A Regional Perspective of Climate Change, Agriculture & Food Security

COMESA CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAMME

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SSA contributes the least to greenhouse gas emissions, yet is expected to be among the most negatively affected by climate change.
It is estimated that the livelihoods of 70% of Africans are dependent on rain-fed agriculture, an activity that is characterized by small-scale, subsistence farms that are vulnerable to a variety of stresses, including those associated with climate change.

Climate change impacts will increase agronomic complexity and increase risks of shocks at the farm and community levels, and implying additional changes in crops, cropping patterns, timing, agronomic practices, and seed needs.
Changes in rainfall patterns are expected to result in loss of cropland,

Crop yields in most of sub-Saharan Africa are estimated to fall by at least 10–20% by 2050

If current emission scenarios continue, a 2 degree Celsius warming will drop agriculture yields of key food staples by up to 40%
The recent El Nino weather phenomenon, one of the worst in 50 years, has caused intense drought in southern Africa that will have a "devastating" impact on the region's food security.

Across large parts of South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Botswana and Madagascar, the rainfall season has so far been the driest in the last 35 years.
El Nino effect in SSA
* SSA is now faced with the La Nina which has caused floods in most countries, leaving hundreds dead and thousands homeless.
* Crops have been destroyed due to excess water.
Scope of Climate Data and Information Useful in Agriculture and Food Security

- Good quality and adequate historical climate data are indispensable for monitoring climate change impacts and vulnerability at global, regional and national levels.

- Planners have historically managed climate risks with differing degrees of success, depending, in part, upon the quality and scope of the climate information available to them.
Regional Initiatives to improve access to Climate information

* COMESA supported small holder farmers in Zambia and Uganda on the use of ICT to access climate and weather information to assist them in their planning and farming practices.
There are Many continental and regional initiatives on climate services and these include, inter alia;

a) IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) is a specialized institution of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

* UNECA African Climate Policy Centre
* SADC Climate Services Centre
* FEWS NET
There are several categories and types of climate information products and services existing in the countries for agriculture and food security. These include:

- Daily Weather Forecasts;
- Monthly Climate Outlooks;
- Seasonal Climate Outlooks;
- Climate Alerts; observed climate Impacts;
- and Tailored information for users (farmers)
Practical solutions to solving these challenges do exist in Africa and two catalytic sectors – agriculture and clean energy – can be leveraged to that end.

There is need to link clean energy expansion to sustainable ecosystems-based adaptation (EBA) driven agriculture can address so many issues under the changing climate. Doing so will ensure the implementation of specific provisions of the Paris Agreement but simultaneously meet socio-economic development priorities.
With Good and Robust Regional Integration policies in place, climate shocks present an excellent opportunity for trade in the region between Member States with surplus to Member states with scarcity of commodities.

This needs good infrastructure connectivity, trade and transit traffic facilitation instruments – SPS measures for which COMESA has set up reference laboratories, standards etc. CVTFS, RCBG and so on
COMESA supported its Member states to Adopt Climate Smart Agriculture as a tool to fight climate change, achieve poverty reduction and sustainable development. Testimonies from rural small scale farmers proved that CSA is key to food security for Africa: “use of manure when planting maize is cost effective because I got 6 times more maize than I have ever got from the same plot, moreover I did not buy the manure, I only collected it from my animals and applied in each planting basin before dropping the seed”.

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I got great benefits from the adoption of CSA technologies, which enabled me to build a house, pay school fees for my children and also join a cooperative union” (Mr. Kayigwa Fred, a farmer from Namutumba district, Uganda).

COMESA supported Manitatra CSA project in Madagascar, with beneficiaries in the Mid-West standing at 3,355 farmers of which 20% are women. Target beneficiaries in the South East are estimated to 1,400 food insecure small scale farmers of which 900 are women. In the Southeast, total beneficiaries is 3138 farmers of which 42% are women.
The key infrastructure essential for trade in Sub Saharan Africa is very vulnerable as roads, bridges and dams have been damaged by floods. This calls for climate proofing our infrastructure in the region.

In 2010, the Africa Infrastructure Country Diagnostic found that to enable Africa to fill its infrastructure gap, some US$93 Billion per year for the next decade will need to be invested.
The COMESA region has a high rate of urbanization with nearly 50% of the population living in cities. Climate change impacts are contributing to urban migration from rural areas. Urban areas are already threatened by climate risks such as storms, floods and droughts, which exacerbate existing problems with regards to service provision such as waste management, food, water and energy accessibility, health and other basic needs.
Bridging The Gap Between Climate Change, Agriculture & Food Security

* COMESA has already supported some Member States to design NAIPs + CSA Investment frameworks which take into account the need for investment in climate smart agriculture.

* Article 129 of the COMESA Treaty underscores the need for Co-operation in Agricultural Development to ensure:
(a) a common agricultural policy;
(b) regional food sufficiency;
(c) an increase in the productivity of crops, livestock, fisheries and forestry for domestic consumption, exports within and outside the Common Market and as inputs to agro-based industries; and
(d) replacement of imports on a regional basis;
Article 130 of the COMESA Treaty reiterates the need for cooperation to ensure regional food security through;

(a) the harmonisation of agricultural policies of the Member States with a view to having a common agricultural policy;
(b) research, extension and the exchange of technical information and experience;
(c) agro-meteorology and climatology;
(d) the production and supply of food-stuffs;
(e) the coordination of the export and import of agricultural commodities;
In order to bridge the gap between climate change, agriculture and food security, there is need for:

1. Development of deliberate policy on adoption of Climate smart agriculture
2. Development of harmonized regional agriculture policy
3. Investment in key resilient infrastructure to boost regional trade in agricultural products.
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- Strengthened regional integration arrangements that transcend national and subnational borders holds a key role for overcoming Africa’s food import dependency and food insecurity problems.

- Under the Malabo Declaration, a strong recommitment to boost intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services was crafted to: a) triple the current level of intratrade by 2025; and b) to fast-track the establishment of Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) by 2017 and transition to a continental Common External Tariff (CET) scheme.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION