ecdpm's
Volume 5 - Issue 3
May/June 2016

GOVERNANCE REGIONAL INTEGRATION ECONOMICS AGRICULTURE TRADE

GREAT insights

From Climate Commitments to Action

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In this issue:

Discussing global society, solidarity, cooperation, EU, Africa, agriculture, conflict, trade & WTO, finance

About *GREAT Insights*
Governance, Regional integration, Economics, Agriculture and Trade (GREAT) Insights is ECDPM's magazine covering a wide range of topics related to economic development in Africa and the developing world. *GREAT Insights* gathers expert analysis and commentary from a wide variety of stakeholders with different perspectives.

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ISSN: 2215-0593 (print)
2213-0063 (online)
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This publication benefits from structural support by ECDPM's institutional partners The Netherlands, Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria and Denmark.

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Coverphoto: Darling wind farm, Cape Town, South Africa. Photo: warrenski, flickr.com

Photo above: Closing Ceremony of COP21, December 2015, Paris: Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (second left); Christiana Figueres (left), Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); Laurent Fabius (second right), Minister for Foreign Affairs of France and President of the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris (COP21) and François Hollande (right), President of France celebrate after the historic adoption of Paris Agreement on climate change. Photo: United Nations

Editorial

To coincide with Earth Day, the Paris Agreement, adopted last December at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), opened for signature on 22 April 2016 in New York. The Paris Agreement aims at greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adapting to climate change action, and mobilising climate financing and technology. It is a major achievement, a clear sign of the collective resolve of humanity to seriously tackle one of the most critical challenges of our time. Together with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted last September 2015, it marks a tremendous success for multilateralism, while the WTO round of trade negotiations has been less successful. It resulted from aligning expectations from a range of stakeholders, and a convergence of various coalitions, involving not only governments, but also business and civil society actors, as well as the scientific community. It was pushed by a strong new US-China alliance, an active European Union, a number of developing country coalitions, including the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, and very effectively coordinated by France. Most of all, the Agreement is meant to be a people agenda, a partnership with global and local actors, public and private.

Yet, there is no place for complacency. Time is running out, and unless decisive steps are taken to speedily walk the talk and translate ambitious global commitments into concrete actions at global, regional, national and local levels, the Paris Agreement will fail to deliver and sufficiently reduce climate change.

All country leaders have not only to sign and ratify the Paris Agreement, they must also identify concrete action plans to achieve the climate change goals, by submitting Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) (as elaborated on by **Tosi Mpanu-Mpanu**). This requires a comprehensive approach based on policy coherence and coordination. Most importantly, it involves some fundamental shifts in our production and consumption patterns, and approaches to our future. The Paris Agreement is only a small step in this process, which can only lead to a giant leap for humanity if such shifts in the paradigm are taking place.

In practice, the NDCs should include: mitigation targets regarding global temperature rise; consensus to support adaptation to climate change and; in the case of developed countries, commitment to provide climate financing to developing countries which, taking the example of climate-vulnerable Africa with its high dependence on the agricultural sector, stand to lose a lot more (see article by **Estherine Fotabong**). Many African policy-makers are taking fate into their own hands: initiatives to mainstream climate-smart measures into their agricultural policies and practices are emerging. This is a work in progress, challenged by limited knowledge, finance and institutional coordination. Yet, the Green Climate Fund, the upcoming UNFCCC meetings and the countries' NDCs that refer to the importance of agriculture, show that there is hope, as argued by **Hanne Knaepen**.

Despite its ambitious targets, there is some disappointment in the Agreement given that it does not provide for sanctions to be imposed upon those who fail to honour their climate change mitigation commitments and comply with the agreement. The abandonment of sanction mechanisms was the price that had to be paid to ensure that countries such as the United States and China ratified the Paris climate agreement in the first place (as discussed by **Dirk Messner**) but it remains to be seen whether requiring parties to engage in adaptation planning processes and submit and update adaptation communications every five years will be enough to achieve the ambitious goal of decarbonising the global economy.

Climate finance and investment is also a major pillar of the required climate action. One of the cornerstones relates to carbon pricing, which is still undefined. Market forces will probably be too slow to emerge on time to tackle climate change ambitions. Public interventions, in the form of significant carbon taxes and others, will likely be required to alter incentives in the short term. Beyond climate mitigation, which still accounts for the bulk of finance action, more emphasis also needs to be put on financing climate adaptation, building on business opportunities and positive public action. This includes not only disinvesting from environmentally damaging operations, but also fostering incentives for reallocation of capital in climate friendly endeavours, as increasingly promoted by international financing institutions (see article by **Nancy Saich**). In financing as well, paradigm shifts and innovations, as with the recent decision by the French President to issue sovereign green bonds, are most needed.

This issue of *GREAT Insights* brings a range of perspectives on some of the challenges, but also opportunities, of translating the Paris Agreement into concrete actions, from a broad perspective, or focusing on more specific issues, such as agriculture, trade, conflict or finance. This is a concern not only for environmental experts but for all of us.

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Paris Agreement - gateway to a decarbonised global society

by Dirk Messner

The Paris climate agreement marks a momentous breakthrough and a civilising milestone in the history of the international community. It provides the gateway to a decarbonised global economy and society, sets ambitious goals for climate change mitigation, and yet its success is not a foregone conclusion. Significant efforts will need to be undertaken at local, national and international levels in the next few years and decades for effectively phasing-out a fossil fuel-driven economy.

A smog filled Beijing. Photo: Lei Han, flickr.com

Breakthroughs in Paris

The Paris Agreement stipulates that global temperature rise should be held below 2°C, if possible at 1.5°C, to limit unmanageable, irreversible consequences of climate change, which pose a particular threat to vulnerable groups, regions and countries. Keeping global warming below 2°C will require enormous efforts, a fact that the climate treaty does not hide. The document states the need to transition to a climate-neutral global economy during the second half of the 21st century. The burning of coal, oil and gas, which has driven economic development and prosperity since the earliest days of the Industrial Revolution, must be phased out.

This Agreement represents a historic milestone in international politics. Based on science and research findings on the future risks of global warming and the recognition of these risks by an increasingly large number of citizens and governments worldwide, the international community has decided after 21 years of tough climate negotiations to make a u-turn in global economic policy. With the goal of averting risks and making provisions for the future, a strategy of preventive climate change mitigation against the manifest self-interest of powerful fossil fuel-driven industrial sectors are pursued. It is necessary to leave in the ground a large proportion of the fossil resources that have already been identified in order to keep global temperature rise below the 2°C guardrail. Even growing sectors of the private sector have started down this path in recent years. After two decades of difficult negotiations and painstaking educational work in many societies, in Paris the rationality concept (of averting verifiable and large scale risks to the planet and to current and future generations) were enforced against the powerful 'cartel of immediate interests' (which sees climate change mitigation as a potential threat to prosperity). The Paris Agreement formulates the core principles of a new global social contract: we will only achieve economic development, prosperity and poverty reduction if we recognise the biophysical guardrails of our planetary ecosystem. If we exceed these limits, then we put human civilisation as a whole at risk. Agreed upon by almost 200 nation states in Paris on 12 December 2015, this "planetary imperative for human development" is comparable to the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations on 10 December 1948.

In the Paris Agreement, all states commit to play their part in global climate change mitigation efforts. The old distinction drawn by the 1997 Kyoto Protocol between industrialised nations with a duty to commit to mitigating climate change on the one hand and developing countries and rising powers with no obligation to make any such binding commitments on the other has been removed. This represents an acknowledgement of the fact that greenhouse gas emission levels of the rising powers in particular, and especially those of China, have been rising rapidly for two decades and that, without efforts to mitigate climate change in these countries, it will not be possible to keep to the 2°C guardrail even if industrialised nations immediately ceased to produce any emissions. At the same time, the Paris Agreement recognises that poor developing countries must also work to establish development pathways that do not require the burning of fossil fuels. Otherwise, it will be impossible to achieve a climate-neutral, decarbonised global economy. For their part, industrialised nations and a number of rising powers have pledged to support poor countries in their climate change mitigation efforts. They approved the Green Climate Fund, which will make US$100 billion available annually in order to assist developing countries with implementing climate-friendly development pathways and adapting to the consequences of global warming.

In the Paris Agreement, the signatory states commit to developing national roadmaps for the decarbonisation of their economies and to submitting these road maps for regular review as part of the UNFCCC's climate process. The precise mechanisms of this review process are still to be operationalised. The goal is to readjust the climate change mitigation plans of all countries if it becomes evident that the efforts being undertaken are insufficient for achieving the common goals.

Weaknesses of the Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement is ambitious in its system of targets, far more ambitious than the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) presented by the signatory states in Paris. If the countries were to follow through on all the voluntary commitments they have already made, which is by no means a given, then they would only achieve around 30% of the greenhouse gas emissions reductions required to stabilise global warming around the 2°C mark. The currently committed reductions would still translate into a global temperature rise of between 2.7 and 3.5°C. 70% of the climate change mitigation target is still to be addressed. Each state needs to take quick and drastic action to expand its climate change mitigation proposals if the 2°C guardrail is to be observed. There are no reasonable grounds for countries to rest on their laurels in Paris.

