

The African Regional Economic Communities and Africa-EU STI Cooperation

Second CAAST-Net Plus Workshop with the African Regional Economic Communities, Science Academies and the ERAfrica Initiative

3 April 2016 | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Report and Recommendations



caast-net-plus.org

Building Bi-regional Partnerships for Global Challenges



CAAST-Net Plus is funded by the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement n° 311806. This document reflects only the author's views and the European Union cannot be held liable for any use that may be made of the information contained herein.

Author(s): Ms Phumelele Higgins (DST), Ms Refilwe Mashigo (DST)

Organisation Name(s): Department of Science and Technology of South Africa (DST)

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Context	3
Participants	4
Workshop Objectives	4
Welcome and Presentations	4
The ERAfrica Initiative	5
Network of African Science Academies	6
European Academies Science Advisory Council	6
African Academies of Sciences	6
Regional Economic Communities	7
Summary of Workshop Conclusion	9
Follow-up Actions, Desired Results and Responsibility and Support Roles	10
Appendix A: Participant list	14

Notes to Reader

1. Presentations delivered by the RECs, science academies and Africa-EU project partners can be downloaded from the following link: <https://caast-net-plus.org/object/news/1536>

2. For a comprehensive report from the first CAAST-Net Plus workshop with RECs, go to: https://caast-net-plus.org/object/news/1473/attach/D4_2_3_CN_Feb2016_Pretoria_Wkshop_with_RECs_Final_v2.pdf

Introduction

The second CAAST-Net Plus workshop with Africa's Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and science academies took place at the Hilton Hotel in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 3 April 2016. The workshop was a follow on of the first workshop between CAAST-Net Plus, the science academies and RECs, which was held in February 2016 at the Farm Inn in Pretoria, South Africa. This report summarises the second workshop's content and recommendations.



[Image credit: I. Wagner/CAAST-Net Plus]

Context

Since its inception in 2008 as CAAST-Net, several engagements have been held between EU stakeholders and REC representatives to foster the regional blocs' participation in Africa-EU science, technology and innovation (STI) programmes.

Box 1: Info on CAAST-Net Plus engagement with the RECs and science academies

CAAST-Net Plus Workshop with the African Regional Economic Communities (4-5 February 2015)

Second CAAST-Net Plus Engagement with RECs, Science Academies and ERAfrica (3 April 2016)

Presentation: Role of RECs in Africa-EU Collaboration in STI (Anneline Morgan, Department of Science and Technology, South Africa)

Presentation: Role of Academies of Science in Addressing Global Sustainability Challenges (Dr Mohamed H.A. Hassan, InterAcademy Partnership)

For info on CAAST-Net engagement with the RECs search the CAAST-Net Bulletin archive

Involving both the RECs and science academies in Africa-EU STI engagements represents an important opportunity for CAAST-Net Plus. The RECs aim to fulfil objectives that are aligned to the African Union's Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA-2024), and they play a crucial role in the promotion of African economic integration. The science academies represent one of the potential channels in and through which REC STI objectives can be addressed, and are also able to offer ideas on the mechanisms and options for the RECs in engaging in STI cooperation within their respective regions and beyond. In this context, CAAST-Net Plus has

continued to build on the legacy of CAAST-Net by organising and supporting strategic engagement with the RECs and science academies.

Participants

- African Union Commission (AUC)
- European Commission (EC)
- Southern African Development Community (SADC)
- Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)
- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
- East African Community (EAC)
- Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)
- Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD)
- Ghana's African Academy of Sciences (AAS)
- South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF)
- Network of African Science Academies (NASAC)
- European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC)
- Finland's University of Jyväskylä (JYU)
- Project Management Agency at the German Aerospace Centre (DLR-PT)
- Centre for Social Innovation (Austria) (ZSI)
- Research Africa (RA)

A full list of workshop participants is given in Appendix A.

Workshop Objectives

- Exchange experiences, information and ideas on the mechanisms and options for RECs to engage in Africa-EU cooperation in STI;
- Explore potential synergies and/or areas of collaboration between RECs and Science Academies within the ERAfrica Initiative and the activities of National Contact Points (NCPs);
- Facilitate dialogue between RECs and their European counterparts on co-funded opportunities with the aim of informing the AU's Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024) implementation process; and,
- Discuss further participation in the second phase of the ERAfrica Initiative for joint bi-regional cooperation in STI.

