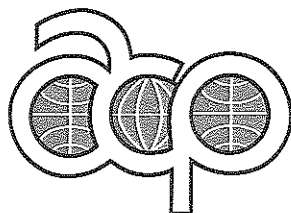


Groupe des Etats d'Afrique
des Caraïbes et du Pacifique
(Groupe ACP)



African, Caribbean and
Pacific Group of States
(ACP Group)

Avenue Georges Henri 451
1200 Bruxelles

Téléphone : +32-2-743 06 00
Fax : +32-2-735 55 73 - +32-2-732 94 70
E-mail : info@acp.int
Website : www.acp.int

ACP/84/090/15
SED/ Department: EJ/mjb

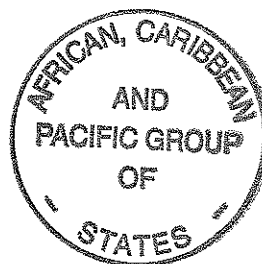
NOTE VERBALE

The Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States presents its compliments to the ACP Embassies and Missions in Brussels, and would like to share with them the attached revised document: *ACP Issues Paper on the Paris Climate Change Conference* (COP 21) [ref. ACP/84/067/15/Rev.4]. This is an outcome document from the *Special meeting of the Subcommittee on Sustainable Development in preparation for the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*, held at the ACP House on 28th and 29th October 2015, and includes comments made during the meeting of the Committee of Ambassadors of 16 and 17 November 2015.

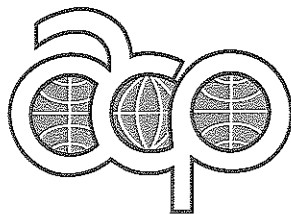
The Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States avails itself of this opportunity to renew to ACP Embassies and Missions, the assurance of its highest consideration. *ls*

Brussels, 18 November 2015

To all ACP Embassies and Missions



Groupe des Etats d'Afrique
des Caraïbes et du Pacifique
(Groupe ACP)



African, Caribbean and
Pacific Group of States
(ACP Group)

REFERENCE **ACP/84/067/15 Rev. 4**
SEDT Department ∩

Brussels, 18th November 2015

**ACP ISSUES PAPER ON THE PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE
CONFERENCE (COP 21)**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. For the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, the adverse impacts of climate change remains the single greatest challenge to the sustainable livelihoods, security and well-being of our peoples. It poses immediate and long-term significant risks to sustainable development efforts and threatens the very survival of the 79 developing countries that make up the ACP Group.
2. Adapting to climate change is therefore a high priority for all ACP Countries, and especially those which are particularly vulnerable, including the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and African countries. The fight against climate change must be tackled in an urgent, cohesive and decisive manner at the international, regional and national levels, collectively by both developed and developing countries, taking into consideration the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.
3. The Paris Agreement should be a legally binding agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and shall be consistent with international law including international human rights law.
4. In preparation for COP21, the ACP regions hosted a number of meetings at the highest political level as well as at the level of the climate negotiators and NGOs, to articulate positions for the various agenda items to be discussed in Paris. These meetings include, inter alia, the Fifteenth Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment held in Cairo from 4 to 6 March 2015; the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in Barbados, from 2-4 July 2015; ; the Third Summit of the Pacific Island Development Forum held from 2 – 4 September, 2015 and the Preparatory Meeting of the African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) held on 25 September 2015 in New York on the margins of the Seventieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA-70). Furthermore, we recall the outcomes of the Regional Forum for Civil Society and Pan-African Members of Parliament on the Joint Position on COP21 held in Libreville on 21 and 22 July 2015; the Libreville Ministerial Declaration of Economic Community of Central African States of 27 August 2015 and the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Declaration on Climate Change Action in Port Moresby, September 2015.
5. In addition, regional dialogues were held in preparation for COP21, including inter alia, Africa Climate Talks held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 3 to 5 September 2015, the preparatory meeting for COP21 of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) climate change negotiators and Ministers with responsibility for climate change in Castries, St. Lucia, from 16 to 18 September, 2015, and the preparatory meetings of the Pacific region including the Twenty Sixth Meeting of Officials of the Pacific Island Member Countries, organised by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in Apia, Samoa from 22 to 24 September 2015 and the extraordinary meeting of the Economic Community of Central African States and the Fifth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA V) which took place in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe from 28 to 30 October 2015.