The Paris Agreement has another significant blemish in that it does not provide for sanctions to be imposed upon those who fail to honour their climate change mitigation commitments and comply with the agreement. The abandonment of sanctions mechanisms (such mechanisms would imply a serious infringement of the sovereignty rights of states) was the price that had to be paid to ensure that countries such as the United States and China ratified the Paris climate agreement in the first place. Consequently, the climate accord affords greater autonomy to its signatory states than the World Trade Organization (WTO) does to its members, for example. The WTO's Dispute Settlement Body investigates instances of failure to comply with regulations and can even impose penalties. It remains to be seen whether or not the ambitious goal of decarbonising the global economy can be achieved by means of soft control mechanisms such as mutual reporting and reviewing of national decarbonisation roadmaps.

Next steps

In order to have a good chance of keeping global temperature rise below the 2°C mark, global, energy-based greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced to zero between 2050 and 2070 (WBGU 2014). To make this possible, there is a need to massively expand the use of renewable energies worldwide, an area in which there has been some significant progress. A decade ago, over 75% of new energy sector investments globally were made in fossil fuels; since 2013, new investments in renewable energies worldwide have accounted for over 50% of total investments. The old fossil fuel-driven business model is becoming less relevant as renewable energy systems are coming to the fore. At the same time, there are still many fossil fuel-based energy producers operating within the grid, and new coal and gas-fired power stations are being planned and built. We must now develop and implement phase-out strategies, especially for coal-fired power stations, that are equally as ambitious as our expansion plans for renewable energies.

It would seem that hopes of being able to remove a large proportion of greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere through carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) are failing to materialise. So far, no large-scale technologies have emerged for using CCS in conjunction with coal and gas-fired power stations to transform the latter into climate-friendly energy producers within a reasonable period of time. CCS could play a limited role in the decarbonisation of the global economy if it is able to generate negative emissions in future in combination with biomass-based energy production, which also has limited potential. CCS could also serve as a transition technology as part of restructuring work to make strategically significant industries with high greenhouse gas emissions, such as the cement and steel industries, more climate friendly.

In addition to decarbonising global energy systems, major efforts are required to make cities and urban areas climate neutral (WBGU 2016). Over 70% of energy-based greenhouse gas emissions are linked to urban infrastructures, primarily heating and cooling mechanisms in buildings and mobility systems. The urban population is expected to double from a good three billion at present to six billion by 2050. This mega trend presents significant opportunities to make these new urban areas climate neutral from the outset. Failure to exploit this window of opportunity would lead to the development of high-emission cities with enormous path dependencies. It would then be impossible to keep global warming below the 2°C mark. This is a major international challenge that can only be tackled through global cooperation – the Habitat III Conference in Quito at the end of 2016 could be a chance to move the urbanisation shift into a sustainable direction. The aforementioned urban boom is primarily concentrated in Asia and Africa. It is necessary to begin work immediately in these continents to pave the way for climate friendly cities. In the 'old cities' of the OECD world, the main priority is to build on the energy transformation initiated in many countries by

transforming mobility systems and retrofitting housing stock to make it climate friendly. Creating 'climate-friendly cities' in the context of the largest urban revolution in human history is a global task of Herculean proportions; as a topic, it is not as mainstream within the political climate discourse as the energy transformation, which already enjoys general acceptance globally.

What sort of toolkit is needed to ensure the decarbonisation of the global economy? There are four key building blocks. First, in a market based economy price signals are essential for companies and consumers. Undesirable economic activities must be made more expensive in order to support alternative ones, which is why emissions trading systems and greenhouse gas emissions taxes are key instruments of climate change mitigation. Duties on greenhouse gas emissions, ideally on a worldwide scale, would provide incentives for reducing emissions. Low global oil prices provide a good opportunity for successively introducing increasing duty levels for greenhouse gases. The resulting revenue could be used to ease the tax burden on citizens in other areas, such as employment. Second, technology development must be supported and advanced in areas in which greenhouse gas-neutral solutions do not yet exist. Storage systems need to be developed further for renewable energies and high-performance batteries are required for electric mobility systems to facilitate the decarbonisation of the transport and mobility sectors. It is also essential to invest in the development of climate-neutral aviation fuel. Additionally, developing climate-friendly building materials to successively replace energy-intensive concrete, steel and aluminium production could help to link the global urban boom to climate change mitigation efforts.

Third, decarbonisation roadmaps must be developed worldwide in all sectors of the economies to point the way towards achieving zero emissions between 2050 and 2070. Efficiency standards, price signals, new technological developments, and the training of future engineers and workers in climate-neutral business practices all form part of such sectoral transformation strategies. Fourth, all of these efforts need to be undertaken at local, national and global levels. Decarbonising the global economy will be impossible without international cooperation. Global research cooperation and development policy, transnational collaboration between cities, and the orientation of international development banks towards the transition to climate-friendly business practices and lifestyles are important building blocks of the 'Great Transformation' towards sustainability (WBGU 2011). ■

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Translating climate cooperation into action

by Tosi Mpanu-Mpanu

The Paris Agreement marks an important step forward in our global effort to address climate change, but there remains much work to be done to avert dangerous climate change.

Political success

In December 2015, the countries of the world came together to adopt an unprecedented global agreement designed to combat climate change. While there is no doubt that the Paris Agreement represents a major political achievement, its implementation brings both opportunities and challenges if the promise of our achievements in Paris is to be realised in practice.

A key success was the agreement on a global goal to limit warming to 2°C and pursue efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C above preindustrial levels. This is a strong political signal that greater action needs to be taken and it is of particular importance to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that face disproportionate impacts from rising global temperatures as the poorest and most vulnerable countries in the world. Importantly, the Preamble to the Agreement refers to the specific needs of LDCs in terms of climate finance and technology transfer.

The Paris outcomes also encouraged increased participation compared to previous agreements. All parties to the Paris Agreement are to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which include mitigation objectives. The Agreement also allows countries to include adaptation plans in their NDCs, acknowledging the importance of taking action to adapt parties' economies, infrastructure and social support structures to prepare for the impacts of climate change.

For the first time, the issue of loss and damage, which is concerned with averting, minimising and addressing the loss and damage arising from extreme weather events and other events caused by climate change, has been given a stand alone provision in the Agreement. This is a significant political statement of the importance of loss and damage action and it lends legal weight to the existing Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage.

Greenhouse gas. Photo: Bill Dickinson, flickr.com

A further vital component in implementing obligations relating to mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage is climate finance. The Paris Agreement contains a legally binding obligation on developed countries to continue mobilising financial resources to assist developing countries, building on existing obligations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The provision of US$100 billion per year has now been recognised as a floor rather than a ceiling for contributions and a commitment to mobilise financial resources for renewables has also been established.

Ongoing cooperation needed

However, the, Paris Agreement has limitations and much work remains to be done to avert dangerous climate

change. Firstly, it fails to effectively commit parties to achieving the 1.5°C temperature goal. It can only be hoped that all Parties take this goal seriously and build on the unity achieved in Paris as we begin to implement the Agreement.

Secondly, the Paris Agreement does not seem to require developed country parties to submit ambitious mitigation targets, despite having greater responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions and greater capacity to reduce emissions. Indeed, to some observers, the agreement is weaker in its application to the wealthiest and most polluting countries than the existing Kyoto Protocol. While developing countries are entitled to adaptation finance, there is little in the Agreement to concretise this, requiring more efforts to strengthen this. Recognition of loss and damage is also heavily qualified, reflecting the position of wealthier developed countries that have sought to limit responsibility for the costs of adverse impacts. Continued discussions in the coming months and years will be vital for the international community's recognition of loss and damage and the necessity of adaptation finance to become the concrete support desperately needed by poor and vulnerable countries.

Enduring, long-term capacity building

The goal of achieving a floor of US$100 billion per year in climate finance is vital to the effectiveness of the Paris Agreement. It is important to ensure that climate funds are genuinely 'new and additional', going beyond other existing sources, such as official development assistance.

An estimated US$93.7 billion will be needed each year from 2020 onwards simply to implement the NDCs of the LDCs (IIED Briefing, November 2015), suggesting that significantly more funds will be required to assist non-LDC developing countries in meeting their targets. To date, less than a third of the climate finance mobilised has reached the LDCs, with just a fraction of this funding adaptation. A clear definition of climate finance and how it is to be accounted for could assist in ensuring the financial contributions of developed countries are genuine and that funds reach those countries which need it most acutely to assist with mitigation and adaptation actions. These efforts could be assisted through injections into the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF). This fund, specifically dedicated to supporting LDCs, is currently empty, lacking finance for even the urgent adaptation needs of LDCs. The Paris outcome clearly provides that the LDCF will serve the Paris Agreement, however it remains to be determined how the fund will be governed and what access modalities will be in place.

Further challenges arise in the context of absorbing climate funds, requiring additional support for least developed and other vulnerable countries. The Green Climate Fund, for example, operates through grant-based payments to institutions complying with certain financial, risk-management and gender-policy based criteria. LDCs are less likely to have institutions that qualify for these grants, or possess the capacity to coordinate, manage, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of climate finance. Going forward, the provision of finance will need to overcome these barriers.