Welcome and Presentations

The meeting kicked off with a welcoming address by **Dr Mahama Ouedraogo** representing the African Union Commission (AUC) and **Mr Stéphane Hogan** representing the European Commission (EC). In their opening remarks, the role of the delegates in attendance was highlighted as crucial in adding value to the process of enhancing bi-regional cooperation. As part of the opening remarks, **Mr Stefan A. Haffner** of the Project Management Agency at the German Aerospace Centre (DLR-PT) gave a brief background of the preceding meeting in South Africa. Mr Haffner indicated that the South Africa meeting had set the tone for future dialogue between RECs, academies of science, and the ERAfrica Initiative – a group of actors aiming to develop joint funding schemes between European and African programme owners for supporting joint bi-regional STI initiatives.

After the scene-setting, the ERAfrica Initiative, RECs and science academy representatives had the opportunity to share their work, STI strategies and programmes, and interests in EU-Africa STI collaboration. What follows below are brief summaries of the presentations on the ERAfrica Initiative, NASAC, EASAC, AAS, and a consolidated RECs presentation.

The ERAfrica Initiative

Dr Aldo Stroebel from South Africa's National Research Foundation (NRF) presented on the ERA-NET ERAfrica – a project funded by both European and African countries with the intention to collaborate on research projects and capacity building – and the ERAfrica Initiative that evolved from a group of funders of the original ERAfrica project.

Stroebel indicated that one of the most important components that set ERAfrica apart was that it had a strong joint funding commitment and co-responsibility. During the first CAAST-Net Plus and RECs meeting in South Africa, participants had expressed interest in continuing with that approach, and the subsequent steps would be to determine how their participation in the ERAfrica Initiative would look like. He indicated that the two research themes that were endorsed under the ERAfrica call were food and nutrition security and resilience. The secretariat of the ERAfrica Initiative was in the process of drafting a second call for proposals, and insodoing would motivate for regional funding and harmonisation of STI programmes. Twenty African and European government and research funding institutions had indicated their interest in the second call.

Stroebel also delivered a brief summary on the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI), which is a 5-year initiative supported by the NRF, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The SGCI aims to strengthen the capacities of science granting councils in sub-Saharan Africa in order to support research and evidence-based policies that will contribute to economic and social development.

Discussion Points

The European Commission has provided seed funding to African and European partners who submitted a proposal towards a new ERA-NET Co-Fund in 2016. The allocation of these funds were determined by funding commitments of the consortia of partners. The RECs and science academies expressed an interest in this ERA-NET Co-Fund and requested more information on how they could participate.

It was indicated that the next ERAfrica Initiative call should emphasise joint programmes and support the implementation of programmes under the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on Science, Technology and Innovation (HLPD).

Science academies could be used as a platform for formulating and harmonising science policies.

More information would be helpful on the funding of the calls, and how they (science academies and RECs) could participate in the ERAfrica Initiative.

The impact of research on society needs to be harnessed by science academies and the RECs. This should entail identifying approaches for the translation of research results into policy-informing perspectives.

The delegates were not in a position to commit any funding for the ERAfrica Initiative but expressed an interest in providing in-kind contribution such as assistance in policy reviews and participating in key policy dialogues. They called for alignment with what is already happening in the academies and RECs.

Network of African Science Academies

Dr Jackie Olang from NASAC delivered a brief overview on the potential role that NASAC could play in jointly identifying research agendas, priorities and future plans for the bi-regional STI collaboration. She outlined the following key activities which could inform the current Africa-EU research and innovation landscape:

- Serving as a panel of experts in a number of programmes focusing on areas such as climate change and women in science.
- Functioning as a dialogue platform for researchers and policy-makers.
- Providing policy booklets to policy-making institutions.
- Enhancing visibility of research successes.
- Involving the science sector in policy deliberations.

