Beyond COP22, implementing the Climate Agenda at the AfDB

We are delighted to welcome you to our special issue of the Climate Finance newsletter. This issue prioritizes key highlights and prime activities from the 22nd edition of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP22) from an African perspective.

The entry into force of the Paris Agreement on the eve of COP22 reflected the commitment of the international community to make the agreement a reality. Two key issues were of particular importance to Africa at COP22: operationalizing the Paris Agreement and deploying means for its implementation.

The African Development Bank continued its support to the African Group of Negotiators to ensure that the Paris framework is consolidated into a binding and enforceable agreement capable of addressing challenges that concern the continent, in particular access to climate finance. Africa, currently the most climate risk-exposed region, has only been able to access just about 4% of global climate finance. One of the reasons put forward for this low access is the lack of bankable projects on the continent, which in itself is symptomatic of complex interlinked challenges Africa faces. The AfDB will address this through a proactive client engagement exercise it unveiled with the creation of the Vice Presidency for Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth. Moving forward, scaled up investment in low carbon and climate resilient projects will be the hallmark of doing business at AfDB.

With best regards,

Anthony Nyong
Director, Climate Change and Green Growth

Marrakech COP22, an African COP...

Yet again, the AfDB together with the African Union Commission (AUC), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) co-sponsored the Africa Pavilion, a physical space and a platform aimed at showcasing and defending the continent’s interests and determination in addressing challenges created by climate change. (See COP22 videos: Focus on the African Pavilion and What’s at stake for those at the Africa Pavilion).

The Pavilion hosted numerous strategic debates including those that took place on Africa Day (see video: COP22: Africa Day), a day dedicated to discussing and strategizing on the continent’s priority climate action programmes, key among them, the African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI). The theme of this high-level meeting was “Moving from Commitment to Action with Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)”.

Renewable energy: abundant resources yet to be utilized

Renewable energy (RE) was the subject of several roundtables, one of which was held on the first day of COP22. The meeting highlighted the progress made in this area in Africa, clearly different from one region to another. The AfDB’s report on the renewable energy sector and youth employment in the Maghreb, published in October 2016, cites, for example, the important growth of the sector in Morocco which is not only a model to be replicated in North Africa, but on the whole continent. There are however some promising signs. RE investments, particularly in solar energy, in Senegal and Ethiopia, aim to reach the threshold of 30% use of RE by 2018.

Solar power in Africa was the focus of a presentation at the beginning of the Africa Pavilion. The continent has a solar power potential of 1000 gigawatt, only 1% of which has been exploited...
In his speech at the first panel of the day, Bank President Adesina reaffirmed the AfDB’s commitment to supporting universal access to electricity and accelerating the growth of renewable energy in Africa’s energy mix, given the sector is a key driver for Africa’s development.

Greater reach of global financial mechanisms in Africa’s adaptation to climate change

At the African Action Summit held on the sidelines of COP22, President Adesina called for global financing mechanisms to support Africa to prevent countries from using resources allocated for growth to cope with climate risks. President Adesina particularly advocated for climate finance to pay premiums for vulnerable countries to the African Risk Capacity - a facility to help cope with extreme weather phenomena.

The mobilisation of climate finance and its orientation in the context of the Paris Agreement was at the center of the second Climate Finance Day which took place three days before COP22. The AfDB sponsored the event, in line with its strategic objective of supporting green growth in Africa.

Furthermore, the AfDB’s Africa Climate Change Fund (ACCF) co-organised with Senegal’s Centre de Suivi Ecologique (CSE) and the World Resources Institute (WRI) a panel discussion focused on the role of direct access to international finance in advancing climate resilient, low carbon development in Africa.

Rural and urban climate adaptation and resilience

The AfDB supported the African Adaptation Initiative (AAI) which was officially launched at the Africa Pavilion. A joint initiative of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCN) and the African Group of Negotiators, the AAI aims to help set up mechanisms to support and accelerate the implementation of flagship programs to combat climate change in order to guarantee food security and mobilise the funding necessary to strengthen the continent’s capacity to adapt.

In addition, the AfDB co-presented the main benefits of hydrometeorology at COP22. Initiated by the World Bank Group, in partnership with the AfDB, the program aims to modernize meteorological and hydrometric tools and systems in order to obtain reliable meteorological information, which is of vital importance for the agricultural sector and others highly dependent on rainfall.

The AfDB also organised a joint event with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on mobilising climate finance for urban resilience in Africa. The two organisations pledged to redouble their efforts to meet the costs of adaptation that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change estimated to be between US$ 28 to 67 billion per year by 2030.