A dual approach of more appropriate financial and risk management standards for LDCs, as well as the provision of capacity building support, would assist in overcoming these barriers. Grants and readiness funds should focus on in-country capacity building, emphasising the development of strong, enduring institutions within LDC member countries. These can embody and preserve the expertise required to absorb climate finance and implement climate initiatives. It is also important that funds facilitate the LDC leadership in reaching out to other countries, including African countries and small island states, to cooperate in the sharing and development of initiatives focussed around renewable energies, adaptation and loss and damage.

A global family

The Paris Agreement marks the international community uniting in recognition of the dangers posed by climate change and the collective need to act. For the goals and aspirations of the Agreement to translate into meaningful actions to address climate change, we must perpetuate and build on the goodwill solidified in Paris. We must continue to work together to address challenges such as those identified above, as one global family, to create a safer world for present and future generations.

About the author

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Paris Agreement: A pact of solidarity for developing countries?

by Pradeep S. Mehta and Rashid Kaukab

While the Paris Agreement addresses various elements - mitigation, adaptation, financing - to tackle climate change, they have not been elaborated on in the manner and to the extent that developing countries wanted and needed. The authors set out some recommendations to ensure the goals of the agreement are reached.

The Paris Agreement on climate change – finalised at the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Paris in December 2015 – is a welcome sign of the collective resolve of humanity to deal with one of the most critical challenges of our time. It is not a perfect agreement. There is some genuine and well-founded disappointment among many developing countries which will be bearing the brunt of the adverse effects of climate change despite being least responsible for it. But it is a good beginning and it provides a solid platform to build upon. Moreover, it shows that all countries - developed, developing and least-developed – can come together to find shared solutions to common problems.

The main challenge for developing countries, particularly in Africa, is to address their under-development and widespread poverty. Climate change makes this challenge even more formidable. Their limited and fragile productive capacities will be further tested and their objective of 'trading out of poverty' undermined. Their need has been for an agreement with adequate mitigation targets based on respective responsibilities and capacities of countries, adaptation efforts at the same level as the mitigation targets, sufficient provisions for financing and technology transfer to assist them in transitioning to greener economies while meeting their developmental and poverty-reduction goals, and effective safeguards against disguised protectionism on their trade prospects. The Paris Agreement addresses these elements though not always in the manner and to the extent that developing countries wanted and needed.

Global temperature rise and mitigation targets

Parties agreed under article 2.1 (a) of the Agreement to keep global temperature increase well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. The target of 1.5°C offers hope for developing countries, particularly in Africa. It will produce fewer climate extremes for farmers in the tropics who are adversely affected by heat waves, floods, and cyclones. But achieving this target requires gigantic efforts which sadly are missing in the Agreement. Even the target of 2°C will not be delivered if one were to go by the countries' current pledges under the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). Paragraph 17 of the Paris Decision Text "…. notes with concern that the estimated aggregate greenhouse gas emission levels in 2025 and 2030 resulting from the INDCs do not fall within least-cost 2 degrees Celsius scenarios but rather lead to a projected level of 55 giga tonnes in 2030". Obviously more needs to be done and the leadership in this regard has to come from developed countries while developing countries

Greenhouse gas counter. Photo: Luc Van Braekel, flickr.com

that no legal or monetary requirement has been placed on individual countries' contribution leaving room for defaulting. Moreover, provision of adequate funds will be crucial for the success of adaptation actions to be undertaken by developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states.

Climate financing

Under article 9.3 of the Paris Agreement, developed countries are to continue to take the lead in mobilising climate finances from a variety of sources, including both public and private, and to allocate US$100 billion a year in climate finance for developing countries by 2020 with a commitment for further finances by 2025, taking into consideration the needs and priorities of developing countries. While this is certainly a positive element in the Agreement, the lack of binding requirements on individual countries can be a possible cause for unfulfilled commitments. It is feared that the term "mobilise" has been intentionally kept broad and may include funds that come with strings attached. Similarly, there has even been talk of calling the money sent home by migrants working in richer countries a form of climate finance. Developing countries' expectation is that these commitments will be fulfilled fully and faithfully. They remain convinced that developed countries have taken note of the need for assistance to developing countries for the common good, and will meet their commitments in the coming years.

Trade and response measures

It may sound paradoxical, but trade-climate change nexus may become even more challenging after the Paris Agreement. Measures and actions being developed and to be developed by countries, particularly developed countries may have trade consequences for developing countries particularly in Africa. For example, standards, carbon-labelling schemes and carbon taxes will affect trade flows.

Unfortunately, countries could not effectively deal with the effects of these so-called 'response measures' in Paris. This lack of convergence will test the existing trade rules under the World Trade Organization (WTO). There are already disputes in the WTO, e.g. on the use of subsidy schemes to promote the production of clean energy. Such disputes may only increase with the passage of time if the countries do not deal with the 'response measures' under the UNFCCC in the coming months. The WTO also needs to find other means than dispute settlement to better deal with the nexus of trade and climate change actions and commitments. This may mean paying greater attention to the relationship of trade and climate change and examining the relevant trade rules to better address this relationship so that the outcome leads to a win-win situation.

Some recommendations

The urgent need now is to take several actions to ensure that the Paris Agreement leads to actions and outcomes that fulfil its objectives and assist developing countries, particularly from Africa, in achieving their development goals in a sustainable manner. Some concrete suggestions in this regard include: Sensitisation and de-mystification: Creating climate awareness and sensitisation of all stakeholders, particularly in developing countries, should be an urgent priority. The outcomes at Paris and the provisions of the Paris Agreement should be unpacked and explained in simple and clear language for the policy makers and other public and private stakeholders for their better understanding and to facilitate the implementation. The engagement of all stakeholders is also essential to ensure ownership of the Agreement at the local and national levels that will be the best guarantee for its proper implementation. The civil society organisations should play a leading role in this sensitisation effort.

Full and faithful implementation: All parties to the Convention must meet their commitments as pledged in their INDCs so as to achieve the desired goal of the Paris Agreement. Developed countries must honour their pledges of providing financial resources and making green technology transfer to developing countries to ensure efficient implementation of the Agreement. There should not be any attempt to meet these commitments in 'innovative' ways that meet only the letter of the commitments while ignoring the spirit and intent. That will make the Paris Agreement a 'paper tiger' and not the game-changer that it can be. For this purpose, climate negotiators and policy makers must ensure transparency on climate financing issues by adopting a Measuring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system to help developing countries keep track of how far developed countries are honouring their pledges. Policy makers and implementers in the East African Community (EAC) must be proactive and take advantage of the UNFCCC technology transfer scheme through the creation of relevant institutions.

Prioritisation: Developing countries, particularly in Africa, also need to identify priority sectors based on their development aspirations and challenges, and with a view to integrating climate change concerns in relevant policies and strategies. Issues of how to address challenges of adaptation and resilience faced by the energy, manufacturing, and agriculture sectors should be given priority. Urgent priority sectors should remain: energy, agriculture and forestry, especially agriculture since it is the backbone of a large number of African economies. The time is now ripe to discuss agriculture and related issues under the UNFCCC. Hence developing countries should prepare their submissions on agriculture to the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice for discussion at the workshop scheduled for June 2016.

Individual responsibility and governmental accountability: Finally, climate action is not the responsibility of governments only. Our planet is the home for every human being and this home is to remain welcoming and hospitable to the coming generations. Hence, each individual must make responsible choices in order to supplement governmental efforts in addressing climate change. Individual lifestyle initiatives may include transitioning from the use of fossil fuels to the use of renewable energy. On the other hand, individuals should also hold governments and the private sector accountable in their actions in addressing climate change. This sense of individual responsibility for one's own actions, as well as for holding the governments accountable, will be the ultimate key for the full and faithful implementation of the Paris Agreement.

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EU contributions to take warming below 2°C

by Artur Runge-Metzger

The international community's tireless efforts to bring about a universal multilateral climate agreement finally paid off. But now comes the hardest part: putting our promises into action.

Ain Beni Mathar thermo-solar power plant, Morocco. Photo: Philippe Roos, flickr.com

The Paris Agreement sketches out the road towards a global transition but it is up to us to make it happen. The transition to a low-emission, resource-efficient and climate-resilient global economy demands a fundamental shift in technologies, energy systems, in business and investment behaviour, and ultimately, in society as a whole. That is why, if we are to have a realistic chance of achieving our collective goal to keep global temperature rise well below 2°C, and build a healthier planet with fairer societies and more prosperous economies for future generations, we have to start right now.

Swift implementation a key challenge

As of now, the swift implementation of the Paris Agreement is the most pressing challenge for all countries. In Europe, the shift to a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy is well underway. With the benefit of more than 10 years experience in implementing climate policy, we have already started work to translate our Paris commitment to reduce emissions by at least 40% by 2030 into action.

We are in the process of reforming the EU emissions trading system to ensure it remains the most efficient way to cut emissions in the decade to come. This year we will also be proposing legislation to reduce emissions in the non-emission trading scheme sectors, including land use, as well as measures that accelerate public and private investment in innovation and modernisation in all key sectors.

Achieving our target will not be easy, but we are confident that through ambitious implementation of legislation we can ensure EU emissions are reduced in line with our Paris commitment. Since 1990, greenhouse gas emissions in the EU have fallen by 23% while our economy has grown by 46%, so we have a good record on delivering.

