

**CAAST-NET PLUS'S  
CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS  
STRENGTHENING EU-AFRICA  
CAPACITIES AND COLLABORATIONS  
FOR CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH:**

**A SUMMARY OF OUTPUTS,  
OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS**



## + Scope and purpose of report

This document summarises the key outputs and outcomes of the work of the CAAST-Net Plus consortium on climate change research collaborations, including our main recommendations for policy and programming and how it relates to the Africa-

Europe High Level Policy Dialogue on Science, Technology and Innovation (HLPD) priority on climate change and sustainable energy.

## + Introduction

Since early 2013, the CAAST-Net Plus consortium has been working on understanding how European and African organisations can collaborate to conduct climate change research, in support of international commitments under the UNFCCC framework, now contained in the Paris Agreement of December 2015. Under the Paris Agreement, European and other developed countries continue to support climate action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to climate change in developing countries.

A greater part of CAAST-Net Plus's effort in the area of climate change has been used to complete capacity building work in support of research collaborations, on both mitigation and adaptation-related issues that were prioritised by stakeholders at various fora. There exist deep imbalances between European and African capacities to conduct climate change research, which has been a recurring theme in our consultations. Addressing this need therefore presented a solid basis for collaboration on an issue of mutual bi-regional interest. CAAST-Net Plus designed and launched a climate change capacity platform in 2016 to focus our efforts on specific activities, which complemented related efforts to strengthen climate change research.

The intended outcomes of this work were to: 1) enable early career African academics to pursue research that better reflects the needs of African business, industry and policy-making in support of the uptake of sector-specific targets for low-carbon or climate-resilient development; and 2) ensure

that African researchers are in a better position to secure funding through the European Commission's Horizon 2020 funding mechanism, private sector and other sources. Three sector-specific events were held; in Kigali (focusing on energy) in July 2016, in Accra (focusing on agriculture) in November 2016, and in Kampala (focusing on health) in March 2017. In total, more than 50 African researchers had the opportunity to strengthen their research proposals and funding plans.

The connections made during these events are expected to lead to potentially valuable outcomes that can only be investigated and verified beyond the life of the CAAST-Net Plus project. In addition, various initiatives are also planned to build upon this capacity building work beyond the life of CAAST-Net Plus. For example, UNEP DTU Partnership and the African Academy of Sciences (AAS) are leading a work package to design 'flagship actions' within a project under the Joint Programming Initiative-Climate (JPI). This project aims to internationalise EU climate change research, and is funded under the H2020 framework as an EU 'coordination and support action' (CSA) project. This project, called SINCERE, will enable its members to inform the EU's agenda for climate change research collaborations in Africa, South America and in Small Island Developing States. The knowledge and experience gathered by the CAAST-Net Plus consortium was central to defining the proposed work of SINCERE, which aims to implement many of CAAST-Net Plus's recommendations on how to strengthen climate change research collaborations.

## + Background, format and outputs of the research capacity platform

Informed by the work of CAAST-Net Plus completed between 2013 and 2015, the purpose of the research capacity platform was to establish and test a series of activities, in support of topics for bi-regional research partnerships on climate change. This included detailed feedback on research proposals submitted by African climate change researchers, prior to attending each event. During the events themselves, an emphasis was placed

on working sessions, including group-based work where early-career African researchers could seek advice and receive coaching from the speakers on specific research ideas and proposals. The thematic focus was on the causes and effects of climate change, both mitigation and adaptation, across the sectors of energy, agriculture and health.

## + Kigali platform event: sustainable energy

This workshop, held in July 2016, brought together selected experts in the area of climate change (with a particular focus on low-carbon energy) research and research funding, from academia, the public and private sectors, to provide guidance and feedback to early-career academic researchers based in Africa. With a focus on research for sustainable energy systems, and associated business development, we invited 18 researchers already pursuing, or interested in, research that explores the interaction between, and relative influence of, state, market and donors in scaling up the use of low carbon climate resilient sustainable energy, in Africa.