Mobilization of Niger for the resilience of its people to the effects of climate change was also a topic for a roundtable discussion focusing on adaptation actions which promote resilience with strong co-benefits. The AfDB and the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) support Niger climate action.

Water at the heart of COP22 and climate action

For the first time in COP history, a day of action was dedicated to water. At the center of many challenges posed by climate change, water is cited as a key element for adaptation in more than 85% of planned nationally determined contributions. The AfDB participated and which requires US$ 33 billion in investment per year for 20 years for its development.

A roundtable was also devoted to the status of the African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) launched at COP21. This vast energy development plan for Africa aims to produce 300 GW in 2030. The AfDB, which is a major partner, signed an agreement with the French government for 6 million euros to support the AfDB-hosted delivery unit.

The Renewable Energy Performance Platform (REPP) developed by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) in collaboration with the AfDB, was also the subject of a side-event. Another innovative approach to addressing the energy challenge in Africa, the Platform aims to provide technical and financial advice while facilitating access to risk mitigation instruments and funding provided by REPP partners.

An event co-hosted by the AfDB and the CIF highlighted the critical role of strategic partnerships between public and private financiers in the growth explosion of RE. Participants noted, however, the need to mitigate the economic, political and social risks to encourage private investment in RE in Africa. (See CIF’s success stories in Morocco, Kenya and South Africa in Our Publications).

In addition, a signing ceremony took place during COP22 reaffirming the commitment of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through the Power Africa Initiative towards the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA) initiative, by providing a second tranche of US$ 11 million in commitments bringing the global total to US$ 20 million.

Toward tourism certification framework for water and waste management

The AfDB took part in a debate which called for the development and adoption of a strategic policy framework for a sustainable tourism certification program in Africa, with adequate criteria that would include monitoring and evaluation of water and waste management systems in the hotel sector.

In addition, an African charter on sustainable and responsible tourism was signed on 10 November at the Ministerial Forum on Tourism and Climate Challenges in Africa. This charter endorses the work of the AfDB’s African Natural Resources Center.

Gender and climate change

A parallel event on the implications of the Paris Agreement on gender in Africa was held at the Africa Pavilion. During the debate, the African Working Group on Gender and Change called for moving from gender mainstreaming to genuine integration in the implementation of policies and strategies at all levels.

This issue is of particular interest to the AfDB, financing of climate-friendly technologies enables African women to participate more fully climate change adaptation. (See Our Publications: Inclusive climate financing)
in a high level panel organised by the Kingdom of Morocco to discuss Africa-specific issues and challenges in the water sector as well as medium- and long-term perspectives in the context of climate change.

Key engagements and activities for the year ahead…

- Setting in motion the AfDB's new Climate Change Action Plan for 2016-2020 (CCAP2). CCAP2 outlines the Bank’s climate change programme over the period 2016-2020. Building on the results, lessons learned and recommendations from the previous CCAP 2011-2015, CCAP2 provides a clear framework of action for the Bank, including options for collaboration with its partners, to deliver the High 5s and the broader objectives of Ten Year Strategy (2013-2022) whilst safeguarding environmental integrity.

- The NDC Partnership. The AfDB looks forward to joining other international development institutions in setting the agenda for the NDC Partnership. Launched at COP22, the Partnership seeks to ensure countries receive technical and financial necessary to implement their NDCs in fast and effective manner.

- Regional engagements and upcoming events. The AfDB works with countries through nine climate funds, mechanisms and policy advocacy initiatives to ensure well-targeted delivery of climate finance. The AfDB, as one of the strategic implementing partners of Africa Carbon Forum (ACF), is actively involved in the planning and organisation of the 2017 ACF which will take place in Cotonou, Benin in June. The ACF is an annual event organised by the Nairobi Framework partners to mobilise support for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and, in particular, operationalise the African NDCs.

Our publications

In the blog “Climate Change in Africa”

- Is the Green Climate Fund fit for purpose in Africa?
- With a united African front, the COP of Action could spell real action for Africa
- Environmental and Social Integrity in the Paris Agreement
- INDCs: Prospects for Africa in implementation of the Paris Agreement

In the media

- Africa is tired of being in the dark': bank chief on plans to boost energy (The Guardian)
- UN’s COP22 climate conference in Morocco calls for ‘urgent’ action (France 24)
- Africa: Convincing Investors to Unlock Africa’s Green Energy Potential (AllAfrica)
- COP22 Africa Pavilion video interviews (Climate Home)
- Une finance climat émerge en Afrique (Novethic)
- COP22 : Il faudra attendre 2018 pour le cash ! (La Tribune Afrique)

To subscribe to Climate Finance, a publication of the Climate Change and Green Growth Directorate (PECG), unsubscribe or for inquiries,