We are ready to share our experience. Many countries will be putting climate action plans into place for the first time which brings its own challenges. Regardless of our starting point, none of us are alone in this: we are all working towards the same common goal. The EU supported many partner countries in all regions of the world in the preparation of their climate plans and it will continue to do so as they move to the implementation phase.

The good news is that the Paris Agreement is setting clear steps towards the convergence of climate change policies globally. Take carbon pricing as an example. Some 40 countries already use carbon pricing mechanisms – covering

around 7 billion tonnes of CO_2, or 12% of global emissions. We can only expect this number to grow as countries start to implement their commitments and learn from existing best practices. The EU is already sharing its experience in emissions trading with others, including China, which has seven pilot programmes up and running and plans to develop a nationwide emissions trading system from 2017.

Opportunities: jobs and growth

Beyond the challenges, there are many opportunities for economic transformation, jobs and growth in the EU and in all countries. These can also contribute to achieving broader sustainable development goals to achieve low-emission development in the context of inclusive sustainable growth and poverty eradication.

We know that investments will have to go beyond business as usual – some US$13.5 trillion in energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies to implement climate action plans over the next 15 years, according to the International Energy Agency. But we also know that these plans will not only lead to a scaling up but also a rebalancing of investments across energy sources and sectors. A rapid scaling up of private investment in low-emission technologies will be crucial to support the clean energy transition and avoid locking-in high emissions infrastructure and assets.

Happily, on many issues, we are moving in the right direction. Global renewable energy investments in 2015 outstripped fossil fuel investments, reaching a record US$286 billion in 2015, according to a recent UN report. And for the first time, the developing world (up to 19% in 2015) outdid developed nations (down 8%), with South Africa among the top ten investing countries (US$4.5 billion, up 329%).

Investment is the engine of growth, and with it comes jobs. According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), doubling the global share of renewables by 2030 would increase employment in the renewables sector from more than 9 million global jobs today to 24 million, while increasing global GDP by up to US$1.3 trillion.

Access to energy a top priority

At the same time, another global task has to be accomplished in the coming years: bringing clean energy to the one in five people globally with no access to electricity. Energy poverty, which is particularly acute in Africa, must be resolved in a low-carbon way. The Paris Agreement recognises the important role renewables have to play in this respect, particularly in the context of Africa, putting them at the forefront of the global energy transformation.

The African Renewable Energy Initiative, unveiled at the Paris climate conference, has the potential to contribute to accelerating access to renewable energy in Africa, unlocking the continent's vast renewable energy potential.

A lot of good work is already being done through cooperation forums such as the Africa-EU Energy Partnership, the EU's Electrification Financing Initiative (ElectriFI) and the Technical Assistance Facility for Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All), funded by the EU. The Covenant of Mayors initiative supported by the EU is a unique opportunity to increase the capacities of African cities to provide access to sufficient, sustainable and safe energy services to urban and peri-urban populations, with special emphasis on energy efficiency as a driver for local and climate-resilient development.
Good coordination between the different African and international renewable energy initiatives can ensure that synergies are fully exploited. African countries have recently given a coordinating role to the African Development Bank, which will set up a delivery unit for the African Renewable Energy Initiative. The bilateral joint declarations on reinforced cooperation in the field of sustainable energy, which have important climate benefits, can also play an important role for donor coordination. These encourage domestic policy reforms and enhance political commitment to sustainable energy. The European Commission has already signed joint declarations with 20 states (14 in Africa and 6 Pacific Island States) as well as with the group of EU Overseas Countries and Territories.

Climate action: a win-win-win

Switching to cleaner fuels will not only cut emissions but also reduce pollution in homes and cities and improve the health of millions of Africans who currently cook with diesel, kerosene and wood, often in a manner leading to high indoor-pollution. The transition to clean energy will also bring new jobs and energy security. We are already seeing how countries like Morocco (solar power), Kenya (geothermal energy) and South Africa (independent producers of renewable energy) are leading the way in renewables in Africa.

Climate action also helps avoid environmental, economic and societal pressures, including migration, that can be exacerbated by climate change. These pressures can be alleviated in two ways: by reducing emissions which contribute to climate change, and adapting to climate impacts by ensuring, for example, that agricultural systems do not become dysfunctional and can still provide food and jobs.

The EU is helping to strengthen Africa's ability to deal with these pressures and supports many adaptation projects through the Global Climate Change Alliance programme and other initiatives. As we embark on this new journey together towards a safer and more sustainable future, Africa can count on the EU's support. ■

For more information on the EU's work in Africa and developing countries see:

EU. 2015. European Union Climate Funding for Developing Countries 2015.

EC. 2014. Africa Climate Briefing

https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/africa-0_en

http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/articles/international/2015-10-09_climate_finance_en.htm

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The Paris Agreement and African agriculture

by Estherine Fotabong

African countries need to focus on enhancing their adaptive capacities and reduce their vulnerability to climate change. Translating that momentum quickly into the agriculture sectors, neglected in the Paris Agreement, should be central to a holistic and comprehensive transformation of African economies.

The Paris Agreement marks a significant step in the evolution of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and presents a unique opportunity for Parties to the Convention to strengthen the global response to climate change. The Agreement aims at combating climate change and it promotes actions and investment towards a low carbon, resilient and sustainable future.

The Agreement reflects a mixed approach combining bottom-up flexibility to achieve broad participation with top-down rules to promote accountability and ambition in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Under the Agreement, developing countries have been charged with the shared responsibility for tackling the problem of climate change. To achieve this target, parties to the Paris Agreement submitted Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) indicating the unique plans individual countries intended to follow to reduce emissions. All African countries commendably submitted INDCs except Libya before the COP21 meeting. Countries' contributions included unconditional and quantifiable emission reduction targets that can be achieved with international assistance.

Adaptation

With the adverse effects of climate change becoming more frequent and intense, Africa faces increasing climate risks and adaptation needs. Under the Agreement, a global goal of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change has been established. The capacity of African countries to cope with the effects of climate change on different economic sectors and on human activities is expected to be significantly challenged, and potentially overwhelmed, by the magnitude and rapidity of the impacts. The Paris Agreement therefore presents greater opportunity for Africa to pursue adaptation goals. Article 7 of the Agreement establishes "the global goal on adaptation" to "protect people, livelihoods and ecosystems" with a unique focus on developing countries. It calls on countries to act to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change. The Paris Agreement specifically mentions "adaptive capacity" and states how individual countries intend to carry out measures such as resilience mechanisms, disaster risk management and innovation through relevant technologies. Each country is obliged to submit and update on their adaptation efforts every five years. African countries need to focus on enhancing their adaptive capacities and reduce their vulnerability to climate change. The Agreement binds parties to engage in adaptation planning processes and submit and update adaptation communications periodically. The Agreement obliges African countries to demonstrate commitment by planning and implementing effective adaptation actions and update and report on their adaptation progress and needs.

The African Development Bank estimates Africa's adaptation between US$20-30 billion per annum over the next 10 to 20 years. Therefore, there is an urgent need for Africa to focus on formulation and implementation of national adaptation plans and on ways to address loss and damage. Critical areas for adaptation include irrigation and drought management, diversification of agricultural practices, a more resilient livestock sector, better saving and lending mechanisms for farmers, and better forest-conservation practices. Africa's adaptation strategies should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach. They should take into consideration vulnerable groups, communities, ecosystems and indigenous knowledge systems as a resilience mechanism to enable communities to adapt to climate challenges.

Agriculture omitted from Paris Agreement

African agriculture is and will continue to be the mainstay of economic growth and transformation on the continent as it employs about 65% of Africa's labour force and accounts for more than one-third of the continent's GDP according to African Union and World Bank statistics. In the aftermath of the adoption of the Paris Agreement, the next logical step

Sahel food crisis 2012: dried maize ears in drought stricken farm, Mauritania. Photo: Oxfam International, flickr.com

for Africa is to translate that momentum quickly into the agriculture sector. This should be central to a holistic and comprehensive transformation of African economies.

Africa's vulnerability to climate change is largely linked to its high dependence on the agricultural sector, which is heavily reliant on rain-fed systems making it particularly vulnerable to changes in precipitation patterns. Climate change is expected to impact crop production in Africa through changes in temperature and the quantity and temporal distribution of water supply. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts that rising temperatures and unpredictable rains will make it harder for farmers to grow certain key crops like wheat, rice and maize. While many of the projected effects of climate change on agriculture are negative, it is possible that productivity could increase in some areas due to more favourable climatic conditions. Innovative ways of how Africa's agricultural sector will adapt to climate change is an opportunity to bring agriculture into focus in the Paris negotiations. The INDCs is a platform for Africa to showcase how innovative adaptation can boost food production in a changing climate. Africa must aim to increase productivity and sustainable production systems to achieve food self-sufficiency.

Article 4.1(e) of the Climate Change Convention calls on Parties to "cooperate in preparing for adaptation to the impacts of climate change; develop and elaborate appropriate and integrated plans for coastal zone management, water resources and agriculture, and for the protection and rehabilitation of areas, particularly in Africa, affected by drought and desertification, as well as floods".

