

## CONCEPT NOTE

### "2<sup>nd</sup> Open Day" of the Department of Sustainable and Economic Development and Trade on Climate Change

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Today, climate change is of major global concern. Traditional climate patterns have become less reliable, the frequency and intensity of severe weather events such as droughts and hurricanes are on the increase and the rising sea level poses a threat to low-lying areas, leading to loss of coastal land and infrastructure as well as to intrusion of soil-contaminating saltwater. Also, climate change has led to important new challenges and opportunities in sectors such as energy, transport and trade.

Hence, livelihoods built for generations on particular patterns of farming, fishing, trading ... may quickly become impossible. Mankind will be affected in terms of loss of life, less return to investments and altering economies. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has thereby predicted that the relative effects will be greatest in developing countries, in particular in the group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing Countries (SIDS). If not addressed, climate change is likely to place an additional 80-120 million people at risk of hunger, wiping out all progress made to date towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. On the other hand, climate change is also providing new opportunities in the sense that "green" economies based on renewable energy sources and adapted technology need to be developed, promoted and adopted.

At the international scene, two major events related to climate change and sustainable development will be organised shortly.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP17/CMP7 will take place in Durban, South Africa, from 28 November to 9 December 2011. Discussions there will seek to advance the implementation of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, as well as the Bali Action Plan, agreed at COP13 in 2007, and the Cancun Agreements, reached at COP16 last December. The main elements of these agreements include the establishment of a Green Climate Fund, the new Technology Mechanism, the Cancun Adaptation Framework, the Fast Start finance and the Forest Management Reference Levels.

The next United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), also referred to as Rio+20, will take place in Brazil in June 2012. The objective of this Conference will be to secure renewed political commitment for Sustainable Development, assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on Sustainable Development, and address new and emerging challenges. The focus will be on (1) the development of a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication and (2) the institutional framework for sustainable development.

As the ACP region includes a high number of vulnerable countries, the issue of climate change and how to address the phenomenon has been put high on the agenda in the latest ACP-EU Partnership negotiations. Several joint declarations on climate change have been developed and endorsed: the Caribbean/EU declaration (May 2008); the Pacific/EU declaration (November 2008); the Africa/EU Declaration (December 2008); the ACP/EU declaration (May 2009); and the Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) Resolutions.

Acknowledging the high importance of the above described thematic area for its Member States, the Department of Sustainable Economic Development and Trade (SEDTE) of the ACP Secretariat proposes to dedicate its second "Open Day" to the global concern of climate change. Through this event, the SEDTE department hopes to deepen the understanding of the impact of climate change issues on vital economic sectors among the ACP delegations and therefore to strengthen their capacity to address related problems and seize existing opportunities. A second main objective is to familiarise the participating delegations with the different components of the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) in order to ensure that the member countries and ACP regional entities are knowledgeable about the opportunities offered by the GCCA and will be able to fully participate in and benefit from the programme.

In this regard, the issue of mainstreaming climate change and of the ways in which climate change can impact on the sustainable development of ACP countries will be illustrated and discussed on the basis of short presentations by the ongoing ACP-EU programmes:

1. The programmes ACP FISH II Programme, ACP-EU Water Facility, Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA), ACP-FLEGT Support Programme, African Monitoring of Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) Programme and Forest Research Network (FORENET) Programme will shed some light on the interconnections between climate change and natural resource management;
2. The programmes Trade.Com Facility, Programme Initiative Pesticide (PIP), Support to the Multilateral Trading System Programme (ACP MTS Programme), EU-ACP Development of SPS Systems (EDES), ACP Sugarcane Research Programme (SRP), Pan-SPSO, All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme (AAACP), and SPINAP-AHI will address the impact of climate change on trade-related issues; and
3. The programmes ACP Business Climate Facility (BizClim), EU/ACP Microfinance Framework Programme, ProInvest, ACP-EU Energy Facility, Global Index Insurance Facility (GIIF), and the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund will comment on the impact of climate change on private sector development and investments.

Further, the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) initiative, created by the EU in 2007, will be brought under attention. First, the overall GCCA programme with global coverage will be presented; and secondly, detailed information will be provided on the intra-ACP GCCA programme that recently started up its activities in the different ACP regions. Special focus will be on the opportunities that the GCCA provides to the member countries in their efforts to address climate change related problems.

It is expected that this second "Open Day" will have laid the ground for a meaningful ACP Secretariat support to Member States in addressing climate change challenges in their development efforts and in preparing for an active and successful participation in the negotiations at the imminent UNFCCC-COP 17 in Durban and next year at the Rio +20 Summit.

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