

CLIMSA'21: Climate services stakeholders from the tri-continental OACPS regions come together at the ClimSA Programme inaugural forum

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2021/OACPS. Over 400 participants from the Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the Europe Union (EU) gathered to take part in the inaugural ClimSA'21 Forum from 15,16 and 18 November 2021. This fully-virtual event, with the theme of **“Connecting suppliers and users of climate information in ACP regions”**, was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Kenya.

The ClimSA'21 Forum is an activity of the Intra-ACP Climate Services and related applications programme (ClimSA), which was launched in March 2021. The Programme, with a budget of € 85 million over six years, is a joint initiative of the OACPS and the EU.

The intra-ACP ClimSA programme was established to support the climate information services value chain in the Members of the OACPS, through providing technical and financial assistance, infrastructure, and capacity-building to improve and widen access to, and use of climate information.

The first ClimSA Forum, ClimSA'21, was organised to identify and qualify the needs of stakeholders in targeted sectors of agriculture and food security, water resource management, public health, energy and disaster risk reduction. ClimSA'21 enabled stakeholders to share their experiences in the use of climate information, the challenges which they faced and their ongoing needs in matters of information and climate services in order to move towards a sustainable improvement of social and economic conditions in sensitive sectors and territories facing climate change.

During the opening ceremony, H.E. Mr Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti, OACPS Secretary-General, reiterated the OACPS' commitment to carry on with necessary efforts in the implementation of climate services and early warning systems in all the regions of the OACPS.

In his welcoming remarks, Dr. Chris Kiptoo, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, underlined the necessity to support national and regional policies to improve the early warning actions for the benefit of the community, as well as the role of technology and tailored climate services to address the needs of the final users.

Ms. Carla Montesi, Director in charge of the Green Deal and Digital Agenda, (DG INTPA - European Commission), reminded the audience of the EU's deep commitment to innovation, partnership and improving the value of climate services, and highlighted the importance of the cooperation to advance the climate change agenda.

Mr. Maxx Dille, Director at the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), reminded participants of WMO's commitment to support all stakeholders and to create a conducive environment for data, broadcast networks, delivery of information and production of tailored climate services to all final users. Dr Dille also urged all stakeholders to work together to improve climate services. This needs an urgent action, since the extreme climate events are increasing and their impacts are being witnessed everywhere. He ended by saying that more resources are needed to build resilience to reduce the impacts.

Overview of the ClimSA'21 Forum

Day 1:

Focused on the progress report of the implementation of the ClimSA Programme since its launch in March 2021, deliberations on the **first day** laid the scientific background for a framework to generate more informed decision-making. The Programme also launched the Caribbean ClimSA component implemented by the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH). Some Caribbean member states highlighted the valuable collaboration existing between CIMH and the National Meteorological Services. Other topics discussed included climate information for decision making, public-private sector commitment, gender equality, innovative solutions and new technologies for the preparedness of member states in their response to climate change.

Day 2:

The **second day** was dedicated to exchanges between users and suppliers of climate services and the identification of user needs and requirements to move towards a sustainable improvement of socio-economic conditions of the most vulnerable to climate change impacts.

Day 3:

On the final day, participants defined their expectations and the challenges to be overcome; they also outlined opportunities to improve the Programme's quality of service.

Recommendations:

As main outputs, the Forum formulated nine operational recommendations:

- To build capacity in Decision Support Systems (DSS) for sector-specific priorities of the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS);
- To improve adapted dissemination means for climate information at the regional, national and community levels;
- To increase capacity to develop climate smart agriculture in relevant sectors;
- To strengthen end-to-end Early Warning Systems (EWS) including community-based EWS;
- To convene a regional stakeholder workshop between climate experts and socio-economic sector representatives to define and validate the user requirements;
- To encourage Regional Climate Centers to extend the services to all GFCS priority sectors;
- Operationalise a collaborative platform between Climate and Health sectors to promote co-design and co-production;
- To implement a Hydrological Status and Outlook System (hydrosos) initiative;
- To assist National Hydro-Meteorological Services (NHMS) for institutional capacity to extend its mandate in the full GFCS sector priorities.

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About OACPS

The Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (OACPS) is the world's largest group of developing countries. Since 5 April 2020, the ACP Group of States officially became the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). This follows the entry-into-force of the revised Georgetown Agreement which was endorsed by the ACP Heads of States at the 9th Summit of ACP Heads of States and Government in December 2019, in Nairobi, Kenya. The Organisation is composed of 79 states, consisting of 48 countries from sub-Saharan Africa, 16 from the Caribbean, and 15 from the Pacific. Members of the OACPS include 47 Least Developed Countries (LDCs), 38 Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) and 15 Landlocked LDCs. These countries and regions have contributed less than most others to climate change, but they are also more vulnerable to changing weather patterns, rising sea levels, and extreme weather events.

About Intra-ACP ClimSA Programme

The Intra-ACP Climate Services and related applications programme (ClimSA) is an initiative of the Organisation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) funded under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) to strengthen the climate services value chain: from access to information, generation and provision of climate services to engagement and capacity of users to ensure utilisation of these services. For that purpose, the intervention aims to provide, among others, technical support, capacity building, institution strengthening and, awareness, for eight Regional Climate Centres in

the six ACP regions.

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