




Environment and Spirituality: Climate Change & other Challenges


Brief Presentation by Strike Mkandla (UNEP)

All-Africa Council of Churches

9th General Assembly, Maputo

7-12 December 2008.

- 
- Africa has an insignificant contribution to climate- change causing green house gases (GHGs)
 - Africa accounts for less than 3.5% GHGs concentrations in the atmosphere
 - It is expected to suffer more than most from climate change because of poor adaptive capacity and disaster preparedness

- 
- Slowing down or mitigating climate change depends on the major polluters – the industrialized countries
 - Africa has to prepare for climate change impacts (adapt)
 - Extreme weather events (droughts/floods) are the most visible manifestation of climate change
 - Longer term changes: sea-level rise and melting glaciers

Signs of Climate Change

Extreme weather events (droughts and floods)

El Niño floods in Rhoka Village, Tana River Valley, Kenya

Livestock loss in Africa



Signs of Climate Change in Africa (Cont')

- Melting snow cap over Mount Kilimanjaro

❖ **Glaciers projected to disappear by 2020 if current trend continues**

Negative impacts already manifest: no option but to act

- “Common but differentiated responsibility” – Africa must play commensurate role
- African governments focusing on adaptation to climate change, to avoid being caught unprepared
- Destruction of property (including infrastructure) and lives
- Intensification of health problems (shifting malaria zones and changing disease patterns)
- Water/dust borne diseases (among others)
- Water stress, threats to biodiversity and genetic resources

Global signposts on Climate Change: Kyoto Protocol – post 2012 regime

- Bali (2007) UNFCCC CoP mandated negotiated international agreement, by 2009, for implementation beyond 2012
- Algiers, November 2008 meeting. African participation training of negotiators (organized by UNEP/ECA as requested by AMCEN, Johannesburg)
- Poznan, Poland - review of progress in negotiations at the 14th session of UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (CoP) and 4th Meeting of the Parties (MoP) to the Kyoto Protocol, in December 2008
- Copenhagen, Denmark, 15th session of UNFCCC CoP and 5th MoP of the Protocol in December 2009 – target completion date for negotiations

Signs of political will from Africa:

Many forums address climate change

(1)

- Dec. 2005- Disaster Risk Reduction(DRR) convened by African Union Commission in Addis Ababa (in collaboration with UNEP and ISDR Secretariat). Mapped strategic approaches and actions needed to cope with expected impacts of climate change
- 2006 AMCEN 11th Session, Brazzaville. The session took and incorporated the DRR ministers' recommendations into report to the

Signs of political will from Africa: Many forums address climate change (2)

- Jan. 2007 AU Summit (Addis Ababa) – held high-level climate change thematic debate and issued decision/declaration
- AMCOST 12th ordinary session, 2007. Recommended establishment of African Panel on Climate Change
- March 2008 of first joint AU-ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning & Economic Development – support to ACPC & ClimDev
- AMCOW-2008 Roundtable on climate change - Kampala. Impact on water resources

Signs of political will from Africa:

Many forums address climate change

(3)

- Inter-Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment, Libreville, Gabon- from 26-29th August, 2008. Libreville Declaration
- “The Bangui Ministerial Declaration on the adoption of a common position post Kyoto-2012” Central African Ministers responsible for environment and forests, 10-11 September, 2008.



AMCEN 2008-Johannesburg: Decision 2: Climate Change. Putting the pieces together.

- **Part 1: African Common Position – AMCEN** recommended that the African Union, at its thirteenth summit in June and July 2009, consider, with a view to its final adoption, a common African position on the comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012, which is to be finalized in December 2009.

(1)



AMCEN 2008-Johannesburg: Decision 2: Climate Change. Putting the pieces together

Part 2: Comprehensive framework of African CC programmes – AMCEN decided

- (a) To create, in view of the need for synergies in implementation, a comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes, bringing together existing and new intergovernmental decisions and initiatives and programmes in a consolidated manner, to be implemented at the regional, subregional, national and local levels;



AMCEN 2008-Johannesburg: Decision 2: Climate Change. Putting the pieces together

- (b) To adopt and develop further a conceptual outline, as set out in annex II to the present decision, to serve as the basis for identifying and filling gaps in the comprehensive framework of African climate change programmes



Key Initiatives Endorsed by AMCEN at its 12th session, Johannesburg

- Climate Information for Development (ClimDev) Programme – AU/ECA/ADB initiative
- African Climate Policy Center (ACPC) – approved by 2008 AU/ECA First Joint Conference of Ministers. ECA to set up.
- African Panel on Climate Change (APCC) – Purpose and modalities to be agreed between AMCOST and AMCEN as directed by the AU Summit after being proposed by AMCOST.



