

PRESS RELEASE: ACP Open Day to highlight climate change and economic development

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PRESS RELEASE, 6 October 2011: The Second Open Day of the Sustainable Economic Development and Trade Department (SEDT) is scheduled for Tuesday 11 October at the ACP House in Brussels.

The one-day event aims to bring together African, Caribbean and Pacific embassies and regional organizations, along with leaders of various Programme Management Units and facilities to exchange information on ways to improve access to these facilities, including funding opportunities.

Given the multifaceted effects of climate change on the sustainable development of ACP states, this year's Open Day will focus on climate change.

"The reality is that climate change is a major global concern, and even more so in Least Developed Countries (LDC's) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), many of which are ACP members. The frequency and intensity of severe weather events such as droughts, hurricanes, and rising sea levels not only threaten lives, but economies as well. Livelihoods built for generations on particular patterns of farming, fishing and trading may quickly become impossible," said ACP Assistant Secretary General and Head of SEDT Mr Achille Bassilekin III.

Recent ACP-EU outcomes, such as the ACP/EU declaration in May 2009 and several Joint Parliamentary Assembly resolutions, have placed climate change as a priority issue. Mr Bassilekin added that increased awareness has also brought about interest in "green economies", which needs to be developed and promoted in the ACP region.

The Open Day intends to deepen understanding of the economic effects of climate change in ACP countries, and to familiarise participating delegations with the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA), an EU initiative to address climate change-related problems.

Discussions will feature an overview of opportunities and challenges faced by ACP countries, followed by brief presentations on various programmes in three key areas:

1. **Interconnections between climate change and natural resource management** – ACP Fish II Programme, ACP-EU Water Facility, Multilateral Environment Agreement (MEA), ACP-FLEGT Support Programme, African Monitoring of Environment for Sustainable Development Programme (AMESD) and Forest Research Network (FORENET);
2. **Climate change and trade-related issues** – Trade.Com Facility, Programme Initiative Pesticide (PIP), Support to the Multilateral Trading System Programme (ACP-MTS), EU-ACP Programme on Development of ACP Systems (EDES), ACP Sugarcane Research Programme (SRP), Pan SPSO, All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme (AAP) and SPINAP-AHI;
3. **Impact of climate change on private sector development and investment** – ACP Business Climate Facility (BizClim), EU-ACP Microfinance Business Programme, ProInvest, ACP-EU Energy Facility, Global Index insurance Facility (GIIIF) and the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund.

The Open Day is held in anticipation of two upcoming major international events, including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP 17 in Durban, South Africa (28 November to 9 December 2011) and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) or Rio+20 in Brazil (June 2012).

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