Despite the groundbreaking success of the Paris Agreement, agriculture is not explicitly mentioned in the Paris Agreement despite efforts to push for it. This has proven a cause of concern for many African countries, considering the catalytic role agriculture plays in the socio-economic development of the continent. In spite of the exclusion of the sector, Africa has generally welcomed the Agreement as it is the first time ever that food security features have appeared in a global climate change accord or agreement. The UNFCCC has historically paid little attention to the agriculture sector. Most of the implications for agriculture will be indirect, and overall Paris outcomes are framed by general parameters. They are indirectly defined by the country-level strategies that were presented through INDCs submitted in the lead-up to Paris. As of late October 2015, 155 countries, accounting for roughly 90% of global emissions, have submitted strategies, many of which include adaptation or mitigation actions in the agricultural sector. An analysis by the CGIAR Research Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) shows agriculture is

discussed in 80% of INDCs submitted by nearly 190 countries. This portrays the importance that countries attach to the agriculture sector and its influence on the climate debate.

The Subsidiary Body for Science and Technological Advice (SBSTA), which is an auxiliary body of the UNFCCC, has provided a platform for agriculture to be discussed during its meetings in the run-up to the operationalisation of the Paris Agreement in 2020.

The way forward

For Africa to be able to address the issues pertaining to agriculture and climate change, it is imperative to promote initiatives geared at improving adaptation, increasing food productivity and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the sector. The African Union and the continent's negotiating bodies in the global climate change discussions have emphasised that adaptation to climate change remains a priority for the continent. The Malabo Declaration of 2014 on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods provides a vision for an African-led response to the impact of climate change on the agriculture sector. The Malabo Declaration is emphatic on the need for enhancing resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and other related risks. The Malabo Declaration has envisioned that by the year 2025, at least 30% of African farms, pastoral, and fisher households will be resilient to climate and weather related risks.

Africa needs to optimise the agro-sector through applying ecosystem-based adaptation approaches that enhance ecosystems to improve food security, incomes and job creation without further escalating greenhouse gases. For rain-fed farming systems facing increasing propensity of drought, as in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa, one of the most important priorities is expanded access to irrigation, especially small-scale irrigation. Insurance instruments are important for pooling risk and responding quickly to shocks when they arise.

Furthermore, the SBSTA needs to ensure that there are clear standards for comparing and assessing the agricultural components of national Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) strategies. A number of initiatives are working in this direction including the Food and Agricultural Organization which has launched the Economics and Policy Innovations for Climate-Smart Agriculture programme. On the continental front, a number of programmes and initiatives such as the NEPAD Climate Change and Agriculture Programme, driven by the NEPAD Agency, represents a galvanising and catalytic effort to bring coordination and coherence in Africa's efforts at combating the effects of climate change on its agriculture sector: its overall aim is to meet the African Union's vision of supporting 25 million farming households to practice CSA by 2025. Additionally, under the umbrella of the Africa CSA Alliance, the NEPAD-iNGO Alliance on CSA has been formed between NEPAD and as a grassroots implementation mechanism for providing support to at least 6 million smallholder farmers on the continent.

Financing adaptation within the agriculture sector in Africa represents perhaps the single most important element for Africa to meet the challenges of climate change. Significantly, Africa has not been able to fully access all major funding opportunities related to climate change primarily as a result of capacity restraints. The Green Climate Fund (GCF) which is expected to be filled to the tune of US$100 billion per annum presents a great opportunity for Africa to access climate funds; the fund has identified climate-resilient agriculture as one of its five investment priorities. There is lots of potential, but if Africa wants to fully benefit from the GCF, it needs to develop institutional and human capacity in terms of project preparation and implementation.

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Linking responses to climate change and conflict

by Janani Vivekandanda

Explicit recognition of the linkages between climate and security is still missing. Climate change acts as a 'threat multiplier', increasing the risk of violent conflict, and inhibiting prospects for peace. Climate finance, if allocated and used in a conflict sensitive way, can be an entry point to tackle deep rooted causes of vulnerability to climate change, disasters and conflict.

Climate and conflict links in the post-2015 aid architecture

December 2015 saw the most significant climate change agreement of a generation. After 21 years of wrangling, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change forged a global deal to curb greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, 2015 was a momentous year for political commitment and agenda setting on the most urgent challenges of our times: not only climate change, but also disasters and poverty, with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in September and the agreement of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015 – all under Agenda 2030. The agreement of these frameworks all mark positive headway for multilateralism and provide important guidance for future development and climate and disaster responses.

But success in translating these agendas into action is stymied by the fact that the new frameworks run in parallel. Explicit recognition of the linkages between different types of risks and vulnerabilities – such as the links between climate and security - is still missing. Tackling climate change, disasters and conflict are not parallel challenges. They are linked risks which need to be met with linked responses.

The links between climate change and conflict are critical to achieving peace and sustainable development. Even with the Paris Agreement to keep warming to 1.5°C, the effects of warming already in the system will play out for at least the next two decades, impacting conflict, security and fragility. Climate change played a role in the ongoing political economy of conflict in Darfur and Mali and in food insecurity across the Sahel. Climate change has also played a complicating role in recent conflicts in the Arab Spring, most notably in Syria and will certainly make the complex process of peace harder to achieve.

No conflict has one single cause and it would be myopic to claim that climate change was the sole cause of any conflict to date. Rather, climate change exacerbates socio-economic and political issues that can already cause conflict such as unemployment, volatile food prices and political grievances, making them harder to manage and increasing the possibilities of political instability or violence.

For example, the five-year drought from 2006-2011 in Syria compounded existing poverty dynamics, making fragile livelihoods of rural farmers untenable. With failing crop yields and falling incomes, many moved to urban centres such as Daraa, putting a strain on weak infrastructure and scant basic services. It wasn't the drought itself which caused the conflict, but the existing tensions which were already in place in Assad's Syria, shifting the tipping point at which conflict ignited.

Climate change as a peace inhibitor

What determines how climate change might contribute to conflict lies in the understanding of the ways in which climate change and security risks interact. The effects of climate change, such as more frequent hurricanes, long-term changes in rainfall and temperature and sea-level rise are not experienced as physical hazards in isolation. They combine with the social, political or economic factors at play. Research conducted for the G7 found that in already fragile contexts where risks like poverty, weak governance and conflict are high and ability to cope with these risks is low, climate change acts as the ultimate 'threat multiplier', increasing the risk of violent conflict, and inhibiting prospects for peace. Take any risk to security such as volatile food prices or competition over local resources, add in climate change and the situation gets degrees worse.

Climate change will continue to inhibit peace unless it is effectively integrated into managing risk and building resilience. Many of those most affected by climate change live in fragile states where under-development is intractable and people's capacity to manage climate changes is weak. For example, in the Indian states of Odisha, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, the impact of the 2016 heatwave is combined with poverty, endemic corruption and long-standing perceptions of marginalisation of the poorest by the central government in Delhi. Here, the failure by local or central government to respond adequately to impacts on livelihoods and the rising death toll could pose a very real risk of violence or political instability. This possible instability will make it harder for these communities to adapt to climate change and

Men displaced from Shangil Tobaya farm rented land for the rainy season in Dali, close to Tawila in the Sudanese state of North Darfur. They are part of a community of displaced persons who have set up camp in Dali, fleeing the heavy fighting that took place in Shangil Tobaya (North Darfur) in early 2011.
Photo: UN Photo/Albert Gonzalez Farran. www.unmultimedia.org/photo/

for authorities to provide adequate adaptation support, locking them into a vicious cycle of conflict, poverty and climate vulnerability.

Choosing the right approach

There is much that can be done to ensure that climate change does not lead to increased conflict, insecurity and fragility. Addressing the root causes of vulnerability to climate change – such as the lack of livelihood diversification, political marginalisation, unsustainable management of natural resources, weak or inflexible institutions and unfair policy processes – can help ensure countries plan for uncertainty and peacefully manage a range of possible futures which climate change presents.

Taking account of these links between climate change, conflict and fragility is central to building resilience in an ever uncertain world. Obviously, the best way to reduce the threat is to reduce future greenhouse gas emissions. But with dramatic changes already under way, people need to adapt. And how people and governments adapt, especially in fragile contexts, is critical. Better policy responses are required to ensure that how we tackle climate change does not inadvertently fuel conflict. For example, a large push towards renewable energy in 2007 saw a switch of land use from food production to growing crops for biofuels, which was perceived to contribute to higher food prices and resultant food riots in over 40 countries around the world.

Furthermore, our efforts to tackle conflict need to take account of climate change, and where possible, use responses to climate change in support of peace and stability to avoid maladaptation. If we want to mitigate drivers of conflict or extremism through the provision of education, training and jobs, it is imperative that those skills and jobs are 'climate-proof'. For example, there would be little value in providing support for farming to unemployed Syrian young men when long-term drought is the reason they cannot pursue a livelihood in farming, or to reintegrate Somali refugees into pastoralism or fishing livelihoods which are no longer viable. In some cases, such interventions could inadvertently do harm to conflict dynamics through raising expectations around jobs which cannot be sustained.

