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**Climate Vulnerable Forum  
Regional Workshop for Africa**  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 7-8 May 2015  
@ The United Nations Conference Center (UNCC)

CONCEPT NOTE

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**Overview**

The Africa Climate Vulnerable Forum Regional Workshop aims to identify and promote headline climate change policy priorities for vulnerable developing countries of the region. The event further amplifies inputs of African countries to ongoing policy development in this domain. The exercise also deliberately facilitates the exchange of knowledge to share on challenges, successes and experiences in climate change policy implementation between countries regionally. The event provides an opportunity for states to discuss collective policy priorities for the region outside of formal negotiation or institutional channels, and for other stakeholders to interact with these discussions. The outcomes of the Workshop will feed into the Climate Vulnerable Forum's global deliberations and serve as the input for countries from Africa towards its forward work.

**Background**

The Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) is a semi-formal and non-exclusive cooperation mechanism for vulnerable developing countries focused specifically on climate change policy. The CVF is hosting regional workshops during 2014-15 in Africa, Asia, Central America/Caribbean, the Middle East and the Pacific to inform its global advocacy efforts on the basis of a more representative understanding of climate change policy priorities for developing countries vulnerable to climate change. These workshops are also a key input to the future collaborative work of countries through the CVF itself, including in the run-up to and during UNFCCC COP21, as well as for the period beyond 2015.

The Africa Regional Workshop is the input mechanism for countries from the region of Sub-Saharan Africa to these initiatives (a separate regional workshop for the Middle East and North Africa is involving countries in the northern part of the continent). The Sub-Saharan Africa Workshop's conclusions will directly inform a Global Consultation of the hosts of all the CVF regional workshops of 2014-15 taking place in Bonn in June 2015 during the UNFCCC inter-sessional there.

**Regional Context**

Africa is widely regarded as the continent most vulnerable to the impact of climate change, and is the only region recognized as such by the UNFCCC. Africa's unique vulnerability profile is composed of a broad range of factors, especially urban and rural poverty, high degrees of climate-sensitive diseases and agricultural-sector based economies. Due to climate change, environmental factors such as a predominantly tropical climate, important arid zones and low-elevation coastal areas, moreover, represent significant and growing hazards for populations. Overall, one of the world's hottest regions, most African nations have already experienced significant increases in

heat since the 1960s and are projected to warm considerably more during the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Climate-related challenges such as an expansion of arid territories, biodiversity impacts, drought and flooding are expected to increase in tandem.

Significant socio-economic developments are unfolding in parallel to important changes in the climate. Population growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is the highest of any region, while economic growth is second only to, and comparable with, emerging economies in Asia/ASEAN. In demographic terms Africa is still predominantly rural, although it is also experiencing, together with Asia, the world's most rapid urbanization. The effects of such fast-paced changes are also felt in environmental terms: African deforestation, for instance, is twice the average global rate. And while tremendous progress has been achieved in certain key areas of human development such as education, other top indicators, such as reduction in extreme poverty, continue to show the least progress in Sub-Saharan Africa despite the substantial economic progress enjoyed by the region.

In the context of such challenges, a wide range of regional organizations are actively addressing Africa's climate change challenges, and linking international and national partners. These include for instance the African Development Bank's Climate Change Action Plan (2011-2015), the African Climate Policy Centre, the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, the SADC's Regional Climate Centre and other Centres, ClimDev-Africa, and numerous other entities and programmes. Important national climate change programmes are also increasingly characteristic of country-level efforts both in adaptation and mitigation. Africa already counts, for instance, 26 REDD partner countries. Nevertheless, Clean Development Mechanism participation has been among the least of any region, while climate finance mobilization continues to fall short of national policy resourcing needs—indications of just some of the key challenges countries continue to grapple with.

### **Outputs, Outcomes & Follow-Up**

The CVF Regional Workshop for Africa will draw on country experience to identify an up-to-date understanding of the types of challenges, successes, needs and gaps experienced by developing nations as they strive to implement climate change policies across the region. In doing so the workshop will identify more effective responses to climate change pertinent to Africa together with recommendations for actors at different levels (national, regional and global). It also aims to expand involvement in this policy dialogue beyond the six countries from the region that are currently members of the CVF – Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda and Tanzania.

Key **outputs** from the two days of the CVF workshop will include clarity on the experience of developing countries in Africa in implementing national/regional climate change policies, in terms of:

- The most significant challenges faced in the implementation of climate action (whether programmatic, geographic, governance, finance, technology or in other respects), inclusive of adaptation and mitigation
- Projects, programmes or aspects of climate policy that have met with the most success at national or regional levels – knowledge that other countries within and beyond the region could benefit from
- Chief needs and priorities for achieving further progress and the advancement of the response to climate change on the ground (adaptation and mitigation), including a discrete set of policy recommendations for enhanced climate action targeting national, regional and global progress

Expected **outcomes** of the CVF workshop include:

- Shared understanding of lessons learned from adaptation and mitigation work in the region and how these might be applied to future projects/programmes

- Identification of the most important risks, solutions and needs for vulnerable countries of the region
- Shared agreement on future climate change policy priorities
- Identification of promising new areas for international and South-South collaboration in addressing climate change building on exchange of knowledge on policy response success
- Promotion of local/regional public awareness, increased representativeness of CVF efforts and inputs from Africa to the CVF's work focused on COP21 and other climate-relevant policy domains during and post-2015

The workshop is **followed-up** through a Global Consultation in June 2015 in Bonn that will review the findings of all the regional workshops collectively and inform global level actions and advocacy of the Forum ahead of COP21 with the objective of ensuring strong and representative inputs of vulnerable countries.

### **Structure, Participants, Presentations & Methodology**

The **structure** of two-day Workshop will consist of open public as well as closed segments, with a balance of presentations with question and answers together with group working sessions for the detailed examination and synthesis of issues. Opening and closing sessions will engage and inform broader groups of stakeholders, the public and the media.

**Participants** in the Workshop are to include:

- Government officials responsible for climate change policy implementation (inclusive of adaptation and mitigation) from CVF members and other developing countries vulnerable to climate change from across Sub-Saharan Africa
- Relevant regional and international organizations, agencies and assistance actors active in Ethiopia and Africa
- National and local government officials from relevant Ethiopian entities
- Representatives of academia, private sector, NGOs and other civil society groups based in Addis Ababa
- Members of the diplomatic corps and information media (for open sessions) based in Addis Ababa

International delegates representing African countries, as well as other select delegates, are expected to share **presentations** on national policy experiences addressing climate change (challenges, successes, needs and forward priorities).

The CVF Trust Fund is sponsoring a limited number of designated national representatives (one per country) from members and other countries within the region to attend the workshop. International organizations and other international participants are kindly requested to defray their own travelling expenses.

The Workshop **methodology** follows a three-step process of:

- 1) Presentations from different countries and organizations on lessons-learned and experience in climate change policy implementation
- 2) Facilitated breakout group brainstorming of key challenges, successes, needs and forward priorities
- 3) Reporting back and facilitated group synthesis in plenary formulating a discrete set of recommendations for enhancing the response to climate change through actions at national, regional and global levels

A limited number of focused sessions will also enable in-depth examination of additional specific topics of special interest.