

Workshop Brief

Proceedings of the COMESA/FANRPAN Meeting on the Africa-wide Civil Society Climate Change Initiative for Policy Dialogues (ACCID)

26 – 27 November 2008

Farm Inn, Pretoria, South Africa

Background and Introduction

The current global climate crisis has led to the creation of a global market for developing country emission credits. In 2007, the World Bank valued these emission credits at over US\$7.5 billion. This carbon market allows projects that reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions to sell their credits to companies and governments in industrialized countries that have committed to cut their GHG emissions. The income from selling the credits could help beneficiary countries to invest behind climate-friendly and sustainable development. The Kyoto Protocol and the resulting carbon markets have a narrow focus on industrial and energy-related emissions which only benefits a few African countries with a sizeable industrial base such as Nigeria, South Africa and Egypt. As a result of this biased focus, out of more than 1,100 Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects registered by June 2008, only 17 are located in Africa, and of those 17, Uganda, Tanzania and Nigeria have one project each, whilst the remaining 14 are located in South Africa.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture, forestry, and land use (commonly referred to as AFOLU) holds the most promising potential for carbon finance. Presently the carbon market is driven by buyers' preferences and has shown little interest in supporting genuine poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa's largely agro-based economies. Notably, the less industrialized African countries already store significant amounts of carbon in their soils and forests. It is the conviction of COMESA, SADC and EAC regional blocs that these countries should be recognized and rewarded for contributing to addressing climate change through sustainable agriculture, forest

management, and other environmental conservation practices.

The November 2008 Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change adopted by the COMESA Ministers of Agriculture and Environment advocates for the inclusion of all bio-carbons in the post 2012 climate change regime. It also notes that the continent can not afford to wait any longer, and demands that the rules for a post-Kyoto agreement must change.

Against this background, COMESA, in conjunction with SADC and EAC, mandated FANRPAN to mobilise African civil society organisations (CSOs) under the Africa-wide Civil Society Climate Change Initiative for Policy Dialogues (ACCID) and facilitate dialogue around the Africa Bio-Carbon proposal. The main objective of these dialogues is to ensure alignment between African governments and CSOs with regards Africa's approach to tackling the current Climate Change negotiations and beyond.

Attendance

The workshop was attended by 21 representatives from 14 selected civil society organisations which have both national and regional mandates in terms of membership and representation, 4 universities/research institutions, NEPAD, and FANRPAN. Whilst this attendance is satisfactory regardless of the venue having had to change at a late stage, the organisers took note of the delegates who could not attend the workshop because they could not secure entry visas into the Republic of South Africa on time. Apart from inclusion of some in the Poznan delegation, the organisers will share the proceedings and outputs and continue to solicit for their input post Poznan. Mr. Gregor Pfeifer, a Senior Consultant from Africa Practice facilitated the two day workshop.