



**CAAST-Net Stakeholders' Conference on Africa-Europe
Cooperation in Science and Technology:
Status and Way Forward
10-11 November 2009: Mombasa, Kenya**

CONFERENCE CONCEPT, OBJECTIVES AND CONTRIBUTION OF OUTPUTS
(for speakers, session chairpersons, and press)

Science and technology (S&T) cooperation between Europe and Africa at present enjoys unprecedented political attention. The international nature of science, the interests of the global science community in strong networks, and in knowledge-based responses to global challenges, combined with growing African scientific capacities, goes some way to explaining the attention. But this situation can also be ascribed to the sustained global focus on African development as well as the recognition of the critical role played by S&T as an instrument for fighting poverty and disease, and supporting socio-economic transformation. All this drives the need for greater coherence between research and development cooperation policies.

Researchers in Africa and in Europe have a diversity of instruments available to support S&T cooperation in a wide range of thematic areas, and new opportunities are emerging. It is, however, important for those instruments to be embedded in a dialogue between African and European stakeholders representing the scientific and science policy communities. Such a dialogue is important, not only to develop a shared vision as common ground for improving the overall enabling environment for research collaboration, but also to link S&T partnerships with political, economic and development cooperation, in order to ensure the translation and take-up of research results to support economic growth, social development and other policy programmes.

The goal of this conference is to enhance bi-regional cooperation in S&T through an examination of the nature and the role of cooperation processes, focussing on three specific configurations: Under the European Union's Framework Programme; via bilateral agreements; and lastly via development cooperation. The conference will provide a forum to:

- examine the practice of cooperation (good collaborative standards, barriers and constraints, success factors),
- examine the opportunities and limitations of existing funding instruments for EU-Africa cooperation, their alignment with needs, and to consider new approaches,
- examine the supporting policy environment, and to identify policy gaps,
- examine S&T priority identification mechanisms, addressing mutual (bi-regional) interest,
- explore the role of policy coordination for greater coherency and efficiency between bilateral and multilateral approaches, and between research and national or regional development cooperation,
- review pathways and mechanisms for translating S&T research outputs into development and innovation outcomes.

This conference and its outputs should align with and contribute to the existing inter-governmental frameworks for cooperation. The recommendations arising from the conference are expected to provide substantial inputs to on-going cooperation dialogues, such as that taking place around the 8th partnership on Science, Information Society and Space of the Joint Africa-Europe Strategy, to give impetus to the bi-regional policy dialogue on S&T.

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For more information on this event write to the Conference Secretariat (sc2009@caast-net.org) or visit
<http://www.caast-net.org/xwiki/bin/view/Main/Stakeholders+Conference+2009>