.

## **Session in the River Room (11.30-13.00): Progress in Regional Climate Downscaling for Africa**

- Just before lunch, eager participants of the African Pavilion's climate change sessions assembled in the River Room to participate in a session on the Progress in Regional Climate Downscaling for Africa.

### **Key Takeaways from the Session**

- The focus of the session was on introducing CORDEX and explaining where downscaling scenarios can help decision making.
- CORDEX, a COordinated Regional climate Downscaling Experiment, is an initiative to downscale the latest Global Model (GCM) projections of climate change to regional scales of relevance to stakeholders.
- CORDEX data are still being generated in an ongoing process, but the aim is to test the presumption that downscaled information is better than larger sums of climate change related information.
- It was emphasized by the panel that CORDEX has the capacity to integrate climate information into the decision space within Africa, empowering decision making processes on climate related issues. Ultimately, models such as CORDEX might help increase the level of available information put into political decision making – enabling better decisions in the long run.
- Throughout the session it was made clear to the audience that many factors are to be considered when making decisions concerning climate changes. Thus, one should focus not only on climate data, but also on social and economic factors. Decision making can't rely entirely on hard data, but should also integrate factors associated with human behavior.

## **Session in the River Room (13.20-14.40): Adaptation to Climate Change – A Kenyan Perspective**

- This afternoon, Dr. Harun Warui (African Adaptation Project – Kenya) and Mr. Cleophas Wangombe (Ministry of Planning & National Development, Kenya) meet in the River Room of the African Pavilion to discuss the issue of adaptation to climate changes from a Kenyan perspective.

### **Key takeaways from the Session**

- Recognizing that Kenya is particularly vulnerable to climate changes, due to its dependence on rain, the Kenyan authorities have recognized the need for adaptation measures in order to ensure continued productivity. A plurality of methods are being explored, including water harvesting & storage.
- Many Kenyans have sensed the need and urgency of adaptation, but more needs to be done. By raising awareness of the consequences of climate change at a local level, authorities are trying to avoid making the same mistakes as developed countries.
  - Kenya currently uses local funds as well as adaptation partnerships to achieve adaptation methods. The Imarisha Naivasha Project is a current initiative of the Government of Kenya that aims to help restore the forest as well as the catchment area around Lake Naivasha, which has previously been damaged by over abstraction of water, deforestation, catchment degradation, erosion, and decline in water quality. So far, a 3 year plan and budget for the project have been defined and work on the development plan has commenced. The project show an active engagement from the Kenyan authorities in trying to deal with adaptation challenges.

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## Interview Requests

A wide array of senior officials from the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the UN Economic Commission for Africa are attending the COP17/CMP7 discussions in Durban.

Interview requests can be sought from the communications officers listed below by mail or telephone.

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