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Address: A307 Gate House, Black River Park, Observatory, 7925, South Africa
Phone: +27 (0)21 447 5484  Fax: +27 (0)21 447 9152  Email: info@research-africa.net
Website: www.researchresearch.com/africa
In April of this year the Africa-EU research and innovation partnership, under the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, reached a substantial milestone. Senior officials meeting in Addis Ababa at the third High-Level Policy Dialogue on STI adopted a roadmap on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture that will guide bi-regional cooperation in the years to come.³

CAAST-Net Plus and its partners have been supporting the evolving bi-regional partnership since it emerged following the first HLPD meeting in 2010. We have also played a role in developing the FNSSA roadmap by supporting the expert working group charged with contributing to its contents.

Our close involvement doesn’t end there. Back-to-back with this year’s HLPD meeting in Ethiopia was the third CAAST-Net Plus stakeholder forum, organised jointly with the Bureau of the HLPD. Its role? To debate the shaping of a multi-stakeholder platform that will take forward the implementation of the FNSSA roadmap and its accompanying partnership. In the coming months, as CAAST-Net Plus draws to a close at the end of 2016, much of our effort will be dedicated to assuring the FNSSA partnership gets off onto a sure footing, helping to put in place the foundations of what we all expect will be a long-term, sustainable and fruitful bi-regional collaboration.

One of the pillars of the FNSSA partnership is going to be knowledge management and communication. What has become evident to all as the partnership develops is that, while there is a mountain of knowledge being generated by our collaborative efforts, it seems that it isn’t readily accessible and isn’t being optimally used to inform policy, improve food systems and processes, expand product ranges, markets and trade, or to support innovation for social and economic gain and environmental protection.

CAAST-Net Plus partners have taken on the challenge, with the backing of the European Commission and HLPD Bureau, of developing a blueprint for a Knowledge Management and Communication System (KMCS), and later this year we will be hosting our final stakeholder forum with the KMCS as the central theme. In this context we will be engaging with as many of the existing platforms as we can identify to ensure an inclusive and participatory process.

It’s not only in the specific context of the FNSSA partnership that CAAST-Net Plus is developing interventions to strengthen bi-regional collaboration. In health, CAAST-Net Plus partners are collaborating with the Council on Health Research for Development to advance the Research Fairness Initiative (RFI).⁴ The RFI is a reporting system that encourages governments, business, organisations and funders to describe how they take measures to create trusting, lasting, transparent and effective partnerships in research and innovation. In the area of climate change, project partners are taking forward the conclusions of three years of consultation, which are encapsulated in the Bergen report.⁵ Our goal? To shape a dedicated platform that joins up academia, business, civil society and government for improving, enhancing and for strengthening the coordination and funding of Africa-Europe research and innovation.

Looking ahead to our final six months, we will be redoubling our efforts to ensure that we achieve the goals we have set for ourselves. As always, we look forward to your continued support and engagement.

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³ Dr Andrew Cherry is Senior Scientific Officer at the Association of Commonwealth Universities and the CAAST-Net Plus Coordinator.
⁴ Dr Eric Mwangi is Research Scientist and Policy Advisor at the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the CAAST-Net Plus Africa Region Coordinator.
⁵ http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jp
⁶ http://rfi.cohred.org/
⁷ http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jp
The decision was taken at a senior officials meeting of the HLPD held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 4 and 5 April 2016.

According to a press release disseminated on 7 April after the eighth College-to-College meeting between the European Commission and the African Union Commission, the partnership will contribute to the Human Development priority area of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy.

“[The EC and AUC] welcomed the adoption of a Roadmap by the Africa-EU High Level Policy Dialogue on science, technology and innovation, and the launch of a jointly funded and co-owned EU-Africa Partnership on Research and Innovation on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture,” the release says.

“This initiative is in line with the agriculture and food systems’ policy goals of the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy, as well as the relevant sectoral strategic frameworks – namely the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA-2014), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Malabo Declaration for Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Prosperity.”

The implementation of the partnership was brainstormed on 5 and 6 April at a stakeholder forum organised by CAAST-Net Plus with and for the HLPD Bureau and working in collaboration with the RINEA, PROIntensAfrica and PAERPARD projects.

“What makes this partnership different from other initiatives is that it has been jointly designed right from scratch, will be jointly funded, and is envisaged as a long-term collaboration,” said Nienke Buisman, a policy officer in the European Commission’s research directorate, in an interview with Research Africa.