Beyond Paris: Opportunities for integration

2016 is being heralded as 'the year of implementation' of the 2015 global agreements. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development signifies momentum and political will and there is a lot to be optimistic about. However, the way in which we go about responding to climate change and disasters is critical to ensuring we contribute to more sustainable and resilient communities – rather than exacerbate existing problems and create more trouble in already fragile contexts. Under the Paris Agreement and the current humanitarian aid system, funding for climate change and disaster response is at an all-time high. According to the Global Humanitarian Assistance Report

Lake Bam, Burkina Faso: enormous environmental challenges such as silting, drastic reduction of aquatic life and conflicts of interest threaten the livelihoods of the 28,000 people living from this lake. Photo: Ollivier Girard for Center for International Forestry Research, flickr.com

2015, disaster aid rose for a second year running to a record US$24.5 billion. Yet despite this rise, funding was not sufficient to meet needs. With increasing demands on development aid, it is unlikely that the international aid community can keep on increasing humanitarian aid budgets, instead it needs to ensure more efficient allocation of resources.

Climate finance, if allocated and used in a conflict sensitive way, can be an entry point to tackle deep rooted causes of vulnerability to climate change, disasters and conflict. It can also be an enabler for more cooperation and coordination between aid stakeholders, which can in turn be used to leverage other types of political mobilisation and governance reform. The apolitical nature of climate change can often foster a sense of shared responsibility between all sectors and enable dialogue, coordination and cooperation. More pragmatically, money talks, and climate finance - particularly increasing contributions to the Green Climate Fund - can be a strong incentive for linked responses if this requirement is built into funding tenders. So far, most money is not going to fragile states – where many of the most vulnerable are - which is another issue that can and should be addressed through an enabling aid architecture, which allows higher risk and flexible spending.

The components of the 2030 Agenda cannot be achieved in isolation of each other. Nor can international aid donors hope to make headway in tackling fragility without linking to climate and disasters processes. On 22-23 May 2016, the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) will bring together humanitarian stakeholders and world leaders in Istanbul in a bid to make the humanitarian system fit for purpose in a rapidly changing world. The WHS presents an opportunity to rethink how we 'do' humanitarian aid and to perhaps challenge the received wisdom relating to the humanitarian principles. If the WHS can push us toward new funding streams, policy coordination and implementation strategies, which enable interventions to address the root causes of vulnerability (to the linked challenge of disasters, climate change and conflict), then we have some hope of achieving the triple bottom line of building resilience to climate change, conflict and poverty. A good solid start would be to embed normative principles around conflict sensitivity into climate change and disaster risk reduction frameworks. This will not of course be the solution, but it will enable progress in joined-up implementation of the 2015 frameworks which, at the very least, does no harm in fragile states, and can perhaps even contribute to building peace and stability.

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How the WTO can implement the Paris Agreement

by Raymond Saner

Greening the World Trade Organization is an imperative to accompany the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

COP 21 implementation

Climate change remains a serious threat to mankind despite the moment of hope after the successful conclusion of the COP21 last December with the Paris Agreement. Promises given at COP21 to implement mitigation and adaptation measures are based on non-binding proposals causing doubt about what the signatory countries will really do about reducing their greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions. There are several ways to tackle climate change, and break business-as-usual patterns through new technologies, a global carbon tax and greening the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements.

Technology options

As a way of alleviating doubts about governments' intentions to reduce climate change, some environmentalists take refuge in the belief that new technologies will be developed that can help generate the needed abatement of GHG and that such new technology could be developed, sold and used based on a 'business as usual' approach to protection of intellectual property rights (IPRs) - an approach which has not led to reduction of GHGs. Alternative solutions are needed.

A carbon tax

An increasing number of environmentalists are calling for a carbon tax to stop the frantic increase of life endangering externalities. While a carbon tax is a first step towards stopping 'business as usual', implementing a carbon tax would require extraordinary efforts in measuring and labelling carbon content of goods and services. In view of globalisation, this would mean that goods have to be followed, checked and labeled from initial stage to final product stage. Still, a carbon tax is a laudable effort to bring about carbon truth.

Developing countries' own endeavours

Most of the poorest developing countries are not benefitting from global trade: they are in desperate need of food and often do not have sufficient energy resources hence their citizens continue to cut trees to generate minimal traditional forms of energy. The consequences include land erosion, desertification and inundation, which can lead to conflicts and migration.

It is therefore essential that countries that cannot afford alternative green energy technologies can produce alternative green energy on their own, at home. In doing so, they can contribute to mitigation and adaptation rather than having to wait for eventual handouts such as capacity building support, trade preferences and special loan arrangements. Moreover, the continued economic stagnation and the increasing costs of coping with mass migration and terrorism leads to developed countries cutting their aid to the poor developing countries and taking back some of the special preferences.

Greening WTO agreements

Developing countries need a firm commitment by the wealthy industrialised countries that they will be given access to alternative green technology and related high tech innovations. This could be done if we reconsider some of the basic rules of the WTO that govern intellectual property rights, investment measures and preferential market access rules and regulations.

Green TRIPS

A green approach to the so-called TRIPS, the WTO Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, could provide a framework to support technology transfer into developing and least developed countries in order to promote the development of low carbon production to fight climate warming. Brazil has called for a Doha Declaration on Climate Change, applying the same logic to the global public good of climate mitigation as was applied in the area of medicines to human health, namely taking full advantage of the flexibility within TRIPS to grant compulsory licenses to critical climate-friendly technologies.

The Group of 77 and China has also called for compulsory licensing under the UNFCCC negotiations. Moreover, universities and public-private partnerships are beginning to voluntarily adopt alternative licensing solutions, such as including humanitarian or open licensing clauses within their licensing agreements. The list of ideas goes on:

Green planet. Photo: Olearys, flickr.com

the US-China Clean Energy Forum has advanced the idea of establishing a joint intellectual property protection program, with insurance jointly written by US and Chinese entities (for example by the US Overseas Private Investment Corporation and by People's Insurance Company of China), to lend credibility to IPR protection regimes.

Green TRIMS

Greening the Trade Related Investment Measures agreement (TRIMS) would constitute an option to renegotiate and re-activate it. Many developing countries experienced TRIMS as a useful mechanism allowing them to temporarily protect their own industries in select sectors until they were ready to drop these measures. A second generation TRIMS agreement could be negotiated which could allow developing countries time to protect infant industry in the sector of carbon reduction technology and hence it could make it easier for them to commit to GHG reduction targets.

Assessing such a re-use and negotiations of TRIMS could be guided by UNCTAD whose research on Foreign Direct Investment and developing country mandate would make it the appropriate international organisation to lead such an effort.

Applying green TRIMS could help developing countries learn how to apply and use green technology for climate change adaptation and mitigation. One of the common measures currently prohibited by the WTO TRIMS Agreement is 'local content requirements', a specific law or regulation committing foreign investors to purchase or procure locally a minimum threshold of goods and services. A reintroduction of TRIMS to support a new green TRIMS Agreement would ensure that green technology is produced fully or partially in the importing developing countries, either in commercial partnership with developed country patent holders or alone through their own abilities to innovate and create their own green technologies.

Green plurilateral PTA

A green three-sector Plurilateral Agreement is a comprehensive solution to fight climate warming and to reduce poverty. This solution would consist of negotiated trade-offs across three domains of the WTO framework agreement, namely:

1. *Environment:* green goods and green services putting trade liberalisation of goods (EGA) and services (TISA) on most favoured nation basis with exemptions for Developing and Least Developed Countries.
2. *Energy:* green goods and services relevant for supporting green energy, making 'green' commitments in GATT and GATS related to green energy);
3. *Trade and development:* making green commitments through Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) giving market access for green technology producers in developing countries to markets in developed and emerging countries; trade facilitation and capacity building to help Low-Income Developing Countries and LDCs to grow economically and reduce poverty within green growth parameters.

New thinking required

The notion of Global Public Goods and Public Common Goods needs to be revisited to accompany the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Besides, the tensions between Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and the multilateral, plurilateral and bilateral trade and investment agreements hinders the goal of achieving low carbon investment and low carbon economic activities. The principle of mutual supportiveness suggests that each international regime should take into account the scope and legal ramification of other agreements and ensure that treaty regimes are complementary not contradictory.

In addition, recurring crises linked to finance, food, energy and climate change have fuelled collective forms of coping, producing and provisioning food and energy at affordable prices as part of Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE). A prominent feature of SSE is the possibility to craft new ways of producing and distributing food and other goods and services that are fairer for producers, healthier – and sometimes cheaper – for consumers, better for the planet and beneficial in terms of social or community cohesion.

The UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy considers that SSE holds considerable promise for addressing the economic, social and environmental objectives and integrated approaches inherent in the concept of sustainable development as defined by the SDG agenda. SSE has the potential to support the transition from informal economy to decent work; green the economy and society; promote local economic development; develop sustainable cities and human settlements; empower women's well-being; ensure food security; promote universal health coverage; and provide transformative finance. SSE appears to be a promising new approach consistent with the concepts of Mutual Support and Global Public Goods.

A green approach

Aspiring to simultaneously achieve the COP21 goals, the SDG goals, as well as continued trade and economic growth on the basis of 'business as usual' approach, is simply an absurd undertaking. A greening of the WTO framework is needed to reduce barriers to the global trade of environmental goods and services and concomitantly make access to green technology possible and affordable for developing countries that have to cope with the negative consequences of climate change as do developed countries. However, the developing countries and particularly the LDCs are severely hampered by their scarce financial resources and lack of access to green technology.

