



The Africa, Climate Change, Environment and Security (ACCES) Dialogue Forum

Event Report

11 October, 2010, UN Conference Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Over 120 participants from all over Africa joined the Africa, Climate Change, Environment and Security (ACCES) Dialogue Forum on the 11th October, 2010 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for a fruitful and meaningful dialogue on the security implications of climate change in Africa. The ACCES Dialogue Forum was organised as a pre-event to the 7th Africa Development Forum, hosted by UNECA and the African Development Bank on 11-15 October and the meeting of the Global Climate Change Alliance arranged by the European Commission on 12 October.

Views and experiences were exchanged between participants representing relevant ministries from national governments in Africa, the United Nations, the European Union, African Union, international organisations, development agencies, African environmental agencies and authorities, universities and research centres, non-Governmental organisations and grass roots groups. Many participants entered into constructive discussion about the pressing security needs of African communities faced with climate change.

ACCES members include:



The German Federal Government and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) kindly provided financial assistance for the organisation of the Dialogue Forum.



Opening Panel

On behalf of the Madariaga-College of Europe Foundation and the Folke Bernadotte Academy **Daniel Fiott** welcomed all the participants and speakers. He thanked the UN Economic Commission for Africa for hosting the Dialogue Forum, and the German Federal Government and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency for their kind financial assistance for the Dialogue Forum. Fiott also kindly thanked the European Commission and the Global Climate Change Alliance for their unwavering support in the organisation of the Dialogue Forum.



Fiott explained to participants that the Vulnerability Discussion Paper, which formed the basis for discussions at the Dialogue Forum, was a collaborative effort that focused on five key areas of vulnerability: water security, food security, energy security, migration and natural disasters. Fiott thanked participants for their interest in the event, and kindly asked them to consult the dialogue questions prepared for them before the event to stimulate debate during the day.

Josué Dioné, Director of the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division at UNECA, welcomed participants and the fact that the Forum would give the opportunity to reflect on and clarify issues involved, concerns, priorities and expectations of the multiple players on the interlocked issues of environment, climate change and security.

Outlining the major ramifications on security and overall sustainable development posed

by climate change to the African region and globally, Dioné reflected on the fact that since the 1970s drought affected people in Africa has reached approximately 35 million.

Dioné then placed the ACCES Dialogue Forum within the broader context of UNECA's work programmes, and welcomed the opportunity to explore areas of collaboration.

Potential collaborative efforts, Dioné continued, could be placed in the context of UNECA's following work areas:

- Implementing the Joint AUC-ECA-AFDD Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDev-Africa) Programme and its ECA-based African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC);
- Addressing issues of water security in the context of climate change and within the framework of the African Water Vision spearheaded by the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) with support from UN-Water Africa;
- Enhancing food security in Africa, taking into account the realities that climate change will bring to bear on agricultural production and productivity.

Günther Sleeuwagen, Ambassador of Belgium to Addis Ababa, welcomed participants by stating that the purpose of the Forum was to talk about possibly the single greatest challenge to humanity: climate change.

Noting that the security repercussion of the projected changes to the climate are now increasingly acknowledged, Ambassador Sleeuwagen explained how environmental stress is likely to contribute directly by conflict by exacerbating other factors such as poverty, inequality, corruption, ethnic tensions and disease and threaten global, national and human security.

Ambassador Sleeuwagen also explained that climate change and its security implications threaten not only the security of separate nations but it is also about the collective

security in a fragile and increasingly interdependent world. Multiple studies outline the potential global and regional security implications of climate change. In particular, conflict-affected countries and fragile contexts – having already comparatively low capacities to respond to climate change – are likely to suffer the most and the earliest.

In this spirit, the Ambassador stated, **the EU considers climate change to be one of the most pressing security challenges of our time.** Climate Change and its international security implications are part of EU's wider agenda for climate, energy and the Common Foreign and Security Policy, and central to the endeavours of the EU.



