

ACP/84/048/02 Final
PAHD Dept.

Cape Town, 28 July 2002

CAPE TOWN PLAN OF ACTION

Cape Town, Republic of South Africa, 26-30th July 2002

CAPE TOWN PLAN OF ACTION

Mandate

- I. The First ACP Ministerial Forum on Research for Sustainable Development mandates the ACP Secretariat, with the support of ACP States, to use this Cape Town Plan of Action as a framework for negotiations in the preparatory meetings leading to the proposed Joint ACP-EU Ministerial Meeting scheduled for November 2002.
- II. The First ACP Ministerial Forum on Research for Sustainable Development mandates the ACP Secretariat, with the support of ACP States, to develop and improve this document as the basis for a joint ACP-EU Plan of Action on research for sustainable development. The Ministers encourage all ACP States to submit improvements through the ACP Secretariat for consideration by the appropriate ACP decision-making bodies.

Specific amendments proposed

- III. The language of the document should respect the conventions generally accepted for Plans of Action and, for this specific reason, special attention must be paid to the wording of the paragraph on institutional capacity building.
- IV. Additional input needs to be made to the areas of research with a view to widening the topics covered. The Ministers request that special attention be accorded research activities liable to have an impact on sustainable development.
- V. Specific comments and proposals made during the Ministerial Meeting may be submitted in writing to the ACP Secretariat for inclusion in the final text. The amendments should be made in accordance, *inter alia*, with the following principles: harmonisation of the text, and consistency with the Cape Town Declaration and the ACP Vision on Sustainable Development.

Introduction

- A. The ACP Vision for Sustainable Development aims to create a strong foundation for sustainable development in key strategic areas for ACP states. It provides a rationale for directed investment in research and capacity building and targets specific thematic areas to be strengthened.

- B. In order for ACP states to face the challenges to achieve sustainable development, the necessary interventions will require renewed commitments and investments consistent with people-centred development goals. The promotion and employment of applicable and emerging technologies in the various research programmes in our states, is critical to achieving this objective.
- C. In this context, it is important for ACP countries to form strong partnerships with development partners and to promote internal capacity-building to undertake research and development.
- D. We recognise that research and development flourishes where there is stable financing of research institutions over a significant period of time. This also increases the retention of researchers

Establishing Research Priorities

- E. The overall objective of our research efforts is to find solutions and improvements to the economic, social and environmental problems confronting ACP states, and to establish mechanisms for enhancing the competitiveness of our economies and improving the quality of lives of our populations.
- F. Efforts should therefore be undertaken to prioritise research activities at the national and regional level, into all aspects of development programmes needed by our countries.
- G. National science and technology policies and plans should be developed using a participatory approach that involves policy dialogue among the research community. Such policies should be further guided by appropriate diagnostic studies and surveys of the science and technology landscape.

Research Domains

- H. ACP States will develop documented research priorities at the national level. These priorities will form the basis of national and regional research priority setting. The ACP Secretariat in collaboration with national and regional bodies and other competent institutions will establish ACP research priorities for sustainable development. It is expected that this process will be developed over a five-year period.
- I. ACP consultations leading to the Cape Town Declaration have identified a number of research priority domains. These domains are intended to guide discussions with the EU and other development partners in the short-term and to enhance the setting of national and regional research priorities.

- J. The ACP has considerable technical expertise and human resources in these priority domains but faces great challenges in strengthening and enhancing the science and technology base to achieve all the goals of sustainable development. The ACP therefore seeks collaborative partnerships, research exchanges, technology transfer and institutional capacity development with its development partners. These priority domains therefore represents the major basis for discussions in matters pertaining to research and technology.
- K. At its meeting in Cape Town on 26-27 July 2002, thematic Working Groups of the ACP Forum on Research for Sustainable Development, elaborated more detailed potential areas of interest and these, among others, form the basis of engagement with the EU, drawing on the ACP Vision for Sustainable Development and the Cape Town Declaration on Research for Sustainable Development.

The research priority areas identified in the ACP Vision for Sustainable Development are:

Quality health care

1. Improved health status is a primary pre-condition to escape from the burden of poverty. It is also critical to recognise that communities have developed traditional community medicines based on their biodiversity that can be exploited. Developments in biotechnology as well as related fields create massive possibilities for improved health care and well-being. For this reason, health is a priority area for the ACP states.

Environment

2. Environmentally sound and affordable technology enhances sustainable development as it stimulates innovation and develops and endogenous capacities needed to manage processes of environmental change. ACP states therefore should address these processes such as climatic variability, loss of biodiversity, deforestation, desertification and rising sea levels, as they affect sustainable development. We encourage ACP states to undertake research activities aimed at upgrading and mainstreaming appropriate indigenous technology, as well as establishing efficient structures and mechanisms for the access and adaptation of appropriate foreign technology responding to local needs and enhancing effective environmental management.