To learn more about what was said at the stakeholder forum, visit the CAAST-Net Plus Twitter feed (@CAAST_Net_Plus).

All the background information related to the stakeholder forum and the partnership can be accessed from the RINEA website (http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jn).

Read the full Research Africa article published on *Research Professional* “EU and Africa join forces on food and nutrition research” (7 April 2016) (http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jm).

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New Beginnings

**HLPD approves partnership roadmap**

The EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on STI has launched a new research and innovation partnership on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture.

The decision was taken at a senior officials meeting of the HLPD held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 4 and 5 April 2016.

According to a press release disseminated on 7 April after the eighth College-to-College meeting between the European Commission and the African Union Commission, the partnership will contribute to the Human Development priority area of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy.

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Read the full Research Africa article published on *Research Professional* “EU and Africa join forces on food and nutrition research” (7 April 2016) (http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jm).

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1 Gerard Ralphs is Partnership and Project Manager at *Research Africa.*
The African Union Commission’s Research Grants programme is seeking proposals from eligible partnerships for research and innovation on sustainable agricultural intensification.

The call, which was launched on 18 May 2016, is financed through the AUC’s Pan-African Programme.

“This call for proposal supports Africa’s Science Technology and Innovation Strategy-2024 which addresses the aspirations identified under Agenda 2063 and Priority 3 on Human development of the EU-Africa partnership. The call supports research on: Food & Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) with particular attention on Sustainable Intensification,” the AUC’s website says.

“The overall objectives of this call for proposals are to deploy science, technology and innovation in the agricultural sector as a tool for Africa’s sustainable economic growth, wealth creation, and food and nutrition security, as well as political stability,” the work programme says. Specific research topics in which collaborative projects will be supported include:

+ ecological intensification processes;
+ research on animal and crop health, including fish; and,
+ research on appropriate use of soil, water, land and inputs management practices.

“The African Union Research Grants is one of the programmes initiated within the Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology to support Pan-African research and development through grants and direct funding,” according to the AUC. “The programme provides the needed opportunity to use Science and Technology as a tool for sustainable development, building and strengthening Africa’s S&T capacities.”

A second AURG call for proposals will be launched in 2017.

[Image Credit: Flickr/Tim Cronin for Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)]
The second CAAST-Net Plus workshop with Africa’s Regional Economic Communities, African and European science academies and the ERAfrica Initiative took place at the Hilton Hotel in Addis Ababa on 3 April 2016.

The convening followed a first meeting, held in Pretoria in February 2016, at which it was agreed to involve the ERAfrica Initiative in the CAAST-Net Plus discussion with the RECs and science academies. Participants at the April event heard specifically about the current programmes of the science academies, the ongoing efforts of the RECs to promote regional science agendas, and plans for the development of the ERAfrica Initiative (see list of presentations on next page).

“All the RECs realise the importance of science but not all of them are sure about how to engage with science issues,” said Anneline Morgan, who is the SADC Secretariat’s science representative.

“Partnerships serve as a platform for our institutions to gain an entry point into cooperation processes,” she said.

More Seats at ERAfrica Initiative Table

Championed by South Africa’s National Research Foundation (NRF) and the Project Management Agency of the German Aerospace Center (DLR-PT), and building on the results and experiences of the ERAfrica project, the new ERAfrica Initiative is an informal network of collaborators from Africa and the EU who are exploring the creation of a new platform for supporting bi-regional research and innovation.

“The ERAfrica Initiative was identified during the workshop as an emerging platform for hosting several initiatives, policy dialogues and for the development of tailored instruments for advancing Africa-EU collaboration in STI,” said the German Aerospace Center’s Stefan A. Haffner, speaking after the workshop.
“Common funding responsibility, common identification of research topics, common ownership makes the ERAfrica Initiative unique, flexible and cost efficient. Its strength is its independence and that it is a thematically open platform of actors for identifying relevant fields of research and innovation and for initiating and managing the support of bi-regional projects.”

The next meeting of interested parties will take place in the second half of 2016 (for the official dates, watch the CAAST-Net Plus website calendar).