Ambassador Sleeuwagen then showed how the EU has taken the lead in shaping adequate response related to security implications of Climate Change. In 2003, the European Security Strategy noted the implications of climate change for our security. In March 2008, a Joint Paper to the European Council by the High Representative and the Commission analysed the issue in more depth, and set out recommendations for future EU work in the area. The issue was also highlighted in the Review on Implementation of the European Security Strategy, presented in December 2008, In December 2009 a Progress Report has been prepared on the implementation of the Recommendations in 2008 and the new

Progress Report on activities in 2009 is under preparation.



Pointing-out that the EU is aware of the fact that Africa is one of the most vulnerable global regions to climate change, the Ambassador explained that Africa needs urgent and effective assistance in responding to the challenges and building up adequate local capacities. In line with the relevant political decisions, it what said, the EU strives for providing the necessary assistance to Africa in the course of intensive dialogue and partnership with the concerned regional organisations and national authorities.

Ambassador Sleeuwagen concluded by saying that the ACCES initiative reflects the key approach of EU institutions and EU Member States to the security challenges of Climate Change; namely, to **establish a solid framework for a long-term dialogue process between various stakeholders of the international donor community and concerned African authorities.** At the end of the day, as a result of integrating "top-down" and "bottom up" approaches, he explained, the Process will lead to concrete projects which will expressly be aimed at improving security and stability and building up local capabilities in the context of climate change. It is necessary to be aware of the fact that dialogue *per se* has a conflict prevention impact that could be clearly multiplied by identifying and implementing concrete projects.

In this sense, Ambassador Sleeuwagen hoped that the ACCES project could successfully be embedded in the Africa-EU Action Plan for the years 2011-2013. This, he concluded,

would establish an effective interplay with the policy makers at various levels.

Gyorgy Tatar, Head of Task Force at the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU, welcomed participants. Tatar began by stating that the objectives of the Dialogue Forum are to foster collaborative and sustainable dialogue between a wide range of international actors and stakeholders; to gain greater information on local adaptation and resilience capacities and to set into motion the possibility of establishing a longer-term forum to address in a comprehensive, integrated and conflict sensitive manner the security implications of climate change in Africa.

Tatar explained that each session of the Forum would reflect each of the analyses contained in the Vulnerability Discussion Paper, which were produced prior to the event; including water security, food security, energy security, migration and natural disasters. The Vulnerability Discussion Paper, Tatar continued, formed the basis for the Dialogue Forum, with facilitators highlighting the hottest security spots in Africa related to each of the vulnerability cells and some of the dynamics involved for each of the security themes.

Stating that the intention was to develop further dialogue after the event, Tatar explained that the ACCES members are **keen to hear participants' views so as to strengthen the Vulnerability Discussion Paper**. He also stated that ACCES members and interested African representatives at regional, national and local levels should seek to identify and compare local needs with ongoing international activities after the event. The approach of the process, Tatar highlighted, will be a combination of "top-down" and "bottom-up" actions, serving as the key for the elaboration of "fundable" projects aimed at building-up local resilience capacities to respond to the security threats of climate change in Africa.

Session 1 - Energy Security

Patrice T. Kantu, Project Coordinator at the Institute for Environmental Security, began his presentation on energy security by stating how it is one of the major challenges currently facing the African continent, and it also has an indirect impact on Europe. He pointed-out that energy insecurity will affect the whole continent without sufficient and secure energy resources. It was also suggested that this security risk will be compounded by the potential effects of climate change.



With sub-Saharan Africa consuming less energy and less CO² than the rest of the world, and in spite of the fact that it has an abundance of renewable resources such as solar power, it was illustrated how 500 million or so individuals in the region have a real lack of energy access and has low levels of energy production. Indeed, it was shown how many African countries are open to energy shocks but Kantu focused on the five "hottest" spots of energy insecurity in Africa: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Uganda and Zambia.

Participants responded well to the presentation by making a number of constructive remarks. One comment highlighted that the problem in Africa may not necessarily relate to energy dependence between States, this could even be seen as a positive factor, but rather the real problem is encouraging and maintaining investment into energy infrastructure. The participant argued that there are a number of Government plans in place, and there is also the development of regional power pools, as

a means to deal with energy shocks. **Investment, it was argued, is the only way to ensure development of renewable resources and also to make current energy usage more efficient.** This point was seconded by another participant who argued that the private sector should assume a key leadership role in energy security in Africa.