At a national context NASAC already:

- Collaborates on science for Africa, i.e. how to improve society and make it relevant for solving daily activities.
- Strives to be a partner or a source of support in national governance policy-making.
- Recognises scientists in various scientific fields.

At a regional level NASAC:

- Promotes regional strategic agendas.
- Provides scientific advisory documents to African policy and decision-makers.
- Engages in policy dialogue to inform economic development actions.
- Contributes to international and global platforms.

In a programmatic context, Olang indicated that there are some prospects for academies to collaborate with the EU-Africa programme. She further mentioned that they are currently involved in a programme on food nutrition security and agriculture. Through the programme's activities, they could contribute positively to the work of the HLPD on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture.

European Academies Science Advisory Council

The presentation was delivered by **Ms Christiane Diehl**, a representative of the EASAC Secretariat. In her presentation she noted that EASAC is a collection of academies in EU Member States. The purpose of this body is to provide independent advice to the EU although it is not funded by the EU. EASAC mainly focuses on the following objectives:

- Guide EU policy-making.
- Provide detailed analysis of Europe's most respected scientists.
- Produce publications designed for a policy oriented audience and the EU. These journals are targeted at EU agencies and focuses on science for policy and policy ranked for science.
- Timely offering of science-based analysis and advice.
- Coordination of science academies in the EU Member States.
- Identify networks of excellence in Europe.
- Collaborate with the national academies.

African Academies of Sciences

Dr Tom Kariuki described the AAS, which is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, as a 'pan-African organisation'. The AAS recognises individuals who have reached the highest level of excellence in their field of expertise and have made contributions to the advancement of science on the continent. These individuals are recognised on merit and designated as Fellows of the Academy. The organisation has a strategic partnership with the African Union and New Partnership for Africa's

Development (NEPAD) through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and is partnering with the African Union on Agenda 2063 and STISA-2024. The main focus of the organisation is to recognise scientific excellence and function as a think tank for STI in Africa. Its key thematic focus areas include:

- Climate Change;
- Health and Well-being;
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM);
- Water and Sanitation;
- Food Security and Nutritional Well-being; and,
- Sustainable Energy.

Discussion Points

There is exponential growth of new young academies, and these should not go unnoticed.

Matured science academies should support newly established academies.

National academies should also consider focusing on universities and there should be linkages between the two sectors, including other STI agencies.

There is a need to differentiate between 'science for policy' and 'policy for science'.

Regional Economic Communities

Speaking on behalf of the RECs, **Ms Anneline Morgan** from the SADC Secretariat shared a brief summary of the RECs' activities and strategies in STI. Her presentation provided an outline of the common outputs amongst the RECs, which focused on the following:

- Governance systems and partnerships.
- RECs operations aligned with African Union agendas.
- Linkages with the United Nations agencies.
- Sectoral policies guiding RECs operations at national level.

Common themes within RECs

The following were perceived as the common thematic interests between the RECs:

- Regional integration is at the heart of all RECs. It is a process in which neighbouring states enter into an agreement in order to enhance cooperation through common institutions and rules. The terms of this agreement could range from economic to political to environmental areas of collaboration, although it has typically taken the form of a political economic initiative, where commercial interests are the focus for achieving broader socio-political and security objectives, as defined by national governments.
- STI policy harmonisation across all RECs.
- The regional bodies have come up with programmes to raise awareness in STI such as national science weeks.
- The promotion of STEM through a number of targeted programmes.
- A number of programmes are set up to address STI human capacity development.
- Support for research and development (R&D) and innovation.
- Research and infrastructure development to address inadequacies in STI infrastructure.
- Leverage funding for STI and designing new ways to implement new funding instruments.
- Development of National Systems of Innovation (NSI).
- Leveraging strategic partnerships that are to the benefit of all RECs.

Challenges

Common challenges faced by the RECs include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of capacity i.e. limited resources.
- Dual membership of Member States in different REC architectures.
- Inadequate political will to support STI engagements.
- Lack of commitment in funding for STI.
- Absence of institutional frameworks supporting STI e.g. legal and regulatory frameworks within the RECs.