Indicative list of climate change decisions circulated at AMCEN

- Decision on Climate Change and Development (Assembly/AU/Dec.134 (VIII)), adopted at the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union
- Declaration on Climate Change and Development in Africa (Assembly/AU/Decl.4 (VIII)), adopted at the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union
- Jinja Declaration adopted by the African Ministers' Council on Water at the African Ministerial Roundtable on Climate Change

Indicative list of climate change decisions circulated at AMCEN

- Tunis Declaration and Action Plan adopted at the International Conference on International Solidarity for the Protection of Africa and the Mediterranean Region from Climate Change
- Decision CP 5/3 on assessment and monitoring activities adopted at the fifth session of the Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region



Indicative list of climate change decisions circulated at AMCEN

- Joint Declaration of the Abidjan Convention and Nairobi Convention
- Joint Africa-European Union Strategy and Action Plan on Energy and Environment, including the Africa-European Union Partnership on Climate Change, adopted at the 2nd Africa-Europe Summit.

(1)

Indicative list of climate change decisions circulated at AMCEN

- Decision on climate change and the continental shelf (Assembly/AU/Dec.179 (X)) adopted by the tenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union
- Decision on the outcomes of the third ordinary session of the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (EX.CL/Dec.387 (XII)) adopted at the twelfth ordinary session of the Executive Council of the African Union (2)

Indicative list of climate change decisions circulated at AMCEN

- Resolution L.2 on climate change and development in Africa adopted by the First Joint African Union-ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, 26–29 March 2008; the resolution expressed appreciation to the African Union, ECA and the African Development Bank for the Climate Information for Development in Africa programme and welcomed and endorsed the establishment of the Africa Climate Policy Centre by ECA. (3)



Indicative list of climate change decisions circulated at AMCEN

- Decision on disaster risk reduction (EX.CL/Dec.250 (VIII)), adopted at the eighth ordinary session of the Executive Council of the African Union.



Supportive Action by the United Nations

- Decision by the UN Secretary General and the Central Executives Board (CEB) on regional coordination of climate change initiatives and activities
- Instruction to 9th Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) for ECA to coordinate. Task given to Environment, Population & Urbanization Cluster to come up with a framework for cross-cluster programme.
- Clusters expected to indicate measures to climate- proof their sectors as they do support to AU and NEPAD.



Supportive Action by the United Nations

- Inputs required from clusters include tabulation of consequences of no action in CC adaptation
- Recommended that RCM should make input to AMCEN for the comprehensive framework on climate change (Agriculture, water, energy, infrastructure, coastal cities, health, disaster risk reduction etc.)

(2)



What will inform an African Common Position on Climate Change? (1)

- Low level of GHG contribution makes Africa feel a victim and not culprit for climate change – entitled to assistance to cope with CC – adaptation, not mitigation
- Africa has abundant “pollution space”, has a long way before requiring to cap emissions
- Entitled to support for cleaner production from principal polluters to avoid worsening climate change. Technology transfer into the bargain.

What will inform an African Common Position on Climate Change? (2)

- Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) design did not deliver to Africa – less than 5% of CDM projects
- Africa has provided a large part of the carbon sinks for the world. Avoided deforestation and keeping large areas under small scale agriculture has avoided the pressure for clearing large tracts of land. Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) will be an important issue for mitigation credits.



Climate Change: Ethical and Moral Issues?

- Stewardship of nature?
 - The steward: *One who manages another's property, finances, or other affairs*. What are the responsibilities in respect of nature?
 - Inter-generational equity (responsibility to future generations)
 - Carrying capacity: population dynamics and natural resources use
 - Production & consumption patterns: resource efficiency, cleaner production etc.
 - Poverty and over-consumption: environmental “*footprints*”.



Climate Change: Ethical and Moral Issues?

- Inter-regional equity: does the Church have a position?
 - “Polluting space”: polluter pays principle and carbon trading for adaptation in developing countries. The unsatisfactory CDM arrangement
 - Technology transfer for cleaner production and financing for adaptation
 - Capping greenhouse gas emissions in industrialized countries. Are there “limits to growth”? Paul Ehrlich says there are “too many rich people”!
 - Reduced emissions from avoided deforestation: credits for non-polluters