### Presentations

- **The ERAfrica Initiative**
  Dr Aldo Stroebel, National Research Foundation of South Africa
  [http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iJ](http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iJ)

- **The Network of African Science Academies**
  Jackie Olang, Network of African Science Academies
  [http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iK](http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iK)

- **The European Academies’ Science Advisory Council and Africa-EU Cooperation in STI**
  Dr Christiane Diehl, European Academies Science Advisory Council
  [http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iL](http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iL)

- **The Programmes of the African Academy of Science**
  Dr Tom Karuki, African Academy of Science
  [http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iM](http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iM)

- **Role of RECs in Africa-EU Collaboration in STI**
  Anneline Morgan, SADC Secretariat
  [http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iN](http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iN)

### Participants

**RECs represented:**
- SADC: Southern African Development Community
- IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development
- COMESA: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
- EAC: East Africa Community
- ECCAS: Economic Community of Central African States
- ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States

**Science academies represented:**
- NASAC: Network of African Science Academies
- AAS: African Academy of Science
- EASAC: European Academies Science Advisory Council

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Dr Mahama Ouedraogo of the African Union’s Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology addresses workshop participants.

[Image credit: Research Africa/CAAST-Net Plus]
Impact Studies

J. Haselip & T. Spangsberg

This report provides a critical evaluation of the scope, coordination, communication and uptake of Europe-Africa bi-regional research cooperation in addressing the joint European Union and African Union priorities for climate change mitigation and adaptation. The main focus is on bi-regional research funded through the European Commission’s Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes. The analysis considers the extent to which research knowledge is being used to inform policymakers in developing effective responses to climate change, as well as whether and how bi-regional research and development outputs are being translated into technologies, goods and services.

http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jq

J. A. Francis & A. Talleh

This report showcases the key findings from an analysis of research cooperation between Europe and sub-Saharan Africa in food and nutrition security (FNS). The analysis was conducted within the framework of the CAAST-Net Plus project. Our research has sought to investigate two issues: first, the extent to which joint EU-SSA research cooperation supported by the EU’s Framework Programmes, bilateral programmes of the EU’s member states, and private research funds has impacted on Africa-EU joint FNS priorities; and, second, the extent to which research outputs have been used in policy-making, programme planning and implementation, building capacity and contributing to knowledge generation, and supporting innovation in products, processes and markets for increasing impact on FNS outcomes.

http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jr

J. Ouma-Mugabe, C. IJsselmuiden, N. Musolino, K. Kuss, E. Mwangi & G. Gichini

This study maps the landscape of health R&I cooperation, placing emphasis on initiatives financed through the European Commission’s Sixth and Seventh Framework Programmes and the ACP Science and Technology Programme, while also offering a glance at bilateral cooperation initiatives. The overall aim of the study is to analyse the extent to which health R&I cooperation supported by the framework programmes, by other major bi-regional programmes, and to a lesser extent by bilateral programmes, is addressing agreed joint health R&I priorities, is fostering the uptake and translation of research results by the private sector, and is being used to inform policymakers.

http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jt

Action Research

I. Barugahara, A. Cherry, S. A. Haffner, J. Haselip, C. Mailula, N. Musolino, A. Tostenen & I. Wagner

This publication contains the findings and recommendations for decision-makers that emerged from discussion at the first CAAST-Net Plus stakeholder forum. The forum convened 60 African and European experts working across three global challenge areas of special interest for CAAST-Net Plus, including food and nutrition security, climate change, and health. The findings and recommendations presented here focus on the development of cross-cutting support mechanisms, frameworks and viable policy options for using science, technology and innovation to tackle these global challenges.

http://l.caast-net-plus.org/ju
Designing an Africa-EU Research and Innovation Collaboration Platform on Climate Change (2016)
A. Tostensen, J. M. Haakonsen, M. Hughes, J. Haselip & C. Larsen

In this report we present our designs for joining up academia, business, civil society, and government in a dedicated platform for improving, for enhancing, and for strengthening the coordination and funding of Africa-EU research and innovation on climate change. We also show our accumulated findings and recommendations about the research gaps, cooperation constraints and potential solutions in this domain, which were obtained through a research study and through four multi stakeholder consultation workshops. [http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jo](http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jo)

Potential Instruments for Implementing the EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture: A Landscape Analysis Prepared by CAAST-Net Plus for the HLPD Bureau (2016)
M.S. Jeenah

CAAST-Net Plus was tasked by the Bureau of the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) to support the members of the HLPD Bureau’s Working Group 1, South Africa and the United Kingdom, in elaborating a section of the HLPD Expert Working Group’s contribution to a Roadmap for an Africa-EU Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (‘the Partnership’). Through a desktop review and interviews with key informants, this CAAST-Net Plus report analyses existing EU-Africa R&I projects related to FNSSA and recommends potential instruments for implementing the Partnership over the short-, medium- and long-term. [http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jp](http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jp)

Lessons Learned From Building Africa-EU Research and Innovation Partnerships for Global Challenges (2016)
J. Lancon & A. Alpha

