



**COMMISSIONER, RURAL ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE TALKING NOTES- WATER
CLIMATE DEVELOPMENT DAY
03 DECEMBER 2011**

***MAKING THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE THROUGH INVESTMENTS IN WATER
SECURITY, CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND DEVELOPMENT***

**Honourable Ministers
Executive Secretaries
Distinguished Guests
The Press Fraternity
Ladies and Gentlemen**

1. On behalf of the African Union Commission, I welcome you and thank you for prioritising this important engagement. I bring you the greetings and best wishes of H.E Dr Jean PING, Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

2. You would recall that COP 16 put in place a number of key decisions ranging from establishment of the Cancun Adaptation Framework, the Green Fund, Technology Mechanism, REDD+, work programme on loss and damages and set out the ambition for a global goal of no more than 2 degrees rise on global average temperatures

3. We have repeatedly called for COP 17 to make progress on the Cancun decisions by 'putting the meat to the bones' and translating the Cancun decisions from aspirations into operational instruments, tools, mechanisms and institutions required to make this world a safer place.
 - A safer place for the millions of women and children all over the world who are already suffering from the impacts of climate change;
 - A safer place for the farmer who, if not protected from climatic hazards, will grow less food to feed the world's communities and nations;
 - A safer place for the youth and other vulnerable groups, to assure them of hope for tomorrow, hope for a better future to nurture their aspirations and fulfil their dreams .

- A safer place for business and industry to provide sustainable development and jobs for our people.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

4. Today, we stand together to speak about the need to increase investments in water security, climate change adaptation and development to make the world a safer place for you and me as well as our future generations.
5. When world leaders speak about climate change, they invariably talk about increase in floods, droughts, sea level rise and other water related disasters.
6. When delegates to the COP 17 talk about the need for a second commitment period to the Kyoto protocol, they invariably call for keeping the world a safe place from disasters including those that are water related.
7. Can anyone here explain climate change to a 3 year old child without talking about water, about flooding, about droughts?
8. Making the world a safer place from climate change means making the world safer from the increased frequency in floods, droughts, sea level rise and other water related disasters.
9. Sustaining national economic development, GDP and jobs for the unemployed requires assurance of water resources availability.
10. Water is, therefore, critical to development. However, climate change threatens water and in turn undermines development and, indeed, our pursuit of Millennium Development Goals.
11. We all know that global warming threatens the hydrological patterns that determine the availability of water.
12. This implies that many of the world's most water-stressed areas will get less water, and water flows will become less predictable and more subject to extreme events.

13. I am saying all this to stress the point that water, climate and development are interlinked.
14. It is worth noting that these linkages are recognised in the African Union Heads of State and Government in the Sharm el Sheikh Declaration on Water and Sanitation. As part of implementing these commitments, the African Union Commission through AMCOW and in collaboration with the Global Water Partnership, developed the Water, Climate and Development Programme for Africa. It is gratifying to report that this programme was launched by AMCOW in August 2011 at the World Water Week in Stockholm.
15. It is reassuring that the Water, Climate and Development Programme aims to integrate water security and climate resilience in development planning processes, build climate resilience and support countries to adapt to a new climate regime through increased investments in water security.
16. I wish to reaffirm the commitment of the African Union to make these initiatives effective and sustainable. In this endeavour, we welcome and appreciate the support by our international partners. That said, it is imperative to institutionalise these initiatives through global mechanisms in the UNFCCC negotiations.
17. In this connection, we look forward to the Delegates to COP 17 according due attention to these linkages and making decisions that will ensure that water resources are recognised as a critical input to sustainable development and a medium through which climate change impacts will be felt.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

18. I am, indeed, glad that today we are all here to make a specific case for water.
19. As you may all be aware, Paragraph 14 of the Adaptation Framework agreed to in Cancun called for the need to put in place programmes and projects on water resources and fresh water.
20. We would like to see COP 17 delegates calling for the operationalization of references made to water in paragraph 14 of the Cancun adaptation framework.

21. In doing so, parties will be calling for action on the decisions they have already made. This is as it should be.
22. It is expected that Parties will continue from where they left off during the 34th Session of the Scientific Advisory Body for Technologic Advice (SABSTA) in June 2011, Bonn-Germany
23. As you would recall, during the 34th SABSTA session, parties agreed to address water as part of the Nairobi work programme on climate change adaptation. While this is a good first step, it is not adequate as that only deals with adaptation.
24. Today I call for the establishment of a work programme on water resources management for climate change adaptation and mitigation for sustainable development. Such a work programme will support parties with dedicated focus to develop tools, mechanisms, instruments to make the world a safe place from extreme events - droughts, floods, sea level rise, and mobilise investments to support countries to build climate resilience through water security among others.
25. A study commissioned by the UNFCCC estimates the additional costs for adaptation in the water sector to be in the region of \$9 – 11 billion in 2030. The World Bank study on the economics of adaptation to climate change estimates costs at \$13.7 billion in drier scenarios, and \$19.2 billion in wetter scenarios for 'water supply and flood management'.
26. From Pakistan, to Queensland Australia, to Somalia, Bangkok, and beyond, we have all seen the impacts of water and damage to infrastructure. Just as we commenced the COP 17, the impact rumbled on South Africa's Kwa-Zulu Natal province under which Durban is located; forcefully reminding the world that we should scale up actions on safeguarding and better managing of our water resources. Clearly, there is need to scale up investments in water management.
27. We hope that as parties make decisions on the Green Fund, the creation of thematic funding window for water resources should be part of the package
28. As we deliberate today on solutions for water, climate and development, I urge you to rally behind the message of making the world a safe place through increased investments in water security.

29. Let us all keep up the call for a high profile for water in the UNFCCC negotiations. Let us go out and spread the word and help bridge the divide in the negotiations: the water-climate and development divide.

I thank you