

16 TH JULY 2012, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) signed the Tripartite Agreement for the Implementation of the Programme on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in Eastern and Southern Africa on 15th July 2012 on the margins of the ongoing 19th African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Heads of the three Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya, Dr. Richard Sezibera and Dr. Tomaz Augusto Salomão signed the Agreement on behalf of COMESA, EAC and SADC respectively.

Following the piloting of the Climate Change Initiative, the three Regional Economic Communities (RECs) agreed to address the threatening challenge of climate change in Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA-EAC-SADC) Region. To this effect, the three RECs have jointly developed a five year Programme on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in COMESA-EAC-SADC Region. The overall objective of the Programme is to address the impacts of climate change through successful adaptation and mitigation actions aimed at building socio-economic resilience of communities through Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA).

The scale and gravity of the impacts of climate change at the global level and particularly in developing countries is a serious challenge to sustainable development in the 21st Century. Climate change is increasingly affecting socio-economic development in the COMESA-EAC-SADC Region that is heavily dependent on rain-fed agriculture for food security.

The Programme, officially launched in Durban, South Africa on 5th December 2011, at the margins of the 17th Conference of Parties (COP17) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is intended to increase investments in climate resilient and carbon efficient agricultural practices and strengthen linkages between agriculture, forestry, and other land uses (AFOLU) and renewable energy practices in the COMESA-EAC-SADC Member/Partner States. The Programme is funded through a multi-donor financial commitment equivalent to US\$90 million from the Government of Norway; the European Union Commission; and the Government of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland respectively over a five year period.

The signing of the Tripartite Agreement after the Rio+20 Summit held under the auspices of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), held from 20th-22nd June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, demonstrates the Regional Economic blocs' collective efforts to address climate change in the region within the framework for follow up action agreed by the Rio+20 Summit. The Summit acknowledged climate change as a cross-cutting and

persistent crisis and resolved to increase sustainable agricultural production. The signing of the Agreement also provides an opportunity for the inclusion of climate change as one of the areas of cooperation under the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite framework.

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