Over a period of nearly a decade, the CAAST-Net (2008-2012) and CAAST-Net Plus (2013-2016) projects have studied the conditions shaping research and innovation cooperation between Africa and Europe. This Policy Brief brings together CAAST-Net Plus learning about bi-regional partnership-building. Drawing specifically on CAAST-Net Plus research and a workshop held in Montpellier, France, in March 2016, the Brief was produced for the Stakeholder Forum held in association with the European Union-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on Science Technology and Innovation held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 5 and 6 April 2016. [http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jv](http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jv)

Bringing Public and Private Sector Actors Closer Together in the Africa-EU Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (2016)
G. Ralphs & N. Diaby

Expectations are high that the brand new research and innovation partnership between Africa and the EU in food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture will make a tangible contribution to the human development priority area of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy. For this contribution to be realised in both regions and at scale, much stronger linkages need to be forged between publicly financed R&I actors, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, and large-scale industrial players. How – and how soon – can this goal be achieved? This Policy Brief draws on results of original survey research undertaken by the Ministry of Research, Senegal. [http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jw](http://l.caast-net-plus.org/jw)

The CAAST-Net Plus online repository contains over 200 reports and presentations from project events. [https://caast-net-plus.org/about/goals/reports_presentations](https://caast-net-plus.org/about/goals/reports_presentations)
The Research Fairness Initiative (RFI) is emerging as a novel and innovative platform, which promises to address some of the challenges affecting health research partnerships globally.

Led by the Council on Health Research for Development, the RFI aims to create a reporting system that encourages governments, businesses, research organisations and funders to share their efforts to develop fair partnerships. By describing their partnering policies and practices transparently, RFI envisages the development of better guidelines and benchmarks that will increase global capacity to deal with the challenges of global health, equity and development.

With support from CAAST-Net Plus and the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, a first consultative RFI workshop was held in May 2016 at the offices of the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) in Nairobi. The workshop’s goals? To generate substantive inputs from leading Kenyan public, private and governmental institutions, and potential future users of the RFI, on the purpose, content, format and implementation of the RFI; and, to assess the usefulness of the RFI as a collaborative platform for supporting bi-regional EU-Africa research partnerships.

In terms of participants’ expertise and experience, the cohort that attended the two-day event reflected an appropriate mix of scientific and policy communities. Both the panel sessions and group work stimulated important discussions between junior and senior researchers, employees of different departments at KEMRI, and national policymakers. More specifically, the direction of conversation concerned the broad issue of fairness in bi-regional research partnerships, ethics, as well as a series of issues related to the RFI’s applicability to KEMRI and other Kenyan institutions involved in health research and innovation.

**Key Discussion Points**

The issue of fairness in research partnerships between African and European partners was described by some participants as an area filled with ambivalence. On the one hand, funding from Europe can involve unfavourable conditions, such as sending samples overseas or the use of research material from the country of the funding institution. These practices, participants felt, can result in skewed benefits of research in the direction of European partners and can also create a funding dependency on European institutions. On the other hand, some participants reported that South-North partnerships are actually frequently equitable in terms of research outputs, such as publications. Many participants also felt that most collaborations start from the good intentions of individuals and later often result in inter-institutional Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), which serve to enhance fairness.

A specific discussion on fairness in the context of research ethics in Kenya was ignited by a panel representative from the World Health Organization. The point of contention was whether a single national ethics committee should supplant

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1 Katharina Kuss is Scientific Advisor at the Spanish Foundation for International Cooperation, Health and Social Affairs (FCSAI).
2 Dr Eric Mwangi is Research Scientist and Policy Advisor at the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.
the more than 20 institutional ethics review committees in operation in Kenya at present. Some parties, such as Kenya’s National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, consider the quantity of information to be reviewed by separate review committees as well as the variations in practices at country-level as favourable for health research in Kenya. Others reported their preference for a national standard on ethical practices, which they said would serve to increase fairness.

Discussions on the RFI guidelines, in particular, led to the general consensus that research institutions in Kenya need to strengthen their legal and financial capacities to more efficiently engage in contract negotiations. This capacity need applies to Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Material Transfer Agreements (MTA) and internal framework conditions or guidelines.

Overall, the workshop stimulated serious engagement between participants about the research support infrastructure in Kenya as well as on the nature of research collaborations with European partners. Critically, the event also revealed some of the strengths and weaknesses of KEMRI’s collaboration in multilateral or bilateral research as well as gaps that could be filled by stronger institutional policy.

