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**2<sup>nd</sup> ACP Forum on Research for Sustainable Development**

**Brussels Conclusions & Recommendations on Research for  
Sustainable Development in ACP States**

## **2<sup>nd</sup> ACP FORUM ON RESEARCH FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

### **Brussels Conclusions & Recommendations on Research for Sustainable Development in ACP States**

The delegates at the 2<sup>nd</sup> ACP Forum for Research for Sustainable Development in ACP States, held from 12 to 13 October 2010 at ACP House in Brussels, Belgium hereby make the following conclusions and recommendations.

The delegates conclude that:

1. The Cape Town Declaration on Research for Sustainable Development (2002), Cape Town Consensus and Cape Town Plan of Action, laid the ground for a framework through which ACP-EU Cooperation could be enhanced in the development and utilisation of knowledge as well as the promotion of technological innovations for sustainable development in ACP States.
2. A number of intra-ACP Programmes and initiatives funded through the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund, which are relevant to the promotion of knowledge development and utilisation, have enhanced not only intra-ACP Cooperation but also ACP-EU collaboration in the spirit of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. Going forward, it is now vital that the sustainability of these initiatives and their impact is ensured.
3. The value of the discussions during the past two days, were very enriching both in terms of taking stock of progress, and in terms of providing further impetus to the ACP-EU dialogue on the importance of knowledge and innovation for development and in reinforcing ACP-EU commitment to building a sustainable partnership in science and technology. The discussions included: a review of relevant Intra-ACP Development Cooperation Programmes, a selection of regional Research and S&T Initiatives, participation in EU FP7, the ICPC NanoNet Project, the role of Academies of Sciences in research for sustainable development, and the promotion of multilingualism in the educational systems of Sub-Saharan Africa. For the future, the value of, and the need for, more regular meetings was repeatedly made, and also to allow more time for in-depth discussion and experience-sharing.

4. The launch of the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF ACP Research for Sustainable Development Programme, underlines the continued commitment of the EU within the context of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, in supporting the developmental needs of ACP States.
5. Developmental needs in ACP States require human and institutional capacities for developing, assessing, adapting, and diffusing research outcomes and technological innovations. This requires that educational and research and innovation institutions are adequately funded and integrated in the national and regional innovation systems. Measures also need to be taken in order to ensure that Research, Technological Development and Innovation (RTDI) support and promotion initiatives are gender-inclusive.
6. The role of effective structures and bodies - such as Research Councils, National Science and Technology Councils, Academies of Science and other bodies with an interest in science, technology and innovation - is crucial in the integration of the products of research, science and technology in the development process of ACP States.
7. International cooperation for sustainable development is one of the most effective frameworks for international diffusion of knowledge and technological innovation. Through international partnerships involving governments, firms, universities, and research institutes from different countries, participation and commitment can be stimulated and enhanced. More support for RTDI dissemination efforts is required in ACP States (such that there is greater awareness of all of the opportunities that are available), as well more support for the promotion of science in general.

To this end the Forum makes the following recommendations on the way forward:

8. In order to enhance the research agenda in ACP States and Regions, ACP States should consider significantly increasing their respective current funding levels towards research, Technological Development and innovation, to at least 1% of National GDP.

9. The Forum participants call on ACP development partners, including the EU to provide further support to research for sustainable development programmes in ACP countries and regions through funding, exchange programmes, training and knowledge and technology transfer. In particular, support should go towards ensuring that all ACP countries have formulated a national S&T policy that is aligned with national development goals, as well as the appropriate infrastructure for policy oversight and implementation.
10. Public/private networks and partnerships of research and innovation should be facilitated through innovative financing mechanisms and need to be grounded in national policies for sustainable development.
11. National research and development (R&D) programmes should, where possible, be geared towards sustainable development and aligned with national strategies and regional collaborative efforts. These strategies and programmes need to include robust IPR legal frameworks, policies that address ethical and safety considerations, as well as protection of indigenous knowledge, biodiversity, and cultural heritage assets unique to ACP countries.
12. There is need to strengthen existing institutional mechanisms at national and regional levels aimed at facilitating international scientific and technological co-operation. Similarly, in order to enhance their capacities, the participation of ACP States in global infrastructural partnerships should be encouraged.
13. In addition to building institutional capacity at all levels for research for sustainable development, capacity development measures are also recommended in order to assist ACP countries transform research outcomes into products and technologies that address developmental challenges. There is also a need to build and enhance ACP capacity to participate in collaborative research programmes such as the EU Framework programmes, and other international programmes of relevance to ACP countries. The South African experience in this area provides an example of how this can be achieved. Examples of possible actions could include formulating specific strategic projects within the current IncoNets CAAST-Net, EUCARINET, and PACENET.

14. Specific actions are also recommended, within the context of coherent RTDI policy frameworks, in order to put in place mechanisms by which the expertise and skills of ACP scientists and other RTDI stakeholders in the wider Diaspora can be harnessed to contribute to the development and implementation of RTDI policies in their respective ACP countries.
15. ACP Academies of Sciences, or organisations carrying out a similar function, are encouraged to foster appropriate regional networks of such Academies, such as the Network of African Science Academies (NASAC), within the context of intra-ACP Cooperation. Further, existing ACP National Academies of Sciences should provide mentorship to countries that desire the establishment of such bodies.
16. Increased intra-ACP Cooperation in research is encouraged and supported, in particular, the increased sharing of experiences and dissemination of information at regional level as well as increased access to professional training.
17. It is recommended that, ACP Senior officials responsible for the management and promotion of research for sustainable development in ACP States and Regions should meet every two years in order to monitor and evaluate the progress of actions undertaken in the context of intra-ACP and ACP-EU Cooperation, and decide on strategies for continued cooperation. Such meetings would allow greater preparation and discussion of key thematic issues of interest for the ACP Group.
18. **We mandate the Chairperson of the ACP Forum for Research for Sustainable Development to forward the Brussels Conclusions & Recommendations on Research for Sustainable Development in ACP States to the appropriate organs of the ACP Group of States for political endorsement, as well as to ACP regional integration organisations, the European Commission, and ACP Ministries responsible for Research and Innovation, for their consideration.**