Potential areas of collaboration within the ERAfrica Initiative

Participants agreed that the following areas are important for all RECs and could be facilitated through the ERAfrica platform:

- Climate change;
- Water;
- Health;
- Human capacity development;
- STI policy training; and,
- STI indicators to support evidence-based policy.

Discussion Points

Participants agreed to support the implementation of policies and development of strategies relevant to the EU-Africa STI partnership programmes across the regions, i.e. the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES).

RECs could consider prioritising joint STI funding to implement STI programmes and to advance their respective R&I outputs.

There is a need to expand and/or develop regional Research Chairs and Centres of Excellence in areas of common challenges, e.g. climate change, agriculture, etc., in the context of Africa-EU partnerships.

Ongoing policy dialogue between the RECs and European partners on issues such as the HLPD and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are essential.

Good practices in strategic STI collaboration should be shared between science academies and the RECs.

The development of R&D infrastructures is key in ensuring Africa is well enabled and has the necessary capacity to engage in STI partnerships, both within Africa and in EU-Africa programmes, i.e. taking stock of what is existing and sharing and expanding STI infrastructure.

Mobilising women and youth in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) is critical.

Summary of Workshop Conclusion

Participants at the workshop had the opportunity to engage on possible actions to enhance their respective involvement in EU-Africa STI programmes and related engagements. The **actions itemised in the table overleaf** were expressed by RECs and science academy representatives, as pathways to enhancing RECs and science academies participation in continental and Africa-EU research and innovation cooperation. Although the responsibility lies with all stakeholders involved in the STI partnership i.e. RECs representatives, private sector, academia, science academies and STI project coordinators, etc., to ensure the partnership is proactive, inclusive and consultative, a **key stakeholder is suggested to take the lead responsibility in the process**, whilst receiving support from the other partners.

Follow-up Actions, Desired Results and Responsibility and Support Roles

#	ACTION	RESULT	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	SUPPORT
1.	Establish synchronised strategies between stakeholders. Consider doing research in consultation with other actors i.e. sharing ideas with and receiving inputs from the public and private sector.	Collectively addressing common challenges and finding solutions for mutual benefit.	African Union European Commission	Science academies RECs
2.	Continued dialogue between RECs and science academies in Africa-EU collaboration in STI policy and practice.	A 'platform' for all stakeholders to engage and stay informed about current landscape and future activities, and share ideas towards an enhanced bi-regional STI partnership.	CAAST-Net Plus	African Union Commission European Commission Science academies RECs
3.	Support in capacity development from African Union to RECs.	Enhancing RECs' capacities to be operational at national, regional, continental and inter-continental level.	RECs	African Union Commission
4.	Involve science academies and RECs in subsequent ERAfrica meetings, as they are potential collaboration partners.	Added support and garnering potential funders from science academies could strengthen ERAfrica's outputs.	CAAST-Net Plus	African Union Commission
5.	Establishment of regional funds for STI collaboration with international support, e.g. European Development Fund, African Development Bank, Swedish International Development Agency, USAID, UN agencies, Japan International Cooperation Agency, etc.	More funding for mutual STI thematic areas, i.e. in food security, poverty, health, etc.	RECs	African Union Commission

#	ACTION	RESULT	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	SUPPORT
6.	Establishment of national systems of innovation (NSI) and raising investments in STI from African side.	Synchronised NSIs will gradually complement activities between different regions.	RECs	African Union Commission Science academies
7.	Monitoring and evaluation of RECs STI engagements.	Formulation and sharing of good practices and lessons learnt for future STI engagements.	RECs	African Union Commission Science academies
8.	Foster collaboration between Specialised Scientific Committees and the RECs, science academies and NASAC and EASAC.	Enhanced collaboration across all scientific bodies in Africa and Europe.	CAAST-Net Plus	Science academies RECs
9.	Build more 'Science Parks' as these can accelerate research outputs.	Acceleration of research outputs, which will contribute towards a growth in global knowledge economy.	Science academies	RECs African Union Commission
10.	Establish potential areas of collaboration in support of addressing specific areas in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as they could be broad in scope.	Collective action in addressing common challenges. Collaborative action can yield the necessary solutions in a timely manner.	African Union	RECs European Commission Science academies
11.	Scale up research results produced by already existing projects, and focus on ongoing research that can be funded to produce further research for policy advice.	Increased research uptake to inform STI policies.	RECs	Science academies African Union Commission European Commission