6. Finally, at the ACP level, a Regional Joint Policy Discussion was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 30 June and 1 July 2015 which also contributed elements for the development of a common position of the ACP Group on the Paris Climate Change Conference (COP21).

II. ISSUES UNDER NEGOTIATION AT COP21

A. THE AD-HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE DURBAN PLATFORM FOR ENHANCED ACTION (ADP)

7. The mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP), to develop a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention, applicable to all Parties is central to the success of the Paris Climate Change Conference. In this regard, the ACP Group pledges the full support of its Member States, to work expeditiously with all Parties, in a transparent manner, to complete the work of the ADP at COP21.

A.1 Workstream 1

8. The ACP Group strongly believes that the new agreement to be adopted in Paris should be a legally binding agreement under the Convention and in accordance with its principles, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and the principle of equity. In addition, the Agreement should also be effective, durable, flexible, informed by science and take into consideration national circumstances. Furthermore, there must be a process to monitor the progress on mitigation to ensure that the global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, will limit global temperature rise to well below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
9. Notwithstanding the importance the ACP Group places on adaptation, a comprehensive, balanced and equitable treatment of mitigation and adaptation is needed for a successful Agreement. Equally important to the Agreement, is the need to ensure adequate means of implementation, including finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity building and include robust arrangements on accountability and transparency of action and support.
10. The ACP notes the considerable efforts made by all UNFCCC Parties, including LDCs and SIDS, in submitting their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), notwithstanding the limited technical and financial resources made available to assist developing countries in the preparation of these Contributions. The ACP Group emphasizes the need to build a clear, consistent and common understanding of the legal nature and content of the INDCs while ensuring that they form an integral part of the 2015 Paris Agreement. Underscoring the need for adequate mitigation ambition, the ACP Group recommends addressing bunker fuel emissions.

11. The historic responsibility of developed countries dictates that they show strong leadership in the fight against climate change and provide adequate support, including finance, technology development and transfer and capacity building to developing countries in accordance with their existing obligations under the Convention.

A.2 Workstream 2

12. Enhancing mitigation ambition in order to close the mitigation gap by 2020 is critical towards contributing to reducing the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere to a level that “prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system”.
13. The Doha Amendment, establishing the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, was adopted in Qatar, in December 2012. However, three years after its adoption, only 50 countries have ratified. Consequently, all governments are urged to ratify the amendment as soon as possible, in order to build on the work achieved during the first commitment period and to contribute to global mitigation efforts now and up to 2020.

B. Adaptation

14. Adapting to climate variability and climate change is of critical importance to enable ACP countries to contribute to poverty eradication and achieve sustainable economic development in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. This importance is evidenced by the loss of life and millions of dollars in damage caused by recent extreme weather related events in countries such as Vanuatu, Dominica, Cabo Verde and other ACP Countries. However, the progress made at the negotiations on adaptation is of grave concern to the ACP Group, given that it has been relatively slow and uneven, when compared with the progress on mitigation.
15. Additional support is needed from the international community for the implementation of adaptation actions in all ACP countries, especially the Small Island Developing States, Least Developed Countries and African countries which are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change, as well as slow onset impacts, many of which will have permanent and irreversible damage.
16. The ACP Group takes note of the proposal for a global goal for adaptation which can contribute to monitoring the effectiveness of adaptation action, with the aim of making all developing countries, in particular the most vulnerable, more climate resilient to the impacts of climate change.

