

Is Africa Ready for NDCs Implementation?

Assessing the Political Economy of Climate Change Governance in Select African Countries

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Key Messages

- National sectoral policies have limited alignment with Climate Compatible Development (CCD) which hinders coordinated climate action.
- Institutional challenges such as unclear role differentiation are a key barrier to effective climate action in Africa, often leading to intersectoral conflicts and competition over climate change funds.
- Institutions, agencies and ministries responsible for dealing with the threats posed by climate change lack capacity to deliver on CCD goals.
- Disharmony between climate change initiatives funded by state and non-state actors can hinder the achievement of CCD goals.

Overview

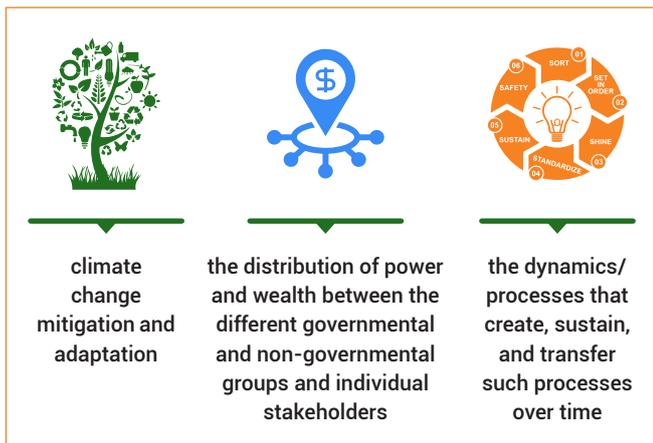
The extent to which a country's regulatory and policy framework meets the requirements associated with implementing its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) gives an initial measure of its appropriateness. NDCs implementation is likely to present challenges that are distinct from those posed by prior climate change policies and plans, in that the goals of NDCs will typically require more rapid and coordinated action compared to traditional climate change goals. This policy brief discusses an assessment of the alignment between key sectoral policies and the three building blocks of Climate Compatible Development (CCD) – adaptation, mitigation and development, and the coherence between various key sectoral policies in eight select African countries. This analysis is crucial in exploring Africa's climate change governance readiness for the implementation of NDCs. The outcome of this assessment is that sub-optimal policy coherence, policy incoherence and misalignment are key barriers to successful NDCs implementation, because existing national policies were not specifically developed to tackle climate change. Therefore, early identification of policies' misalignment and incoherence with climate-sensitive policies and CCD building blocks can help policymakers devise a more coordinated and holistic approach to addressing climate change.

Introduction

Policy coherence is the systematic promotion of mutually reinforcing policy actions across government departments and agencies creating synergies towards achieving the agreed objectives. Coherent policy approaches with satisfactory trade-offs between the priorities driven by sectoral development goals can lead to greater effectiveness, efficiency, and reduce competition for limited budgets and resources. In addition to its horizontal dimension within equivalent governance levels, sectoral integration processes have a vertical dimension spanning different levels of governance.¹

Calls to integrate climate change priorities into sectoral strategies are nothing new. Most NDCs have been developed from other planning documents such as low-carbon development strategies or national adaptation plans of action, the development of which required – and in some instances promoted – sectoral integration. Integrating NDCs priorities into sectoral strategies is a pre-condition for successful NDCs implementation. This is because without such integration, sectoral strategies may include policy goals that undermine the NDCs goals. For example, a land-use management plan that contemplates building in flood-prone areas would become maladaptive and ruin efforts directed at reducing vulnerability to flooding episodes.

This policy brief is based on the findings of a study which sought to critically analyse the interactions of the political and economic processes within each of the select eight countries on:



The findings of this study were also used in developing an index and monitoring tool as an accountability mechanism that will be used to track the implementation of NDCs by African countries. This study was focused on eight African countries, hereinafter referred to as PACJA platforms,

namely: Botswana, Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia.

Methodology

A scoring system was developed based on the work of Gouais and Wach² to determine the extent to which various key sectoral policy documents in the eight select countries align with the building blocks of CCD and their coherence with other key sectoral policy documents. Interactive content analysis was conducted to identify the dominant narratives in each of the policy documents. Each policy document was thoroughly reviewed to identify evidence/articles/clauses that support CCD/green economy/green growth. All assessments of alignment were supported by quotations from the policy documents to ensure auditable rationale for each assessment.

To establish alignment with CCD, appropriate indicators for the three building blocks of CCD were selected based on the literature and validated through stakeholder discussions and expert interviews. Examples of adaptation indicators included: **livelihood diversification, development of drought-resistant crop varieties and early warning systems, food security, incorporation of indigenous knowledge, awareness creation and education, and security of land tenure.** Indicators of mitigation included: **tree planting, woodlot establishment, agroforestry practices, promotion of liquefied petroleum gas and biodiversity conservation.** For development, the indicators included: **access to credit, private sector participation and development, capacity building, community empowerment, gender mainstreaming and good governance.**

To establish policy coherence with other key sectoral policies, the study involved carrying out expert interviews in the eight countries. Experts were purposefully selected based on their expertise in sectoral policies under consideration. A prerequisite for the selection of experts was that they had a longstanding and comprehensive overview and understanding of the policies in their sector. In all, experts affiliated with the various governmental ministries and agencies, local universities and research institutions were selected, and asked to score the level of coherence between their respective sector policy and that of the other policies. The policy documents used for this analysis were the water, agriculture and national climate change policies, in addition to the National Development Plans (NDPs) and the National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs) for each of the eight countries.