In the public interest, giving developing countries concessions through green TRIPS, green TRIMs and a green tri-sector plurilateral should be linked to requesting developing countries to make Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) commitments to effectively implement the Paris Agreement as fast as possible for the good of all countries and their citizens. ■

For more detailed reading on the suggestions developed in this article please refer to the author's recent e-book titled *Greening the WTO* available at: http://feempress.feem.it/getpage.aspx?id=8350

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EIB climate action: Putting the Paris Agreement to work

by Nancy Saich

Direct financial contribution from governments to the climate cause can only be limited. This is when the intervention of public finance institutions such as the European Investment Bank has demonstrated its value, including through cooperation with others, sharing experiences and combining efforts.

Hydro power plant, Ghana. Photo: Arne Hoel, World Bank, flickr.com

Climate change threatening our planet

The Paris Agreement on climate sets the framework for greater global action towards a world where global warming is kept well below 2°C. Strong political will and a common vision have made the deal a reality, now it is time to put it into practice. We must start curbing greenhouse gas emissions at a much faster pace if we want to prevent further increase of the earth's temperature, which is essentially what is causing climate change.

We can limit further damage and protect ourselves from worsening negative impacts by investing significantly more in green technologies and increasing the climate resilience of our natural and built infrastructure and economies.

Two ingredients are essential for a long-standing solution: global action and significant sums of money. Concerted and coordinated initiatives are crucial not only because climate change is a global issue, but also because the damages caused by it are hitting the whole planet hard – and in particular its poorest regions.

This is where financial means become critical. We must mobilise sufficient amounts for the most needed action and develop the most effective solutions. And we know that the volume of funding needed is huge – in the range of trillions of euros.

Leveraging climate finance

Governments have many different priorities to which they need to respond. Their direct financial contribution to the climate cause can only be limited. This is when the intervention of public finance institutions such as the European Investment Bank (EIB) has demonstrated its value. The EIB is one of the biggest climate action financiers globally and will alone invest around €100 billion in climate action over the next five years. However, no single actor can provide sufficient finance alone.

The combination of funds from public sources such as the European Commission and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) with finance from EIB and other financial institutions allows a crucial leverage effect and increased impact on the ground. Cooperation with other financial institutions is essential to

mobilise greater private sector finance when funding is insufficient, projects are too risky, or they require technical and financial advice.

Many projects with a positive climate impact may lack the necessary funding, for example because their financial risk goes beyond acceptable levels for potential private investors. This can be the case for a new innovative clean technology in its pilot phase or when there is the need to develop green infrastructure in geographic areas where this has proven difficult. To encourage private finance flows to 'riskier projects', the EIB has developed a number of innovative finance products that help lifting part of the financial risk of projects and make them attractive for investors. For example, the EIB has been developing a pilot programme in the framework of the Renewable Energy Performance Platform (REPP). The REPP was created in support of the UN Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) initiative and alongside the United Nations Environment Programme. This Platform will stimulate the bankability of innovative small and medium-scale renewable energy projects such as run-of-the-river hydro in sub-Saharan Africa by helping them to access risk protection and financing products.

Cooperation as means to enhance impact

But collaboration does not end at financing projects jointly. Throughout the years, the EIB has developed a strong network of institutions with whom it works to tackle climate finance collectively rather than in a competing manner. EIB has cooperated closely with other Multilateral Development Banks, national and international financial institutions, the OECD and other key actors on a number of issues from tracking climate finance flows to defining what an adaptation activity is, to reporting on greenhouse gas emissions. Building on this cooperation is crucial to work more effectively and provide consistent advice and messages to countries when they build their strategies on climate - as international finance institutions underlined again recently on the occasion of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund meetings in Washington D.C.

The EIB is in a unique position of being able to share its climate knowledge from the EU in the developing world. There are however also cases where developing countries are ahead of the curve in certain areas - for instance in terms of how to build resilience to climate risks in projects - and we can learn from them. This has clearly been the case in relation to the work we have developed with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to build the climate resilience of small island states. Although much smaller than the EIB in size, the knowledge of CDB in this area is extensive and the sharing of experience between EIB and CDB brings huge dividends. A combination of EIB finance and EU funds for technical assistance has allowed building the necessary climate resilience features in highly vulnerable projects such as a coastal highway in Belize and a reservoir and dam in San Lucia. The knowledge built and shared between these two institutions will be crucial to replicate similar projects and cooperation in other contexts.

Looking ahead: The new EIB Climate Strategy

The EIB has been active on climate for many years using a diverse range of instruments and approaches. It has worked with both the public and private sector within and outside Europe to leverage finance, develop traditional and niche green technologies and provide technical advice on how to make projects more climate friendly and climate resilient. It has also led the field in terms of innovative initiatives. A very successful example is 'green bonds', an advantageous way of raising funds for environment and climate friendly investments, in which EIB was the first issuer in the market with its Climate Awareness Bonds focussed specifically on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency investments.

The extent and urgency to develop collective solutions requires a more strategic approach to the climate challenge. This explains the adoption of an EIB climate strategy last year which will focus on the three areas where EIB can provide the most added value.

Firstly, while maintaining its commitments in terms of financial volumes, EIB wants to prioritise climate initiatives with the highest impact on climate change. Its climate finance will thereby gain in efficiency. Secondly, the EIB are going to dedicate greater attention to what specialists call 'climate adaptation'. We must accept that climate change consequences will keep hitting us even if we manage to curb emissions. We will have to live with them and adapt our economies and infrastructure accordingly. Finally, the EIB will reinforce the 'climate lens' that it uses when developing any of its internal processes and rules for financing. This third set of actions is meant to strengthen the climate friendliness of all EIB's investments and activities across the board. These three pillars will be used to drive forward the EIB's efforts to support implementation of the Paris Agreement. ■

The author was a key member of the EIB's delegation at COP21 in December 2015 - see her interviewed in Paris here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUXr9JpUCLs

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Making agriculture in Africa climate-smart

by Hanne Knaepen

African policy-makers promote climate-smart agriculture and aim to mainstream it in agricultural policies at continental, regional and national levels. ECDPM explains barriers and discusses the way forward.

African economies in danger

The Paris Agreement paves the way for mitigation and adaptation measures in developing countries. Although the Agreement refers to the "need to safeguard food security", it does not mention agriculture as a separate sector.

The link between agriculture and climate is however obvious. The Fifth Assessment Report (2014) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) explains that climate change is already having a negative impact on food security, especially through agriculture, affecting crops, livestock production and fisheries. Agriculture in turn contributes significantly to climate change. African agriculture is responsible for 15% of total global emissions from agriculture. Knowing that agriculture is the backbone of African economies, the problem of climate change impacting food security is huge.

An integrative response

There is a myriad of approaches to achieve sustainable agriculture ranging from agroecology, sustainable intensification to ecosystem-based adaptation. Often they overlap or they are complementary. At times, they compete.

In 2010, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) launched a new concept, baptised as climate-smart agriculture (CSA). CSA is based on three pillars: sustainably increasing agricultural productivity, adapting and building resilience to climate change, and reducing or removing greenhouse gases. There exists a wide variety of techniques to achieve these goals, for instance, the landscape approach or conservation agriculture.

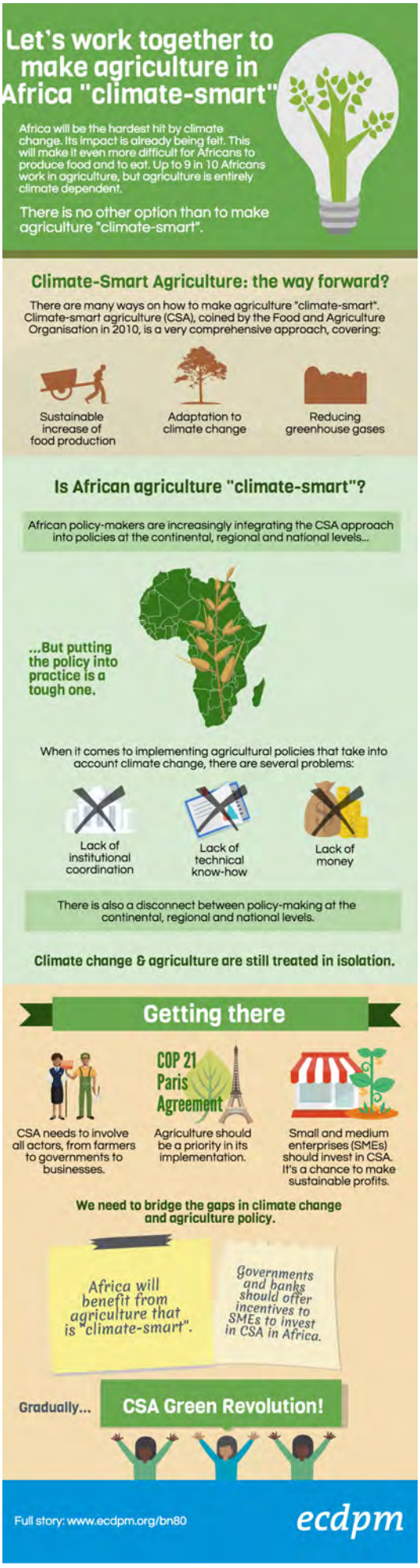
African governments, at continental, regional and national levels, are attempting to mainstream climate change into their agricultural policies, generally referring to it as CSA. The African Union (AU) sees things big: it wants 25 million farming households to be using CSA practices by the year 2025, calling it the CSA Vision 25x25. One of the concrete tool of the Vision 25x25 is NEPAD's launch of the Africa CSA Alliance (ACSAA), aiming to involve a wide variety of stakeholders to empower 6 million smallholder farmers by 2021, through tailoring CSA practices specific to the country context.