**Road to Brussels**

The second and third CAAST-Net Plus-supported RFI consultative workshops will be held in 2016 in Nigeria and Senegal. In Nigeria, the event is being supported by the National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion (NOTAP) in cooperation with the Nigerian Academy of Science (NAS). In Senegal, the workshop will be organised in collaboration with the Ministère de la Recherche Scientifique (MRS) and the SME, Pharmalys. Information on how to increase fairness in bi-regional research partnerships that is gathered at these consultations will be presented to funding institutions and policymakers at the COHRED Research Fairness Initiative Conference, which will take place in Brussels on 28 September 2016.

**Lasting Legacy for CAAST-Net Plus**

Since 2013, the research and consultations conducted by CAAST-Net Plus partners have led to an in-depth understanding of Africa-EU research and innovation cooperation in health, of the challenges that need to be addressed, and of possible areas of intervention for improving partnerships and strengthening bi-regional cooperation. It is from this informed perspective that CAAST-Net Plus is lending its support to the RFI, and the anticipated outcome of this support, for CAAST-Net Plus, is a lasting legacy in the EU-Africa cooperation landscape of more equitable partnerships for improved health outcomes as well as, we hope, outcomes in other fields, such as food security and climate change. This legacy will take tangible form, through the work of the RFI, in opportunities for continuous dialogue between experts in the two regions for the elaboration of standards of fair and responsible practices in international collaborative partnerships.

Guidelines are currently being developed by COHRED for the purpose of the formal establishment of the Research Fairness Initiative. For more information go to [http://rfi.cohred.org](http://rfi.cohred.org) or contact Lauranne Botti (botti@cohred.org).

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2 Lauranne Botti is RFI Project Manager at the Council on Health Research for Development.
3 Dr Kimani Gachuhi is Chief Research Officer at the Kenya Medical Research Institute.
Building Effective EU-Africa Food Security Research Projects

Common challenges and potential solutions

CAAST-Net Plus is conducting research into the common difficulties that EU-Africa food security research projects encounter. It is only by understanding these difficulties more deeply that appropriate solutions can be developed, writes Yanis Roussel.

The EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on Science, Technology and Innovation has just launched the Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (‘the Partnership’). A number of bi-regional ‘FNSSA projects’ will work under the umbrella of this Partnership, contributing to its objectives and responding to the research agenda it has begun to develop. However, our research finds that these initiatives encounter common constraints that need to be overcome for effective Partnership outcomes to be achieved.

**Common Challenges**

1. **Sustainability**: Many actions take place in the field of FNSSA, but few are linked and the end of a project often means the end of networking activities between partners. This lack of sustainability acts as a ‘brake’ that slows down the pace of any future collaboration.

2. **Inter-disciplinary and cross-sectoral approaches**: Global changes and challenges are affecting both European and African societies each day, and their causes and impacts cannot be tackled independently anymore. For example, FNSSA issues are directly linked to climate change and health issues. Where research and innovation aims to address these issues, the divisions between traditional scientific fields need to be reconsidered and bi-regional projects need to reflect a stronger inter-disciplinary approach. Actors from across sectors—ie government, civil society and business—need to be drawn into the discussions.

3. **Inclusiveness**: Many European-led initiatives typically only work with a few ‘usual suspect’ countries (from Africa and, equally, from Europe), whose involvement in European Commission programmes is established. This excludes many other countries, with good potential for contribution to joint research on FNSSA. Our research data points to the difficulty that these ‘excluded’ countries face in participating in networking activities before a project starts.

4. **Financial contribution**: One of the major challenges for bi-regional cooperation projects on FNSSA is to secure cash funding from the participating institutions, which often tend to prefer in-kind contributions. As a result, many initiatives rely disproportionally on European Commission support, which invariably comes to an end. This ‘donor dependence’ will have to be seriously reconsidered for future projects.

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1 Yanis Roussel is Project Officer at the Institute of Research for Development and is based in Marseille, France.

### Potential Solutions

1. **Address finance, governance and sustainability in project design:** There has to be an alternative to open governance structures, in which partners can commit only to those actions that are of interest to them, and more commitment-based structures, where the partners have to agree on agenda priorities and financing/implementation actions. A flexible governance structure for joint FNSSA projects, for example, could allow for the creation of a ‘consortium core’ in which the more involved countries should figure prominently. A ‘consortium periphery’ could contain countries which only want to commit themselves to specific actions. This type of structure could help to strengthen sustainability involving more actors in decision-making processes.