However, one other participant cautioned about over-reliance on the private sector given that a lack of environmental policies are in place in many African countries. The participant made clear that before private business is allowed to develop energy infrastructure such as oil, companies must be made to adhere to environmental standards so as to create a sustainable environment.

Another participant also cautioned against looking at the specific experiences of individual countries, and conversely stressed that **any mechanisms to deal with energy insecurity must indeed be regional in nature.** Using the example of Tanzania, it was highlighted how the country also faces regular power shortages. But the participant explained that what is needed is a regional approach whereby shortages are identified and met by a regional authority. A point about the energy needs and security of islands off the coast of the mainland African continent was also raised. The participant explained that smaller states are often neglected in debates about climate change and security.

The environmental aspect was also touched upon by the Forum, with one participant stating that Africa needed to take more seriously the issue of water shortages and desertification. This, it was explained, was essential if African countries are to develop more renewable power sources such as hydro-electric dams.

Patrice T. Kantu responded to the points by stating that the revised Vulnerability Discussion Paper should give further consideration to a host of other countries, especially those that suffer from issues such

as desertification and more recognition for smaller island States is certainly required. Kantu noted the potential that renewable energy sources such as solar, geothermal and wind can play in ensuring energy security on the African continent. Looking at the issue of regional governance, Kantu also suggested that the African Union look to play an even greater role in the area of energy security.

Session 2 - Water Security

Valerie Ndaruzaniye, President of the Global Water Institute, introduced her presentation on *water security* by describing how the impacts of climate change are developing rapidly. In her words, she stated that the "steep increase in greenhouse gases since the Industrial Revolution has transformed the relationship between communities and the environment on which they depend." Ndaruzaniye explained how the earth water cycle is being altered and is leading to substantial changes in precipitation patterns, intensity, and extremes. She added that, frequent precipitation, floods or droughts are being felt in various places. Speed in temperatures' shifting is said to be unprecedented, she said. According to scientific evidence, much of the damage will be in developing countries, particularly on this African ground.

Ndaruzaniye hence explained to participants how members of ACCES, spent the last 6 months assessing countries and regions in Africa that could be described as "hot spots" in terms of vulnerability due to water scarcity and potential insecurity related to it. She then showed a list of indicators that have been used for selecting hot spot countries and regions. She said that we should rather call these countries "hope spots" given that they are seriously in danger for multiple reasons. According to her, there is only one thing we can do: that is to be positive about it and strive for hope we believe in. She asserts that the first thing to be done is to reduce gas emissions that are inducing increase in

temperatures; the second action, she said, should be to ensure that African governments agree on prioritising "water resource management" on their National Action Plan. According to Ndaruzaniye, this will require cross-cutting agreement among different sectorial ministries and private sectors.



Ndaruzaniye also delineated how **climate change-side effects come as additional burdens to already weak and/or impoverished states where conflicts occur frequently**, living millions of people without shelters and forcing many others to internal displacement or migration beyond frontiers. In this vein, she cited, as an example, Mozambique conflict that lasted 15 years between 1977-1992 and that produced the highest rate of refugees in the African history. She also cited DR Congo and Burundi where, after their respective conflicts, there remains the question of effectively reintegrating ex-combatants whom without decent income, represent an obvious threat to the rest of the population, particularly, women and girls in the region.

Ndaruzaniye showed how water can give rise to protracted conflicts, especially if the water available becomes scarce. Such conflict, Ndaruzaniye explained, is also compounded by insufficient water management and infrastructure, climate change and the human impact on ecosystems. Ndaruzaniye then highlighted the problems of water insecurity faced in Ethiopia, Kenya, the DRC, Burundi, Sudan, Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Mozambique before dialoguing with the Forum.

In her concluding remarks, Ndaruzaniye emphasised the need for preventing conflicts by boosting economy using water-related programmes. Through various questions, she encouraged participants to discuss best practices that could be borrowed by those countries described as hot spots, so that delays in water programme implementation can be reduced and the acceleration in the process in curbing climate- induced side effects can be possible. Ndaruzaniye suggested that African governments prioritise the issue of water security, by ensuring sectoral cohesion within national and regional plans for water management.