Roles	Lead responsible partner
+ Event organisation, host	Ministry of Education, Rwanda
+ Agenda setting, inviting speakers and participants	UNEP DTU Partnership, Denmark
+ Preparing materials, presentations	Research Council of Norway



Select participants from the event in Kigali, July 2016, on a field visit to the Rwamagana grid-connected PV plant the largest of its kind in East Africa, at the time of construction in 2015

## + Accra platform event: climate smart agriculture

Building upon the format first trialled in Kigali in July 2016, this workshop was held in November 2016 to provide targeted capacity-building for early-career African researchers with a professional interest in the topic of 'climate smart' and sustainable agriculture intensification, which is a key means of adaptation to climate change, especially in Africa.

Roles	Lead responsible partner
+ Event organisation, host	Science and Technology Policy Research Institute CSIR-STEPR, Ghana
+ Agenda setting, inviting speakers and participants	UNEP DTU Partnership, Denmark
+ Preparing materials, presentations	Research Council of Norway



A working session of the research platform event in Accra, November 2016

## + Kampala platform event: climate change and human health

Continuing the first two events (Kigali and Accra), a third event held in March 2017 focused on the health sector, thus comprising the global challenges that CAAST-Net Plus prioritises, harnessing synergies across the various work packages of the CAAST-Net Plus consortium. This 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop provided targeted capacity-building for early-career African researchers with a professional interest in the topic of human health, which is a key sector exposed to the impacts of climate change, especially in Africa.

Roles	Lead responsible partner
+ Event organisation, host	Uganda National Council for Science and Technology
+ Agenda setting, inviting speakers and participants	UNEP DTU Partnership, Denmark
+ Preparing materials, presentations	Research Council of Norway



Participants of the climate change research platform event with Hon. Dr Elioda Tumwesigye, Uganda's Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation. Kampala, March 2017

+ More detailed accounts of the three research capacity platform events, including copies of all the presentations and visual materials used, can be found on the CAAST-Net Plus project website: <https://caast-net-plus.org/>

## + Key outcomes, recommendations and next steps

Following up on these platform events, the key partners in the CAAST-Net Plus consortium met in Copenhagen in September 2016 to agree a set of 'legacy' actions for the work on climate change research collaborations. Here, we aim to provide direct inputs into relevant processes and upcoming projects, complemented by more indirect means in support of the Research and Innovation Network for Europe and Africa (RINEA)<sup>1</sup> project's analytical contribution to the HLPD on climate change and sustainable energy. For example, the AAS contributed to the expert group on Climate Change and Sustainable Energy at the African Union, Addis Ababa, in July 2017, in the framework for an EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership. This was beneficial to the work of RINEA, and had a positive indirect benefit for the wider objectives of CAAST-Net Plus contribution to the HLPD, given that both UNEP DTU and the AAS will be involved in the upcoming EC-funded project SINCERE. As such, SINCERE will be following up on the work of RINEA by helping to pursue the objectives of the Africa-EU joint programme

on climate change and sustainable energy, focusing on the role of research collaborations. Initial discussions indicate a willingness to design and implement a joint call for research funding on climate change and energy, akin to the LEAP-Agri model which CAAST-Net Plus was instrumental in designing and launching. As such, the legacy of CAAST-Net Plus's work on Africa-EU climate change research collaborations will manifest itself in other, related, forums and agendas to push for investment in African research capacity. This will ensure that CAAST-Net Plus continues to make a difference beyond the lifetime of the project. Reflecting on the insights gathered through the research platform events, there will be a need to ensure buy-in from the African Union Commission on a climate change research co-fund, which will ensure faster EU approval and support. Related work will focus on building new Africa-Europe partnerships on climate change and sustainable energy research capacity building, linked to 'Future Earth' (from Rio+20), the Belmont Forum (funding agency) and the International Social Science Council, for example.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.rinea.org/index.php>



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