2. **Define the interfacing challenges in agenda-setting:** Defining clear priorities and involving stakeholders from across sectors in decision-making processes will strengthen the ability of projects to address the interfaces between global challenges such as food security, climate change and health. This type of approach will demonstrate to the participating countries that they have a clear interest in making financial commitments if they want to address global challenges in an integrated way.

3. **Welcome ‘new’ partners in consortium building:** Our research recommends that existing consortia and networks must be used to facilitate commitment and partnership building between as many African and European organisations as is feasible. This will enhance the cooperation between partners (and potential partners) by facilitating the dialogue that will allow mobilisation of new partners from countries not yet involved in bi-regional initiatives.

4. **Coordinate and communicate within and across initiatives:** Several multilateral initiatives involving African and European organisations and institutions cover similar domains/scopes. To avoid duplication of research and coordination funding, networking and communication between initiatives should be fostered through creating dedicated tasks or activities in projects for this to be achieved.

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**About This Research**

Drawing on an analysis of Africa-EU actions in FNSSA, research aims at identifying key elements which allowed those initiatives to achieve their objectives. A desktop analysis supported the identification of the main actions as well as an understanding of their context, objectives and results. Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders who participated in the implementation of actions at different levels were conducted to develop a more granular understanding. Particular attention was paid to speaker diversity, with interviewees representing both continents and various countries in East, South and West Africa and North, West, East and Southern Europe. A final report and accompanying policy brief will be developed and disseminated on completion of fieldwork and data analysis.

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**Networking and communication between initiatives should be fostered through creating dedicated tasks or activities in projects for this to be achieved.**
Developing the Africa-EU Renewables Research Agenda

CAAST-Net Plus pitches in

The Africa Region Coordinator of CAAST-Net Plus Dr Eric Mwangi participated in two recent workshops organised by Africa-EU renewable energy research networks.

CAAST-Net Plus was invited by the Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme (RECP) to talk about the promotion of joint Africa-EU energy research and innovation. This was an important opportunity for CAAST-Net Plus, allowing us to reflect back on results achieved in our predecessor project, CAAST-Net, in the renewables space. These results included a renewable energies research agenda-setting workshop in Senegal in 2009, and a solar energy symposium in Botswana in 2010. The CAAST-Net Plus presentation at the RECP event also served to remind participants that a number of relevant joint Africa-EU projects were jointly funded by African and European partners within the framework of ERAfrica.

Building on its participation in the RECP event, CAAST-Net Plus was also invited by the EU-supported ENRICH and SUCCEED projects to participate in their policy roundtable on energy accessibility and efficiency in Kenya specifically. The event brought together top management professionals from the local energy industry and researchers from Kenyan higher education institutions to diagnose challenges and opportunities in the energy sector. Our role in this context was to bring a bi-regional perspective to the discussions, by showcasing examples of Africa-EU cooperation in the renewables space that might have an impact on the Kenyan national energy discussion, such as in the Horizon 2020 funding programme and the ACP Science and Technology Programme.

Both of these interventions were timely and useful for CAAST-Net Plus in the context of the project’s continued efforts to build an Africa-EU Research and Innovation Platform on Climate Change. A forthcoming workshop, to take place in Rwanda, in July will provide an important opportunity to consolidate our efforts in pursuit of this goal.

The Africa Region Coordinator of CAAST-Net Plus Dr Eric Mwangi

As the global focus on and popularity of renewable energy continues to grow, it is the responsibility of academia to take its position as the leaders in shaping new ideas and channelling information about renewable energy.

Africa-EU Renewable Energy Cooperation Programme

MOEST

1 Dr Eric Mwangi is Research Scientist and Policy Advisor at the Kenyan Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

2 ENRICH: Enhancing Energy Accessibility and Efficiency Through Establishing Sustainable STI Support National Networks with a regional dimension in East Africa. ENRICH is co-financed by the ACP Science and Technology Programme.

SUCCEED: The East African Higher Education Network on Sustainable and Energy Efficient Campus Development is a project within the EDULINK Programme, which is financed by the ACU-EU Cooperation Programme in Higher Education.
The event took place on 17 January 2016 and the 150 participants in attendance were hosted by Sudan’s Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

“Researchers had the chance to share experiences from successful Sudanese applicants in Horizon 2020’s predecessor – the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) – as well as express concerns and discuss pertinent issues for cooperation with the presenters,” said Constantine Vaitsas of the Foundation for Research & Technology - Hellas (FORTH), Greece, speaking after the event.