One participant raised the issue of water sanitation in many African countries, and stressed that the international community should be concerned with both securing water supplies but also ensuring that this supply is safe for use. Another participant then explained that more efforts are needed in countries that are exiting conflict, and that **more efforts are required to ensure that post-conflict reconstruction prioritise water security**.

On the issue of water access, it was noted by another audience member that in many countries the problem is not one of stocks but rather supply. It was explained that after huge rainfalls in many African countries little is being done to ensure water capture, and, through proper management, more efforts could be taken to supply this water in dry seasons. Without proper supply of water, and its unequal distribution, the participant suggested that this could give rise to further conflict within and between peoples.

Another audience member raised the issue of Egypt's water insecurity, especially given its major shared water source – the Nile – with neighbouring countries. This was supported by the comment from another participant that the problem in Egypt is not water stocks but water supply. The dialogue member then suggested that water security plans should operate on a basin rather than national basis to ensure regional security. On the issue of

investment into the water sector, the same audience member explained that the difficulties related to investment stemmed from the **private sector's belief that little returns can be from water projects.**

Speaking on the topic of population increases, one dialogue member explained that this problem will have to be tackled from the perspective of water security. Population increases with water shortages, it was claimed, can lead to conflicts. Another participant added to this point by suggesting that greater investment into technologies such as desalination plants could ease the tension between population increases and water supply. Agreeing with the requirement for more investment, one dialoguer claimed that aid needed upscaling and it also needs to be better coordinated.

The issue of coordination between major international and African stakeholders was raised, with the audience member stating that **water could not be seen as a stand-alone issue and instead be dealt with along with agriculture and the environment.** Supporting this argument, one participant used the example of pollution to the water table through chemical usage to highlight the linkages between water, the land and the environment.

Session 3 - Food Security

Mulat Demeke, Economist with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, began his presentation by explaining how the limited capacities for higher food production and weak resilience for production systems are a major problem in Africa. Demeke showed how most African countries are net importers of food, but that transformation of this situation could occur through better management and more efficiency in the food production system.

Also speaking on the linkages between food security and other security issues, Demeke

highlighted how water shortages can have a detrimental impact on food production. Demeke then raised the issue of climate change and stated that because no concrete forecasts exist for its security implications, it would be necessary to enhance endeavours in three key areas: more information for early warning, and its dissemination, is needed; production activities require greater coordination, with community level farming knowledge being fed into overall production strategies; and, more support for marketing and financing is essential.



Demeke then presented the five “hot spot” countries – Chad, Cote d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, the DRC and Zimbabwe – before then opening the dialogue for the food security session.

One participant began by stating that any food security strategy in Africa must begin at the local level through the involvement of small scale producers. The local level, it was also argued, is the best way to ensure adaptation to climate change.

Another dialoguer took up the issue of productivity by suggesting that **availability and quality of water and soil are essential to food production.** The audience member then stated that more needs to be done to ensure outlet for producers and stabilise food prices. Concluding, it was also remarked that food production should not be seen as merely an economic matter, and encouraged a more holistic approach that would take into consideration the quality of food in terms of

nutritional value plus the impact of intensive farming on the environment.

The issue of decentralising policies to a local level resurfaced under the comments of another participant. Explaining that more needs to be done to work with the human capacities found at the local level, the Forum heard that local farming skills are critical and need feeding into any food security development initiatives. Local experiences, it was learned, are sometimes better than empirical evidence.

One other audience member agreed that food production in Africa should be sustainable, and it was also noted by the participant that proper **land usage for agriculture can actually play a role in mitigating climate change**. Looking at the issue from a political perspective, participants learned that more States could prioritise food security under National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs).

Looking at the distinction between conflict and security, one dialoguer urged the Forum to treat food security as a human security issue rather than a simple cause of conflict. Conflict, it was said, is usually preceded by a long process but human security implies sudden shocks to livelihoods. The audience member then pointed-out that if **local, regional and international efforts get to grips with the human security development** then there would be less reason for people to turn to arms and conflict.