Responses from regional bodies have emerged as well. In 2015, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) launched a platform: the COMESA Climate-Smart Agriculture Partnership. The idea is to work with governments to launch national CSA Programmes. Madagascar has been one of the pioneers: with support from COMESA, it has climate-proofed its National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP). The Government also recently concluded a Climate Smart Investment Framework, in support to the NAIP.

A reality-check

Implementing CSA is a process with varying degrees of success. During our recent visit to Madagascar, the CSA focal point at the Ministry of Agriculture underlined Madagascar's advancement with the Framework. However, administrative hurdles are stalling the process. The Ministry is waiting for an independent technical assessment. As long as this is not done, the Framework cannot be presented to potential funders of CSA projects. Another big challenge that Madagascar is facing is scaling-up the many small climate-smart projects on the island's huge territory. The FAO is working on bridging the various initiatives, but progress has been slow.

CCAFS climate-smart farm, Western Kenya. Photo: C.Schubert, flickr.com



CSA policies at regional and continental levels also struggle with slow progress. In essence, this is due to a lack of state-of-the-art knowledge and data, capacity challenges, and the difficulty of mobilising resources to fund CSA practices (agriculture and climate financing sources tend to be separate).

In addition, there is a disconnection between policies and frameworks at the continental, regional, national and local levels.

Hope

The solution lies in finding a multi-stakeholder, bottom-up, intersectorial approach that can overcome these challenges. A mouth full. Potential lies with the private sector as well: investing in climate-sensitive agriculture is an opportunity for them to make sustainable profits. In this regards, governments and financial partners should create an enabling environment and provide financial incentives to mitigate risks, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). After all, SMEs are in a good position to address opportunities in local markets and they can better adapt climate-smart technologies to local markets.

Despite agriculture not coming forward as a separate sector in the Paris Agreement, the Subsidiary Body for Science and Technological Advice, an auxiliary body of the UNFCCC, will pay specific attention to agriculture as a point of discussion during its meetings in the run-up to the operationalisation of the Paris Agreement in 2020. The next meeting will be held in May 2016 in Bonn.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is promising. This Fund, in the first place fed by developed countries as of 2020 to the tune of US$100 billion a year, will benefit African countries. One of the four priority areas of the GCF is CSA. The projects that the GDF will fund in these countries will be based on their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). Although agriculture is very prominent in the countries' INDCs, not all countries have made the link. Support is needed there. Also, ensuring that the funding gets into the right hands, with their desired impact - the decades old aid challenge - will be a factor to monitor closely. Especially given the enormous budget the GCF is expected to sit on.

Despite many issues to be resolved, CSA is stepping up. The Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GACSA) is soon hosting the Annual Forum (June 2016, Rome) where experiences among all interesting partners will be shared. ECDPM will be present.

For more information on ECDPM's work on CSA, refer to: http://ecdpm.org/publications/making-agriculture-africa-climate-smart/

About the author

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Talking Points

Our blogs aim to deepen the dialogue on policy issues, and get to the heart of the matter in an honest and concise way.

CAADP's future? Focus on informal private sector and politics

Talking Points, Francesco Rampa, 29 April 2016

Two weeks ago, in Accra, Francesco Rampa attended the CAADP Partnership Platform, the annual event where all stakeholders get together to discuss progress with CAADP implementation. Unfortunately, like in his assessment last year, there was "little walk" on the promise to "walk the talk" and deliver concretely on the agricultural transformation commitments of the AU Malabo Declaration.

Intercultural integration and communication: An agenda for Europe

Talking Points, Damien Helly, 21 April 2016

As the EU is about to adopt a strategy on culture in external relations and a Global strategy on foreign and security policy, we argue that both documents would be stronger with the explicit mention of intercultural communication as key vehicle to (re)build trust with the world.

Four ideas to give Africa its place in the EU Global Strategy

Talking Points, Annabelle Laferrère and Damien Helly, 5 April 2016

In less than three months, Europe will release its first-ever Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy (EUGS). The EUGS aims at creating "a stronger and more effective EU foreign policy," in words of the HR/VP Federica Mogherini. But can this new policy document bring more unity to the EU External Action, especially in relation to Africa?

The Arab Spring, an 'unfinished revolution' in Tunisia's regions

Talking Points, Sahra El Fassi and Alfonso Medinilla Aldana, 1 April 2016

Imagine a country divided into 24 regions, each with very different capabilities and prospects to succeed. How would you treat them in a fair and equitable way? This is the challenge that Tunisia's 24 governorates, 264 districts, and numerous municipalities, face.

The Weekly Compass

Want to know the direction in which development cooperation is sailing? Stay informed of all the latest news on EU-Africa and EU-ACP development cooperation with the ECDPM Weekly Compass (WECO)

Towards European development diplomacy in the #EUGlobalStrategy

Weekly Newsletter, 13 May 2016

Unless heads of State decide otherwise, the EU will have a new Global Strategy for foreign and security policy by the end of June. One of the building blocks of the EU Global Strategy is development diplomacy. The latter, in line with the new 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals, focuses on prosperity, human dignity and sustainability. Both the EUGS and the 2030 Agenda provide the opportunity to design a sound and effective EU development diplomacy. To achieve this, the EU and its Member States need to keep in mind three key principles: development is political; the EU Global Strategy needs thoughtful wording; and the added-value of EU action on development-related issues needs to be considered.

CAADP's future? Focus on informal private sector and politics!

Weekly Newsletter, 29 April 2016

Two weeks ago, Francesco Rampa, Head of ECDPM's Food Security Programme, attended the 12th CAADP Partnership Platform in Accra. The annual event is where all stakeholders get together to discuss progress on CAADP (the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme). He came back disappointed. In most countries, he says, CAADP still fails to deliver on the agricultural transformation commitments of the African Union Malabo Declaration. In his latest blog, Rampa discusses the future of CAADP and points out that it needs to focus more on the results on the ground, putting the private sector, including smallholder farmers, at the forefront of the transformation. This, he says, "requires a better understanding of the politics around agriculture and the informal parts of African food value chains."

Extractives sector in Madagascar - How to support civil society?

Weekly Newsletter, 22 April 2016

Civil society and local communities are confronted with a series of challenges when large-scale mining companies settle in remote areas, particularly regarding socio-economic and environmental implications. ECDPM's Isabelle Ramdoo and independent exper Aimée Randrianarisoa analyse the difficulties faced by civil society in Fort Dauphin and Tuléar in Madagascar when engaging and leading collective action to negotiate and facilitate dialogue with the mining industry. Their Discussion Paper calls for targeted support to civil society and proposes several actions to be taken, particularly by the development community. The paper is available in French only. ECDPM will release a new paper (in English) in the next few weeks on the partnership between civil society and mining companies, including in Madagascar.

Political economy of regional integration in Africa

Weekly Newsletter, 15 April 2016

There are numerous regional organisations and policies in place to support regional integration in Africa. By and large, however, the reality on the ground does not match political ambitions. So what blocks or drives regional integration in Africa? Our multi-disciplinary team looked at six of Africa's largest regional organisations: the African Union (AU), COMESA, EAC, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC. The case studies analyse the commitments of these organisations in different sectors, ranging from peace and security, to transport and infrastructure, food security, climate change, gender, trade, energy, conservation and industrialisation. More than 200 people were interviewed. See the full studies, or our synthesis and summary brochure. We also have a video explaining the 10 key messages from the study.

Latest ECDPM publications

Cooksey, B. 2016. Tanzania and the East African Community: A comparative political economy. (Discussion Paper 186). Maastricht: ECDPM.

Tanzania has improved port efficiency, reduced the cost of transit trade and increased the export of manufactured goods to its neighbours in the EAC. But Tanzanian clearing and forwarding agents, travel and tourism companies and trades unions strongly resist deeper integration under the EAC Charter.

Ramdoo, I., Randrianarisoa, A. 2016. Secteur extractif à Madagascar : quel appui à la société civile ? (Note de réflexion 185). Maastricht : ECDPM.

La société civile et les communautés locales malgaches sont désormais confrontées à de nouvelles problématiques avec l'arrivée du secteur extractif à échelle industrielle. Mais elle rencontre de nombreux obstacles, notamment à l'action collective.

Medinilla, A., El Fassi, S. 2016. Réduire les inégalités régionales en Tunisie. (Note d'information 84). Maastricht : ECDPM. (Also available in English at http://www.ecdpm.org/bn84)

La nouvelle Constitution tunisienne vise une distribution plus équitable entre les régions de la prospérité et des opportunités. Cette ambition se heurte cependant à des contraintes structurelles et politiques.

ECDPM. 2016. Monitoring and reporting on Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD): The example of Switzerland. (Discussion Paper 184). Maastricht: ECDPM.

Switzerland is committed to promote Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD). A monitoring and reporting system is indispensable to guide this effort and to track and report progress.

Next issue of *GREAT Insights:*
Regional integration in Africa
July/August 2016, Volume 5, Issue 4

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