#	ACTION	RESULT	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	SUPPORT
12.	Adoption of common standards, search terms, criteria, etc., using a front-end database linked to each individual academy.	Uniformity/harmonization and ease of searching on research topics. Database could assist in displaying scientific capacities in Africa as a broader Africa-EU Knowledge Management and Communication System (KMCS).	CAAST-Net Plus	Science academies African Union Commission European Commission
13.	Development of a research funding portal, i.e. the ERAfrica Initiative portal, as an optional mechanism for research funding collaboration.	Coordination and alignment of funding for Africa-Europe STI collaboration activities.	CAAST-Net Plus	RECs African Union European Commission
14.	Promotion of evidence-based STI policy formulation.	Policies informed by science can result in policies that effectively address societal challenges, moreover at grassroots level.	Science academies	CAAST-Net Plus
15.	Produce joint policy briefs on STI and a platform to present findings thereof.	Sharing of information and ideas for policy.	RECs	Science academies CAAST-Net Plus
16.	Continue engagements with the private sector and business representatives in STI-related matters, and consider innovation and strategic partnerships in linking STI to trade and industry. Non-traditional funders, e.g. civil society organizations, philanthropic organisations could also be considered.	Increase in funding and support for STI activities.	RECs	Science academies

#	ACTION	RESULT	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY	SUPPORT
17.	Define and clarify the role of the private sector in research and innovation activities.	RECs STI strategies could be informed by private sectors' interests and/or vice versa. Private sector and research representatives could as a result, agree on shared interests as a basis for their collaboration.	Private sector	Science academies RECs
18.	Involve academia in establishing STI partnerships.	Common research agenda setting and sharing of research results to inform STI stakeholders.	Science academies	RECs

Appendix A: Participant list

	NAME	INSTITUTION	COUNTRY
1.	Dr Jean Albergel	Centre national de la Recherche Scientifique – L’Institut de recherche pour le développement (CNRS-IRD)	France
2.	Ms Christiane Diehl	European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC)	Germany
3.	Mr Stefan A. Haffner	German Aerospace Center Project Management Agency (PT-DLR)	Germany
4.	Ms Phumelele Higgins	Department of Science and Technology (DST)	South Africa
5.	Mr Stéphane Hogan	European Commission (EC)	Ethiopia
6.	Dr Mohamed Jeenah	Innovation Netx	South Africa
7.	Dr Tom Kariuki	African Academy of Sciences (AAS)	Kenya
8.	Ms Prudence Makhura	National Research Foundation (NRF)	South Africa
9.	Mr Hambani Masheleni	African Union Commission (AUC)	Ethiopia
10.	Ms Anneline Morgan	Southern African Developing Countries (SADC)	Botswana
11.	Dr Valanathan Munsami	Department of Science and Technology (DST)	South Africa
12.	Mr Benedict Musengele	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)	Kenya
13.	Dr Palmer Netongo	Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)	Cameroon
14.	Ms Gertrude Ngabirano	East African Science and Technology Commission (EASTCO)	Rwanda
15.	Ms Jacqueline Olang	Network of African Academy of Sciences (NASAC)	Kenya
16.	Ms Vinny Pillay	Department of Science and Technology (DST)	Brussels
17.	Ms Melissa Plath	University of Jyväskylä (JyU)	Finland
18.	Dr Mahama Ouedraogo	African Union Commission (AUC)	Ethiopia
19.	Mr Gerard Ralphs	Research Africa (RA)	South Africa
20.	Dr Aldo Stroebe	National Research Foundation (NRF)	South Africa
21.	Ms Isabella Wagner	Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI)	Austria
22.	Ms Valentine Atonde	Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS)	Ethiopia
23.	Dr Kebede Kassa	Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)	Ethiopia
24.	Ms Nomatamsanqa Sopazi	Southern African Developing Countries / African Union (SADC/AU)	Ethiopia