17. The experiences of ACP member states show that the agriculture sector suffers greatly from the impacts of climate change. Therefore, for many ACP Countries, enhancing adaptation efforts of small-scale and medium-size farmers, through the provision of climate-resilient crops, the adoption of good post-harvest practices and the transfer of technology related to sustainable agriculture and agro-industry, will contribute significantly to building resilience in this vital economic sector that supports the livelihoods of millions of people in ACP countries.
18. Tourism as a sector is important to the sustainable development of all ACP Countries and central to the development of SIDS. Climate change is posing incomparable threat to near-shore, ocean and coastal resources of SIDS, resulting in bleaching of corals, damaging near-shore fisheries and mangroves habitats, threatening beaches and shoreline infrastructure linked to the industry. Adapting to the impacts is critical to the ability of ACP SIDS to support their own development.

C. Loss and damage

19. The Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage was established to address loss and damage associated with impacts of climate change, including extreme events and slow onset events, in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.
20. For the ACP Group, the loss and damage mechanism must be an integral part of the Paris Agreement, but distinct and apart from adaptation. The mechanism should include, inter alia, arrangements to assist countries affected by slow onset events; climate impact risk insurance; as well as institutional arrangements to establish a climate change mobility facility and clearing house mechanism for risk transfer to address issues related to population displacement, relocation and reconstruction.

D. Mitigation

21. The scientific evidence shows that drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are needed if the global goal to limit warming to well below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels is to be achieved; however, the emissions of greenhouse gases continue to rise globally. In this regard, the ACP Group welcomes the work undertaken by the Structured Expert Dialogue (SED) to review the adequacy of the long-term goal with the ultimate objective of the convention, as well as the overall progress towards achieving the long-term goal.

22. The Report on the Structured Expert Dialogue (SED) on the 2013-2015 Review, indicates that the science provides the basis to consider strengthening the global goal to limit warming to well below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels because of the high likelihood of meaningful differences between 1.5°C and 2°C. Given that impacts are already occurring at the current levels of warming, risks will increase with further temperature rise.
23. The resulting impacts of temperature rise would disproportionately affect the SIDS, the LDCs and African countries. Consequently, the ACP Group urges all countries to enhance their mitigation ambition and supports a review process to assess the adequacy of the aggregate contributions submitted to the UNFCCC, while at the same time, periodically reviewing and updating mitigation reduction contributions, in line with the science and with the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. The developed countries should take the lead in further reducing their emissions beyond 2020, such that the world can be on a pathway consistent with temperature increases that are well below 1.5°C by the end of the century.
24. The ACP Group understands the important role that market mechanisms can play in the 2015 Paris Agreement. Consequently, the ACP Group wishes to underscore the work undertaken in the context of the negotiations on the Framework for Various Approaches (FVA) including on a New Market Mechanism (NMM) which should promote environmental integrity and avoid double counting, taking into account capacity building needs.
25. The 2015 Paris Agreement should recognize the critical role REDD-plus could play in limiting global average temperature increases to well below 1.5°C and ensure that the support given to implement it in ACP Countries, not only cater for the mitigation component of REDD-plus but also enhance the non-carbon benefits derived from it as a result of the multiple functions that forests have that would be crucial in building the resilience of millions of forest dependent communities in ACP Countries.
26. Renewable energy and energy efficiency are of particular importance for ACP Countries. Whilst ACP Countries have themselves made progress in addressing renewable energy and energy efficiency, additional technical, financial and capacity building support is required.

E. Finance

27. Climate finance is particularly important for the ACP Group, given the significant amount of financial, technical, technological and capacity building support that is needed to enable all ACP Countries, especially the Small Island Developing States, Least Developed Countries and African countries, to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.