Mulat Demeke then concluded the session by re-affirming that African needs to do more on boosting the sustainability of production. In terms of price stabilisation, Demeke remarked that the whole value-chain of food production in Africa needs development. Increased production could lead to price stabilisation, but so too could efforts in developing market infrastructure and boosting investment into productive capacities of traders and agro-industries. The Forum also heard how technology is also

desperately required to meet the food demands of an increasing population.

Session 4 - Migration

Patrice Quesada, Associate Expert from the International Organization for Migration, began his presentation by outlining the relationship between climate change and migration. It was pointed-out that **climate change alone will not necessarily lead to migration or displacement**.

The audience learned that adaptive capacities to climate change also depend on factors such as demographic pressure, poverty, the level of development and weak or inequitable governance. In this sense, Quesada explained how migration is not vulnerability *per se*, because it can be both a positive and negative response to climate change vulnerability.

Where the positive impact of migration is concerned, Quesada stated that migration can imply transfers of skills, remittances and cultural rapprochement which can all play a legitimate role in coping with climate change.

The Forum also learned how there are many different forms of migration, including forced migration in response to natural disasters and voluntary migration for economic reasons. Quesada also stated that the **most vulnerable people cannot actually migrate** because they lack information, education and/or relevant networks.



Paul Rushton, Consultant with the International Organization for Migration, then gave a short presentation on “Climate, Environment and Conflict in Darfur”. He started by explaining how findings from research in Darfur had shown while there is a complex relationship between the environment, migration, and conflict, there is no clear evidence that climate change is causing conflict and migration. The research, the Forum learned, was a combined analysis from the field and from satellite data looking at a range of indicators such as groundwater levels, rainfall and population density.



Rushton also illustrated how the IOM is working with communities in Africa to boost resource management and local capacities. In this sense, the attempt has been to reduce the impact on the surrounding environment, to encourage technology transfers, to promote the efficient use of energy resources at the local level, to assist with agricultural capacities and reforestation programmes.

The Dialogue Forum heard that there had been an advantage to this more local-level approach, especially when the needs of remote communities require a response. Rushton also explained how NAPAs are difficult to implement in these remote areas, and so **building inclusive resilience at a local level is an urgent strategy before climate change strikes**.

One audience member responded to the presentations by concurring with the migration presenters that migration has been occurring for millennia. The participant then suggested that the real problem facing Africa at the moment is maintaining the security of pastoral communities as they migrate. The speaker stated that **climate change is**

impacting on the traditional routes utilised by pastoral farmers, and also that when conflict does occur it is usually these farmers that are most affected.

One participant cautioned the Forum in neglecting the negative impacts of migration, citing the economic losses suffered by States when people leave for other countries. The dialoguer stated that more needs to be done to ensure financial assistance is given to States that experience losses in population. The participant ended by suggesting that more also be done to encourage migration back to past areas of habitation.

However, most participants agreed that migration is not necessarily a negative phenomenon, and it can indeed help in coping with climate change. The key challenge, it was claimed, is how to improve the management of migration flows and to prevent forced migration at the local, regional and international levels.

Session 5 – Natural Disasters

Jeanette Clover, Senior Programme Officer with the United Nations Environment Programme, began her presentation by stating that Africa has experienced the fastest rate of increase in the incidence of natural disasters over the last three decades. Climate change will exacerbate mainly water related hazards in Africa. The Forum also learned that the economic losses of Africa as a consequence of natural disasters represent a high proportion of Africa’s GDP. Clover pointed-out that up until recently, insufficient attention has been paid to the implications of the differential outcomes and changing vulnerabilities for human security. She drew attention to two important dimensions of the climate change, disasters and security nexus: a) the equity dimension – not all individuals, communities or regions are equally affected. It is the most vulnerable, especially the poor in semi-arid areas and the urban poor in settlements and slums that are

most affected; and b) the connectivity dimension – the complex combinations of socio-economic, political, environmental, cultural and structural factors that act and interact to affect vulnerability to environmental change.