Participants also learnt about open Horizon 2020 funding opportunities and what National Contact Points do.

“One of the main benefits of the event is the realisation of the benefits of establishing and running an NCP system,” Vaitsas added.

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Prof. Ahmed Hassan Fahal of the University of Khartoum, who was recently appointed as the first Sudanese National Contact Point for Horizon 2020, supported the event’s organisation, alongside the EU science counsellor to the African Union, Stéphane Hogan. Dr Thomas Nyirenda, who is South-South Networking and Capacity Development Manager for EDCTP, also participated.

CAAST-Net Plus has partnered with the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership to deliver a Horizon 2020 information session in Khartoum.

A quickstart guide to Horizon 2020 information sources

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1 Gerard Ralphs is Partnership and Project Manager at Research Africa.

* Data courtesy of Melissa Plath (Finnish Universities Partnership for International Development/University of Jyväskylä, Finland) and Masahudu Fuseini (Science and Technology Policy Research Institute at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Ghana).
PAEPARD has been running for nearly a decade. What kinds of activities has the project been involved in in this time?

Since its launch in 2007, the Platform for African European Partnership on Agricultural Research for Development (PAEPARD) has been involved in a range of activities. These can be categorised under the following broad headings:

+ Incubating partnerships between Africa and Europe in Agricultural Research for Development (ARD);
+ Building the capacity of African partners to be able to develop concept notes and competitive ARD proposals in a multi-stakeholder partnership;
+ Sharing information relating to ARD and funding opportunities;
+ Knowledge co-creation and learning along a so-called Users’ Led Process; and,
+ Advocating for greater coherence between donors with the MDGs/SDGs.

Our very active website (http://paepard.org) and blog (http://paepard.blogspot.co.za/) contain all the details of our activities in these areas.

What role does the private sector specifically play in achieving the objectives of the project?

PAEPARD’s very philosophy is to give a prominent leadership role to non-research stakeholders—ie farmer organisations and industry—and the private sector therefore plays a crucial advisory and implementing role for PAEPARD. In addition, PAEPARD actively encourages SMEs to work with farmer representative groups and universities or research institutes to focus their work and develop their businesses. We know that this type of engagement will ultimately lead to increased sustainability of research in both Africa and Europe.

With PAEPARD’s 19 consortium partners and a number of associate partners across Africa and Europe, how important is communication to the project’s performance?

Communication is the ‘glue’ that binds PAEPARD together. A Communication Strategy has been elaborated over the years and this has two components—an internal and an external component. The internal component has developed a communication tool using Web 2.0 technology that makes information and knowledge sharing among partners easy. The external component is composed of our widely followed blog as well as more classic media to disseminate information and lessons learned during the project.

What can we expect from the project going forward?

There are three major outputs that stakeholders can anticipate going forward: First, a large number of project proposals supported by PAEPARD will be submitted to numerous funding calls in 2016, which will hopefully result in a number of new ARD initiatives. Second, we are preparing lessons learned from multi-stakeholder ARD partnerships, and these lessons will be shared very soon with the global ARD community, including donors. Third, we also hope to see a number of technological and institutional innovations scaled out in the coming months.
Profile

Africa-EU Innovation Alliance on Water and Climate

AfriAlliance

Questions: Gerard Ralphs
Responses: Dr Uta Wehn

What is the context in which the AfriAlliance project has emerged? What is the project’s goal?

The World Economic Forum’s Global Risk Report 2016 identifies water crises and failure of climate change adaptation and mitigation as the highest impact risks for the next decade. More specifically, a lack of appropriate water-related skills and capacity in some parts of Africa, and institutional fragmentation within Africa as well as between Africa and the EU, are major obstacles to addressing water crises, climate change challenges, and achieving the SDGs. AfriAlliance therefore aims to enhance African preparedness for climate change challenges by enabling African and European stakeholders to work together on water and climate innovation, research, policy, and capacity development.

What are some of the ‘quick wins’ the project will be looking to achieve?

In the short-term, we seek to capitalise on the existing knowledge base and innovation in Africa and the EU in order to identify opportunities to co-create, adapt and apply solutions for water and climate change challenges, which are based on a much-improved understanding of local demands in Africa.

What are some of the long-term impacts it foresees in its theory of change?

The long-term impacts we aim for are:

- Minimised fragmentation among the broader water and climate community in Africa, the EU and other international actors;
- Better preparedness in Africa to address water and climate change vulnerabilities;
- Enhanced knowledge sharing and technology transfer among key stakeholders within Africa and between Africa and the EU; and,
- Improved water resources monitoring and forecasting processes and tools in Africa.

