

## **MEMO: Meeting for Coordinators' of projects funded by the Coordinated Call for Africa, Environment**

September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Time: 9:30-12:30

Place: SDME Building  
Square de Meeûs 8  
B-1049 Brussels  
Room SDME 9G (9<sup>th</sup> Floor)

Present: Panagiotis Balabanis, European Commission  
Gerasimos Apostolatos, European Commission  
Massimo Burioni, European Commission  
Cor Dietvorst, WASHTech  
Guenter Langergraber, CLARA  
William Critchley, WHaTeR  
Thierry Lucas, Knossos  
Martha Bissman, AfriCAN  
Melissa Plath, CAAST-Net

### **The Africa Call**

The European Commission, Directorate I – Environment and CAAST-Net, A Network for the Coordination and Advancement of Sub-Saharan Africa-EU Science and Technology Cooperation, convened this meeting of Coordinators of Africa Call projects and related projects. The meeting was organized in order to find possible areas for cooperation between the projects and to make concrete suggestions for implementing this cooperation.

The Africa Call identified the need for cooperation between the projects, creating a network of the projects funded to strengthen synergies and provide mutual benefit and coordinated action. This cooperation will facilitate dissemination and information sharing, particularly to Africa. The projects in the Africa Call collectively work to bridge Africa and Europe to find mutual benefits and targets. CAAST-Net will provide support to these processes in order to ensure coordination and a multi-disciplinary approach.

### **Projects**

WHaTeR aims to develop improved and innovative water harvesting technologies (WHT) that are sustainable under dynamic global and regional pressures and well-adapted to, and integrated with, land use systems and associated environmental services. WHaTeR defines water harvesting as the collection and concentration of rainfall runoff for productive purposes. In terms of cooperation, WHaTeR and WAHARA are already cooperating and there is clearly room for more cooperation and potential areas for overlap. For example, WAHARA and WHaTeR each have a representative on the other's Advisory Team.

CLARA's project objectives are to strengthen local capacities to adopt, implement and operate integrated water supply and sanitation for small communities in rural areas and peri-urban areas and to contribute to the MDGs and to climate change adaptation in the African water sector. CLARA has already engaged in cooperation with WaterBio Tech. WaterBio Tech will hold two international conferences and will invite CLARA and WASHTech to participate in the conferences, along with the other Africa Call projects, if wanted.

WASHTech aims for more effective investment in new technologies by strengthening sector capacity and strategies for innovation and scaling up and process and time needed for successful uptake and sustainability. The main outcome of the project is a technology assessment tool. WASHtech has already initiated cooperation with CLARA, with the development of technology assessment as the main area for cooperation.

AfriCAN Climate's main objective is to help translate research results into action, through developing, operating and promoting a web-based interactive, multi-lingual Knowledge Platform for the dissemination of research results and good practices. AfriCAN Climate's Kick Off meeting will take place in November and is conceived as a networking event for some of the Africa Call projects. The AfriCAN Climate web platform can and should be used to promote results of the projects to aid in clear messages from the projects.

The KNOSSOS project makes research available to policy makers at a European and worldwide level. The project takes stock of available research results that are useful for policy-making. KNOSSOS analyzes which projects to highlight and what aspects of these projects to highlight based on excellence and the policy cycle. Web-based tools are used to publicize these issues (OARE: <http://www.oaresciences.org/en/>).

### Recommendations:

The following recommendations arose from the discussion:

- Consider having representatives of 'sister projects' on advisory boards.
- Many of the projects have mutual stakeholders, technologies, partners, etc, thus the potential for confusing each other and/or creating mixed messages is possible. A streamlined and coherent communication and dissemination strategy will benefit both the projects and the stakeholders.
- A brochure on the Africa Call projects as a collective would be useful as would a collection of the project links and partners made available to partners.
- Cooperation on dissemination is a high-impact area for cooperation. This can be done through dissemination of other projects at events as well as shared dissemination events.
  - To aid this dissemination, having open documents is essential.
  - An 'Africa Call' dissemination, through a common website, would be useful, including a shared calendar of events.
- The projects should invite relevant Africa Call projects to their events.
- Several organizations are partners in multiple projects funded by the Africa Call. These partners should provide links between projects.
- A multi-disciplinary cooperation of projects will lead to greater impact of projects.
- Coordination of projects will ideally make the work of Project Coordinators easier and not add work.

### Conclusion

The Coordinators present at the meeting presented a strong willingness to cooperate and a common willingness to go forward. This cooperation, however, must be realistic and should start in areas that are easy and have high impact, such as in dissemination. For more strategic, broad cooperation, a proposal for cooperation should be put forth for discussion. This can and should include multi-disciplinary linkages as well as regional linkages.

The different types of projects – thematic and networking – exist at the same time. The key challenge is to link these different levels to create an effective method for cooperation. Furthermore, across the themes and in different directorates, there are projects with common objectives. Creating clusters of projects may enhance the impacts of these projects. However, if this is done, the clusters should be open and transparent. Thematic sub-clusters already exist at some level. WAHARA, AFROMAISON, EAU4Food, and DEWFORA are already linked. The CLARA, WASHTech, and Water BioTech projects could also be clustered. These clusters should produce and share an outline of their proposed cooperation in order to find possibilities for cooperating at the cluster level.

The AfriCAN and KNOSSOS projects both offer their cooperation to support the Africa Call projects. The web portal being developed by AfriCAN can aid in dissemination and messaging and KNOSSOS can support regional linkages by looking into regions in depth.

Bringing the projects to the attention of the African Union and African Union Commission, NEPAD, and the Regional Economic Communities is also of importance. This political input will also aid in furthering dissemination of the project outputs and, ideally, sustainability of the projects. CAAST-Net can facilitate this process through the presentation and invitation of the Africa Call projects at the CAAST-Net Stakeholder's Meetings. The next Stakeholder's Meeting is to be held in Senegal and will feature the Africa Call projects.

This memo will be shared with the participants of the Africa Call Environment meeting and the other participants of the thematic Africa Call meetings. CAAST-Net's WP8 will follow-up with proposals for next steps.