Listing some of the natural disasters to hit Africa, Clover highlighted that sub-Saharan Africa is particularly prone to drought and floods but one must also be aware that disasters such as tropical cyclones and landslides can also imply economic losses.



The Forum then learned that while there are weaknesses across the continent that complicate effective responses to climate change, such as poor institutional capacity, high levels of poverty, poor data, and limited modeling of climate change impacts at the local scale, it is equally important that immediate action is taken to improve the resilience of communities and societies to the impacts of climate change.

Drawing on the selected “hot spots” – Mozambique, Ethiopia, Sudan, Zimbabwe and the Sahel region – Clover then explained how the occurrence and impact of natural disasters can be exacerbated by unplanned and unregulated land use, weak environmental controls, poor enforcement of building standards, urbanisation and other development-linked factors that increase vulnerability.

One of the areas of improvement needed in natural disaster management is improved science and information. Clover stated that **early-warning systems could be used for constant monitoring of seasonal climate**

forecasting, environmental monitoring and sentinel case surveillance. In noting the linkages between the environment and disaster risk, she highlighted the importance of integrating environmental concerns into Disaster Risk Reduction and implementing environment-based solutions.

Clover also encouraged the development of disaster preparedness and response for each of Africa’s sub-regions. Apart from advising greater investment be made in infrastructure, technology and national meteorological services, Clover also suggested that a network of data-sharing facilities on climate and development could assist in early-warning strategies. Ending her presentation, Clover also stated that greater coherence between all sectors could play an important role in the mitigation and management of natural disasters.

In response to the presentation one participant remarked that far more needs to be done to protect small islands off the coast of Africa. Using the example of Madagascar, it was explained by the audience member that more could be done to **improve early warning capacities for natural disasters**.



Other participants raised the issue of proper management of natural disasters, claiming that local capacity management should be made a priority. In addition, the participants also called for greater integration between

international aid and crisis response mechanisms by working with local communities. It was also suggested that **natural disaster risk management be factored into all development sectors** especially when it comes to long-term planning for disaster management.

Another participant explained that we have become used to thinking of only flooding and droughts as natural disasters, but there are also other disasters such as wide-scale bushfires that can also be considered natural disasters especially when it damages livelihoods. Talking about the impact of whitefly on the environment in the DRC, another audience member suggested that disaster response usually waits for the disaster to occur before acting and that such responses should be thinking more in terms of early warning and prevention.

On the issue of early warning one participant stated that far information is required to help with the process, including reliable information on rainfall levels and poverty which could feed into a credible disaster response. It was explained how a multidisciplinary approach is needed to natural disasters, and it was suggested that perhaps this could take the form of a continental advisory committee comprised of the relevant national ministers.

Another participant then argued that there are sufficient bodies in place to know if a natural disaster is coming, but the real problem is getting the information to the relevant authorities in time. It was also stressed by the participant that **early warning systems must ensure that information is acted on immediately.**

In her concluding remarks, Jeanette Clover noted the concerns of small-island nations off the coast of Africa especially when it came to dealing with tidal waves and storms. Clover also repeated the importance of understanding the complex and interrelated dimensions of climate change implications for human security and that this reinforces

the importance of a multidisciplinary response to natural disasters.

Concluding Remarks

Gyorgy Tatar thanked all participants for making the Dialogue Forum extremely successful and fruitful, and commented that a lot of issues have been raised which will inform the editing of the Vulnerability Discussion Paper. Tatar explained that ACCES members will now adapt the Vulnerability Discussion Paper to incorporate the views expressed during the Dialogue Forum. The finalised document, he continued, will be forwarded to relevant bodies and individuals in advance of the Africa-EU Summit end November and United Nations Climate Change Conference, Cancun, Mexico beginning December 2010.

He invited the participants to send their comments and suggestions on the paper to the organisers if necessary and keep on conducting the dialogue launched by this Forum. Gyorgy Tatar expressed the wish to hold the next Dialogue Forum in November 2011.

Daniel Fiott ended the Dialogue Forum by thanking all speakers and participants on behalf of ACCES members and the Madariaga-College of Europe and Folke Bernadotte Academy as organisers.