In what ways does the structure of the consortium support the objectives of the project?

Many of the consortium partners are either networks or have a very broad regional scope. AfriAlliance is therefore a coordination platform, which aims to consolidate the experiences of these already networked actors into an effective, problem-focused knowledge sharing mechanism. As such, AfriAlliance provides an opportunity to initiate and establish joint action on water and climate within Africa, and between Africa and the EU, based on the principle of mutual benefit.

Where can readers go to learn more about AfriAlliance?

The AfriAlliance website (www.afrialliance.org), Twitter feed (@AfriAlliance), and Facebook page are key sources of information. Readers can also contact us at afrialliance@unesco-ihe.org. Our inaugural launch conference will take place from 20-23 March 2017 in South Africa. Participants are welcome to provide input to further shape our activities.

1 Gerard Ralphs is Partnership and Project Manager at Research Africa.
2 Dr Uta Wehn is Associate Professor of Water Innovation Studies at UNESCO-IHE and Project Director of AfriAlliance.

Left: AfriAlliance partners taken during the AfriAlliance kick off meeting on 2-3 March 2016. [Image credit: AfriAlliance]
Right: Members of the AfriAlliance project advisory board met project work package leaders at the UNESCO-IHE offices on 4 March 2016. [Image credit: AfriAlliance]
It is our great pleasure to invite all interested parties to take part in the Eighth EDCTP Forum in Lusaka, Zambia, from 6-9 November 2016.

This year’s Eighth Forum of the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) is being organised in partnership with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Zambia. Zambia has been a member of the EDCTP-Association since 2014, and is also a Participating State in the second EDCTP programme (EDCTP2). With our Zambian colleagues we are pleased to be organising one of the most prominent conferences in sub-Saharan Africa on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected infectious diseases.

The 2016 Forum comes at an exciting time when EDCTP has concluded its first programme (EDCTP1) and its second programme is gaining momentum. It is for us a pivotal moment to share experiences and discuss our theme of “Defeating poverty-related and neglected diseases in Africa: Harnessing research for evidence-informed policies”. This year, we will also award three prizes to African researchers, including the prestigious Dr Pascoal Mocumbi Prize for outstanding achievements in advancing health research and capacity development in Africa.

EDCTP2 is expected to build on and expand the achievements of EDCTP1—ie to sustain the research capacity built through the first programme, ensure the up-take of research results is maximised, and ensure that public funds for research on poverty-related diseases are effectively invested. Under its first programme, EDCTP (co)funded 254 projects, including 102 clinical trials conducted in 30 different sub-Saharan African countries by African and European researchers. Top clinical trial locations were South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Burkina Faso, Uganda and Kenya. Many of these projects broke new ground. They led to publications in peer-reviewed international journals, contributed to new national and international guidelines, resulted in the registration of new medical products or regimens, and built health research capacity and networks.

Since the first EDCTP Forum 12 years ago in Italy, our events have created numerous opportunities for dialogue and the exchange of ideas between scientists, policymakers, funders, donors and global health advocates regarding the clinical development of accessible interventions against poverty-related diseases. As such, we are looking forward to seeing you in Lusaka for a truly rewarding and exciting meeting.

For more information about the Eighth EDCTP Forum go to www.edctpforum.org

1. Dr Gabrielle Breugelmans is EDCTP North-North Networking Manager and Co-Chairperson of the Eighth EDCTP Forum’s Organising Committee.
2. Dr Thomas Nyirenda is EDCTP South-South Networking & Capacity Development Manager and Co-Chairperson of the Eighth EDCTP Forum’s Organising Committee.
The COHRED Research Fairness Initiative Conference
28 September 2016 | Brussels

A CAAST-Net Plus and COHRED collaboration

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For more information visit http://l.caast-net-plus.org/iQ

SCIENCE FORUM
South Africa
8 – 9 December 2016, Pretoria, South Africa

Eager to continue to Ignite Conversations about Science and to build on the success of the first Science Forum South Africa (held in December 2015) the South African Department of Science and Technology will be hosting the second Science Forum South Africa on 8-9 December 2016. The Forum will again serve as a large, open, public platform for debating the science and society interface. The 2016 Forum will have a specific focus on the social sciences and humanities, as well as the role of science in Africa’s development.

Visit www.sfsa.co.za for more information and to register to attend the Forum.
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enquiries@caast-net-plus.org

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