28. The 2015 Paris Agreement must ensure that funding to address climate change is scaled up, adequate, new and additional, predictable, equitable, sustainable, to support, inter alia, adaptation, loss and damage and mitigation, on a scale commensurate with the needs of ACP Countries, especially those particularly vulnerable.
29. For developing countries and in particular the ACP Member States, international public finance will remain the major source of funding for climate change actions and can play a key role in leveraging and mobilizing other sources of finance which can be complementary to public finance.
30. The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was established, as an operating Entity of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention, to provide support to ACP countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the impacts of climate change. The ACP Group welcomes the progress made by the GCF in mobilizing, to date, over USD 10 billion and encourages the GCF to continue to fulfil its mandate and resource mobilization efforts, with the aim of providing additional assistance to developing countries. The ACP Group stress the need for developed Parties to honour their commitments to support developing countries including mobilizing USD 100 Billion in climate finance per annum by 2020, as well as urge donors that have not yet done so, to conclude contribution agreements with the Green Climate Fund.
31. The ACP Group further stress the need for developed Parties to adequately replenishing other existing funds such as Adaptation Fund (AF), Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) and Least Developed Country Fund (LDCF), under the Convention, as well as other funding mechanisms, including the Climate Investment Fund.
32. Given the unique characteristics and vulnerabilities of all ACP countries and in particular Small Island Developing States, Least Developed Countries and African countries, international public finance will facilitate the GCF to fund the full cost of adaptation actions at the national and regional levels, through simplified, direct and priority access to adequate, new and additional public grant-based financial resources.
33. The Green Climate Fund, from the perspective of the ACP Group, should also develop a framework which includes the modalities and procedures to effectively address complex issues such as REDD-plus finance, in order to provide adequate funding for the three REDD-plus phases, including, preparation, implementation and results-based finance.
34. The Standing Committee on Finance (SCF) was established to assist the COP in exercising its functions with respect to the Financial Mechanism of the Convention including, inter alia, improving coherence and coordination in the delivery of climate change financing, mobilization of financial resources and measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) of support provided to developing country Parties.

35. To this end, the ACP Group believes that the SCF can have a significant role in the climate finance governance regime in the context of the 2015 Paris Agreement and supports the launching of a process under the Standing Committee to further elaborate definitions on climate finance and methodological approaches to identifying, monitoring, tracking and reporting financial flows under the climate finance system.

F. Technology Development and Transfer and Capacity Building

36. Mitigating the effects of adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change cannot be achieved without innovation and technology development as well as access to and the transfer of technology.
37. The ACP Group, given the importance of technology development and transfer to all ACP countries, believes that the UNFCCC Technology Mechanism has an integral role within the 2015 Paris Agreement to provide additional support for developing Technology Needs Assessments (TNAs) and to catalyze and accelerate technology development and deployment in support of adaptation and mitigation actions.
38. The 2015 Paris Agreement should provide clear provisions for capacity-building as a core and stand-alone element of the agreement in line with the Durban mandate. This should be in the form of a mandate for the provision of financial support for the implementation of capacity-building activities under the agreement, to allow developing countries to deliver on their obligations under the Convention; and support enhanced capacity building opportunities through South-South and Triangular cooperation.

G. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD-plus)

39. Deforestation and forest degradation account for approximately 20% of global greenhouse gas emissions; therefore in order to contribute to the drastic reductions needed to limit global warming to well below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, reducing emissions from the forest sector must be seriously addressed.
40. Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) is an effort to create a financial value for the carbon stored in forests, by offering incentives to developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands and invest in low-carbon paths to sustainable development. "REDD-plus" goes beyond deforestation and forest degradation, and includes the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.
41. In light of the above, the ACP Group, believes that REDD-plus can play an integral part of the 2015 Paris Agreement in order to enhance efficiency, improve the coordination of support for REDD-plus activities and ensure a durable and effective REDD-plus mechanism, within the overall structure of climate change governance, as well as to support Sustainable Development.

III. THE PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (COP21)

42. Climate change remains one of the most serious challenges to the sustainable development of ACP countries in the twenty-first century, however, working in a collective, balanced, fair, efficient and transparent manner in order to address the difficult issues at COP 21, will no doubt lead to an ambitious and robust 2015 Paris Agreement.
 43. The ACP Group, with its 79 Member States, pledges its full support towards ensuring a 2015 Paris Agreement that will contribute, in a concrete manner, to the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, reduce the adverse impacts of climate change on all vulnerable communities in ACP Countries and protect planet earth for the present and future generations.
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