¹ Pramova, E., Di Gregorio, M. & Locatelli, B. (2015) Integrating adaptation and mitigation in climate change and land-use policies in Peru. doi: 10.17528/cifor/005624

² Gouais, A. L., & Wach, E. (2013). A qualitative analysis of rural water sector policy documents. *Water Alternatives*, 6(3), 439–461. <https://dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/dlc/bitstream/handle/10535/9240/Art6-3-7.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

The scoring criteria used for alignment of the sector policy documents with key pillars of CCD was on a scale of 0 to 3 representing **No Alignment, Limited Alignment, Partial Alignment and High Alignment** respectively. Similarly, the

scoring criteria for policy coherence was also on a scale of 0 to 3, representing **No Coherence, Limited Coherence, Partial Coherence and High Coherence**.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Policy coherence with other sectoral policies

Country	Water Policy	Agriculture Policy	National Development Plan	National Climate Change Policy	National Adaptation Program of Action	Total Averages
Kenya	2	2	2	3	3	2.4
Botswana	1	1	1	1	1	1.0
Zambia	2	2	2	3	2	2.2
Tanzania	2	2	2	2	2	2.0
Ethiopia	2	2	2	3	3	2.4
Gabon	1	1	1	1	1	1.0
Cote d'Ivoire	1	2	2	1	1	1.4
Nigeria	2	2	2	3	3	2.4
Total Average	1.63	1.75	1.75	2.13	2.0	

The table above shows the results of the content analysis and the stakeholder scoring of level of coherence across climate-sensitive sector policies. Notably, there is mostly “partial coherence” across most sectoral policies in the eight countries. In terms of the overall Governance Coherence Index across the study countries, three countries come out as outstanding in as far as environment and climate change policy perspectives are concerned. Kenya, Ethiopia and Nigeria score highly in having more coherent policies. The water, agriculture and National Climate Change Policies (NCCPs), NDPs, and NAPAs of these countries are structured in a manner that responds to actions that need to be undertaken to address climate change issues. They are closely followed by Zambia and Tanzania whose policies and plans also have strong elements that recognise climate change as critical and that it needs to be incorporated during implementation of programmes and projects that address sustainable development in the respective countries. Botswana, Gabon and Côte d'Ivoire score very low in this category because their policies and plans have scanty proposals on how to address climate change issues. In terms of policy alignment with CCD, the analysis shows that sectoral policies across the eight countries under study are aligned differently with the different elements of CCD. Although climate change is seen as a development issue that has the potential to derail sub-Saharan Africa's efforts in attaining middle-income status, this analysis shows that key sectoral policies currently have “limited alignment” with key indicators of CCD, particularly indicators of mitigation.

For instance, while the agriculture sector policies are framed as development policies scoring “high alignment” with development and adaptation, other key policies such as the waste management and forestry policies are set up as mainly mitigation policies, scoring “limited alignment” with adaptation and “partial alignment” with development. The failure of sectoral policies to fully align with all the three elements of CCD, particularly adaptation, has serious implications on dealing with climate change impacts in these countries in a coordinated manner.

While policy coherence across the eight study counties seems to lead to complementarities across the sectoral policies, our findings suggest that a number of challenges constrain policymakers, national institutions and agencies, which are mandated to realise “triple wins” of adaptation, mitigation and development. One key challenge relates to institutional barriers including unclear differentiation of responsibilities and roles, which often leads to conflicts and competition amongst various sectors. Another challenge relates to a lack of capacity to deliver CCD in the institutions, agencies and ministries responsible for dealing with the threats posed by climate change.

Another challenge relates to the current economic situation in the eight countries, where there is intense competition for scarce national resources and inherent vested interests and institutional agendas. The tendency of international bodies to drive local climate change policy agenda through capacity building and financial support may also serve as

a barrier to the implementation of CCD and achievement of policy coherence, particularly if projects are approached in a fragmented, stand-alone manner. Thus, the lack of

harmonisation between climate change initiatives funded by non-state actors can contribute negatively to the goals of CCD.

Policy Recommendations

To overcome the challenges associated with policy alignment and policy coherence, the following are the suggested policy options for policymakers to act on:

- i. Setting up appropriate inter-agency and institutional collaborations and information-sharing platforms across different agencies with the aim of addressing issues related to climate change and foster knowledge networks.
- ii. The adoption of "climate champions" in all key sectors to ensure that the subsequent reviews of these policies incorporate key elements of CCD. These "climate champions" are individuals who may already be working in the various sectors and are given the responsibility to champion climate change issues in the sectoral policies. To be effective, the capacities of these champions need to be strengthened through appropriate training by climate change experts.
- iii. Clearly defining and creating awareness on the agreed upon sector compromises and tradeoffs by relevant state institutions and agencies mandated with integrating climate change across different sectors of the economy. This clarity will help minimise conflicting agendas.
- iv. Inclusion of multiple stakeholders such as private sector and civil society in climate governance processes such as NDC reviews. This inclusion will minimise the probability of leaving out vital issues when addressing climate change across various levels of governance.

Conclusion

Public sector government institutions across the eight study countries still have an uphill task of aligning and streamlining their development and sectoral policies to spearhead CCD. Furthermore, considering the eight countries are not at the same stage of implementing and reporting on their NDCs progress, it will be necessary that each government adopts variable actions that suit their country's circumstances and context.

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