

Title: Advancing new frontiers of climate research to enhance co-production of climate information and services for sustainable development planning in Africa

Climate Research for Development in Africa (CR4D)

Abstract

There is high expectation that COP21 will deliver a comprehensive global agreement that can guide concrete post-2020 actions on climate change that will be particularly important for Africa in the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, in order to safeguard Africa's already highly vulnerable climate-sensitive socio-economic sectors that also determine the continent's attainment of SDGs, there is need to build an enabling environment and strong infrastructure for co-generation of evidence-based climate information and services that can be mainstreamed into sustainable development planning.

The Climate Research for Development (CR4D) in Africa initiative was launched in February 2015 and is intended to contribute to this endeavor by strengthening links between climate science research and climate information needs for development planning in Africa. The primary goal of the initiative is to create regional climate partnerships that involve diverse expertise from the natural, biophysical and social sciences to co-design integrated research that translates into appropriate and actionable information for policy and sustainable development planning.

The side event is aimed at discussing the best strategy to tighten interconnectedness between climate science, services, and policy in order to improve co-generation, quality, access, and dissemination of climate information services necessary to improve climate-resilient development planning and the achievement of SDGS. It will target African and international participants/delegates at COP21, including members of the African Group of Negotiators (AGN), NGOs, youth and gender groups, and CSOs. It will also provide the opportunity to showcase that user-driven research can lead to incremental improvement in usable climate information and services for different user sectors.

Background

The Climate Research for Development (CR4D) in Africa initiative was launched in February 2015 to strengthen links between climate science research and climate information needs for development planning in Africa. CR4D is an African-led initiative supported by partnership and leadership of the African Climate Policy Center (ACPC) of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). ACPC hosts the CR4D Secretariat. The primary goal of the initiative is to create a multi-institutional and multi-stakeholder collaborative platform that mobilizes expertise and resources among African and international institutions to undertake use-inspired applied climate science research that can enhance co-production of climate information and services to inform climate change policy and sustainable development planning in Africa. CR4D will create Regional Climate Partnerships that involve diverse expertise from the natural, biophysical and social sciences to co-design integrated research that translates into appropriate and actionable information for policy and sustainable development planning.

There is high expectation that the 21st Climate Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris will deliver a comprehensive global agreement that can guide concrete post-2020 actions on climate change that will be particularly important for Africa in the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, in order to safeguard Africa's already highly vulnerable climate-sensitive socio-economic sectors that also determine the continent's attainment of SDGs, there is need to build an enabling environment and strong infrastructure for co-generation of evidence-based climate information and services that can be mainstreamed into sustainable development planning. The CR4D platform is intended to contribute to this endeavor.

The CR4D side event is aimed at discussing the best strategy to tighten interconnectedness between climate science, services, and policy in order to improve co-generation, quality, access, and dissemination of climate information services necessary to improve climate-resilient development planning and the achievement of SDGS. It will target African and international participants/delegates at COP21, including members of the African Group of Negotiators (AGN), NGOs, youth and gender groups, and CSOs.

The side event will also provide opportunity to showcase that user-driven research can lead to incremental improvement in usable climate information and services for different user sectors. The case of Regional Climate Outlook Forums (RCOFs) that have been going on for more than 15 years in different parts of Africa will be used to demonstrate the evolution in the usability of seasonal

climate forecasts for decision making in a number of sectors. Discussions will also gravitate around the demand-driven climate research challenges/opportunities and partnerships that can be addressed/exploited in order to improve co-production of actionable climate information and services in Africa. Importance of addressing the lack of adequate climate information and observation systems, as well as data-sharing bottlenecks that might hinder successful implementation of the CR4D initiative will also be discussed.

Format: The event will be for 1 1/2 hours with one keynote presentation on challenges and opportunities for integrating user-driven climate research into sector-specific applications, to set the stage. The presentation will be for 20 minutes. Thereafter there will be an interactive panel discussions, lead by four invited panelists-drawn from renowned experts on African Climate Science, Climate Services, Climate Policy and Governance, as well representatives of Practitioners (Africa Climate Youth groups, NGOs, CSOs, among others).

Participants: The event will be widely advertised to attract a broad range of participants as well as many of the African delegates at CO21. In particular, delegates representing the following institutions and groups will be targeted, and invited.

- African Union Commission
- Regional Climate Centers (RCCS)
- Africa and International climate scientists
- African Group of Negotiators (AGN)
- National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs)
- African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET)
- African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN)
- African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW)
- African Development Bank (e.g. CDSF)
- Development Agencies (UNEP, UNDP, etc)
- Humanitarian Agencies (WFP, etc)
- Youth and Gender Groups

Expected Outcomes

1. A clear understanding, by stakeholders, on the primary goals of CR4D Coordination Platform and its role in enhancing networking capacities of climate and related institutions in order to improve climate information services for Development Planning, and boost Africa's attainment of post-2020 climate change agreements and 2030 SDGs
2. Recommendations on the establishment of CR4D's Institutional Collaboration Platform (ICP)

Invited Speakers:

1. Filipe Lúcio	Director, Global Framework for Climate Services -
2. Joseph Mukabana	Director of WMO Offices for Africa and Least Developed Countries (AFLDC) & African Ministerial Conference on Meteorology (AMCOMET)
3. David Carlson,	Director , World Climate Research Program (WCRP)