Energy and transport

3. Affordable access to suitable, adequate and sustainable energy services is an urgent need in ACP states. This should be facilitated by the efficient and sustainable use of natural resources providing fuel, and the harnessing of renewable sources of energy such as solar, wind, hydro and biomass energy.
4. Technologically efficient and environmentally benign transport systems, able to manage transport congestion, air pollution and accidents, should be promoted in ACP states in support of sustainable development.
5. The ability to adopt and adapt such technologies requires enhanced research capacity and the strengthening of institutions in the ACP states engaged in such research.

Agriculture and Agro-industry

6. Food security at the household level is a major goal of ACP states. Strategies to increase the productivity of relevant staple food crops and value of agro-products are essential. Biotechnology and agro industrial technology can play a significant role in increasing food productivity. We therefore propose to pay particular attention to increase agricultural productivity while protecting the environment and natural resource base. Full use should be made both of new scientific research tools and communication modes including information and communication technologies and the establishment and strengthening of indigenous knowledge systems and innovations. There is also need to provide the appropriate resources to enable the farmer to participate productively in production and post-harvest management.

Sustainable Trade

7. The participation of ACP states in multilateral trade should lead to the development of the private sector, increased employment, enhanced production, supply and trading capacity of ACP states, increased investments, exploitation of new market access opportunities in the knowledge-based international markets, removal of technical barriers to the export of ACP goods and services and economic and trade cooperation with development partners which fosters sustainable development in ACP states.

8. To achieve this objective the ACP states need to undertake collaborative research with development partners such as the EU, addressing economic analyses and assessments of the trends and requirements of global trade, research into mechanisms of accessing information on global trade and international markets; obstacles to ACP exports due to technical and environmental barriers to trade; the socio-economic impact of international trade agreements and protocols on sustainable development in ACP states.

Institutional capacity building

9. Effective research, development, technology diffusion and innovation requires attention to all aspects of institutional capacity-building and the provision of predictable resources for research for sustainable development.

Research Co-ordination

10. We urge the strengthening of existing research institutions and networks and the expansion of collaboration and inter-linkages between researchers and policy-makers within ACP nations as well as intra-ACP. This would lead to substantial partnership for research with EU institutions.
11. We urge the ACP States to develop, use and promote efficient operating conditions of researchers, both at the intra-ACP, and ACP-EU levels so as to limit brain drain and develop research capacity in the relevant sectors.
12. We encourage ACP states to establish research co-ordination frameworks, with a greater utilization of the complimentary and comparative advantages of ACP regional research institutions. This will ensure that research makes a positive contribution to sustainable development in ACP states.
13. We strongly recommend the establishment of an ACP observatory on research for sustainable develop to collect and share information on the latest developments in science and technology and their applications.

Instruments for Collaborative Research

14. We urge the ACP states through their collaborative programmes with development partners and the private sector to foster the creation of regional research and innovation systems that offer sufficient support and interaction to ACP national research institutions and centres of excellence, also strengthen the existing ones.

15. We call upon development partners such as the EU, to provide enhanced opportunities for ACP nationals for sabbaticals, post-graduate research and specialist training.
16. We further urge ACP states to enter into specific collaborative technology research partnerships with development partners such as the EU in priority areas.

Intellectual Property

17. The protection and management of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) stimulates innovation and ensures that some financial returns on research investments are made. National and regional frameworks to facilitate effective IPR protection and management, should be developed in an affordable and ethical way, in ACP states. The more effective protection and management of indigenous knowledge and proper conservation of biodiversity poses significant challenges. It will be necessary to strengthen the ability of ACP states and institutions in ACP states in these areas.

Funding

18. We request the ACP Council of Ministers, to earmark and utilize available funds under the 9th EDF in collaboration with NAO's and RAO's, to initiate and facilitate the priority research domains identified in this Plan of Action.
19. We request the EU to give strongly enhanced access by ACP countries by preferential terms to the Sixth Framework Programme for Research in order to strengthen ACP participation and to achieve the objectives of this plan.
20. We urge ACP states to design and submit proposals to relevant funds that target priority research areas, e.g. the Global Fund established to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.
21. We urge the EU to establish a fund to strengthen science networks and fact-based science policy developments in ACP countries.
22. We urge the developed world to provide resources for research through the cancellation of debt of the ACP countries.

Cross-Cutting Issues

23. Water and sanitation are closely linked to health and water resources are critical for agriculture, while water utilisation has a direct impact on the environment and its sustainability. Therefore special consideration should be given to highlighting water in these domains and as a object of research for sustainable development in its own right.
24. We call upon ACP states to ensure that in all the activities and commitments to achieve sustainable development that cross-cutting issues such as the rights of women, children, the elderly, ethnic minorities, the mentally and physically challenged population, are fully incorporated.
25. Globalisation presents special challenges to ACP countries and it is therefore necessary to undertake specialised research into the impact of globalisation, using a multi-faceted approach.